

managed to achieve its objective of reducing the fertility rate.

In summary, in the next 20 years China will continue to control population size through population growth rates. This will remain the main focus of the Chinese government. It should be noted that if the population control mechanisms of the Chinese prove to be successful, there is something to be learned by the rest of the world about sacrifice and persistence in order to overcome obstacles despite the odds.

### CONCLUSION

The focus of this paper is on China's public policy towards population planning. The effectiveness of these public policies together with reactions of the Chinese, and their implementation were also assessed.

Rapid population growth generally brings about several problems that a country must deal with. The Chinese society faces a mass of problems relating to housing, medical care, employment, education, food, fertile land, and ecology. The future of the one-child family program may hinge on the government's willingness to address mounting concerns over social security and inequity. For now, the Chinese government can consider several policy options to bring government policy more in line with individual desires. The two-child program is one such option.

The positive aspects of the one-child family planning efforts are evident: lower fertility, better health, and reduced pressure on natural resources and the economy.

Several characteristics unique to the Chinese society made these advances possible. The population is nearly homogeneous, with a 93 percent Han majority. The political system is closed, authoritarian, and centralized. Furthermore, traditional values and a strong sense of family are fostered. Also, a 3000-year history of respect for

authority makes the one-child family program succeed where it might otherwise have failed.

The Chinese approach to population and family planning subordinates the needs and desires of the individual to the interests of society as a whole. Other countries can learn and adapt some aspects of China's program. For example, by decentralizing health care and family planning, countries might be able to reduce the rates of maternal and infant mortality and provide means and information necessary for family planning. A widespread rural network can help educate individuals about the country's population and environmental issues. In addition, by modifying and enforcing laws that offer women of every age educational and employment opportunities equivalent to those of men, a country can promote equity and lower fertility levels at the same time.

Although population policy must be consistent, the one-child campaign was a harsh program, even for Chinese cultural and social values. A more tolerant yet effective policy could have been mandatory childbearing, but, with a distance between 5 to 6 year prior to having a second child.

The cohorts born in the 1960s also present an additional problem. By late 1980s, the cohorts would be at the age of marriage, which, in turn, would lead to a rise in fertility levels.

Different population policies should be implemented in different areas because of regional differences. Because

rural areas need children for labour-intensive agriculture, the availability of a subsidy or pension for small sized families would probably discourage peasants from having more children as an insurance for old age security.

In urban areas, incentives similar to those offered for rural areas may apply. Also, urban areas should improve their infrastructure (building highways linking rural and urban areas) and expand the industrial sectors of the economy in order to make work available to both men and women. Schools and medical centres should be set up in the surrounding rural areas for better access. If these plans are properly carried out, incomes would increase and fertility rates would decline, as it has been empirically observed in many studies.

Population policies should take cultural, social and economic factors, along with public acceptance into account. There should also exist a set of incentives to encourage social and institutional changes. Population policies should include a comprehensive development strategy, rather than a single isolated policy.

For the future, it looks like the Chinese government will continue to use the "one-child" program. The "one-child" projection follows the unprecedented scenario that the population will peak at 1.11 billion in years 2003-2007. (Banister (1987), p.281). The population would then begin to decrease until it drops below 1 billion in 2028, and continue to fall rapidly to just over 700 million by 2050.

Overall, the efforts of the Chinese government to reduce the fertility rates should be recognized with great respect. No other country in the world has faced such an almost impossible challenge to hold down or reverse the nature course of human nature. Yet, China has managed to endure the positive and negative impacts of the one-child program and continue their original strategy to reduce, if not reverse, the "natural demographic transition" to gain economic wealth. \_\_\_\_\_

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