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**Analysis of Thomas Robert Malthus’ *An Essay on the Principle of Population***

Sedentary agriculture introduced some *12000 years ago* 🡪 the food was plentiful, the world's population has grown exponentially ever since.

Today there are over *7 billion* human beings jostling for position on planet Earth.

Food is central: sustains life,

provides energy,

promotes growth.

* *But what effect does it have on the human population?*

Malthus, 18th century English economist, believe food fundamentally constrain population growth.

🡺 It is an essay on the principle of population are you that the planet population will always persist a level simply adequate to support life: *nothing more, nothing less* 🡪 ***subsistence level***.

Mathus argues that food be in abundance are short supply as a levelling effect. Surely more food means more births and longer life, the population can only grow.

**Example**: Imagine a school of fish and algae the central food source. Let's assume the school is in equilibrium, the population is constant because there is the ideal food to fish ratio this is the ***subsistence level***. For whatever reason extra *allergy* have been shipped into the area. Increased food means more fish will survive to maturity and the schools population will increase.

According to Malthus the ***population*** ***increases exponentially*** *(one fish, two fish, four fish, sixteen fish...).* The allergy increases in the same way.

Availability of subterranean rock constrain the production of food, the number of rocks is fined. So the production will either remain constant or at best grow linearly. It will be able to replenish itself but will be multiplied exponentially like the fish. That leaves the school of fish with more mouths to feed the food supply can no longer meet the demand of this larger school, so the population increases short live many fish die of hunger, and the school returns to equilibrium.

Land availability is outside human and fish control just like famine and disease.

Malthus calls them ***positive checks***.

Malthus acknowledged these positive checks in the Elizabethan poor laws, it believes that social welfare and food distribution to the poor unravel in the long run.

* *Is it possible to help with the population trap?*

Malthus had in mind preventative checks human preventive behaviour or moral restraint as he put it to beat the system: delayed marriage, emigration 🡪 this was not something he believed animals could engaging.

🡺 Malthus’ theory on population has been acknowledged as the ***most influential work of its era***.