

Demographic Issues in Developing Countries

- typically countries shift into the post-transition stage as they benefit from economic and social growth (e.g. education, urbanization, health care, status of women, natural resource base, and accessibility to technology)
- if countries don't achieve this level of socioeconomic development, they can become stuck in what's called the **demographic trap**

Demographic Trap

- a country becomes “trapped” in the late transition stage when there is relatively low death rate (achieved through access to modern medicine and better nutrition), but the birth rate remains high
- this maintains a high natural increase as the country’s population continues to expand or **population explosion**
- fear that population will outgrow its carrying capacity or **overpopulation** - eventually leading to *Malthusian Collapse* (e.g. Easter Island)
- Refer to Figure 6-1 on p. 85

Three factors causing *demographic trap*:

1. Unmet Demand for Family Planning

- women want control over pregnancies
- family planning services are inaccessible
- contributes 1/3 to population growth

2. Desire for Large Families

- families choose to have more than two children, why?
- contributes 1/5 to population growth

3. Population Momentum

- next reproductive generation (group of people entering puberty or younger) is so much larger than the current one
- largest contributor to population growth at nearly 1/2

Table 6.15
Reasons for
Having Children

Country	Mexico	Singapore	USA
Nature of birth rate	high	medium	low
Reasons for having children (% of parents)			
a) Economic support	72	19	4
b) Companionship	-	44	47
c) To strengthen the marriage	-	7	15
d) Psychological benefits to parents	16	21	26
e) Miscellaneous	12	9	8
GNP per capita (U.S.\$)	\$1 850	\$7 410	\$17 500

Leads to a “Population Bomb”

The population bomb is the sum total of all the problems caused to countries and people around the world by overpopulation.



Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii

Why do families in LDCs
have so many children?

What is the demographic trap?
(see *Global Connections* p. 85)

What problems are caused by the demographic trap?