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Population and Policy: The Evolution and Effects of China's One-Child Policy

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Abstract: *The term Population pertains to the percentage of the number of inhabitants that live in a geographical area or location. It typically quantifies the size of individuals or animals in specific places. The specifics as regards how many people or animals reside in a given area are often attained through a process called census. A census is when the government, an organized group, or an administrative entity principally adopts effective and transparent models in counting and arriving after the number of people in a region, area, or settlement. This paper will undertake a series of empirical analyses on the concepts of population and policy. Why are they important and how do they impact society? Using China as the springboard of my empirical analysis, I intend to appraise the concepts of policy formation within the framework of its legalistic assessment in the political sense, overall impact on the environment and polity of the state; with the use of political theory as the theoretical framework of my analysis throughout the entirety of this paper. Organically, this study seeks to understand the evolution of China's one-child policy and its overall impact on all spheres of life. The numerous objectives for the exploration include the following; To understand the concepts of population and policy formation, to evaluate the implications of China's one-child policy, to evaluate the consolidation and transition of China's one-child policy, to define the concepts of population theory.*

Key words: Apartheid, Bilateral Relations, Hegemony, Human Right, Nigeria, South Africa.

Reasons and Implications of China's One Child Policy

China's introduction of the one child policy was an unprecedented development as at 1979. Households that exceeded the birth quota were held accountable as the one child policy was simultaneously executed right around when China's Market oriented economic reforms was implemented. These reforms went on to trigger accelerative economic growth in decades to come but implicitly reduced fertility rates (Zhang, 2017).

In reaction to this, decades later, China has had to rethink its one-child policy and address its relative effect on fertility rates in the country as well the ratio of its young citizenry in comparison to the older generation. Thus, since January 1, 2016, all Chinese couples were given the privilege of having two children which very well marked an end to China's one-child policy, which limited practically all Chinese from having more than one child per family (Feng, Cai, Gu, 2016).

China's revised one-child policy means that families with unauthorized births will have to pay a Social compensation charge. This charge was designed to define a concerted price as against serving punishment to couples for child bearing. This evolution was believed to be a sound approach towards a more liberal construct for family planning (China Amends One-

Child policy, 2003).

One pivotal yet seemingly complex puzzle of both social history and modern population is the question of China's decision to adopt an extreme measure of birth control such as the one-child policy (Feng, Cai, Gu, 2013).

“Of all reforms and policies set in the early 1980s in China, the One-Child policy has been called the most far-reaching. Over two decades later, this policy has had a lasting impact on local neighborhoods and villages in China” (Short, Susan, Zhai, Fengying, 2018).

In a more historic perspective, the 1970s saw China's fertility rate fall at an extraordinarily rapid pace not previously experienced by any other population over a comparable period. Up to 1970, fertility had been high and relatively stable at about six births per woman, except for crisis periods. The decline in child broth was evident in it's indication of 2.2 births per women by 1980. This occurred simultaneously with the world record holder Japan who merely experienced a 56% reduction which happened to be from 4.5 births per woman in 1947 to 2.0 in 1957. Although China's fertility rose slightly in 1981 and 1982, preliminary estimates for 1984 indicate that the total fertility rate reduced further to near 2.0 and as long as the population policy continued at the time, fertility rates were most likely to remain near or possibly even sink

below present levels (Bongaarts, Greenhalgh, 1985). According to the article titled "The End of China's One-Child Policy, Wang Feng, Boachang Gu and Yong Cai stated that China's policy change from its previous One-Child policy most likely developed around a decade behind schedule. This position could be a result of the disparities in the various age groups in China following its policy transition (Feng, Gu, Cai, 2016).

One of the many repercussions of China's one child policy was the construct of the missing girls phenomenon whereby fertility rates became lower and sex ratios adversely increased particularly amongst those under rigid fertility control and the all - inclusive increase in sex ratio is driven by an increase in the prevalence of sex selection among first and second births. The exploitation of regional and secular disparities in fines imposed for unapproved births, the discovery is that fertility was hindered by higher fine governments but are affiliated with higher proportion of males to females (Ebenstein, 2010).

History and Formation of China

In an attempt to better understand the rationale behind China's One-Child policy and the outcomes of such policy, it is imperative to analyze the political, economic, social, and traditional history of China. These spheres of influence play a pivotal role in

China's adoption of the one-child policy. In an economic sense, China offers double attraction to the students of economic history. It informs the availability of relatively copious records that provide the mode of economic transitions over a period of 2,000 years. From largely self-reliant localities to an entity that experienced economic integration in the thirteenth century and beyond; induced by a fairly developed monetary system, regional advancement with internal and foreign trade in common commodities. In the second place, China has left the record of many and varied experiments in governmental economic controls at all stages of its evolution.

With regards to the historical specificities of China under the republic, it is important to note that the Literati's of China and its ordinary people freely acknowledged the leadership of the Manchus from the period of 1644 to 1912, a fact that some westerners failed to understand during the nineteenth century, but which is of importance in understanding developments in that country for many years before the outbreak of revolution in 1911. The Southern provinces were the last to be conquered by the Manchus, and trouble might always be expected from them. Kwangtung in particular was ever in a state of revolutionary fermentation. Alien thought and Alien blood has always had an impact on this province than any other

in China; this, for this cause, Canton has long been the center of foreign trade, and that from that city thousands of Chinese have gone to foreign lands, many of these had returned with the Ideas and the funds gained from residence abroad" (MacNair, 1930). China's Social and economic dynamics was more or less daunting especially to economic historians. The case study of the Qing Empire, which was home to the world's largest national economy at the time from the era of 1644-1911 saw its population drastically increase from seventeenth to eighteenth century respectively showing no decline in its per capita income which gave room for an extensive gap between neo-wealthy industrial nations in comparison to China's lagging economy in the wake of the revolution (Brandt, Rowski, Ma, 2014).

The socio-political economic initiation endorsed by a course of action of significant growth preceding 1800; subsequently hindered China from reaping benefits distinctive to the industrial revolution. The twentieth century ensured the procedural disintegration of these historic curtailments and new impediments put together by Socialist schemes which ultimately opened the door to China's Current boom (Brandt, Ma, Rowski, 2014).

"Urban daughters have become large beneficiaries from the socio-demographic patterns due to China's one-child policy in an apparatus patrimonial kinship

that has long distinguished the majority of Chinese communities; parents had little incentives to invest in their daughters. . This was not the case with singleton daughters as the condition of being the only child meant they did not have to compete with brothers for parental resources and investments. Low fertility enabled mothers to get paid work and thus, gain the ability to demonstrate their filiality by providing their parents with financial support. Because they favor their parents, daughters have more power than ever before to defy disadvantageous gender norms while using equivocal ones to their advantage" (Fong, 2002). The primary goal of China's one-child policy was premised on the on the population control and the revamping of the ratio of people who struggle for finite resources within the community, Family and the entire state with the hopes of invariably liberating women from the load of costly fertility through the promotion of contraceptive technology from the periods of 1950-1960. In an attempt to ensure that the masses were receptive to the one-child policy, government fueled propaganda and talks about gender empowerment was merely a supplementary benefit for the policy (Fong, 2002).

Based on the genesis of human development and societal construct, the essential manufacturing systems through which China encountered have been the same as those of other countries; judging by the concrete

conditions of the different modes of production. Albeit, the materialization of great distinctiveness proves the existence of numerous complications in China's economic history that are quite peculiar to other countries. These distinctive differences have been pivotal to the formative development of and changes in its socio-economic space (Zhufu, 1981).

The Concept of Population and Policy Formation

This special issue of population is the outcome of invitations to several scholars in demographic and related sciences to contribute to an exploration of large-scale, long-term, interdisciplinary population problems (Coleman, Basten, Billari 2015).

The macro/micro divergence of population studies is marked in the public realm of politics and the media, as opposed to academia. "Increased public apprehension about population affairs is prone to disposition at the principal point of population change. The close front of population to resource ratio, accelerating growth in the developing world, population aging in wealthier nations; population decline in some countries and prospects for many in others; and all of these interacting under the cloud of climate change" (Coleman, Basken, Billari, 2015).

In the context of population density and technological change, an account of Kremer's model in conjunction with the study of population density, gives a better

understanding of the peculiarities of China. The intent is the presentation of a more tenable description that conveys the value and importance of both population size and density for technological advancement. Kremer's facile model is based on two rudimentary suppositions; the first being the ideology that technology is a collective good because of its property of non-rivalry".

Kremer's second assumption is also premised on the reality that each person's research productivity is independent of population size (Klasen Nestmann, 2006).

Mombert's position claims that Nahrungs Spielraum is a definitive factor for optimum population vis a' vis the law of diminishing returns as is simultaneously set on by the level of density of population (Mombert, 2015).

"For optimal functionality of a population, Mombert argues that two situations must be met; the standard of living should be as high as possible for a fruitful foundation and at the same time with the productive base being enormous and ever increasing by acclamation the latter, a series of reaction is set off in which would prove difficult to address systematically. Therefore, the population is a factor of the population and productive base, and the productive base being in part a function of the population" (Mombert, 2015).

Policy formation deals with the government formation

of public policy. "When we think about how research in Political Science has contributed in a very direct and policy-relevant way to our understanding of the world we live in, it is clear that research into the making and breaking of governments goes to the heart of the political process".

"For most practical purposes, politics is about choosing between governments. For many people who live in democratic societies, their most obvious form of political participation is to play some small part in the competition between rival politicians for control of their country's government" (Laver, 2000).

Policy formation is designed to address systemic problems and proffer economic, political, social, and cultural solutions. These solutions are designed under the existing policy environment. "Good policy is defined by the presence and accuracy of clear objectives with considerations on the legalism of alternate policy tools available for the achievement of stipulated objectives, alongside the options for service conveyance, stakeholder (including internal government). Consultation as required, followed by the formal documentation (business case) and government approval (usually cabinet) processes" (Ferguson, 2019).

In the article titled: "Enhancing Citizen Participation: panel designs, perspectives and policy formation", Lyn Kathlene and John A. Martin believe that policy

formation of any kind and at any level should begin at the grassroots seeing these policies are designed to improve social welfare and life in general for the masses & thus, governmental agencies ought to carry out effective policy analysis and research to arrive at tenable policies and concrete measures for implementation. In their minds, citizen participation is integral to achieving this feat (Kathlene, Martin, 1991).

"One pivotal enterprise in the study of political science is the correctness of the evolution of logic and rationale, empirically supported theoretical framework of public policy process. Numerous case studies of drafting policy making create insightful components that a political theory within the political procedure of policy making must account for. Common conceptual clarifications based on existing case studies are not concrete explanations of how political actors generate, implement and change public policies, to advance their purposes and respond to perceived problems. Specific actors are accounted for through the rigors of theoretical endeavors and primary actors such as legislators. Or the various phases of the policy formation process such as drafting and setting a program which continually abandons the public process wholly (Schlager, Blomquist, 1996).

Consolidations and Transitions of China's One

Child Policy

The transitions and consolidations of the One-child policy in China were primarily informed by certain undeniable realities such as the impact of population growth on sustainable agriculture in China: Traditions, blueprints and challenges of sustainable agricultural development. This is in tune with the reality that China struggled with adequately feeding its populace, ensuring the availability of social security and welfare which was a reflection of the immeasurable demands of its populace. For every nation. For every nation, entity, and individual - the issue of survival takes primacy. Our actions, be they directly or indirectly, are linked to our survival. In reference to China, the structural plan that is the one-child policy was also embedded in China's agricultural commerce (Sicular, 1998).

Agricultural sustainability is contingent on numerous conditions such as the quality of the natural environment, the structure of both economic and demographic schemes, the role of innovation, state institutions and technology. A strong dependence on land intensive methods has been pivotal to China's agricultural resource endowment. China's agricultural growth accounts since 1978 are astonishing, bringing into consideration its profusely enormous outstanding payment it owes to increases in yields per hectare. In the same vein, the intrusion of highly polluting

industries into rural settings has been the reason for major crop losses that entailed significant economic costs. (Ash, Edmonds, 1998).

November 2013 witnessed the 18th Central Committee of the CPC announce its decision to moderate and lighten its One-child policy. The new policy established the liberties new for families to now have two children. Family planning reforms were adopted in scenarios whereby the birth of an extra child was approved considering either of the parents was an only child. Meaning for cases whereby certain families sought the enactment of family reforms in a case of Multiple child births, one of the said parents themselves had to be the only child of their parents as well. In a case where either parents with the case of multiple births were not the only children of their own parents as well, such reforms would not be enacted and they would go on to be penalized. The announcement garnered worldwide media coverage and stimulated academic and popular discussion (Basken, Jiang, 2014).

In an attempt to estimate the effect of the one-child policy in sex ratio imbalance in China, Li, Yi, and Zhang, the outcome was evident in how "the male-biased sex ratio has increased significantly. The one child policy was effectively more applicable to the Han Chinese as against other Chinese splinter group". Their argument is that China's rise in sex ratio was due

to the desire for male children, the progress of gender selection technology, The one-child policy promoted high rates of infertility as the cultural backdrop largely influenced the son-preference; gender selection and gender-selective abortion became prevalent which was a causal factor for the high rates of infertility induced by the one-child policy leads to increasing sex ratios. There's been varying levels of intensity as regards active gender selection at different measures and varying fertility rates which are repercussions of son preference and gender selection technology. The increase in sex ratios is a manifestation of the decline in fertility caused by the One-child policy. Because of the combination of lower fertility and gender selection, the impact of any factor on the sex ratio is higher (Li, Yi, Zhang, 2011).

China's Reversal from the One-Child Policy

One mind-boggling phenomenon is the fact that amongst all nations confronting rapid population growth in the second phase of the twentieth century, China decided to both adopt and implement extreme measures of birth control known as the One-Child policy. Whilst the decline of communism could have served as a contributing factor as well as the complexities of the green revolution which was aimed at feeding the entire Chinese populace, family planning was thus induced to curtail China's

accelerative and excessive growth. The categorization of the green revolution was technological, economic, and global whilst family programs were socially driven, political, and in more cases than not country-oriented (Feng, Gu, 2013)

The need for a post-revolutionary mobilization in China also forced the ruling class and the entire government of China to re-evaluate the One-child policy. In, a world of innovation, high levels of production, and accelerative technological growth, such that has never been seen since the inception of time even unto the primacy of civilization and globalization. It is thus important to note that an age population is very much catastrophic in these times; beyond economic and military implications, such a condition makes the sovereignty of China susceptible to threats and attacks; one that an aging China, however militarily sophisticated it is, cannot afford at unprecedented times like this (White, 1990).

Luther, Feeney, and Zhang sound a profound example of the implication of the One-Child policy. They state that China's census and one-per-thousand fertility survey of 1982 established an outcome for the first time, which was a full and detailed description of Chinese fertility change over the preceding decades (Luther, Feeney, Zhang, 1990).

While the process and principles are established in an attempt to mitigate the repercussions of the One-child

policy, one must note that the use of population projection methods to examine population change, one must do so with caution bearing in mind that they are just projections; outcomes of statistical exercises driven by a certain set of assumptions (Wang, Cai, Shen, Gietel-Basten, 2018).

Generally speaking, ending the One-child policy was a response to a prolonged cry from a large number of Chinese. Although China's birth control policy was at one time an overdue fine for having too many children. Albeit, it was a noble attitude toward the future of the entire world and the country of China (Wang, Yang, Zhang, 2016).

Historically speaking, since 1954 China has undergone two gradual and painful reversals in its population policies. In September of 1954, the sequel to the release of the official census numbers, a prominent member of the National People's Congress, made a public release advocating birth control measures (Orleans, 1960).

China's period of peak population growth especially regarding population policy and trends in China from the period of 1978 to 1983 was short-lived as the sharp decline in mortality rates followed in the 1950s (Banister, 1984).

The role of the population also largely impacted the execution of the social policy under the one country, two systems institutional dynamics in China and Hong

Kong especially since 1997 even to date, China and Hong Kong remain peculiarly different in ways that have enormous social policy consequences (Holliday, Wong, 2003).

There are however claims that China's fertility restrictions adversely contributed to the use of prenatal sex selection; there is however the need for an empirical reappraisal of the reliability and validity of these assumptions (Goodkind, 2015). One impact of China's one-child policy is the reality of how it greatly impacted ethnic policy in China. One demanding subject for Chinese policymakers is balancing ethnocultural diversity and dignity alongside national integration and inter-ethnic cohesion (Leibold, 2013).

Did China's One-Child Policy Contribute to China's Economic Success?

The impact of China's one-child policy largely affected every facet of society and life in China, especially well over three decades. Aside from the logical and obvious impact of China's decline in its fertility rate from much of the period 1779 to 2000. At the time, China experienced a decline in its population growth, which inadvertently and drastically lowered China's national economic growth. At the provincial level, the reflection of population growth was negative after 1979 with every 1% increase in population growth out rightly decreasing GDP by 1.2%. To some

degree, China's one-child policy helped to stimulate the Chinese economy as the one-child policy played a systematic role in provincial economic growth. This also altered the spending and saving designs of households particularly households with twins and triplets which resulted in an indicative of 8-9 percent estimate rates in saving rates to right around 22% in subsequent decades. Amongst variables that helped stimulate China's economy was the influence or increase in intergenerational support. The family ultimately became closely knit together. Thus the traditional value system that was originally peculiar to Chinese society was further intensified due to the implementation of the one-child policy. Primary economic activities such as petty trading, sculpting, and pottery amongst others increased in value as goods and services were all the more in high demand.

The safe importance of China's one-child policy was of value, as evident largely in the demographic shift in national savings and a spike in the middle-aged working class. A variable that was non-existent in China's economic structure way before the adoption of China's one-child policy.

The Social Costs of China's One-Child Policy

The concept of social cost deals with the private dilemmas associated with a transaction alongside external value or price borne by third parties and

affiliates not directly associated with such transactions. The social costs of China's one-child policy are numerous and multifaceted. Whilst some of these said costs are passive, others are pronounced. Amongst these costs are three profound factors and implications.

1. It reduced fertility rates considerably.
2. It altered China's gender ratio
3. A subsequent decline in the working-age population.
4. It was void of any form of ethical justification
5. It could only be a variant factor responsible for China's aging population
6. It also helped curb overpopulation that strained the country's food supply
7. It addressed social issues such as poverty
8. The policy was most effective in urbanized and economically viable areas but experienced some degree of resistance in agrarian and communal settlements.

The Effect of China's One-Child Policy

The effects of China's One-Child Policy are unquantifiable as these said effects transcend from socio-political, to economic spheres of Chinese society. This also influenced market transitions and the persistence of power in the changing stratification

system in Urban China (Bian, Logan, 1996). To my mind, one irreconcilable effect is China's aging population. This impact is solely responsible for China's reversal of the One-child policy as systemic reforms are being institutionalized in hopes of balancing population demography in China

Significance of Study

The significance of this study is to enable social scientists the ability to assess, examine, analyze and comprehend complexities as regards the various causes of changes in population size and growth rate. Using China as the springboard of my analysis in this research, with the premise of research being China's One-child policy, my highlight on how policy formation impacts all facets of society will inform political actors, governments, states, and institutions on what steps to take in the future when adopting or creating new policies for the state. This research will thus ensure the contribution of knowledge and serve as a point of reference in the future for any related topical issue or field of study. The evolution and effect of China's one-child policy took various forms and dimensions. Although no longer a viable policy, this prompted the no Chinese government to take more innovative steps in the management of its population.

Limitation of Study

The researcher's inability to make a trip down to China in an attempt to feel the pulse of the average Chinese position as regards the implications of the one-child policy. In light of this view, collecting data from locals, government agencies and political actors in China would have further improved the quality of this paper.

Conclusion

China's paradigm shift is premised on the reality of its aging population demography. Hence, China now advocates for multiple child births in an attempt to stabilize its deteriorating population demography.

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