
DENSITY ISSUE IN PAKISTAN: CAUSES, IMPACT AND RESOLUTION

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Abstract

Pakistan has experienced population problems which are indeed very worrying, the population problem is a more serious problem than the energy crisis and the water crisis, because it has widespread effects. There are a lot of drawbacks caused by over-population, especially in the fields of economy and security. The problems of this population can still be resolved. Pakistani government has long sought a variety of efforts to address population issues affecting communities. Pakistan has been known as a country with a high population density, especially in the city of Karachi. Various efforts of the government has done, increasing refugees from neighboring countries and difficult birth control complicate government efforts to control the explosion of population growth in Pakistan.

Introduction

Population density is the number of residents in a region per unit area. Imbalance between population growth with food production and other resources can be bad outcome for the country. Countries will also be hampered in its development. Pakistan is leading in population growth rate with 1.89 per cent, leaving behind Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Morocco, Egypt and Malaysia at a growth rate between 1.2 to 1.6 per cent. (Siddiqui F., 2015) Pakistan is potential to be reviewed as largest Muslim population in the world by 2030, if you see the addition of a population of about 3.7 million annually, according to the data the United Nations. Here are some of the effects of overcrowding, if Pakistan is compared with other Muslim countries:

a. Impact of over-population on water need or supply

Water is the main need more than needing food. Water has lot of benefits either for drinking, washing, and so forth, but not only do humans need water. Animals and plants are living things that live around humans, they also become a source of food for humans. Imagine if more dense human population in a region, depleting the water, plants and animals can die slowly and then what is other resource to defend life? Country's development also using excessive cement making water does not seep into the soil, so water directly flows to the river and back to the sea. Pakistan water source can be said to be at minimum level compared to other countries, considering that there is only one access to the sea in Karachi and only some water streams or river. This could trigger a war on water if the population continues to increase in Pakistan.

b. Density effect on Agriculture

People became increasingly dense, meaning food needs will continue to increase. One result of this density is the transfer function of fields that had to be planted as farms to be housing or other facilities. So countries especially Pakistan should import a lot of food grains from other countries, to mitigate them. Pakistan government should utilize the land that is still possible for farming, improve agricultural technology, fisheries, and livestock to increase food supplies. Another thing to note is the altitude and way of eating food that needs to be changed, among other things to change so that people do not just rely on one type of food alone, diversification (diversification of crops and land to cultivate them) crops and agricultural land.

c. Density effect on Education

The main factors that leads to high population growth in Pakistan are high fertility, declining mortality, the custom of early marriages, son preference, high infant mortality, poverty, illiteracy especially of women and lack of women empowerment, the trend of polygamy, religious constraints, beliefs, customs , traditions and lack of recreational activities. There is a belief on Muslims in Pakistan community, that god gives food to everyone even to an ant in a stone. To overcome the mindset of society, some efforts that can be done is, first, the important role of scholars and ulemas or priests here are mobilizing family planning remove the misconception of the people about family planning.

The educators also have to increase awareness and knowledge about the issue of rapid population growth and the problems faced by the government, and scholars need to support it. Both can create an environment that is acceptable Among the common people, so that they can accept the idea of smaller family size is legitimate and acceptable.

Education is of fundamental importance for a country, the better the education of a country could push the country forward, if the population density can not be tackled properly and infrastructure of education is getting fewer, there are numbers of children who can not attend school, circumference education a country becomes low and ultimately the productivity of work will decline, it will even lead to the creation of a widespread problem across the country.

If we look at Indonesia as comparison, which is also one of the most populous country, Indonesian government has several policies for a minimum of education due to the large number of people, such as; the provision of educational facilities more fully and equally in all regions in Indonesia, the creation of educational curriculum that fits the needs of the labor market, improving the quality of teaching staff (teachers and lecturers) in educational institutions owned by the government, Making available training programs for educators and job seekers, pioneering research and new discoveries in the field of science and technology in government agencies. Pakistan can do the same things given, because Pakistan experienced same problem that Indonesia is currently facing.

Governmental Policy

In making a policy, Pakistan needs to deeply understand of what causes the increase in population and also a comparative study of other countries that are also experiencing high density, such as Indonesia, China and India. It is clear, that recent empirical evidence shows that it is a combination of economic, social, cultural (religious) roomates and institutional factors are important determinants of desired family size. Equally important are the related factors such as the level of poverty, educational levels, gender equality and health services which interact in a complex manner to influence family size and population growth (Todaro, 2000).

Humas Yusuf, a scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center, wrote on Dawn, she said:

The best news Pakistanis have received in the past week comes in the form of the National Population Policy 2010. The policy recognizes that demographics are the key to promoting economic development and security in Pakistan. It also priorities family planning – particularly subject in an effort to promote births pacing – as the best strategy for Achieving ambitious targets population (2.1 births per woman in 2025). From some points that have been elaborated on top, of causes and effects of increasing density of population in a state, such as; shortage of educational facilities, health services, food, living space, arable land, clean water, housing units, an energy crisis, putting pressure on transportation, electricity, sewage, sanitation, and Increase in unemployment, a surge in food prices, land fragmentation, import of food, environmental degradation, climate change, urbanization, suicide tendencies, overcrowding and congestion in households,

squatter settlements, poverty, unrest, can give a boost to injustice in society such as; lawlessness, crimes, drug addiction and corruption and decrease in per capita income. It is badly affecting the country's economic development.

a. Density Issue in Pakistan

Indonesian government deal with it by the Transmigration Program Development focus in the Eastern Region, there is an explosion in west region of Indonesia as a capital city, people are seeking wealth and sufficient facility in the city, to counter this Indonesian government develop public services and facility in east region of Indonesia in order to limited the movement of people from eastern to western part of Indonesia. Pakistan can imitate what Indonesia has done, particular area in Pakistan such as Rawalpindi and Karachi can be migrated to other area of Pakistan such as Islamabad that is quite unpopulous and other areas.

The age at marriage in Pakistan is considerably lower in comparison to other countries with similar socio-economic indicators. In a recent study (Mahmood, 2001), it is shown that (i) the median age at marriage is 18.3, (ii) education of women is the only factor contributing to an Increase in age at marriage (age at marriage with secondary education is 22 years with no education vs. 17.7) and (iii) the Socioeconomic norm of Marrying early is still strong and prevalent in Pakistan. Commenting on teenage mothers, "A substantial proportion of women get married during adolescence (13-20 years) and are under social pressure to produce an offspring" ... over 10 percent of the teenaged females have begun childbearing (p. 17).

b. Policy and Governmental effort in dealing with density problem by implementing "Family Planning" program.

Pakistan has a maternal mortality 178 per hundred thousand live births and Infant Mortality Rate, 66 per 1,000 live births make Pakistan has the highest birthrate in the world. This increases the importance of/need of the family planning program in Pakistan which needs immediate support and attention.

One that causes increasing population is largely of Pakistanis donot understand the importance of and how to use contraceptives. Government's population planning policies which also failed to be implemented, is also a major cause of population growth. Thus, educational approaches and introduction of a variety of contraception in childbearing age need to be declared, the government is seeking to pressure the rapid population growth, Increased contraceptive usage requires increasing the knowledge factor. To Increase the knowledge factor requires broader policy approaches dealing with formal education as well as advocacy. (Walker, 2010)

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Government of Pakistan need to have a concrete plan for providing training, outreach and counseling through mosques or madressahs. There are psychosocial issues where a husband has a boxed thought which only views just from the standpoint of Islam alone and oppose family planning that becomes hinder or barrier for women to use contraceptive increased by 50%. At least, if 60% of contraceptive use is done by the people of Pakistan, then Pakistan can make a stable growth of population. Family planning program has existed in Pakistan even since 1965, but the policy has been created never really worked to reduce overcrowding. Society must have an awareness of this.

The high number of the population in Pakistan was not in harmony with smooth development of health facilities in Pakistan, causing lack health in society, especially people in rural areas. Pakistan need to develop health facility such as a social health

center and General Hospital, and provide free medical services to the public health insurance and the health insurance per province or district, as it has been done in Indonesia since a long time.

c. Marriage Law

Again, due to lack of knowledge, people are not aware of with the economic problems the caused by high birth rate. Literacy rate is 57.7% in Pakistan. Dependency ratio is very high in our county. Only 32.17% population take part in economic activities and of 67.83% depends upon them. It views as a pressure on land and population expulsion. (Walker, 2010)

The Government shall enact legislation or policy to raise the minimum age for marriage to 23 for women and 25 for men, so that they are aware of the impact of early marriage, the government should take advantage of printed and electronic media both indoors and outdoors to increase such awareness, and the birth rate will be reduced 20-30% (so called "Zero Population Growth"). Every man should have a family planning in marriage, and this should be a major concern before anything else.

d. Tackling economic problem due to density

The density of population in Pakistan is increasing dramatically from year-to-year lead to the increased economic and social problems such as housing, education, health, transport, water, power etc. Very high rate of population growth lowers the per capita income, which causing low savings and low investment that result in low rate of capital formation (Pakistan's New Population Policy, 2010). And this can lead to poverty, especially in Pakistan as a developing country automatically has a limited public facilities which are not comparable to the total population, the government will be difficult to provide public services equally and thoroughly. So we can conclude that the rising population means a low living standard, Pakistan has 21% of the population live below poverty line. Not just poverty alone is at issue, because poverty has a spill over effect, lack of funds means lack of access to health, it can be said the increasing population has the potential to export disease.

Food resources or other needs, land owned by Pakistan and also the number of its resources will become unstable to the needs of people, when Pakistan's population continues to grow, people will even fight to get their basic needs, consequently government's opportunity to export raw materials or resources becomes more sluggish, because of limited resources. Too many people will result in least employment, due to limited resources to be utilized, then firms only need few people to work, so that people who are not employed would become unemployed, or in any other case, if all people are employed it is necessary to sacrificed their salaries, which is inevitably to minimized the salary or wage to be able to hire and pay all workers. Only a small number are trained and being skilled and the rest of greater numbers of people are unskilled, and it causes poverty, because unskilled person will never be required in any field. And people like that will become dependence on the small portion of skilled person who is employed. Labour force is 54.92 million of the population in Pakistan and remaining population is depending upon them.

In Indonesia, the government restricts subsidy of child support for civil servants / State Army up to the second child, the creation of legal instruments that ensure the growth and development of the business / investment, either domestic or foreign investment, optimizing the role of state corporation body in economic activity, so it can absorb more labor, simplification bureaucracy in business licensing. Building / providing public facilities (roads, phones) so as to encourage economic activity, it can cope with the economy in Indonesia with high population density and also contributed to the population increase awareness on birth restriction or control, in which the consequences are

undesirable. Pakistan has a policy of development, which, according to the statement of Planning Commission, there are 10 programs to Eliminate poverty. By the year 2025, it aims to Eliminate poverty, increase of per capita income from Rs 24,000 to Rs 69,000, male and female adult literacy rate of 100 percent, and to provide clean water, water and universal health care for all its citizens. It also mentions population growth rate of 1 percent by the year 2025(Nasreegh). These goals would positively impact fertility reduction. But there is no population policy that led to complication in attaining of these goal. Due to the absence of effective population policy, the achievement of goals will be difficult. Pakistan as a developing country that still has the problem of overcrowding must take the initiative to have a comprehensive and effective population program. Because if Pakistan fail to comprehend these things can have an impact on other spill over issues.

Although there have been population policy, but if Pakistan failed in its implementation, whether caused by falls understanding of the factors causing the increase in population or lack restriction or warning to the people of Pakistan, will make policy that has been made would be rendered useless.

e. High rate of refugee contributes in lengthening the number of Pakistan population

One of the causes of density is Afghan refugees who come to Pakistan since the Afghanistan war. Refugees who add to the population of Pakistan makes some new problems, there are many unemployment, the spread of refugee who did not do anything in any corner of the city allows the occurrence of crimes, and not a few who argue that they have contributed to the existence of terrorism in the country of Pakistan. There is a small group of extremist who are lack in knowledge participating in spreading the false ideology to Pakistan citizens. The existence of refugee in Pakistan make it difficult for the Pakistani government to control the mobility of citizens, public facilities became difficult to be provided for not just few refugees that have a less income also needs public services provided by Pakistani government, this is one of Pakistan's responsibility to give equal treatment to the refugees like its original citizen. But now, as Afghanistan is getting safer to live in, then Pakistan needs to emphasize the policy that has been agreed among three parties; Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR for Afghani repatriation. Pakistan also needs financial aid and assistance to implement the policy effectively and helps Pakistan dealing with refugee population. And it does not mean that Pakistan is allowed to give harassment against refugee, because it would only add problems for Pakistan and creates instability between the two countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pakistan needs to have tight relations with Afghanistan however.

Pakistan must provide facilities in the country of origin of the refugee, thus Pakistan must cooperate with the government of Afghanistan to a react the refugees back to the home country and have the confidence to proceed with the life which is safe and comfortable in their own country. Confidence building will help Afghanistan build its self-dependence without having to rely on Pakistan, which already has its own lengthy problems.

Besides this, the national debate on the issue in both Pakistan and Afghanistan also needed to a react intelligent solutions from academicians, practitioners and refugees also need to participate, it can contribute to provide input for policy formulation. After that, the media has an important role in increasing the awareness of the population either Pakistani or Afghani residing in Pakistan, so that they get mutual benefit for problem resolution, because the media can also make policy implementation more effective.

Conclusion

To overcome density or over-population in Pakistan, while taking consideration of all significant factor causing this issue in formulation of population policy, Pakistan needs to learn from the former populous countries that can successfully control the growth of their population effectively, in order to efficiently track the core factor causing the density. Great formulation of policy added with great population control programs like what have been practiced and implemented by Indonesia, China, as well as India will help Pakistan to achieve its development program without any meaningful hindrance. Besides that, Pakistan should also invite influential people from all part of Pakistan to attract and spread acknowledgement of small family importance, all kinds of media also should contribute to spread the awareness, as at the current global world is very a ached with media in making their own perception besides the knowledge they have go en from formal or informal education. Without an effective implementation policy, how well the policy is formulated, it will not give any effect to the density in Pakistan.

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