

UNIT 17 POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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17.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you should be able to

judge the relationship between population and development;
examine the idea of over-population state the concept of demographic transition;
comprehend the demographic characteristics of developing countries;
explain the nature of population problem faced by developing countries; and
suggest proper policy measures to be followed by developing countries.

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Perhaps it will take little time for you to agree with the proposition that human beings are a vital resource for economic development. But to specify the relationship between economic development and growth of population, it will be difficult to come out with an unambiguous answer. To your surprise, you will find economies of many third world countries, notwithstanding a higher growth rate of their population, are the least developed economically. Some of the most developed countries, on the contrary, will give you very low rate of population growth. Such a scenario of the present-day world, therefore, will compel you to think seriously in terms of a negative relationship between economic development and population growth.

17.2 OVER-POPULATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Essentially, what you are contemplating in the form of a relationship is the phenomena of so-called 'Over-population'. It depicts a situation, where human population has increased beyond the means of subsistence. Thus a higher growth area in terms of population does not provide the basic needs of life such as food, cloth and shelter. The third world countries have become the victim of such an eventuality. The fear of over-population is not new. Economist Malthus, as early as 1798, had expressed strong apprehensions on population growth over-taking output growth. He thought that nature would reduce the excess number by causing calamities and diseases. However, technological inventions subsequently helped increase production and the seriousness of the problem was over-looked. The implications of population growth resurfaced in recent years with the persistence of poverty and hunger in many parts of the world. The over-population perception has given rise to a number of prescriptions that aim at bringing down the growth rate of population in the third world countries. It is asserted that such a move would allow the benefits of economic development to reach the poor masses.

17.2.1 Recent Development of East Asia and Population Growth

In order to convince others that a control of population growth could result in better quality of life, the policy makers often draw attention to the experience of East Asian countries, viz., Hong Kong, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. These countries have been pointed out to be in the group of third world during the fifties. But rapid economic development has come about there to solve the problem of poverty, in the meantime. The average annual growth of population has witnessed a much faster rate of decline in all of them. A comparison of this feature with other countries of Asia and Africa shows a difference. Look at Table 17.1 it shows the difference in population growth of Asian and sub-Sahara African countries during 1960-70 and 1980-90. It can be seen from the table that in the East Asian group, Hong Kong has a growth rate of 2.5% per annum during 1960-70. But it came down to 1.4% per annum during 1980-90. Similarly, in Thailand, the growth rate declined to 1.8% per annum during 1980-90, from a higher rate of 3.1% per annum during 1960-70. The declining feature

Table 17.1

**Change in Population growth of
Sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asian Countries**

Economy	Average annual growth of 1960- 70	Population (in %) 1980-90
East Asia		
Hong Kong	2.5	1.4
Indonesia	2.1	1.8
South Korea	2.6	1.1
Malaysia	2.8	2.6
Singapore	2.3	2.2

Thailand	3.1	1.8
Sub-Saharan Africa		
Ghana	2.3	3.4
Kenya	3.2	3.8
Sierra Leone	1.7	2.4
Tanzania	2.7	3.1
South Asia		
Bangladesh	2.5	2.3
India	2.3	2.1
Nepal	1.9	2.6
Pakistan	2.8	3.1

Source: **World Bank**, 1993, 'The East Asian Miracle "'

similar to Hong Kong and Thailand, was evident in the remaining countries of East Asian group. In contrast to these, sub-Saharan Africa showed an increase in the rate of population growth. As might have been seen, Ghana recorded an increase from 2.3% per annum during 1960-70 to 3.4 % per annum in 1980-90. Other countries of this group also showed the same tendency as Ghana.

In South Asia group, population growth was not uniform. While Bangladesh and India succeeded in bringing down the growth rate of their population marginally, the remaining two, Nepal and Pakistan, followed the tendency of sub-Saharan Africa group. Thus, from a growth rate of 1.9% per annum, during 1960-70, Nepal went on to 2.6% per annum in the succeeding decade. Pakistan also followed Nepal, as its population growth during 1960-70 was 2.8% per annum but increased to 3.1% per annum subsequently.

17.2.2 U.N. Agenda for Population Management

The perception that control of population growth rate is necessary for solving the economic development has been pursued seriously at important world bodies like United Nations. The World Population Conference held in Bucharest, 1974, had sent the message in a similar vein. The Plan of Action highlighted in the conference has been an integration of population planning with economic planning. More recently, since 1994, the United Nations has organised three conferences - in Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing - themes of which are focused on population as a critical input for development. While the international Conference on Population, held in Cairo in September 1994, emphasised the new thinking on meeting reproductive health needs, the one held in Copenhagen in March 1995 (viz., World Summit on Social Development) examined issues of poverty, employment and social integration. The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, 1995, explored ways to enhance women's full and equal participation in the present-day society. A common thread that runs through these conferences is the need for initiating action on population management which will fit into the development model of industrialised society.

Check Your Progress

- Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

Tick mark (✓) the correct statement:

- 1) Rapid increase in population in developing countries has:
 - a) an adverse impact on the pace of economic development;
 - b) made better off families smaller than poorer families;
 - c) accelerated the process of urbanization;
 - d) all the above features.
- 2) Write a note on the relationship between population growth and economic development
- 3) Fill in the blanks choosing suitable word (or words) from the brackets given below:
 - a) For today's India the (faster/slower) population grows, the..... (grimmer brighter) becomes her struggle to survive.
 - b) The World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, 1995, examined issues of poverty, employment and.....(social integration, population planning, women's participation in society).
 - c) The relationship between population and development (has become/has not become) an issue of world wide debate since the 1950s.
 - d) The United Nations World Population Conference held in(Geneva Bucharest) in 1974 adopted a Plan of Action.
- 4) Why is it believed that the third world countries are over- populated? (write in about 100 words)
- 5) Indicate whether the following are True (T) or False (F):
 - a) People who believe that poverty is the result of over-population, often point to empirical evidence of East Asian countries. ()
 - b) population growth should be modified to suit the prevailing economic situation.()
 - c) Poor people and high birth rate are not generally related . ()
 - d) An initial reaction on the relationship between population and development is likely to have problems.()
- 6) Compare the change in recent years' population growth rate between East and South Asian countries

17.3 DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

The underlying idea behind population growth commensurate to economic development is based on demographic transition that comes about in an economy. Formulated by Frank Notestein in 1953, the theory of Demographic Transition makes an attempt to document the experience of developing countries as effected by the present-day economic growth.

17.3.1 Demographic Transition: A Historical Process

Demographic transition explains a form of relationship between population and economic development. In the western countries it has been found that they have moved from a condition of high birth and death rates, to a condition of low birth and death rates which led to a slow rate of growth of population. This demographic change is known as 'Demographic Transition'. In other words, demographic transition describes the passage through which countries move from high birth and death rates to low ones. This has been the experience of countries going through a process of modernizing economic and social development.

However, it must be kept in mind that, the reasons for this change are very uncertain. There is no simple, continuous and quantitative relationship between economic development and the decline in birth and death rates.

17.3.2 Three Stages of Demographic Transition

The inter-relationship between population and economic development may be divided into three stages:

- i) The first stage is characterized by high birth and death rates. These features give rise to low population growth. To understand the forces that generate this situation you have to remember a society whose economy is dominantly agrarian and level of technology is traditional. High death rates in such a society could be due to chronic malnutrition, famines and epidemics, inadequate medicinal and health services and poor living condition. High birth rates are influenced by the socio-cultural system (i.e. illiteracy, early marriage, traditional values, religious beliefs, demand for family labour, etc.). The difference between high birth and death rates becomes narrow resulting in one percent per annum or less growth rate of population. Sometimes, it may even tend to stagnate at a particular level.
- ii) In the second stage of demographic transition, death rate begins to decline. There is beginning of the process of economic development. Better nutritional components are included in food and living condition improves. However, the birth rates continue to remain high. Consequently, there is an increase in the growth rate of population and it tends to grow quite rapidly.
- iii) During the third stage when the country's economy is properly developed, the already low death rates decline further only slightly. Birth rate, on the contrary, goes down rapidly. The low birth and death rates are now stabilized resulting in a low population growth rate.

It is expected that today's developing countries, if successful in their development efforts, would also reach the third stage of demographic transition.

17.3.3 Demographic Characteristics of Today's Developing Countries

In today's developing countries we find the following features regarding their population growth:

- i) High population growth rates, and
- ii) Inadequate opportunities for the absorption of manpower.

The high population growth rates are due to high birth rate and fast declining death rates due to better sanitation and health facilities. However, the capacities to absorb increasing manpower are much weaker. Furthermore, the process of economic development tends to be more capital intensive under modern

technological conditions, and hence, has less potential of employment generation in the short run. Since the total size of the population is already large, there is an urgency for speedy achievement of demographic transition from high birth rate to low birth rate resulting in lower population growth.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:** i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit.

1. Fill in the gaps selecting appropriate word/ words given in the brackets.

- a) Economic development itself would release forces which would induce.....
(decline/increase) in population growth rates.
- b) Any independent policy of population control in a developing country
is.....(necessary/unnecessary) and(wasteful/fruitful).
- c) Economic development(takes/does not take) time and a developing country
.....(can/ cannot) wait for such a distant possibility.
- d) It is very(easy/difficult) to establish a very clear cut relationship between
economic development and population growth.

2. Identify whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

- a) There is a reciprocal or bi-directional relationship between population and economic development()
- b) Whether a growing population is conducive to or constraint on development would depend upon a combination of number of factors. ()
- c) Theory of Demographic Transition was as developed by Thomas R Malthus. ()
- d) The long term historical trend in population is to maintain slow population growth rates.

3 Explain the demographic transition and its three stages in about 150 words.

4 State the demographic features of today's developing countries in five lines

17.4 SOME ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF RAPID POPULATION GROWTH

It may be useful to throw light on some of the problems arising out of the rapid population growth in the third world. They are:

i) **Providing employment to growing population.** This is so because in developing economies majority of the population is illiterate. The burden of school age population has already shown signs of becoming

unbearable. The proportion of children in schools is increasing fast and, vast numbers are still not covered. The absolute number of illiterate persons increases every year. This is only an indication of the wastage of human resources for want of appropriate development opportunities.

ii) **Problem of utilisation of manpower.** Better educated manpower aspires for occupations of greater prestige, which are opened up by the new development efforts. Because of its capital intensive nature, the ability, of the new economy for employment generation becomes restricted. Simultaneously, it renders many of the old occupations out of day and redundant. As a result, under-employment and unemployment, including unemployment of educated persons, increases. There is thus wastage of even developed human capital.

iii) **Over-strained infrastructure.** Facilities such as housing, transportation, health care, and education become inadequate. The worst symptoms of congestion in every aspect of living conditions are manifested in the urban areas. In countries such as India, a situation of "over urbanisation" prevails which puts unbearable strain on urban amenities. Overcrowded houses, slums and unsanitary localities, traffic congestion and crowded hospitals have become common features in the developing countries.

1) **Pressure on land and other renewable natural resources.** Common properties such as forest and water are over-exploited. This results in deforestation and desertification with permanent damage to the renewable resources.

v) **Increased Cost of Production.** Human ingenuity and technological advancement makes it possible to increase production of goods and services. But, it must be kept in mind that, the cost of production of the basic necessities of life, such as food, increases when the population is growing fast and worse lands are brought into cultivation with costly irrigation etc.

vi) **Inequitable Distribution of Income.** Both at the international and national levels income disparities increase. The increase in gross national product (GNP) is greatly reduced in per capita terms on account of the rapidly growing population. In the face of a rapidly growing population, the major concern of a developing country tends to be focused more on economic growth as such. Consideration of unequal distribution of income are pushed to background. So inequalities within the country tend to widen further.

17.5 POLICY TO CONTROL, RAPID POPULATION GROWTH: INTEGRATION OF POPULATION POLICY WITH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Seen in terms of on-going development models, one of the most serious problems faced by the developing countries is the control of the rapid rate of growth of population. It has become therefore, necessary to evolve an appropriate population policy. In such a context a major objective of the population policy has to be one that takes into account the influence of economic and social development on fertility.

17.5.1 Influence of Development on Fertility (Birth Rate)

Different explanations about the influence of development on fertility can be seen in the following:

i) One explanation is based on the observation or experience of the present-day developed countries. According to this, higher the level of economic development of a country, the lower is the level of fertility.

It must be emphasized that this explanation assumes that in developed countries children are regarded by parents as durable consumer goods. With economic development parents become very much conscious about the economic costs and benefits of raising children. This attitude has a distinct effect on fertility and the size of the family.

ii) Another explanation regarding the influence of economic development on fertility takes into account the love and affection which parents have for their children. This is known as 'Affective Aspects of Motivation' for child bearing. According to this explanation, in limiting the size of their family, the parents are influenced by their consideration for the future career of their children. Thus, it is not so much the disincentive of increasing cost resulting in reduced economic returns from having a large family, but the fear that the large size of the family would reduce their ability to provide adequately for the future of their children, which is important. This fact discourages parents from having a large family.

It must be remembered that during the early phase of demographic transition, children inherit the social status of the parents. Because, at that time, family is the unit of production. But with economic development the economy becomes organized. As a result of the emergence of the organized economy children have to achieve their social status outside their homes, and parents become very much aware of the new responsibility of equipping their children for a satisfactory economic adjustment. The problem of satisfactory economic adjustment tries to ensure that children do not fall below the social status of the parents. This explanation confirms our general experience that persons coming from a larger family tend to fare worse than their parents, in their careers. Therefore, parents who are aware of these now tend to have smaller families because they want to train and equip their children for fulfilling occupational roles outside their homes.

17.5.2 Is Economic Development the Most Effective Way of Reducing Fertility ?

It may be emphasized that the above two explanations emphasize the influence of economic development on the size of the family and fertility. But, since they offer different explanations, we cannot conclude that economic development will automatically bring down fertility. Hence the view point that economic development is the most effective contraceptive cannot be taken as the only factor that matters in population policy. It is as much important for a developing country to deal with its problem of rapid population growth by integrating population and family planning with development planning.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answer with that given at the end of the unit

1) Point out five adverse consequences of rapid growth of population.

2) Fill in the blanks taking word words given in the brackets:

a) Because of capital intensity, the ability of the economy for.....(employment/unemployment) generation becomes restricted.

b) In India, majority of the population is..... (literate/illiterate), and as such, the burden of school age population has become.....(bearable/ unbearable).

- c) A rapidly growing population.....(over-strains/facilitates) the available infrastructure and opportunities
 - d) India is facing a situation ofover urbanisation/ under urbanization).
 - e) The children and the elderly are economically..... (independent/dependent)
- 3) Select five adverse consequences of rapid growth of population from the following:
- i) Increased proportion of non-working population.
 - ii) Decline in dependency ratio.
 - iii) Increased per capita availability of food grains.
 - iv) High level of capital formation
 - v) More expenditure on maintenance of social services.
 - vi) Unemployment increase.
 - vii) Rate of increase in per capital income rises.
 - viii) Increased pressure on existing services.
 - ix) Rise in social tensions.
- 4) Identify the following statements as true (T) or false (F):
- i) The rapidly growing population due to high birth and rapidly declining death rates give rise to distorted age structure. ()
 - ii) In a developing economy, where death rate has fallen fast, and the decline in birth rate is very slow, the percentage of children in the population tends to fall.()
 - iii) People in developed countries have much less children than people in developing countries
 - iv) opportunity Costs of raising many children are much less in developed countries than indeveloping ones.()
 - v) During the earliest phase of demographic transition children inherited the social status of the parents.()
- 5) Is economic development the most effective way of reducing birth rate ? Write your answer in about 100 words.

17.6 LET US SUM UP

The rapid population growth in many third world countries and persistence of poverty has given rise to the view of over-population possibility. There is, therefore, a major move throughout the world to bring down the growth rate of population. Development experience of recent years shows that there is a long run trend towards slow growth of population in a country. This is secured by balance between birth and death rates. Before the commencement of modern economic development, countries were in the first stage of demographic transition. At that time countries had slow population growth because of a balance between high birth and death rates. But, as a result of economic development, developed countries have again attained slow growth in their population. Birth and death rates in these have become quite low. Such features have been noticed during the third stage of demographic transition. However, the balance between birth and death rates is upset during the second phase of demographic transition because of the death rates declining faster than the birth rates.

The present-day developed countries faced the problem of explosive increase in population which has been put under the second phase of demographic transition. It happened more easily because of congenial circumstances such as vast sparsely inhabited areas existing in those times. But today's developing countries are experiencing a much faster growth in their population under conditions different than those faced by the developed countries. Thus they are faced with huge problems of imparting education, employment, urban development and environmental degradation. The need to tackle these problems has led to the necessity a clearer understanding of the relationship between population and development.

The major problem faced by the developing countries is to bring down their birth rates, i. e. fertility. Therefore, understanding of the relationship between development and fertility becomes very significant. There are experts who think that unless fertility is first restricted, sustained economic development is not possible. At the other extreme there are others who assume that fertility is dependent upon economic development. This means that we should concentrate our efforts on development planning, which would, in turn, reduce fertility. Thus, it seems that the nature of the relationship between fertility and development is reciprocal. As the exact nature of this relationship is yet to be fully established, the proper course for a developing country would be to follow integrated policies in regard to both population and development.

17.7 KEY WORDS

Age Dependency Ratio: The ratio of number of persons in the age-groups defined as dependent (under 15 years and over 64 years) to those in the age groups defined as economically productive (15-64 years) in a population.

Age-group: Part of the population put together because of their age level being comparable with respect to some characteristics and/or purpose. For instance, an age group could be all persons aged from 0-14 years or another could be all persons aged sixty-five and more.

Age-sex distribution: The number and percentage of males and the number or percentage of females in each group of the population.

Age-structure: The number of people or percentage of the population in each age group. In developing countries proportion of young people below 15 years is high; in developed countries, because of long life expectancy and low birth rates proportion of old people of 65 years of age, or more, is increasing.

Birth Rate or Crude Birth Rate: The number of births in a year per thousand persons in the total population. (Not to be confused with growth rate).

Burden of Dependency: Concentration of the population of developing countries in the young, non-productive ages, a situation which is less favourable to production and proportionately more burdensome with respect to consumption and social overhead investment. Similar concentration takes place in the developed countries in the old age-group of 65 years and more, who are also retired from the labour force and have to depend on the rest of society.

Capital Intensive: A form of production in which the proportion of capital employment is large relative to labour.

Capital-Labour Ratio: The ratio of capital to labour in an economy, (an industry or a firm).

Death Rate or Crude Death Rate: The number of deaths in a year per thousand persons in the total population.

Demographic Transition: The historical shift of birth and death rates from high to low levels. The decline of mortality usually precedes the decline in fertility thus resulting in rapid population growth during the transition period. It has been devised with particular reference to the experience of developed countries which have passed through the process of industrialisation and urbanisation.

Demography: (Greek: demos (people) + graphic (study), The scientific study of human populations, including their size, composition, distribution, density, growth and other demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and the causes and consequences of changes in these factors.

Dependency Ratio: The proportion of dependents in the population relative to the working population.

Desertification: The spread of like conditions in and or semi-arid areas due either to careless human interference or to climate change. Often, it is the result of a combination of increasing human pressures and spell of rainless lean years.

Durable Consumer Goods: Goods purchased by consumer for use over a relatively long period, e.g. cars, washing machines, television, VCR, furniture etc.

Infrastructure: The underlying structure of services and amenities needed to facilitate industrial, agricultural and other economic development, called economic infrastructure. It includes the provision of transport communications, power supplies, water etc. investment in infrastructure is considered necessary for economic development. There are social infrastructures also, indirectly associated with economic development, such as health and education facilities.

Labour Intensive: A form of production requiring a high proportion of labour in relation to capital. Malthus Thomas R (1766-1834) English clergyman and economist famous for his theory (expounded in the "Essay on the Principle of Population") that the population of the world tends to increase faster than the food supply and that unless fertility is controlled, famine, vice, disease and war must serve as natural checks on population.

Occupation Structure: The distribution of economically active population i.e., working population into a large number of employment or productive activities; Such activities are broadly categorized into primary, secondary and tertiary sectors representing agriculture industry and services respectively.

Population Explosion: Expression used to describe the 20th century world wide trend of enormous and rapid population growth resulting from a world birth rate much higher than the world death rate.

Population Growth Rate: The rate at which the population is increasing (or decreasing) in a given year due to natural increase and net migration, expressed as a percentage of the base population. Natural rate of population increase is the gap between birth and death rates in India, the combination of still high fertility and much reduced mortality (death rate) led to population growth rate of around 2 per cent or more a year. Population growth rate increased as death rate has continued to fall.

Population Increase: The total population increase resulting from the interactions of births, deaths, and migration in a population in a given period of time.

Population Policy: Explicit or implicit measures instituted by a government to influence population size, growth, distribution or composition.

Population Problem: For most developing countries, it is largely a problem of rapid growth rates. Rapid growth rates in population are problematic in two respects: (a) they may slow down economic growth, and (b) under certain conditions, they may increase income inequalities and worsen the condition of the poorer groups.

Sex Distribution: The number of males in the population compared to that females.

Subsistence Level: The Standard of living below which human life cannot be maintained.

Under-employment: The employment of a worker in a job that either does not offer sufficient hours of work to get him his due personal income or the income it fetches is too low for the satisfaction of his basic needs even though he works full time.

Underdeveloped Countries (Third World or Developing or Less Developed): Those countries which for some reasons have been slow in developing their economic resources with the result that their peoples have a much lower standard of living than that enjoyed in the more economically advanced countries of Europe and North America

Under-development: The lack of self-generating force or dynamic (or the presence of counter-productive forces) in the economy, also marked by the underdeveloped social conditions of existence.

Unemployment: The difference between total employed workers and the labour force (persons 15 years older, but less than 65 years, looking for work). This number as ratio of the labour force is the unemployment rate.

Urbanisation: The process of becoming urban. In general usage urbanisation is associated with the concentration of population in towns and cities. As a demographic phenomenon, urbanisation is interpreted as a process involving the absolute and relative growth of towns and cities within a defined area. Usually, they are identified as centres of social change with different attitudes, values and behaviour patterns. These places are modified in the particular milieu of the urban place, characterised by its size, its density, and the heterogeneity of its inhabitants. An urban area is usually supposed to spread its characteristics to the rest of the society of a country or region by process of diffusion, which, however, may not always happen, particularly in countries with colonial legacy.

Young Population: A population with a relatively high proportion of children, adolescents, and young adults, and thus a high growth potential.

17.8 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Cassen, R.H. (1979): *India: Population, Economy, Society*, Chapter I (pp 9-32), Chap 4 (pp 221-231, 245-250, 272-279), Delhi, Macmillan.

United Nations (1982): *Population of India: Country Monograph Series No. 10, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)*, Chap 5 (pp107-108), Chap 8 (pp 176-187).

17.9 ANSWERS AND/OR HINTS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS /EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) `d,,
- 2) See section 17.1 and 17.2 and frame your answer
- 3) a) 'faster' and 'grimmer' or 'slower' and 'brighter'
b) 'social integration'
c) 'has become'
d) 'Bucharest'
- 4) See section 17.2
- 5) a) T
b) T
c) F
d) T
- 6) See section 17.2 and frame your answer.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) a) b)
c) takes, cannot
d) difficult
- 2) a) T
b) T
c) F
d) F
- 3) See Sub-sections 17.3.1 and frame your answer.
- 4) See Sub-section 17.3.2 for your answer.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) i) Pressure on available infrastructure and opportunity
ii) Restricted employment opportunities
iii) Increased burden of dependency ratio
iv) Pressure on land and other renewable resources
v) Worsening of distributional justice.
- 2) a) employment,
b) illiterate, unbearable,
c) over-strains,
d) over-urbanisation,
e) dependent.

3) i), v), vi), viii), ix).

4) i) T ii) F iii) T iv) F v) T

5) See section 17.5.2 and attempt your answer.