

# Book Reviews

VASANT P. PETHE. *Population Policy and Compulsions in Family Planning*. Poona: Continental Prakashan, 1982. 188 p. Rs. 45.

There are three outstanding features of this otherwise not very well written book; It is relentless in its crusade against use of compulsion in family planning; it is unsparing in its criticism of western intervention in family planning in India; and it presents a sound critique of research in family planning in India.

Professor **Pethe's** crusade against compulsion is particularly refreshing. It is a pity that most **intellectuals**, particularly in **Maharashtra**, had stood **aloof** when many atrocities were committed on people in the name of family planning. Indeed, Maharashtra has the dubious distinction of attaining many firsts in this field: it is the first state to promote **sterilization** camps; it is the first state to use innovation of prescribing **sterilization** targets to members of the police force; it is the first state to gloat over performance of sterilization operations on platforms of railway stations in Bombay; and it is the first state to take positive steps to prescribe compulsory sterilization by law. What is **worse**, some scholars in Maharashtra have come out in strong support of the use of compulsion in family planning. Without doubt, Professor Pethe's book **offers** a strong challenge to this group of **intellectuals**. This is very courageous of him and it is very creditable.

**However**, Professor **Pethe** has been so carried away by his crusade against use of compulsion in family planning that he seems to take no notice of the basic policy changes which have taken place since the overthrow of the government in January 1977. He does not pay much attention to the fact that the new government which took over in 1980 has categorically ruled out the use of compulsion in family planning. Indeed, this is enshrined in the approach to family planning in the Sixth Five Year **Plan**.

If Professor Pethe tries to justify his fear of return of **compulsion**, he is all the more vulnerable because he has not analysed the forces **which** have led to the use of compulsion in family planning **and** the counter forces which have been responsible for its abandonment. Absence of such a critical analysis of use of

compulsion is one of the most glaring defects of this book. He has attributed the use of compulsion in family planning to "idiotic and overzealous officials during 1975-77 ending in a traumatic fiasco" (p 32). This quotation provides a flavour of this book.

Professor Pethe carries a great deal of conviction in his denunciation of western intervention in family planning in India. He denounces the **ethnocentrism** of western scholars. He condemns the colonial and **neocolonial** biases among western scholars. He brands the **western** conceptual approach to family planning as **neo-Malthusian** saying that "**many** reactionary ideologies of capitalist persuasion with pseudoreformist orientations and powerful political lobbies—**national** and **international**—**supporting** the establishment, vested interests and *the status quo*—**have** all distorted the true perception of the population question *vis-a-vis* the socio-economic ills facing the low income countries" (P 15).

He goes on to talk in terms of misconceptions at macro and micro levels. At macro **levels**, the misconception is that overpopulation is considered as the mainspring of all economic, ecological and social ills on earth. At the micro level, the misconception is the contention that **the** poor man himself is solely **responsible** for his own destitution and misery which result from his indiscrete procreative behaviour leading to a large family size.

The author is justifiably critical of research in family planning in India. He has presented quite convincing arguments in support of his criticism. He refers to the dominant influence of conceptualisation and biases of the researchers. He also provides evidence of poor quality of the research and anomalies in priority selection, with overwhelming emphasis on fertility and family planning and gross neglect of such critical areas as people's perception of the population problem "psychological, economic and **socio-cultural** processes at work in explaining **fertility** behaviour" (p. 28) and lack of an interdisciplinary approach. He is also justified in being particularly severe on what Americans are fond of calling KAP (knowledge, **attitude** and practices) studies. He rightly asserts that "out of a mountain of huge mass of data presented in formidable arrays of charts and **tables**, these enquiries have discovered almost nothing that was not **common** knowledge" (p. 23). Later on he goes on to denounce them as "neither academically enlightening nor practically useful . . . plainly, mediocre and unimaginative" (p 24).

He **makes** an interesting distinction between **Malthus** on one side and Marx and Gandhi on the other side. Malthus, according to him, considered human being as a nuisance, while human beings were considered as assets by Marx and Gandhi. On this basis he also distinguishes between **Malthusian** approach to family **planning** as capitalistic and the Marxist and **Gandhian** approaches as socialistic.

Professor Pethe is **quite** right when he defends the lack of response to family

planning **among** the poor **on** the ground that the poor have little stake in the survival of the system which is so **unjust** to them. Based on this he rightly calls population **problem** as an integral part of the existing social situation. By implication, he defines a family planning programme as an integral part of a strategy for bringing about social **and** economic development. With this approach it could have been expected that he would have lauded the report of the Planning Commission's Working Group on Population Policy, which has pleaded for an exactly similar approach. He, **however**, ignores this major shift in the approach to family planning advocated by the Working Group, which had also been accepted by the **then** government and included in the Sixth Five Year Plan. Instead, he takes up cudgals against the Working Group by **ques-**tioning its composition, accusing it of evading rather than facing crucial issues, branding it as **neo-Malthusian** in approach and claiming that the Working Group does not present any integrated alternative plan for family planning.

Even if the author is right in his assessment of the Working Group and its recommendations, it is indeed most unfortunate that he does not see any thing positive in its approach. Worse **still**, what he himself has to suggest is grotesque compared to what he criticises in the recommendations of the Working Group.

**Indeed**, the author becomes almost unmanageable when he **lets** loose his own suggestions about what he calls family planning in the 21st century. A commission on population resources, technology, environment and social transformation, council for research and population for social transformation, intelligence services for population information, informal interdisciplinary group for population research, a ministry of population, committees for policy and administrative integrations, Indian population services as a cadre of the IAS and a federation of voluntary organizations involved in population and developmental work, **constitute**, in the briefest possible way, what he terms as his alternative.

One gets **puzzled** also about comes out of the book. In the 70 page **Preface**, which has been written in what the publisher terms as the Shavian manner, the author describes the study of the population question and a critique and broader perspectives **for** 1980s and beyond. This is followed in Part I with what the author calls a full-fledged analysis and evaluation of the fundamentals of the policy model based on compulsory family planning. In Part II, foundations of India's population policy has been examined. Part III contains the original texts of various relevant government documents and policy **decla-**rations. This form of presentation probably can provide some **idea** of the

difficulty a reader faces in getting an organized and integrated view of what the author is **trying** to present.

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J. R. RELE AND TARA KANITKAR. *Fertility and Family Planning in Greater Bombay*. Bombay : Popular Prakashan, 1981. xiv, 217 p. Rs. 60.

This monograph presents the findings of a fertility survey conducted in Metropolitan Bombay. The field work for the survey was done during February to November 1966. The data on socio-economic characteristics, fertility, and knowledge, attitudes and practice of family planning were obtained by interviewing 7,872 currently married **women** aged 15 and over and **married once only**.

The authors claim that the monograph's "**most important contribution for all time** to come is the valuable bench-mark information it provides for future studies in Greater Bombay, and to some extent, other cities in India as well as the entire developing world". Tardiness in publication and failure to obtain data on the marital status of all women detract considerably from these objectives.

Current fertility levels are based on births in the reference period from December 1964 to November 1965. The marital fertility rates for the city, suburbs and Greater Bombay were as follows :

	<i>City</i>	<i>Suburbs</i>	<i>Greater Bombay</i>
Crude birth rate	23.2	29.8	25.9
General marital fertility <b>rate</b>	176.4	187.5	181.4
Total marital <b>fertility rate</b>	5.19	5.07	5.13

It is stated **that** : "The higher marital fertility rate in the city is indicative of overall higher marital fertility performance in the **city** compared to the suburbs. However, it is the more favourable age-sex marital status distribution, and more particularly a higher proportion of young married women, in the suburbs, which has given rise to its higher crude birth rate and general marital fertility rate compared to the city." This is not surprising since, prior to 1967, the performance of the family planning programme was at a low **level**. Moreover, the percentage couples protected was only 25.6 in the city and 14.7 in the suburbs. In

Greater Bombay only 47.9 per cent of couples protected had been sterilised. These low levels of family planning use did not result in any significant reduction in fertility **within** wedlock. The factors related to nuptiality were **naturally** more important at this stage of demographic evolution. One of the major weaknesses of the survey design was that no information on the marital status of **all** women in **reproductive** ages was obtained. Hence, it was not possible to explore further into the effect of the proportion married among reproductive women on the overall fertility level.

Fertility levels of Greater Bombay, given in the monograph as bench-mark, may be compared with the estimates from the National Fertility and Mortality **Survey, Maharashtra** 1980 (NFMS).

	<i>Monograph 1966</i>	<i>NFMS 1980</i>
Crude birth rate	25.9	23.9
General marital fertility rate	181.4	145.7
Total marital fertility rate	5.13	4.61

By 1980, 38 per cent of the **eligible** couples were using a method of family planning and 31.7 per cent had been sterilised. With this large increase in the percentage of **contracepting couples** during 1966-80, the reduction, especially in the crude birth rate, should have been greater than revealed by these figures. Since it is unlikely that births were over-reported in **NFMS**, it is possible then the 1966 fertility rates might have been under-estimated due to such reasons as **under-reporting** of **births**, confusion about the reference period, problems in defining the "resident women" and treatment of single member households and institutional population in the **definition** of the total population.

It is claimed that "the sharp decline in the age specific marital fertility rates from age 30 onwards in Greater Bombay, and more strikingly in **the** city, may **be** due to the use of contraceptives." This statement has to be supported by comparing these declines **with** corresponding declines in a natural fertility regime because the shape of the fertility curve shows a sharp decline **in** older ages, even in a non-contracepting population.

Fertility differentials are established in terms of the average number of children ever born per currently married woman and this average is standardised for the age distribution of such women. Major differentials are found by religion and education of wife. It is argued that the appearance of fertility differentials in Greater Bombay strongly signals incipient fertility decline in India. This is based on the process of diffusion of contraceptive use from higher to lower

classes of society **experienced** by developed countries. While this argument may apply with some **force** to educational differences, religious differences are likely to persist for a much longer time since they are based on different values, social institutions and nuptiality patterns. It is too much to expect that all **religions** would adopt the Parsee (**Zoroastrian**) pattern of reproduction in the short run.

Since the survey was conducted, knowledge of family planning has become almost universal among eligible women with two or more living children. Hence the findings from this survey on contraceptive knowledge are of limited interest now. Percentage contraceptive use varied by religion and education of wife. It is noteworthy that Parsees were so highly motivated to control their **fertility**, that even in 1966, 70 per cent of these women used contraceptive methods, mostly other than **sterilisation**.

With the wisdom of **hindsight**, we may point out the major limitations of this survey. While the number of eligible women contacted is **given**, we are left guessing the number not contacted and the degree of non-response. This should be high in a metropolitan city. Whether call-back visits were paid to contact women not initially available is also unclear. As mentioned before, a major defect of the design is that the marital status and age of all women in the sample households were not obtained. Many methods of multivariate analysis are now available for finding the joint effect and the relative importance of the various determinants of fertility. However, standardization for age composition of the eligible women has been extensively used in the monograph for comparing **different** groups. The age composition is the result of the nuptiality pattern which also is an important determinant of the fertility rate for all women. Moreover, the standardisation procedure assumes the absence of "interaction" between age and the other factor compared.

This monograph is a **useful** addition to our fund of demographic knowledge as it is based on a carefully conducted survey *in a metropolitan area* for a reference period before the Family Planning Programme was expanded and implemented effectively in India. Any longitudinal study of demographic trends in Indian cities should have recourse to the results of this survey for a **pre-programme** period.

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**GUILLAUME J. WUNSCH AND MARC G. TERMOTE.** *Introduction to Demographic Analysis—Principles and Methods*, New York : Plenum **Press**, 1978. xiii, 274. Price not specified.

For understanding and disentangling the various factors conducive to the

**population** change and impact of different demographic processes on the **human environment**, a demographer has to sort out and analyse a vast amount of demographic data available from the censuses, vital registrations, surveys and other sources. For this **purpose**, he requires adequate knowledge of the mathematical and statistical tools so that changes in different demographic processes such as **births**, deaths, migration and marriages can be accurately and unbiasedly measured along with the contributions of the underlying factors. This book is a **pioneering** attempt to present a unified approach to the principles and methods needed for the formal analysis of the demographic data pertaining to **various** components of the population change.

As a matter of fact, most of the demographic measures utilised in the study of mortality, nuptiality, natality and contraceptive effectiveness are restricted to a small core of the **methodology**. The underlying basic principles on which these techniques are based are discussed in detail in the first two chapters. They focus the discussion on the main approaches, a demographer usually adopts in analysing the population data, namely, period analysis and cohort analysis. These principles are uniformly applied in the analysis of four main demographic **events**—**births**, deaths, marriages and migrations in the **subsequent** chapters.

Chapter 1 deals with some fundamental concepts of the cohort analysis and usefulness of representing data through the two dimensional Lexis diagram. Forms of the three basic measures of demographic analysis : reduced events, exposure rates and probabilities of attrition are discussed in the absence of disturbances (**i.e.**, in the 'pure' state) as well as in the presence of disturbances for both the renewable and non-renewable events. Basic measures of the period analysis are covered in Chapter 2. Stressing the double purpose of the period analysis : **standardisation** and translation, the authors show that although standardisation is always a valid purpose, translation may sometimes result in problems and **biased** results. Discussions in these two chapters, though based on simple algebraic expressions, are in essence quite abstract and demand heavily on their readers. Sometimes, the light face and bold face letter symbols used respectively for exact duration and **completed** duration create confusion if the reader is not quite alert while **reading**.

Chapter 3 starts abruptly with a discussion of the measures of infant mortality and is followed up by some period measures of mortality with appropriate emphasis in the standardisation and translation approaches. Under the translation approach, the authors discuss the structure of a life table with independent **sections** devoted to abridged life table functions and construction of the Model Life Tables in general and Lendermann's **in particular**.

Though not strictly a demographic phenomenon nuptiality has an important bearing on natality and hence its discussion becomes quite pertinent. Chapter 4 is devoted to the **discussion** of two types of the measures of nuptiality : first, **analysis** of nuptiality based on statistics of population change and population

composition; second, analysis of **nuptiality** through the **sole** use of the **census** type questions. This chapter also discusses the bizarre phenomenon of "marriage squeeze" in the "marriage **market**".

The period and cohort measures of natality are discussed in full **details** in Chapter 5. The salient features of this chapter **are**—(1) study of birth interval-specific fertility rates for a cohort **as** well as a period, (ii) study of measures for assessing the effect of contraception on natural fertility, and (iii) discussion of **the** different measures of contraceptive effectiveness. In Chapter 6, the authors discuss the different methods of analysing migration data. A brief account of the **multiregional** multiple-decrement life table is **also** presented at the end of the chapter.

The discussion and treatment of the subject matter in the book is exact, concise and lucid. Each chapter incorporates the practical **examples** to illustrate the application of various techniques discussed therein. Authors also give a list of references and bibliography for the supplementary readings **at** the end of each chapter. This makes it a more interesting and valuable text book. The book is characterised, however, by some important omissions by not including the discussion of the indirect methods of estimating mortality and **fertility**. The book also lacks in comprehensive discussion of the mutual interplay of the different components of the population change. The book should have dealt with some more topics such as population projections, stable populations and demographic models. Nevertheless, it is **thoroughly** organised and is a welcome addition to the arsenal of the technical books in Demography.

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**M. SIVAMURTHY AND K. S. SEETHARAM.** *Handbook of Indirect Mortality Estimation.* U. N. Cairo Demographic Centre, 1980. iv + 120 p. Price not specified.

The hand book presents indirect mortality estimation techniques developed during the 1970's. Although, a substantial body of technical literature is available in professional journals, the main aim of the hand **book**, as pointed out by the authors in the foreword, is to provide the researchers having some demographic training with specific steps in the application of **these** methods which may otherwise prove to be complicated.

In particular the book discusses mortality estimation techniques using data on **orphanhood**, widowhood, census survivorship and death distribution. Chapter 1, outlines the scope of the book and the nature of data required for the application of the methods discussed as also their limitations in a broad sense.

**Chapter 2**, which describes **orphannood** method, **also** discusses child mortality estimation using data on children **ever** born and children surviving using Brass\* Coefficients. Procedure of linking the adult mortality estimates derived from orphanhood data by Brass' two parameter logit system using standard life table has been explained in detail.

Chapter 3, discusses estimation of male and female adult mortality from data on marital status distribution of females and males. In the process, Hajnal's method of calculating singulate mean age at marriage has also been described.

Since in many of the countries of Asia and Africa re-marriage is more common among males than **females**, the proportion of males widowed, **would** give a biased estimate of female mortality. To avoid this **pitfall** two methods have been suggested :

- (i) **In** the **first** method a relationship between male and female mortality is derived from a standard mortality pattern using a two parameter system. This relationship is applied to **the** derived male mortality and the female mortality is then derived. In other words, the data on marital status of males are set aside and female mortality is derived exclusively from male mortality using a relationship between male and female mortality in a standard life table.
- (ii) In the second **method**, the proportion of males not widowed derived from the marital status distribution is adjusted by dividing it by  $(1 - p)$  where  $p$  is the proportion of widowed males re-marrying. It has been suggested that ' $p$ ' should be obtained from vital statistics or survey records.

The estimates of adult mortality **so** obtained are then linked with the derived child mortality estimates. The procedure for linking is **essentially** the same as in Chapter 2.

Chapter 4 **expounds** census survivorship method applicable when data from two censuses are available. The procedure is straightforward if the 2 censuses are 5 years or 10 years apart. If the censuses are taken at say 13 or 14 year interval, a procedure for estimation has been described. In the latter case at least one of the censuses must have single year age **data**. The procedure of linking the survivorship data has been discussed in detail.

When distribution of deaths are **available** by age and sex, either from registration statistics or from a survey, and the distribution of population by age and sex is also available from a census or survey, then a procedure of estimating the extent of underregistration of deaths was suggested by Brass using growth balance equation. The method assumes that the population is stable and that the extent of under registration is same over the age range considered, particularly in adult **ages**. The computational **details** of the procedure have been described in **Chapter 5**.

Appendix 'A' proposes a **new** method to estimate the infant and childhood mortality when data on the age distribution of children by ages of mother are tabulated. The method assumes that age specific fertility rates are available or can be derived from data on children ever born and surviving and births during last one year. The proposed method has been **illustrated** with the help of data collected in Uganda Survey, 1976.

The procedure suggested in this appendix is worth pursuing by other researchers. In particular the estimates of child mortality derived can be compared with those developed by Preston and **Hill** using almost similar set of data.

While the handbook no doubt explains the computation procedures in detail so that any one with little demographic training can apply the **methods**, the value of book would have been enhanced manifold, if the limitations and modifications of various techniques had **been** discussed in greater detail. **While**, discussing the estimates of child mortality, **the problems** caused by declining fertility and mortality and the procedures developed to circumvent them could have at least **been** indicated to the reader. Similarly the duration variant of the method could **also** have been hinted. In the orphanhood and widowhood **method**, a note of caution that the estimates of adult mortality derived represent averages experienced over the period during which the relatives were exposed to the risk of dying and that if mortality has been changing these would not represent the correct levels would have warned the user against indiscriminate application of these techniques. Another point which the reviewer would like to point out is that the procedure of linking up adult and child mortality have been repeated in every chapter making a complete reading of the book jarring. Would it not have been sufficient if the procedure of linking up adult mortality with child mortality is described in a separate section or chapter with illustrations using the earlier data? Iterative calculations would have been better presented in a compact tabular form rather than a narrative style running over pages.

The above observations should not, however, reduce the utility of **the** handbook to the audience for which it is intended. The authors need to be **congratulated** in bringing out a manual on topics in which only a few books are readily available.

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