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ABSTRACT

Given the decline in birth rates, which will produce a steep decline in the youth population by 1990, this paper examines the possible effects such a population shift will have on the achievement motivation of children. It is reasoned the increased adult/child ratio could result in either of two possibilities: the greater attention paid to the individual child might effect a greater sense of personal causation, leading to increased achievement motivation; or, the greater adult/child ratio could overwhelm the child, eventuating in a decreased sense of personal causation and/or motivation. Based on these two possibilities, this paper discusses two scenarios describing how it might be when "children of the 60's and 70's" hit the job market. In the first scenario, it is assumed that socialization in a small family increases achievement motivation. These highly motivated individuals will probably expect to accomplish great things in their employment. However, an analysis of the population trends indicates movement to upper level positions may be retarded because of a large older age group. Therefore, one might expect these children to be a frustrated generation. In the second scenario, it is assumed that socialization in a small family reduces achievement. In this case motivation to excell and do well at a job might be reduced. This latter situation might lead to a more peaceful coexistence between generations. (Author/JK)

Session 11.20

SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION BEHAVIOR[1]

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In an important sense, scholars interested in achievement related motives have characteristically been interested in the role that social, cultural, and contextual factors play in this regard. In their theorizing, they have stressed the sociocultural origins of such motives. This focal interest has followed three basic patterns (cf., Table 1).

Table 1 about here

The seminal work of David McClelland certainly exhibited a concern for situation and context. However, for the most part, what came through was the stress on socialization situations and contexts. The primary question was--how do situations create a certain kind of person who may, in turn, act in one way or another with regard to achievement. Collectively, the acts of many achieving persons would have pervasive effects, in some cases changing whole societies (McClelland, 1961).

Subsequent work by Atkinson (see for example, Atkinson and Feather, 1966; Atkinson and Birch, 1970; Atkinson and Raynor, 1974, 1977) provided a formal place for the role of the situation in the determination of achievement motivation. While continuing to stress the importance of personality, Atkinson's formula emphasized that it was the interaction of persons with a situation that was critical. Among other things, Atkinson's formula spelled out how persons varying in achievement motivation would exhibit drastically different responses to situations which present a "challenge." Moreover, at a time when some within

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the educational community viewed positive reinforcement, reward, and the experience of success as the sine qua non in encouraging achievement (cf., Maehr, 1968; Maehr and Sjogren, 1971), Atkinson's risk model showed how the experience of success could decrease as well as increase motivation--depending on the person.

A third pattern of study has stressed the importance of the immediate context. While this pattern of study is certainly reflected in current research on the cognitive aspects of motivation (cf., for example, Deci, 1975) it seems to have taken on special relevance when one is concerned with cross-cultural manifestations of achievement motivation. (Maehr, 1974, in press-a, in press-b; Maehr and Lysy, in press).

Certainly, these different patterns of study are not mutually exclusive in any sense. There is good reason to employ all of these strategies in our research (cf. Fyans, 1977). The point I wish to stress, however, is that while situation and context have figured pervasively in the study of achievement related motives, the focus has been on micro-analyses of achieving situations and contexts. Broad social, cultural, and contextual conditions have not been of primary concern. A notable exception to this, of course, is the work of David McClelland, summarized in The Achieving Society (1961). Perhaps it is time to take a second look at culture and achievement motivation in the broad and global sense. But instead of following a culture-personality-society hypothesis, I suggest that we turn McClelland on his head and consider a society-personality-culture hypothesis (cf., Table 2). Whereas, McClelland put stress on the person determining the nature of society, I wish to entertain the alternative notion, namely, that society determines the nature of the person. Moreover, I wish to explore this relatively old notion in a slightly different way and thus suggest new perspectives

and emphases in research on the sociocultural origins of achievement motivation. Moving to specifics, I propose that we consider the possible effects of one particular aspect of societies: the relative and changing proportions of children, youth and adults that compose the society. Conceivably, such demographic factors do have major effects on social behavior, including achievement motivation. While the "achieving society" may not be solely determined by fertility and mortality rates, age proportions in a society may well prove to be important factors.

Table 2 about here

POPULATION SHIFTS AND BEHAVIOR

Recent Changes in Population Proportions

Anyone involved with education in the U.S. is unavoidably and, perhaps very personally, aware of shifting proportions of children, youth, and adults. Abrupt changes in the size of the youth population are an interesting, and unusual, feature of the social landscape of the United States in the twentieth century. The rapid rise in birth and fertility rates, referred to as the "baby boom," produced an extremely rapid increase in the number of children and youth during the years 1956-1976. Just as surely, the recent and very rapid decline in birth and fertility rates will produce an equally steep decline in the relative size of the youth population in the period between 1976-1990 (cf., Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1 and 2 about here

Such drastic changes in age proportions can hardly be ignored. And they have not been! Granted the fact that giving birth is increasingly a voluntary matter, it may well be that population shifts will become a regular, perhaps cyclical, phenomenon comparable to (forgive me!) the "hog-cycle phenomenon" which is a feature of agricultural economics.[3]

While general attention has been paid to the drastic shift in age proportions of the population, little attention has been given to the psychosocial impact of these shifts. Yet, it should be obvious that such shifts in age proportions are likely to have an impact on social interaction patterns and therewith on the nature of persons and society. These shifts relate to changes in family size and one can easily imagine that size of the family might well have some effect on the way in which children are brought up, what they are given, and how they are treated. These shifts probably also affect the capacity, effectiveness and, in some cases, the very existence of institutions which complement the family in the socialization task. Aside from affecting socialization patterns, it is also likely that changes in age proportions will affect intra- and cross-generational social interactions. When there are proportionally fewer adults to younger persons, it is perhaps more likely that youths will create their own "youth culture." Additionally, a smaller cohort of adults may readily develop suspicions about a large and rapidly increasing youth cohort, especially as shifts in balances of power become evident. There are other possibilities as well (cf., Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp, Note 3) but this is sufficient to suggest the worth of considering the possibility that population age shifts may have important effects on persons and society as a whole.

The Social/Psychological Effects of Such Changes

Some preliminary attention has already been given to the social and psychological significance of these demographic shifts. For example, some scholars have associated the increased numbers of youth in the 1960's with the unusual amount of social and political activity during that period (cf., for example, Coleman, 1974). In this regard, Coleman introduced the concept of "abrupt quantitative

discontinuity" between successive youth cohort groups and called attention to the problems of socialization that are likely to occur when society suddenly finds itself blessed with a drastically increased number of children and youth. Socializing institutions are under-funded and under-staffed. There are fewer adult socializing agents to go around. The demands on parents are increased and the importance of each individual child may well be minimized.

Egbert (Note 1) has recently reviewed these shifting population trends, stressing with Coleman that the drastically increased size of the youth group in the 60's probably was a significant factor in the "youth problems" that were exhibited during that period. However, Egbert has added a new dimension to our perspective here. That dimension involves a consideration of the effects on an "abrupt negative quantitative discontinuity": What happens when the numbers of children and youth suddenly decrease? Since that situation is already upon us, it is hardly an irrelevant question. Indeed, it is hardly impossible not to ask, what might the children being born in the late 60's or 70's (under negative discontinuity conditions: a relatively small number of cohorts) be like as youth in the 80's.

Preliminary work by Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp (Note 3) has eventuated in a theoretical basis for answering some of these questions. An outline of the theory is in Appendix A.

Skipping over the details of this theoretical, and somewhat speculative venture, it may be noted that there are a number of implications as far as the nature and quality of social interaction are concerned. In general, we might predict that the youth of the 80's are likely to be less peer-and group-oriented. Instead, of group inspired and supported agression, for example, we might expect individualized agression. Thus gang fights between youths should decrease and suicide rates

should increase. Going beyond the simple observation that current worries about the crime rate will decrease due to demographic shifts alone, Egbert, et al. would predict that the delinquency that can and will occur will increasingly be done by individuals working alone rather than by groups working collectively.[4]

Moving beyond such general social effects of demographic shifts, I want to consider, more specifically, some possible implications of population shifts as far as achievement patterns are concerned.

PROJECTED EFFECTS OF POPULATION SHIFTS ON ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION

There is at least a preliminary basis for believing that population shifts may have an overall effect on achieving patterns in a society, in the work of Zajonc (1975; Zajonc and Markos, 1974; Markos and Zajonc, 1977). Since this work is rather generally known (thought not always fully accepted)[5], I need only summarize it briefly. Essentially, Zajonc has argued (and, I think, demonstrated to a substantial degree) that the decline in aptitude test scores is a function of family size. The larger the size of the family, the lower are aptitude scores likely to be. Thus in periods when larger families are in vogue we can expect this to eventuate in a general lowering of achieving patterns, culminating in this case particularly in generally lower college aptitude scores. In explaining this correlation, Zajonc has stressed likely variation in the cognitive enrichment of the socializing environment, particularly in the varying intellectual experience and teaching processes that probably characterize smaller and larger family units.

With Professor Atkinson, I would ask whether motivational factors might be involved as well. However, my line of reasoning takes a slightly different tack, although maybe not an altogether alien one. Briefly, I would like to propose the possibility that population shifts, both as they affect social-

ization patterns and as they create different societal and cultural contexts for achievement could well affect achievement motivation.

Early Socialization Experiences (Society → Personality)

Clearly, the children born in this period of reduced birth rate will be raised in socialization units where the adult/child ratio will be greater. If one reasons with Egbert and his colleagues (Egbert and Kluender, 1977; Egbert, 1978; Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp, 1978) that this will also eventuate in greater (adult) attention paid to the individual child, this might have motivational as well as cognitive and general achievement effects. On a priori grounds one might surmise that the increased adult/child ratio could eventuate in either of two possibilities. On the one hand, the greater attention paid to the individual child might effect a greater sense of personal worth and perhaps also a greater sense of personal causation (de Charms, 1968, 1976), leading to an increased orientation toward achievement. Alternatively, we could speculate about the possibility that the greater adult/child ratio could overwhelm the child, eventuating in decreased sense of personal causation and/or achievement motivation.

Not surprisingly, the achievement motivation literature to this point has not dwelt excessively on the effects of size-determined socialization patterns on achievement motivation. There are, however, scattered pieces here and there in the literature which may move this discussion one small step beyond speculation toward a credible hypothesis, one worth putting to the test. For example, Rosen (1961) presented a line of reasoning not unlike that presented here in conducting one of the early (and one of the few!) studies on the effects of family size on achievement motivation development. Briefly, Rosen argued that the large family is more likely to value responsibility, conformity, and obedience over individual achievement. The demands of handling a larger group tends to require this. While children raised in a larger family are perhaps expected to

be more self-reliant, this is likely to be in areas of basic care-taking and not in areas where clear standards of excellence are readily and repeatedly brought to bear. Thus one might surmise that the child brought up in a larger family is not so likely to be presented with a sequence of appropriate challenges, at least in those areas valued by adult caretakers. Rosen's results indicated an overall positive relationship between size of family and nAch, even when SES was controlled. But a closer look at the data revealed that this relationship might depend somewhat on social class. It was in the case of middle class (Hollingshed III and IV) subjects that the relationship was most clearly evident, with some significant reversals in the case of upper and lower class subjects. Thus, the results were somewhat more complex than one might wish in making a clear case for the hypothesis that the social dynamics that are likely to be associated with smaller families will likely lead to higher achievement motivation.

There is, then, some reason to believe that appropriate evidence can be obtained and some evidence to indicate that the larger adult/child ratio in families may facilitate the development of achievement motivation. But clearly the issue must be pursued further, looking also at how the varying adult/child ratio in other socializing institutions may affect the development of achieving orientations.

When the "Children of the 60's and 70's" Hit the Job Market (Personality $\rightleftarrows$ Society)

Assuming that small families raise children to have a greater sense of their own importance, to have a greater sense of their own self worth, and possibly, a greater orientation toward achievement--or even assuming that such is not the case--it is interesting and important to consider what might ensue.

Here I would call attention to one critical situation which the "children of the 60's and 70's"will probably face. These children who were and are born into and raised by small families, will enter a job market where entry-level jobs are likely to be readily available (their cohort group will be small and we assume that societal needs will remain relatively constant). One might expect that their initial experience with the job market should be a successful one; therewith, also raising their level of career aspiration. However, one may note that, considering population proportions alone, upward mobility may prove difficult (the cohort groups produced by the "baby boom" would presumably dominate upper level positions). The question becomes--what is likely to happen under such conditions? First, what will happen will depend significantly on the kinds of persons we will have. Thus, the study of the (personality) effects of being reared in small families is a critical step in making reasonable projections. Of equal importance, is how various personality types are likely to relate to lack of upward mobility or career progression. In piecing together answers to these two questions one can imagine at least two scenarios:

1) Assuming that socialization in small family units increases achievement motivation, one might expect the "children of the 60's and 70's" to be a frustrated generation. Given an age cohort composed of individuals who tend to have a strong sense of their own importance, of their own self work and possibly high achievement motivation, they will probably expect to accomplish great things. Additionally, this expectation would presumably be reinforced by their initial job/career experiences. But an analysis of population trends indicates that movement to upper level positions may be severely retarded (recall that the immediately older age group is large and presumably it will dominate upper level positions, perhaps for even a longer period than current age-associated promotion and retirement practices allow). What might happen under such

conditions is difficult to surmise. Some might argue that a rebellion against the establishment would occur. However, our line of reasoning suggests a slightly different possibility. As indicated earlier, this cohort is not likely to band together as a group and lash out at the external factors that are the source of their distress. As individuals they could acquire and may retain the belief that they personally are not the cause of such failure in achieving and blame the situation. As a result, it would be reasonable for them to direct their orientation in other areas. For the individuals involved, that is a hopeful possibility but it may be of small comfort to those who look for continued economic, industrial and technological growth.

2) The second scenario is perhaps less optimistic. Assuming that socialization in small units has the opposite effect; that is to say, that it tends to overwhelm the individual and therewith reduce his/her sense of ability and competence, giving him/her a sense of powerlessness. This scenario--even more than the first--promises a peaceful coexistence between generations. But peace may well have been won at a high price. Motivation to excel, exhibit excellence, and do well not only at a job or in a career but at anything might be severely reduced for a generation or so.

Quite frankly, I believe that the first scenario is the more credible, perhaps because I like it better. But the point that pervades both scenarios is that motivation and achievement patterns, as we know them, may be drastically changed by population trends. Indeed, the whole concept of achievement may have to be adjusted, if not redefined. That, of course, is the point I wish to stress.

And where do we go from here?

This leads me to the crucial points of this exercise in crystal ball gazing. I have suggested some drastic and perhaps dire consequences of the demographic shifts that are now evident. I have done this primarily to highlight the possible importance of population proportion shifts on interpersonal behavior, particularly achieving behavior. I am not particularly interested in waiting five to ten years to check on the validity of any of these predictions--especially since I hope that the mere attention to them may prevent their occurrence. The point is that it may not only be theoretically interesting but also of practical significance to observe population shifts when and wherever they occur. Moreover, learning something about the effects of population on social psychological behavior may be increasingly useful in the world in which we live. One should note in this connection that drastic birth rate changes such as have been experienced in the U.S. are likely to be experienced by various developing countries in the near future. Moreover, there is also the possibility that birth rate changes may become a cyclical pattern, as I implied earlier. We are not merely dealing with the prediction of a one time phenomenon. The societal experiences of quantitative discontinuities in various youth cohort groups may occur repeatedly. Even if they did not, the scholar in me would still argue that there are benefits in simply establishing relationships and organizing diverse data into meaningful interpretation.

Finally, one may note that by attending to such over-arching global issues, priority is given to areas of research on achievement that have been less than thoroughly studied. The effects of varying size of socializing unit deserves our interest. What effect does increasing the adult/child ratio have--on

behavior in general as well as on achievement motivation in particular? Are any effects of family adult/child ratio trends neutralized by possible counter trends, such as placing children in day care settings? These are examples of the kinds of questions that this inquiry should prompt. At the very least, looking into the future as we have, points up how little we know about the socialization of achieving orientations, about the role of socializing institutions and socializing situations: what are their enduring effects and ultimate implication for society? Perhaps also this exercize has suggested that those of us interested in achievement motivation could, if we put our minds to it, say something significant to those who cannot avoid predicting, planning for and deciding about the future: government planners and policy makers.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have moved rapidly, and some would say precipitously, from a micro- to a macro-analysis of achieving contexts. This is not to suggest that all the important questions about the influence of immediately present contextual factors have been answered. Far from it. Nor does it mean that greater priority should necessarily be given to such macro analyses. The point is that the experience of drastic changes in population proportions, demands the attention of a wide variety of scholars, including those interested in achieving behavior. It is easy enough to be scared off by the complexities that are inevitably encountered and quiver at the lack of hard experimental data. But I suggest that our micro analyses can profitably be married to macro concerns and I submit that there is a point and purpose in asking questions which lead in this direction. Indeed, this may well become the cutting edge of research on "social, cultural, and contextual influences on achievement motivation behavior."

Reference Notes

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2. Egbert, R. L. and Kluender, M. The potential effect of quantitative discontinuity on post-secondary attendance in the 1980's: A feasibility study. (Report prepared for the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare). Mimeo, University of Nebraska, 1977.

3. Egbert, R. L., Maehr, M. L. and Gienapp, J. C. Youth in transition: A study of the decreasing youth population and its impact on society. A proposal for research. (Under review, March, 1978).

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Footnotes

[1]This is an initial version of a paper to be presented in conjunction with an AERA symposium entitled "Recent Trends in Achievement Motivation Theory and Research." What will be said will likely diverge from this printed text and subsequent printed editions will likely vary even more. The author is especially indebted to Robert L. Egbert, John Gienapp, John Nicholls, and Connie Walker.

[2]The author's full address is: Institute for Child Behavior and Development, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, Illinois, 61820.

[3]This idea was suggested to the author by Professor James Coleman in a personal conversation, but he should not be blamed for its current form.

[4]Note, however, that these demographic shifts are occurring at different rates in various social groups. For example, birth patterns in blacks are not the same as whites (cf. Preston, 1976) and this implies interesting fluctuations in delinquency patterns across various social groups.

[5]It may be noted, for example, that it apparently did not figure strongly in the final conclusions of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline, (1977).

[6]Associated with such study, of course, must be parallel work on the complementary or counter effects of other socialization units. In particular, attention must be given to the possibility that increased use of "day care facilities" may modify the effects of being born into small family settings.

Table 1

Basic Patterns Followed in the Study of Achievement Motivation Behavior

1. [CULTURE[1] ----->] PERSONALITY (SITUATION) ------> ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION BEHAVIOR[2]

EXAMPLE: McClelland (1961; McClelland and Winter, 1969; McClelland, 1971)

2. [CULTURE ----->] PERSONALITY <-----> SITUATION -----> ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION BEHAVIOR

EXAMPLE: Atkinson (1957; Atkinson and Feather, 1967; Atkinson and Raynor, 1974; Atkinson and Raynor, 1977)

Hill (1972; 1977)

3. [CULTURE -----] SITUATION (PERSONALITY) -----> ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION BEHAVIOR

EXAMPLE: It is difficult to cite a representative example here. However, this position has been explicated and to some extent defended by Maehr (1974; In Press a, In Press, b, In Press, c; see also Spenner and Featherman, in press).

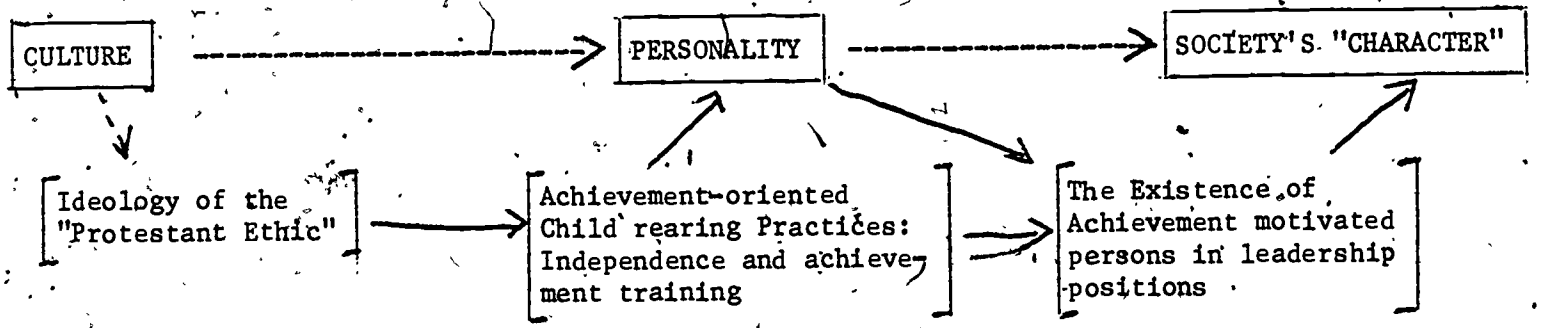
1 Cultural origins of achievement behavior are more often assumed than studies. Hence, "Culture is appropriately placed in parentheses.

2 This terminology and other aspects of this diagram are set forth more fully elsewhere (e.g., Maehr , 1974).

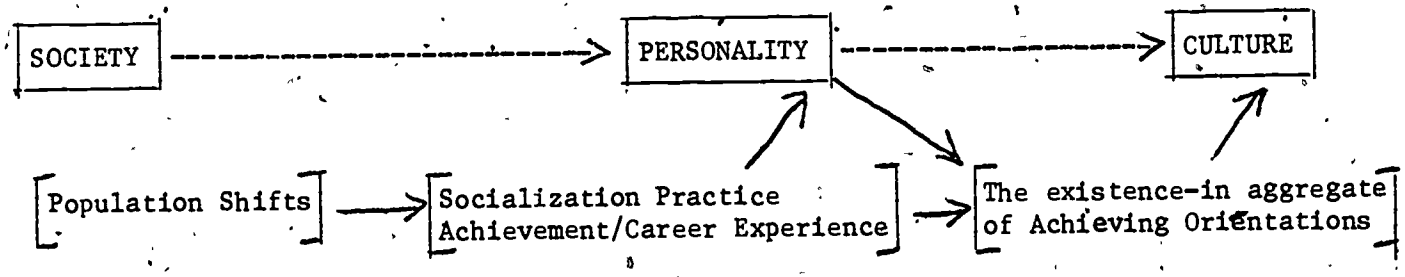
Table 2

Comparison of McClelland's and the Present Hypothesis on Culture, Personality and Society

McClelland's Culture - Personality - Society Hypothesis:



Present Society - Personality - Culture Hypothesis:



Note: For stylistic reasons, the terms "culture", "personality", and "society" are stretched a bit. Nevertheless, the essential points of the diagram should be clear.

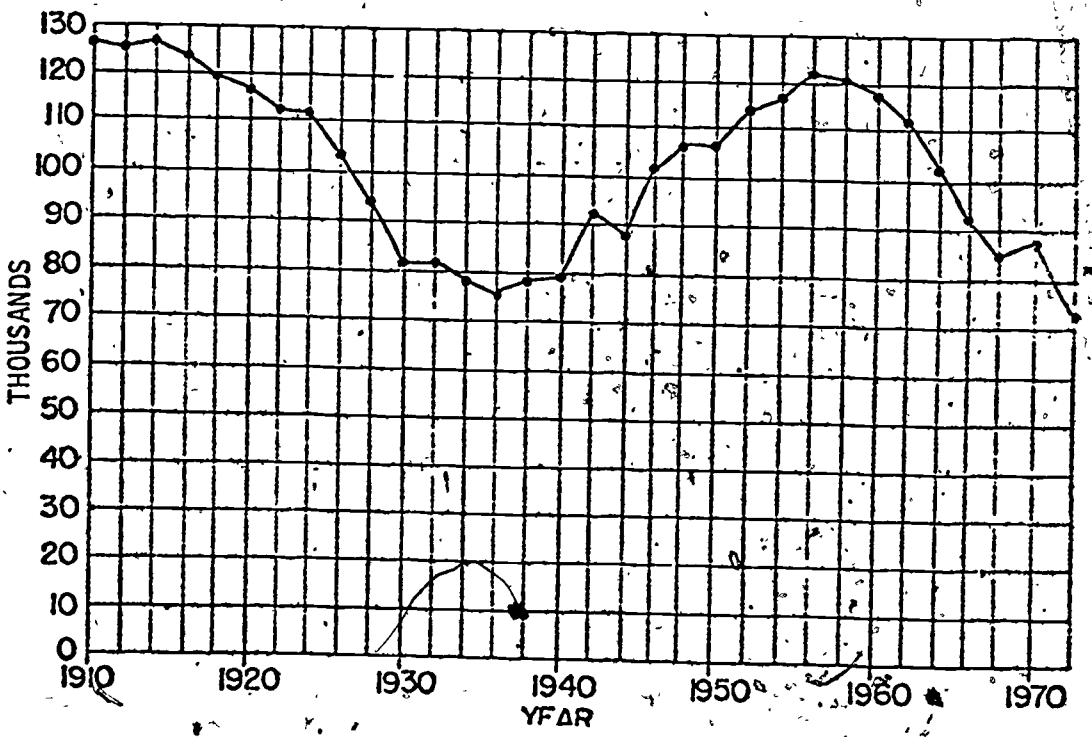


Figure 1. U.S. fertility rate in two-year intervals---1910-1972 (Vital statistics of U.S., 1973. After Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp, Note 3).

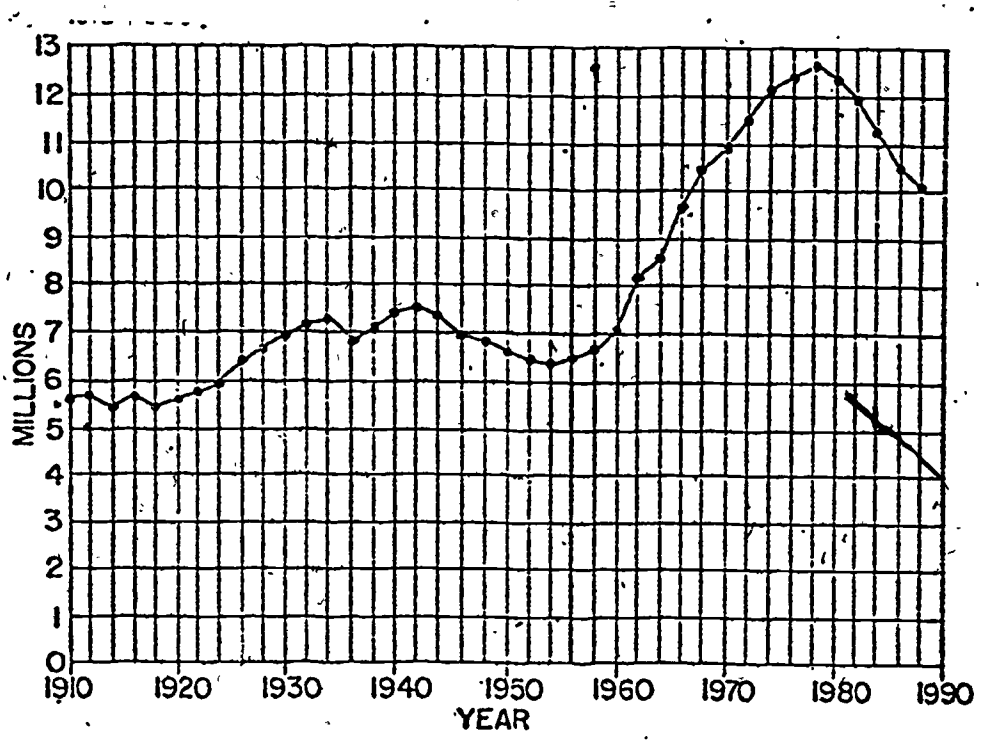


Figure 2. Number of eighteen to twenty-year olds in U.S. population---1910-1988 (Estimated from 1970 census of population. After Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp, Note 3).

APPENDIX A

An Outline of a Theory of the Psychosocial Effects of Population Shifts (After Egbert, 1978; Egbert and Kluender, 1977; and Egbert, Maehr, and Gienapp, 1978)

Major Hypothesis: When major quantitative discontinuity exists between successive cohorts of youth, substantial changes will result in the patterns of interaction within the cohorts and between the youth cohorts and the balance of the population.

Major Assumptions

1. A society's institutions--their personnel, their facilities, their methods of operation, their norms, traditions, and attitudes--are organized to accommodate a given size of clientele. When the numbers of clientele change, institutions must also change. In a period of rapidly increasing or rapidly decreasing numbers of clientele, unusual stresses are placed on institutions to meet the change in numbers of those who require services. Thus, this necessity for change reduces the efficiency of a society's institutions to provide needed services.

   A. Institutions oriented toward serving a clientele whose numbers are increasing or decreasing at a stable rate provide an exception to fixed population institutions. Thus, for institutions adaptable to change, it is the change in the rate of increase or decrease which places them in conditions of stress.

2. Within a given society, most individuals have established norms for behaviors based on a given mixture or proportion of various age groupings. When the age mix is altered through sharp increases or decreases in a given age grouping, different norms and behaviors become necessary for all the population. Some individuals may not adjust as easily and become confused or feel threatened. These individuals may likely respond with behaviors consistent with these feelings.

3. Within a given society, a subtle balance of power exists between various age groups and is related to the size, earning and buying power, and social traditions of each group. Thus, significant increases or decreases in the size of any age group can result in a change in the balance of power. When the change in size of any one age group is rapid, the shift of power can also be fast and can pose a significant threat to the power held by groups who are declining in size.

4. When there is a rapid increase in the numbers of a given age group and a resultant shift in power to that group, there is a corresponding tendency for members of the group increasing in size to behave more cohesively as a group and to accept less responsibility for individual actions. Conversely, when a relative decrease in the size of a given group shifts power to other groups, there is a tendency for an increase in individual actions and assumption of greater individual responsibility by group members.

5. As children and youth are consumers rather than producers, an increase or decrease in the numbers of such persons will require a corresponding increase or decrease in the burden of producers in a society. The more rapid the increase or decrease in the size of the youth age group, the more stress placed on adaption by producers.

6. A change in the size of any age group results in greater or less attention paid to that group by the balance of the population. For example, TV advertisers may adjust their campaigns to serve the larger purchasing group. Greater or lesser attention is also refelcted in emphasis in legislation, institutional programming, and other cultural phenomena.

7. A change in the size of family groups results in the increase or decrease in the size of a proportion of the population. The role of the family as a primary unit responsible for socialization changes as familial size increases or decreases. As family size increases, the financial and social psychological stress increases on the adult members.

8. Every society usually is characterized by a certain amount of inertia which provides stability and order. This inertia restricts the ability of a society's institutions to respond quickly or reallocate resources to meet abrupt changes in the size of an age group. Thus, institutions primarily responsible for serving youth will be relatively underfunded in a period of positive quantitative discontinuity and overfunded during a period of negative quantitative discontinuity.

Major Corollaries

1. The early years of a quantitatively discontinuous trend in youth cohorts will show evidence of the most pronounced level of distress between youth and the balance of society.

2. In the absence of major quantitative discontinuity between successive youth cohorts, substantial social distrubances reflecting distress between youth and society will not occur.

3. In the beginning phase of positive discontinuity (rapid increase in the size of youth cohort) there will be greater evidence of group oriented social disturbances and more socially unacceptable behaviors in the form of increased youth crime and delinquency.

4. In the beginning phases of negative discontinuity (rapid decrease in size of youth cohort) there will be greater expression of individuality, greater evidence of social concerns, and greater evidence of frustration and anger directed toward the self resulting in greater rates of suicide, anxiety, and depression.

5. Initially, society will react with fear and concern to major positive quantitative discontinuity in youth cohorts.

6. Society will eventually respond to major positive quantative discontinuity in the size of the youth cohort with constructive social legislation.

7. During periods of major negative quantitative discontinuity in the size of the youth cohort, society will usually respond eith disinterest toward youth as a group.

8. During periods of major negative quantitative discontinuity in the size of the youth cohort, society will attempt to increase the quality of individual opportunity.