

Research paper on strategies to deal with overpopulation

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



Introduction

Overpopulation has become a global concern. In 1650, the world population stood at only 500 Million. The human beings had only been in existence for a period of a million years. In the next two hundred years the population doubled! Now the people were in the range of 1 Billion. After that the population growth was even more staggering. Within the next 80 years, the population had again doubled to 2 Billion people. It took almost forty years for the population to double again to four Billion. Clearly, the world has to deal with the situation because the resources that the population is consuming are limited and exhaustible. The world has to think of the future population. The United Nations has given an alert that in the year 2025, the human population will be at the levels of 8 Billion. It has been noted that the consumption levels of the population is beyond the sustainable levels.

Causes of Overpopulation

There are several factors that have contributed to overpopulation. First of all there has been a significant reduction in the death rate. The scientists have been successful and there have been scientific breakthroughs that have eliminated early deaths by fatal diseases. There are diseases whose outbreaks would cause many deaths but now they are controlled. This has led to a high increase of the life expectancy of individuals. There has also been an increase in the birth rate in the world. There are medicines which have increased the fertility rates of women. There has also been an imbalance of population in various countries due to immigration.

There are countries whose financial circumstances or opportunities are so attractive

that it has caused a large influx of people into that country. The resources of the country are therefore overstretched. Illiteracy levels also contribute to the high levels of overpopulation. The people are ignorant of the adverse effects of overpopulation and they therefore end up giving birth to more children without thinking of the repercussions.

Effects of Overpopulation

There are adverse and positive effects of overpopulation. In looking at the disadvantages several issues emerge. Overpopulation causes countries not to be able to produce enough food to support itself. This causes famine in some areas and the government may get into foreign debt in order to import food to sustain its population.

There are also high rates of unemployment as the industry is not able to produce jobs for all the young and fit people in the population. There are people therefore who resort to crime as they want to have some material possessions. The high population will need places to live and settle. There will be the need of places of work, industries, recreational or social facilities, schools and hospitals. The environment's landscape therefore keeps changing as more and more land is used for human settlement. There are governments who do not oversee the process resulting in widespread cutting of trees and pollution of the water resources. In countries where the control systems are insufficient, there is widespread pollution of the environment causing destruction. The forests are home to certain species of wild animals which become scarce and scarce and finally become extinct.

There are also civil wars that arise in various developing countries as the people desire more farmland but the resources are few. Lastly, the high population causes the non-

renewable resources to be depleted at a higher rate and later there will not be sufficient resources to take care of the future generations.

There are positive effects of overpopulation however they are few compared to the adverse effects. High population means that businesses are able to increase their sales in the market. The country always has an active workforce. It will not be necessary for the government to put economic incentives in place to encourage the people to give birth to more children. As there are more buyers and sellers in the market, businesses will have to be innovative in differentiating their products due to increased competition. There will also be more efficient use of resources especially renewable resources. There will be improvements in technology as governments seek to ensure that the current technologies in place can sustain the high population.

Analysis of Current Sustainable Strategies and Solutions

There are various sustainable theories when it comes to overpopulation and how the world can deal with the growing statistics. There are those advocates who argue that technology can help increase the resource capacity to support the growth statistics. Improving gasoline mileage will allow more people to have automobiles and still use the same amount of gasoline. However, the strategy may not work where the scientists do not improve emission technologies it will result in more air pollution as the

higher number of people emit higher levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Technology has failed to handle the high population growth and its consumption of resources. Technology has only succeeded in causing certain sections of society to experience high economic growth.

There are those who have proposed that the high population should learn to share resources. This strategy is also not feasible because it will only lead to famine and social conflict in the long run. This is evident in African countries where the people have learnt to engage in armed conflict to get the resources that they would desire (Valentine, 2010). This approach also does not put into consideration the people in the future generation who will have low resource base to work with as the shared resources are exhaustible.

Secondly sharing resources may not be feasible. The human nature is selfish and is inclined towards economic betterment. The rich are concerned with ensuring they live in ease and material prosperity and may not be willing to share their resources. In the year 2004 to 2005, it was ascertained that the rich in India spent over 10 times more on their daily expenditures than the poorest people in the country.

Poverty Reduction Strategy

I believe that the correct path to follow in dealing with the adverse effects of overpopulation is to recommend reduction in population. Where the population is low, they would have negligible effects in their use of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Challenges

There are those who argue that if the people eliminated the use of non-renewable resources and concentrated on the use of renewable resources the explosion in population growth could be supported by the earth. This may not be feasible due to several factors. There are products which cannot be produced without the use of non-renewable resources such as oil, gas and metal. Even if a smaller population used the non-renewable resources eventually the resources would get depleted. It is therefore more advisable to decrease the population.

There are however challenges to the concept or strategy of population reduction.

First of all, the neo-classical theory supports overpopulation theory. In the capitalistic world, the aim or focus is economic development. When the population increases, the economists see that the growth will increase the population capacity of the nation. A higher population leads to an increase in the labour force which leads to higher production of goods and services. A higher population also ensures there is a high market demand for goods and services. There are politicians who support high population growth since it shows that in the future the government will have higher tax revenues. Families also desire more children since in the future there will be more labourers in the family who will provide more money for the family's daily sustenance.

In countries that lack proper welfare systems, people prefer to have many children as they will be assured that someone will take care of them when

they grow old. There are also parents who keep giving birth as they search for the elusive gender children who most of the times are a male child. There are those communities where in times of insecurity have higher population growths due to high incidences of rape and the children that are born as a result. There are men who would like to subordinate their women both economically and intellectually. One of the ways the male chauvinists do this is to ensure that the woman keeps giving birth and is tied to staying in the home. However these theories are flawed as population growth actually leads to reduction in economic development. It has been ascertained that there are countries where the high population limits the amount of land that is available for the people to farm.

In other countries, parents find it even more difficult to provide for their children education and other important needs due to the economic burden. Despite the ecological concerns concerning the high population growth, as discussed, there are many political, social and economic factors that cause the people to continue giving birth.

Another challenge for population reduction is the demographic transition theory. The researchers have put forward that in the primitive societies, there were high growth and birth rates. The population was low. However economic development and stability caused the world to deal with the causes of early death such as diseases therefore the death rates reduced and the population exploded. Developing countries fall in this category. In the third category, the people choose to reduce their birth rates therefore the population stabilizes (Caldwell, 1976). In the end there are low birth rates

and the world population is low. Most developed countries are in the third stage. Only a few countries have succeeded to be in the fourth stage and these are countries such as Germany, Japan and Italy. This strategy of economic development is not suitable since there may not be enough resources to enable all the countries to experience the high economic development and systems that enable the people to choose to conceive fewer numbers of children.

The other challenge faced by the population reduction strategy is that scientists and politicians treasure the political and economic stability. They are reluctant to introduce population reduction policies in their economic and political systems in order to maintain the status quo. There are also no clear scientific statistics on the ecological statistics that are sufficient to support the increasing high population. The world politicians have also been successful in eradicating great environmental problems and are reluctant to introduce measures that seem too harsh or too drastic. There is also the view that a reduction in the population would eventually lead to an increase in the poverty levels. There would be a reduction in the production capacity of the country (Johnson, 2004).

Government, Societal and Global Support

There are several benefits of reduction in population strategies. For population reduction strategies to succeed there will need to be support from the government, the society and the global community. Poverty reduction is the main focus of the United Nation right now. I believe if they were to introduce population reduction as another focal area they would be able to

influence the rest of the world community to continue in that direction. The world governments need to introduce policies that will seriously introduce, monitor and improve population reduction in their countries. There should be education for the citizens on the adverse effects of overpopulation. There should also be great welfare systems to ensure the homeless and aging are taken care of so that they have no need to give birth to so many children. Women in the society should have the same education and employment opportunities to prevent them and the society from seeing their role only as housewives. Rape victims should have medical aid to assist them to prevent the birth of unwanted babies. The society should be educated on the importance of appreciating all children to prevent them from idolising the boy child. The effort to get the elusive boy child causes the family to have many children and even domestic violence when the woman finally cannot give birth to a boy.

Conclusion

With these strategies in place, the world will be able to sustain and support the current population and the future low and controlled populations. It is not good to wait till the world is in a dire situation to implement these policies. China had to introduce population reduction strategies when they saw the high population was affecting their environment and productivity (Jowett, 1991)

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