

# THE ELDERLY POPULATION OF THE PHILIPPINES: 1980

## A SUMMARY

by

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Experiences of developed countries showed that care for the elderly could not remain a purely family responsibility. More and more, state interventions became necessary in order to provide for the physical, social and economic well-being of the elderly. This study aimed to provide baseline information for the preparation of plans to meet the growing problems related to changing population composition and social structures.

The data used in the study came from the records of the elderly in 20 percent of all households in the country covered by the 1980 Census of Population and Housing. Dimensions used in the analysis were type of area (urban, rural), age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, occupation and living arrangement.

Results of the study highlighted the differentials in longevity by sex, as predominance by females was observed in almost all types of areas and across age groups. It was only in the rural areas of the country where a more balanced sex ratio was noted. This could be attributed to the outmigration of old widowed women who could not do agricultural work into less rural areas either to find economic activities or to join the households of their relatives. Furthermore, availability of lighter agricultural jobs to aging male workers was a deterrent to the exodus of male elderly from rural areas.

By type of area, it was noted that the elderly populations of urban areas were slightly younger than their rural counterpart. This could be the result of higher older

ages mortality in the urban areas, movement of relatively younger widows into urban areas to find economic activities or join the households of relative, or to combinations of socio-economic factors differentiating the urban from the rural areas.

Due not only to biological factors, but to socio-economic factors as well, men generally married younger women. Hence, controlling for age, men were mostly married while high proportions of women were widowed. It must be noted that another contributing factor to the differentials in age at marriage was the observed higher mortality among males in all age groups and in all types of areas. The relatively even distribution of rural elderly population by marital status and sex, again supported the premise that widows tended to move out of the rural area; thus, resulting to high incidence of widowhood in the urban areas.

The low educational attainment of the elderly mirrored the social and educational system at the turn of the century. In preparation for their respective roles in society, better education was relatively more accessible to males than to females; hence, better educated elderly males. Again, the pattern seemed not to hold in rural areas, where sex ratio for the better educated population was in favor of the females. This might have resulted to the tendency of better educated males to find non-agricultural jobs in urban areas. Moreover, the inaccess-

sibility of educational facilities in the rural areas then might have led to a more homogeneous population.

It was observed that more than a third (39.0 percent) of the elderly population were still economically active, though participation rates expectedly declined with advancing age. Most of those who still worked were, however, agricultural workers. By type of area, it was noted that economic activity declined as the area became more urban. Thus, in the Metropolitan Manila, participation rate was only about twenty percent.

It had always been assumed that respective families of the elderlies would see to their well-being. It was therefore surprising to note that about forty percent of the elderlies were living alone or with only their spouses. Only about a third, though living with other adults, were still considered to be the heads (figure included the spouses of the heads). The rest were mainly the elderlies who live with relatives but were not regarded as heads. In the light of this observation, the belief that the traditional reverence for the elderlies as a part of the Filipino way of life would ensure for the elderlies the

kind of life that would preserve their dignity and self-worth might be worth a thorough re-examination.

Recent mobility among the elderlies was confined mainly to those who were not household heads or spouses of the heads, further strengthening the observation that elderlies who could not support themselves tended to move into the households of their relatives and lose their headship status. The implications of such moves on the lives of the elderlies and on the receiving households surely needed looking into more seriously.

In all types of areas considered, heads and their spouses exhibited lowest migration rates, indicating that married couples were not inclined to move into the households of their relatives or children. On the other hand, elderlies who join households of nonrelatives were the most migratory group. The absence of kinship ties could have possibly led to more volatile set-up.

The study pointed to several areas of concern that must be seriously considered if efforts were to be made to meet the needs of the elderlies, to ensure for them the kind-of life due them.

Table 1. Distribution and Growth of the Population  
by Broad Age Group: Philippines, 1970-1980

Age Group	1970		1975		Growth Rate 70-75	1980		Growth Rate 75-80
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
All Ages	36,684,486 <sup>a</sup>	100.0	42,070,660	100.0	2.79	48,098,460	100.0	2.71
0 - 14 years	16,757,313	45.7	18,493,255	44.0	2.00	20,221,547	42.0	1.80
15 - 64 years	18,864,652	51.5	22,375,237	53.2	3.48	26,240,572	54.6	3.24
65 years & over	1,032,864	2.8	1,202,168	2.9	3.09	1,636,341	3.4	6.36

<sup>a</sup> Includes 'Not Stated' category.

Table 2. Percent Distribution and Sex Ratio of the Elderly Population by  
Category of Selected Characteristics and by Type of Area; 1980

	Philippines		Area I		Area II		Area III		Area IV		Area V		Area VI	
	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio	Distribution	Sex Ratio
<b>Age</b>														
65-74 years (young old)	70.9	94.1	73.7	79.6	71.5	77.4	72.7	84.5	65.5	90.1	69.0	85.9	71.1	100.6
75-84 years (old)	23.7	96.0	22.4	72.0	23.7	87.7	22.2	86.0	28.7	103.2	24.9	88.4	23.5	103.1
85 years and over	5.4	79.4	3.9	64.2	4.8	77.8	5.1	65.9	5.8	62.1	6.1	70.1	5.5	85.0
<b>Marital Status</b>														
Never Married	5.8	34.2	7.2	27.8	6.7	36.4	6.1	27.7	6.7	27.0	6.5	32.7	5.3	36.6
Married	60.1	166.7	56.9	159.2	56.6	156.1	58.7	163.5	61.7	157.3	58.2	161.2	61.4	170.4
Widowed	33.0	36.6	34.6	23.4	35.5	27.9	34.4	28.0	30.7	38.4	34.2	31.1	32.2	41.8
Divorced/Separated	0.8	72.7	0.8	64.6	1.0	46.1	0.7	95.1	0.5	18.5	0.7	58.1	0.8	80.9
Unknown	0.3	77.0	0.4	39.3	0.1	-	0.1	-	0.5	45.5	0.3	112.0	0.3	85.7
<b>Highest Grade Completed</b>														
No Grade Completed	33.7	69.5	9.3	34.0	23.4	50.8	27.1	50.9	26.5	53.6	23.9	47.4	41.1	77.3
Elementary	52.3	101.0	47.1	58.3	49.8	73.6	53.3	86.6	60.5	94.5	56.1	85.7	51.7	117.0
High School	7.4	155.0	20.5	110.1	15.3	134.3	10.8	137.7	6.7	338.5	10.6	175.2	4.1	180.8
College Undergraduate	1.9	178.8	6.3	150.6	3.3	127.7	2.6	229.2	1.9	353.6	3.0	230.9	0.9	167.9
College graduate and higher	4.6	120.2	16.8	124.4	8.3	137.7	6.2	142.6	4.4	140.0	6.4	135.8	2.1	97.9
<b>Population 65 years and over</b>														
	100.0	93.7	100.0	77.1	100.0	79.7	100.0	83.3	100.0	91.8	100.0	85.5	100.0	100.3
	(1,631,780)		(141,732)		(52,272)		(45,300)		(27,192)		(324,592)		(1,040,692)	

Table 3. Distribution of the Elderly Population by Economic Activity and Age and by Type of Area: 1980

	Philippines	Type of Area					
		Area I	Area II	Area III	Area IV	Area V	Area VI
65 years and over	1,631,780	141,732	52,272	45,300	27,192	324,592	1,040,692
% Engaged in gainful occup.	39.0	20.4	28.0	30.4	33.0	32.0	44.8
% Agricultural workers	75.4	7.3	31.6	43.2	53.5	67.2	86.5
% Not engaged	61.0	79.6	72.0	69.6	67.0	68.0	55.2
65-74 years	1,156,252	104,408	37,352	32,940	17,812	224,116	739,624
% Engaged	43.0	23.6	31.2	34.9	37.4	36.4	48.9
% Agricultural	74.3	7.4	28.7	42.1	52.5	55.3	86.1
% Not engaged	57.0	76.4	68.8	65.1	62.6	63.6	51.1
75-84 years	387,668	31,716	12,388	10,044	7,824	80,896	244,800
% Engaged	31.9	11.6	21.6	20.1	28.7	24.5	38.1
% Agricultural	79.5	8.1	44.2	48.2	56.6	62.9	88.1
% Not engaged	68.1	88.4	78.4	79.9	71.3	75.5	61.9
85 years and over	87,860	5,608	2,532	2,316	1,556	19,580	56,268
% Engaged	17.3	10.1	11.7	10.4	4.1	13.0	20.5
% Agricultural	79.3	-	31.1	56.7	37.5	71.0	87.0
% Not engaged	82.7	89.9	88.3	89.6	95.9	87.0	79.5

a/ Percent of the number of persons engaged in gainful occupations.

Table 4. Distribution and Sex Ratio of the Elderly Population by Living Arrangement and Relationship to Household Head and by Type of Area: 1980

	Philippines		Area I		Area II		Area III		Area IV		Area V		Area VI	
	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio	Distri- bution	Sex Ratio
Total		93.7		77.1		79.7		83.3		91.8		85.5		100.3
Living alone	3.7	55.3	2.8	43.8	3.7	38.6	4.2	51.9	3.7	42.7	5.3	52.1	6.5	57.7
Head, living with spouse only	34.2	33,249.3	29.8	14,156.8	30.7	36,381.8	32.0	a/	33.8	13,417.6	32.4	23,340.2	35.6	45,320.0
Head/Spouse, living with no other adults	2.6	32.9	1.7	24.3	1.9	26.2	2.3	31.8	1.2	21.7	2.6	27.0	2.8	36.0
Head/Spouse, living with other adults	31.5	15.0	31.2	16.5	31.1	13.6	33.7	14.8	36.2	16.7	32.1	14.2	31.1	15.0
Other relatives of head	24.7	40.3	32.1	32.1	30.0	35.7	26.6	35.0	23.8	45.0	26.3	37.5	22.9	43.6
Non-relative of head	1.3	47.3	2.4	31.4	2.6	36.9	1.2	38.0	1.2	48.2	1.4	33.8	1.1	61.9

a/ Not enough samples.

Source: 5-percent sample of the 1980 CPH.

**Table 5. Migration Rate Among the Elderly Population  
by Relationship to Household Head and Area:  
Philippines, 1980**

Area	Total	Relationship to Household Head		
		Head/Spouse	Other Relatives	Non-relatives
<b>Philippines</b>				
Population	1,612,788	1,191,008	400,652	21,128
Migration Rate <sup>a</sup>	42.2	30.6	68.8	195.4
<b>Area I</b>				
Population	142,912	93,544	45,912	3,456
Migration Rate	91.7	70.4	125.8	219.9
<b>Area II</b>				
Population	52,252	35,200	15,672	1,380
Migration Rate	63.2	44.8	99.5	121.7
<b>Area III</b>				
Population	44,832	32,320	11,980	532
Migration Rate	57.3	33.0	118.5	150.4
<b>Area IV</b>				
Population	27,192	20,392	6,468	332
Migration Rate	40.3	30.4	56.9	325.3
<b>Area V</b>				
Population	321,604	232,380	84,820	4,404
Migration Rate	41.4	29.3	68.6	160.8
<b>Area VI</b>				
Population	1,023,996	777,172	235,800	11,024
Migration Rate	33.9	25.5	53.6	209.0

<sup>a</sup>

Per thousand population aged 65 years or older.