

# philippine studies

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## **Philippine Population Research: Papers and Processing of an Experts' Meeting**

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as such an index might prove. Since the compiler invites help from his informants at pointing out gaps in this compilation, and expresses the hope "to publish at a later time an updating," may this reviewer earnestly express his hope that such a future edition will be provided with the index which will facilitate the use by scholars that it should have. In the meantime, we can only be grateful for the wealth of material that has been so far assembled.

*John N. Schumacher*

PHILIPPINE POPULATION RESEARCH: PAPERS AND PROCESSING OF AN EXPERTS' MEETING. Edited by Rodolfo A. Bulatao. Makati, Rizal: Population Center Foundation, 1976. 577 pages.

The volume assembles revised versions of 27 papers originally presented at an Experts' Meeting on Philippine Population Research in October 1974. The book is divided into eight parts: Parts 1 to 7 each consist of papers relating to an area in population research and a summary of the discussion which followed; Part 8 includes a summary of the participants' discussion identifying priority areas of population research and a concluding statement from Rafael Esmundo, then Executive Director of the Commission on Population (POPCOM). Appended to the volume are brief *vitas* of authors and a list of the participants and observers.

The papers presented fulfill adequately one objective of the Experts' Meeting, that is: to review specific research on population-related phenomena, and in the process, to identify priority areas for future research. It would have been preferable if fewer but more substantial selections were made and if more contributions from administrators were included. But this suggestion does not distract from what one gleans as the book's message, namely that researchers and administrators still have to understand each other's needs and priorities before more research findings can be useful for policy-making and program-planning. Only time, hard work, and funding will determine the extent to which this understanding has grown. A review of the book's sections help clarify these points.

Part 1 attempts to link fertility patterns to issues of socioeconomic development. Vicente Pacqueo and Peter Smith describe the logic and uses of economic-demographic modelling as a tool for policy-making and program-planning. They conclude that until more adequate data become available, these models, despite their elegance and potential analytic power, have limited use as policy tools. Alejandro Herrin gives arguments to support a cost-benefit framework for viewing interrelationships between fertility decisions and socioeconomic changes. These arguments, he concedes, remain hypothetical until conceptual and methodological problems are resolved.

Robert Hackenberg seeks to examine the relationship between income distribution and fertility reduction. Regrettably, his analysis simply shows the expected inverse association between social class and fertility rates. He infers the conclusion that the mobility of middle class persons via the traditional bazaar economy is mainly responsible for their fertility reduction. This relationship remains to be tested.

Researchers and administrators often deal with macroscopic data (such as those published by the National Census and Statistics Office) to assess demographic conditions and processes. Part 2, the most substantial section of this volume, discusses the nature and quality of such data. Francis Madigan shows how unsatisfactory field conditions and meagre resources affected the quality of the data obtained in the 1948, 1960, and 1970 censuses. Though he admits that the quality has improved over time, he advises researchers to approach census data with some caution. Vital registration systems also provide a major source of data for researchers and administrators. But as Tito Mijares discusses in detail, the national experiment to improve vital data collection encountered numerous field and technical problems. The results obtained were slightly better than those gathered from civil registration systems alone. Data on Philippine mortality as well are limited. Wilhelm Flieger takes a critical look at the sources of mortality data; despite the shortcomings of these sources, Trinidad Osteria and Jane Baltazar manage to describe Philippine mortality conditions over the past decade. Information on measurement of fertility is more advanced than that of mortality; still Mercedes Concepcion argues, the data should be enhanced by undertaking more focused investigations and panel studies, and by adding a sociological dimension to demographic concepts.

Part 3 is difficult to treat as a unit because the three papers here, while dealing with population movements, vary considerably in topic, method, and approach. All three papers make policy recommendations, but as the authors will admit, the available data to support these recommendations are still lacking. Ernesto Pernia claims that urban growth, not rapid urbanization, underlies the problems which confront Philippine cities. To deal with urban growth, he proposes to combine two strategies: accelerated rural development and the formation of alternate urban growth centers. It is difficult, however, to implement this proposal when one considers that more data on the components of urban growth and the present system of cities – not to mention data on which types of rural development are more effective – must first be compiled. Maria Elena Lopez and Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner use survey data to show that migrants (at least in one low-income community in Manila) remain committed to city life despite conditions of poverty and insecurity of residence. Since migration to cities is likely to accelerate in the coming decades, both authors stress the need to show greater concern for the well-being of the poor (migrant or nonmigrant) *on their own terms*. They list

specific recommendations — among them: creation of schemes for small scale credit, and the reordering of priorities and values in urban planning — but the problem remains of raising these recommendations to the level of policy. One reason why this problem exists is that there is no single national agency assigned to deal with the consequences of internal migration. Benjamin Cariño offers other reasons: the lack of recognition of the link between urban problems and migration, the insufficient data based on the migration process, and the lack of studies on programs that influence migration. Again, it is obvious that new data should be generated before useful policy guidelines can emerge.

One contribution social scientists can make towards more effective policy making is to examine the sociocultural background surrounding policy issues. Two papers in Part 4 represent preliminary attempts towards this end, at least as far as fertility is concerned. Rodolfo A. Bulatao observes, after some solid analysis, that properly devised indices of values are correlated with family size desires, even after standard socioeconomic and demographic variables are held constant. But what are the associations between these indices of values and actual family size? What implications will the obtained correlations have on policy? These questions require more thought and study. Benjamin Lozare considers another aspect, namely the effects of husband-wife interaction on family planning decisions. He finds that (1) more open discussion and intensive interaction between husband and wife are directly associated with family planning ideals, and (2) joint decision-making on family planning matters do not increase the likelihood of contraceptive usage. More rigorous analysis would have strengthened the usefulness of these findings and would have given more information on the fertility decision-making process. A deeper understanding of these cultural patterns would also enable the family planning program planners to transmit more effective messages to various target groups. Gloria Feliciano reviews several media approaches undertaken in this country and cites the necessity of studying the impact of combined approaches. These include the combination of mass media and interpersonal communication channels, and the transmission of family planning messages with items pertaining to health, nutrition, and other aspects of socioeconomic development. Family planning messages can also be directed to students through population education programs. Rosario Alberto presents a model of population education which aims at inculcating students with "proper" values on family planning, family size norms, and the like. The model makes intuitive sense, but has limited value to policy makers unless the assumed relationships in the model are verified empirically.

The next two parts are concerned with family planning. Part 5 discusses various types of programs to improve service-delivery strategies, while Part 6 focuses on the management of family planning programs. To persons familiar with current family planning efforts, the strategies discussed in Part 5 may appear dated. It is presumed that previous experiments to improve service

delivery — for example, the training of *hilots* to be family planning motivators (as described by Jerome Bailen) and the hiring of paramedics to dispense oral contraceptives (as described by James Philips and Flora Bayan) — have been considered in the current national programs. It is difficult to make this presumption on the next two papers since these do not assess the impact of specific strategies. Florentino Solon simply describes the community organization approach to health care, while Beverly Hackenberg suggests the employment of the *katiwala* in squatter communities for more effective family planning and health care services.

Part 6 explores the management issues in family planning program administration. Again, the importance of verifying existing data or gathering new information underlies the papers. Eduardo Roberto discusses normative and positive types of management research, and points out the many gaps in present knowledge. The paper by Cesar Mercado and Amelia Gloria is a modest effort to fill in the gaps. The authors list 54 suggestions, derived from evaluation research and field observations, that they believe have wide-ranging implications for the management of population programs. However, as the authors themselves admit, these suggestions are useful only after considerable discussion and further field testing. None of these suggestions give special emphasis to the legal aspects of population study. Irene Cortes makes this case by presenting an overview of legal research on population in the Philippines and by indicating venues for future inquiry. One inquiry is the constitutionality of public policy and its effect on ethical values. The topic is pertinent to an attempt by the Model City Population Project in Cagayan de Oro to require couples to attend family planning seminars prior to the issuance of a marriage license. Romeo Balandra cites this case, showing how the proposal was later modified because, according to POPCOM, its implementation would violate basic human rights. One speculates about the outcome of this project if national survival, occasioned by explosive population growth, was at stake.

Ultimately what constitutes national survival is politically defined, based on perceptions of existing conditions. One of these conditions is the consequence of population pressure on the environment. This is the topic of Part 7. Telesforo Luna, Jr. gives an overview of the population-environment issue, and in his estimation, knowledge of the structure and function of the ecosystem is too limited a scope for rationalizing environmental management. This limitation makes it difficult for Juan Francisco to specify the extent to which changes in life styles (such as those of the Tasaday and the Mandaya), brought about by environmental pressures, constitute a real threat to ecosystems. Serafin Talisayon's intricate, albeit incomplete, ecosystem flow chart had potential analytical value, the utility of which can only be seen given a good data base, adequate data processing capabilities, and an interdisciplinary perspective.

In Part 7, the editor summarizes the participants' discussion of the priority

areas for future research. Fifty recommendations are made, and these are classified according to the book's sections. The recommendations are fine, and some of these, according to what Estefania Aldaba-Lim says in the preface, have been implemented. But the editor correctly states that the recommended research topics still have to be reconciled with administrative priorities. What are these priorities? Rafael Esmundo contends that administrators seek, within the shortest time possible, research findings about reaching program goals in the most efficient and beneficial manner. In his opinion, few or none of the papers presented answer these questions. The statement is harsh, but contains some truth. As a long-term goal, it is perhaps imperative that researchers and administrators devise appropriate designs and strategies which will provide policy makers with information to make quick and responsible decisions. As a short-term measure, and given the available data and techniques, researchers and administrators should perhaps proceed with social experimentation, learning about, and dealing with, program consequences in the process.

The book covers a wide variety of topics, and should not be read in one sitting. Readers will find the book valuable if only to appreciate how social scientists grapple with Philippine population issues. Several articles (and the bibliographies contained in these) are also useful for researchers engaged in further studies. The organization, print, and binding of the book are commendable, though the same cannot be said of the editing work. Editing errors such as inconsistent bibliographic format, unclear table titles, and an array of spelling and punctuation errors, among others, proved distracting.

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APPLIED FILIPINO PHILOSOPHY. By Leonardo N. Mercado, S.V.D.  
Tacloban City: Divine Word University Publications, 1977. xi, 98 pages.

*Applied Filipino Philosophy* is a compilation of articles most of which have been published previously in local journals. Father Leonardo N. Mercado, considers this work as examples of application of basic concepts which he has already established in a previous work, *Elements of Filipino Philosophy*.

The first article, "Aesthetics," tries to show that Filipino aesthetics is "non-dualistic" as opposed to Western aesthetics, which is seen to be "dualistic." Non-dualism is defined as a type of aesthetics wherein the subject and the object, though kept distinct, are unified in a whole, whereas dualism would dichotomize between subject and object.

The author holds that Greek aesthetics is typically dualistic, such as for example in Plato, in whom there is a distinction between the realm of the Idea and of the sense object, or in Aristotle, in whom there is distinction