

RESEARCH PLANNED BY THE CENTER OF STUDIES OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN PERU

JOSE DONAYRE

The general public as well as the professional conscience was awakened in Peru to the problems posed by uncontrolled population growth, with the diffusion, during 1964, of the 1961 census results and of the social-economic analysis made by the National Planning Institute, and which led to the Development Plan for 1967-1970.

The publication of the National Statistics and Census office, a branch of the National Planning System, exposed the basic trends for the Peruvian population. During the interim of the last two censuses, 1940 and 1961, population increased at an annual mean rate of 2.24 per cent; during 1961, the increase was three per cent, one of the highest rates in Latin America; the highest for the countries grouped in the region that Miró¹ considers Tropical South America, and certainly over the general rate for Latin America as a whole. At the same time, it was made known that the proportion of population below 15 years of age had increased in that period from 42.5 to 43.6 per cent with all the economic and social problems involved. Also, a gross analysis of population mobility disclosed a considerable internal migration from the rural to the metropolitan urban areas, from the high-altitude places mostly devoted to agriculture to the lowlands in the process of initial industrialization.

The purely demographic outlook for the country was felt to be a great cause of concern, especially when projections were made on the basis of the 1961 census. If, as was evident at that time, the progressive trend were to continue, the population would be expected to double

in about 23 years, the life expectancy at birth to increase and the percentage of young population to increase. The social and economic implications of the type of growth described are known and need not be detailed here.

Social and economic evaluation by the National Planning Institute previous to the Plan for Economic and Social Development 1967-1970, was realistic in pointing out that the present rate of economic progress was not to be interpreted as economic development, but only as economic growth. The presence among other purely economic factors of a rigid social and economic system with stratifications of difficult permeability in addition to an unmodified, extremely defective distribution of wealth was still making development impossible. However, the population factor was not taken into account in the final conclusions, although it was obvious that a rapidly growing population added a factor to be considered within the development plans.

A country such as Peru, approaching the take-off stage of development, could not avoid falling into the typical discussions on the values of a growing population. Population growth was interpreted by some as a blockage to development while others considered population as the real dynamo to move the country ahead on the road to rapid progress. The discussion doubtless will continue for years to come, but suffice it to say that the concern about our fast growth rate is now becoming more apparent.

Against this overly simplified background, the Center of Population and Development studies was instituted by the Peruvian government with the characteristics of a paragonovernmental agency. That is to say, the Center is an agency strongly linked to the government through the related ministries, representatives of which were included in the Directive Committee. At the same time, the Center remains an autonomous agency, a characteristic most desirable at the present stage.

The Center was created with broad directives to tackle the problem of population, stressing the connection with development to be studied through multidisciplinary methodology. The main objectives were information, training and research, and thus a program was developed for 1966-1968.

Plans for Research in Fertility

Focusing now more directly on the subject of this paper—the research plans related to fertility that the Center has been carrying out for the past 18 months—the main principles should be pointed out

that orient activities and that are the basis for a wider strategy aimed at making the Center an operative agency.

First of all, mention should be made of the special characteristics of universities and research in Peru. Academic research by university groups or small private or state organizations has lacked a proper establishment and continuity due mainly to the high costs involved and the absence of financial channels. Therefore, groups engaged in research are few, small and subject to great instability. It was no surprise that an organization with a wide scope of functions could be seen as a danger for existing institutions. Not only to counteract these fears, but also to emphasize the positive value of groups already working, the Center took the position of a supporting rather than a competitive agency.

Under this principle a program was launched as a "first stage" operation. Its initial results are now in sight and will determine the characteristics of a "second stage" for the Center's operations.

The program determined the immediate actions of locating interested research groups in population that were either already studying some aspects of the problem or, although not actually engaged in population research, were potentially adequate, homogeneous or competent when their attentions were turned to this field. Once these institutions or groups were located the Center had to motivate them, study their programs and decide the type of support to be given.

The role of a "funding and assisting" institution has been carried out for over a year now and a significant number of working groups have been located, stimulated and supported.

At this point a "second stage" is being evolved with the results and experience achieved in the first. During this stage the Center should itself become active in research, attacking what is considered most necessary in the field depending on the possibilities and the quality and quantity of existing groups. With this idea in mind, the Center is now ready to enter investigative work on the social aspects of population growth. For this purpose an advisor joined the Center in July, 1967, and a program will be formulated soon.

One of the most important tasks to be accomplished during the second stage of the Center is the elaboration of a priority system to indicate the specific research and action targets, according to the funds available and to the human resources detected previously. A priority system will work under two main principles: one is the development of national plans and the other is the simultaneous execution of study

plans plus action programs. Then, at the same time, the characteristics of demographic growth as it impinges on national development will be explored, and also the possible solutions at hand in specially structured pilot programs will be studied. The latter attitude is only an extension of what has been occurring in the past 18 months when, for instance, demographic and social studies were enacted simultaneously with family planning programs.

The plans developed by the Center concerning the matter of fertility can be grouped in two parts: fertility surveys and pilot programs in family planning.

FERTILITY SURVEYS

Fertility surveys adopt the general terms of the typical KAP type of surveys where an ample array of data is sought of an economic, social and biomedical nature. By necessity, due to the extreme cultural and social diversity imposed by the geography of Peru, it has been found necessary to make considerable adaptations in the questionnaires. In addition, further adaptations are necessary to cover the marked variation in social economic levels, a factor probably present for similar surveys in other countries.

Three surveys have been applied to two differing marginal areas or slums surrounding Lima, one to a typical mining town of the Andean region, another to a large hospital service in Lima attended by a middle-class population and the last one to a sample of Lima. A different emphasis is present in each of them although major results will be comparable. They are now in various stages of progress.

The Pamplona Alta Survey

Previous to the establishment of a model pilot program in Pamplona Alta, a rather small "barriada" of recent date situated south of Lima, a survey was conducted to ascertain the most important demographic, economic and attitudinal characteristics of the proposed population. This reduced survey was only a part of a wider plan for medical and social studies to be administered during the operations of the family planning program. The purpose of the latter will be to study the factors involved in the acceptance and success of programs in such environment.

Early results indicate that the slum area under study is composed

of a total of 1,400 families, averaging 5.2 members. The mean family size in Pamplona Alta is below that of Peru, where, according to the 1961 census, the family consists of 5.6 members. Over half (53.1 per cent) of the inhabitants are below 15 years of age. Since Pamplona Alta is a recently formed "barriada," it is not surprising to find such figures. Most important of all is that 61.4 per cent of the women in fertile ages do not know about methods of contraception. Only 28.1 per cent use some kind of contraception and only 9.1 per cent apply effective methods. Only 55.6 per cent of those not using contraceptives would like to use them. It is important at this point to say that the results are below those of Hall² who found that in a lower-class population comparable to the one responding in this sample, 38.3 per cent of the women were using some method and only 25 per cent were unaware of any methodology.

A motivational approach would render excellent results in a human group lacking information and in which the pressures of family size are still not widely recognized.

The Agustino Survey

"El Agustino," one of the oldest and most representative "barriadas" of Lima, is now an official district of the city. It has approximately 120,000 inhabitants located mainly on a hillside in the Oriental outskirts of Lima. A pilot family planning program whose characteristics will be described below has been established simultaneously with the application of a fertility survey in a representative sample of the area. The special characteristics of an established settlement different from the Pamplona Alta situation will certainly be reflected in the results of the survey and will make comparisons most appropriate. Field work is now finished and the evaluation phase has started.

The Cerro de Pasco Survey

In connection with a pilot family planning program that will be described below a general fertility survey has been carried out in Cerro de Pasco, a mining town of about 25,000 inhabitants in the Central Sierra. The Center for Social Research by Sampling (CISM), a branch of the Service of Employment and Human Resources (SERH) of the Ministry of Labor prepared the questionnaire and performed the survey during May and June, 1967. The questionnaire, especially adapted for the indigenous population, is the first com-

prehensive one developed in Peru for the particular purpose and should be the basic one for other studies. At the moment of this writing the field work is finished and results should be forthcoming.

The Hospital del Empleado Survey

Located in Lima, the Hospital del Empleado is the main part of the white-collar employee security system in Peru. Therefore it is used mainly by the middle-class population mostly in its medium and low levels, not only from Lima but from all parts of the country. A survey was conducted in the Obstetrics Department among the patients hospitalized during one month. The Center has finished the tabulation from the crude data obtained and a final report is being prepared.

The preliminary results indicate that in this particular sample 34.7 per cent of the women were already using some kind of protection against pregnancy and 62.4 per cent of those not using would like to use them. Hall's figures of 54.1 per cent users among middle-class women were considerably higher. Further analysis should make clear the reasons for the difference.

The Lima Survey

Apart from studies of particular strata of the Peruvian society like the ones referred to above, the Center has finished the field work for a survey on attitudes toward family size in a representative sample of Lima's population. An indirect projective method has been used successfully to uncover the concern about the problems of excessive family growth.

Prospects

With the experience acquired and having located the interested and capable groups to work in this field, two needs can be filled. One is the carrying out of a national fertility survey of the KAP type. For that purpose a basic questionnaire should be made, adaptable to all the cultural and social levels coexisting in Peru. The questionnaire used for the Cerro de Pasco Study probably will be the initial one.

The institutions that should be engaged in a national survey are the Center for Social Research by Sampling (CISM) of the Labor Ministry, an able group actually working through a cooperative program with the University of Michigan; and the National Statistics and Census Office. The cooperation of other institutions, especially

those of university level, should be sought to make the effort more feasible and successful. Cooperation of this kind has already been used by CISM to elaborate a national sample frame, which can also serve as a tool for the fertility survey.

A general survey of this type, after the ones applied by CELADE in seven Latin American capitals, has been proposed to the Center and will probably be the first one of the national series.

Preliminary contacts are being made to develop a most necessary national survey on abortion on which data are extremely unreliable and partial. The two institutions named above will be instrumental in achieving the success of that survey.

PILOT PROGRAMS ON FAMILY PLANNING

Two important principles have been followed in the stimulation and initiation of family planning programs. One is the establishment of programs within the context of maternal and child care and sexual and family education. Pilot programs of this kind are more difficult to administer, but should be more effective given the present initial status of these activities in Peru.

A second principle is the need for the participation of recognized, respectable institutions in the family planning programs. Emphasis, then, has been directed to establish such programs within the public health services or the university medical schools. Support for individuals has been repeatedly denied, except when technical assistance or educational help has been procured. The involvement of the public health services and medical schools is of prime importance for the efficiency of the programs as well as for their future expansion.

The Cerro de Pasco Program

Although not directly funded by the Center of Studies of Population and Development, the Cerro de Pasco Program maintains close contact with that office, and many of the principles developed there are applied to other programs under direct connection with the Center.

The program consists of a family planning and gynecological clinic coupled with an extensive study of reproductive physiology at high altitude related to the use of contraceptive techniques. It is carried out by the High Altitude Research Institute of the Peruvian University "Cayetano Heredia," under a three-year agreement with the Popu-

lation Council. The first program of university origin should lead the University to an expansion of community studies and services while stimulating other universities into action.

The Pamplona Alta Program

A maternal and child clinic adjacent to the community center has been established as the largest effort of the center to study the feasibility and characteristics of a program directed to the increasing population of marginal areas. Here the emphasis of the program is given to medical-social studies, development of the proper communications and maternal-child medical assistance.

Cooperation of the Public Health Ministry has been secured to furnish equipment and material as well as part of the personnel. In the near future, the clinic is expected to become a public health unit.

The Agustino Program

Due to the larger population and the facilities available at the area hospital, formerly devoted only to tuberculosis cases and now opening services for the community, the program here is more comprehensive and ambitious.

Family planning is administered within a concerted program of sexual and family education, social service and maternal and child care. Because the hospital participates in medical teaching, an adequate plan should be evolved for students, interns and residents first, followed by postgraduate courses to train Peruvians. The hospital is a public health hospital; therefore, another of the objectives mentioned above is simultaneously accomplished.

The Program of the National Institute of Neoplastic Diseases

A dependency of the Public Health Service, the National Institute of Neoplastic Diseases is the largest and most important organization in Peru devoted to cancer treatment and research. Aside from the obvious importance of protecting cancer patients from pregnancy, the program purports to study the histopathology and hormonal correlates in the use of intrauterine devices, as well as to train students, interns and residents.

Prospects

Immediate prospects lie in the execution of two programs, already approved. One involves an increasing number of "barriadas" where

existing clinics will start working specifically on the postpartum application of progestogens. A large organization for work in the slum areas is thus rapidly becoming operative and may expand through the rest of the country.

Another large program is starting at a public health unit in Lima, with the prospect of involving the entire public health area in successive steps.

Under the present circumstances the task ahead is one of organization that must be carried out by the Center in connection with appropriate representative private institutions, to assure uniformity and to afford rapid expansion. At the same time, effort should be directed toward creating university and interuniversity organizations to deal effectively with the problems of population from all possible points of view.

SUMMARY

The Center for Population Studies and Development was established at the end of 1964, after the publication of the 1961 census data and the ensuing studies, "Diagnosis of the Socio-Economic Reality of Peru." The latter, made by the National Planning Institute, awakened the interest of several groups and stimulated an active discussion of the effects of the accelerated population growth on present efforts at national development in Peru.

The main objectives in establishing the Center were to promote the necessary studies as well as to insure the circulation of information and the training of appropriate personnel. In compliance with such objectives, some of its efforts have been dedicated to fertility studies, principally by stimulating specialized agencies and by operating, up to now, as a coordinating entity that provides technical and financial help to those who request it.

Among the activities carried out by the Center were five fertility surveys made in zones or communities with diverse population characteristics within the great variety that the country presents. Consequently, as a second stage, it is now possible to plan on a national scale surveys on fertility and the epidemiology of abortion.

Together with the interest in the analysis of the population facts of Peru, programs are also designed to expand family planning through

pilot programs functioning within a general context of child-maternal care and of sexual, health and family education. Four of the currently functioning programs emphasize in varying degree community service, medical-biological investigation and personnel training.

Finally, it is pointed out that the immediate task is the establishment of a solid organizational base that would permit the success and the expansion of the present programs.

REFERENCES

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² Hall, M-F., *Family Planning in Lima, Peru*, in, Kiser, C. V. (Editor), *COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA*, New York, Milbank Memorial Fund, October, 1965, pp. 100-112.