CONTEXTUALIZING PRODUCTIVE AGING IN ASIA

13-14 MARCH 2017
ARI SEMINAR ROOM (AS8, LEVEL 4)
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Convenors:
Pei-Chun Ko
Wei-Jun Jean Yeung
“Productive Aging” emphasizes older adults’ engagement in productive activities, including working, care giving, volunteering or helping in later life. Asian countries (especially in East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia) face demographic aging in different scales and speeds. In this conference, we aim to address determinants of productive aging in Asia from a multilevel perspective to understand how communities, families and individual factors can facilitate engagement of older adults in Asia.

Take coresidence as an example to illustrate why family factors matter to older adults, cultural values of older adults living with family in later life are prevalent across Asian countries. However, declining coresidence rates and increasing numbers of golden agers living alone may affect older adults’ motivations and engagement in productive activities once they are detached from family. Other family factors, including intergenerational support to older parents, proximity between parents and children, or adult children’s need of childcare may also influence older adults’ motivations and opportunities to engage in productive activities. More studies are needed to research on family factors in relation to productive aging in Asia.

Older adults stay in their residential communities longer than adults at working age. Studies based on Western countries showed that older adults in disadvantaged communities face the difficulty to be connected socially. It is because community contexts not only include infrastructure, facilities and space that help generate productive activities, but also relate to residential composition and social welfare resources that may enhance older adults’ motivation and senses of participation. It would be important to investigate the impacts of community contexts on productive engagement in Asia.

Many Asian countries have had reforms in pension, long-term care and health care. Incentives related to productive aging are also implemented in developed countries. These differences in policies and institutional support across Asian countries may indirectly influence the rates and intensity of engagement in productive activities across countries. It will be relevant to conduct cross-national studies to understand how different welfare and policy settings are associated with productive aging.

Theoretically informed empirical studies, especially those with cross-national and cross-temporal comparisons are welcome. Participants are invited to address the following themes in the conference:

- Prevalence and profiles of productive engagement;
- Attitudes towards productive aging;
- Intergenerational support and family structures in relation to engagement in productive activities;
- Community contexts, such as the rural-urban divide, socio-demographic features, infrastructure, types of services or organizations;
- Cross-national comparative studies in productive aging;
- How factors at different levels (micro, meso and macro) interact to shape productive aging;
- Conceptual and methodological issues, such as definitions, data harmonization and methodological innovations.

**PHOTO CREDITS**

*Straits Times*: www.straitstimes.com  
*Today’s news*: www.new0.net  
The Thermos Foundation: garden91.pixnet.net  
*Dong Nai Newspaper*: www.baodongnai.com.vn  
*Sisa Sangjo News*: www.ssnews.tv  
*City Nakatsu*: www.city-nakatsu.jp  
*China Times*: www.chinatimes.com
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<td>PANEL 1 – FAMILY BACKGROUND AND CHILDHOOD CONDITIONS ON PRODUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT</td>
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<td>Touchanun Komonpaisarn</td>
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<td>QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS</td>
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<td>PANEL 2 – DETERMINANTS AND HEALTH OUTCOMES OF NON-PAID PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES</td>
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<td>Angelique Chan</td>
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<td>Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore</td>
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<td>Chi Chao</td>
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<td>National Yang-Ming University, Taiwan</td>
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<td><strong>Panel 3 – Employment in Later Life: Determinants and Health Implications</strong></td>
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| 14:00 | **Firman Witoelar**  
SurveyMETER, Indonesia  
Health and Well-being of Older Workers in Indonesia |
| 14:20 | **Giang Thanh Long**  
National Economics University, Vietnam  
| 14:40 | **Laishram Ladusinh**  
Melody Thangajam  
International Institute for Population Sciences, India  
Changing Patterns of Occupation and Earning of Elderly in India |
| 15:00 | **Questions & Answers** |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | **Tea Break** |
| 16:00 – 17:30 | **Panel 4 – Gender and Family in Productive Aging** |
| **Chairperson** |                                                                    |
| 16:00 | **Yeonjin Lee**  
Wei-Jun Jean Yeung  
National University of Singapore  
Cohort and Gender Differences in Paid, Formal, and Informal Activity Engagement in Korea |
| 16:20 | **Niharika Tripathi**  
International Institute for Population Sciences, India  
Gender Differentials in Social Cohesion, Living Arrangements and Productive Ageing in India: Evidence from Household Survey Data |
| 16:40 | **Praveen K. Pathak**  
University of Delhi, India  
Gender Differentials in Social Cohesion, Living Arrangements and Productive Ageing in India: Evidence from Household Survey Data |
<p>| 17:00 | <strong>Questions &amp; Answers</strong> |
| 17:30 | <strong>End of Day 1</strong> |
| 17:45 | <strong>Bus Transfers to Dinner</strong> |
| 18:15 – 20:00 | <strong>Workshop Dinner</strong> (For Speakers, Chairpersons &amp; Invited Guests) |</p>
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<td>Panel 5 – Reframing Productive Activities</td>
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<td>Premchand Dommaraju, Abhijit Visari, National University of Singapore</td>
<td>(Un)productive ageing: Dependence and reciprocity in old age in India</td>
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<td>Erin Hye – Won Kim</td>
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<td>Ju Hyun Kim, Chung Nam National University, South Korea</td>
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<td>Productive Aging of Korean Older People Based on Time Use</td>
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<td>Thang Leng Leng, National University of Singapore</td>
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<td>What is Productive in Lifelong Learning? Exploring lifelong learning among the baby-boomers in Singapore</td>
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<td>Panel 6 – Community Environment and Productive Aging</td>
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<td>Wen Zhuoyi, Lingnan University, Hong Kong</td>
<td>Age-friendly Community and Productive Ageing in Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Ling Leng Thang</td>
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<td>Peter McDonald, Iwu Utomo, Ariane Utomo, The Australian National University, Robert Sparrow, Wageningen University, The Netherlands</td>
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<td>Towards Productive Aging: Insights from Rural Indonesia</td>
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<td>Yasuhiko Saito, Nihon University, Japan</td>
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<td>Life After Retirement for Japanese Older Adults: Are They Productive?</td>
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<td><strong>Panel 7 – Cross-Country Comparisons on Productive Aging</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ik Ki Kim</strong> Renmin University of China</td>
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<td>Comparison of the Social Participation of the Elderly in Incheon-Gyeonggi Province (Korea) and Shandong Province (China)</td>
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<td>Vipan Prachuabmoh Chulalongkorn University, Thailand</td>
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<td>Dhiman Das Shu Hu National University of Singapore</td>
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<td>Productive Aging and Quality of Life: Social Divide among the Elderly in China and India</td>
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<td>Pei-Chun Ko Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore</td>
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The Role of Family Background and Childhood Conditions in Productive Engagement in Later Life in China

Pei-Chun KO
Asia Research Institute, and Centre for Family and Population Research
National University of Singapore
arikp@nus.edu.sg

Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG
Asia Research Institute, and Centre for Family and Population Research,
Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore
ariywj@nus.edu.sg

Engaging in productive activities (employment, care provision, volunteering and helping) in later life has become an important issue in China as promoting productive aging is crucial to social inclusion of its growing share of older population and the increasing expenditure on old-age welfare. Studies have found that socioeconomic resources are the common denominators to explain engagement. Life course studies address how later-life socioeconomic conditions are associated with family background and childhood conditions. However, less studied is the extent of family background and childhood conditions initiate the process of cumulative disadvantage (or advantage) in individuals’ resources which affect their engagement in productive activities in later life. Thus, the proposed study aims to investigate the effects of family background and childhood conditions. Waves 1 and 3 (Life History) of the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) are employed. Family background includes inherited financial transfers, parents’ occupations and family socioeconomic status (subjective SES). Childhood conditions include respondents’ health conditions before 16 years old and neighborhood cohesion in childhood. Logistic regressions are applied to estimate the likelihood of activity engagement. The analytic sample size is 6,594. The preliminary findings demonstrate that parental occupation as non-agricultural work, better family SES and higher neighborhood cohesion in childhood are positively correlated with paid work. For grandparental care, it is found that family SES is negatively correlated with the engagement. Lastly, non-agricultural work and higher neighborhood cohesion are associated with higher likelihood in volunteering, helping and caring for non-family members. To conclude, these findings imply that being productive in later life can be traced to childhood. Productive engagement in later life is not only about current socioeconomic status of older adults. It is the past that has accumulated the resources and capabilities for older adults to be engaged in activities.

Pei-Chun Ko is a joint postdoctoral fellow in the Asia Research Institute and the Centre for Family and Population Research at the National University of Singapore. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Colonge in February 2015. Her research interests include aging, intergenerational relationships, social networks and social capital and comparative research in East Asia. Her dissertation examined determinants of grandparental childcare, social activities and education gradients in mental health in China, Japan and South Korea. She is currently working on projects related to determinants of productive aging in China and plans to develop a comparative perspective to compare the findings with other Asian countries.

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung is Provost’s Chair Professor of Sociology, Director of the Centre for Family and Population Research, and a Research Leader in the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS). Before joining NUS in 2008, she taught at the University of Michigan and New York University. Professor Yeung is a member of the board of trustees of the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies and an international advisor to the Institute of Social Science Survey in Peking University. She was a co-principal investigator of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics and has advised on many international panel surveys. Her current research focuses on American and Chinese family demographic changes and how they relate to children’s and young adult’s well-being. Her recent publications include edited volumes on Asian Fatherhood, Transitioning to Adulthood in Asia, Marriage in Asia, One-Person Households in Asia, Economic Stress, Human Capital and Families in Asia.
One of the many roles of grandparents is the role as caretaker for their grandchildren. Studies that looked at the situation of elderly providing care to their grandchildren found that care responsibilities can have beneficial effects but can also pose challenges to those providing it, depending on individual circumstances and the intensity of care provision. Literature on the situation of elderly providing care for grandchildren in Thailand is a very timely topic, given that in 2011, 23% of persons 60+ co-resided with and 28% provided care for a grandchild younger than 10 years of age. A special phenomenon is the occurrence of skipped-generation households where grandparents and grandchildren co-reside in the absence of the parents. This household type is mostly the result of parents moving from rural to urban areas in order to work there, and grandparents assuming full care responsibility.

The objective of our study is to shed light on the health effects on grandparents of providing care for grandchildren. Whether this experience is a positive or a negative one concerning the caretaker’s health depends on a wide range of factors that we explore in the context of Thailand. We are particularly interested in comparing the grandparenting experience between those living in rural and urban areas, between men and women, as well as between those that are main caretakers compared to those that provide only supplementary care. We also expect to find noticeable differences between households where three generations are living together compared to skipped-generation households.

The study is based on the quantitative analysis of two waves of the National Survey of Older Persons in Thailand, 2011 and 2014. The findings from this study will be the first in-depth quantitative analysis about the grandparenting-health relationship in Thailand and one of very few to date in an Asian society. Overall, we expect that some of our results will be similar to the results found by Chen and Liu (2012) for China, but then again, the context in China and Thailand does differ significantly e.g. we do not expect to find as large differences between maternal and paternal grandparent households as are found for China. Contrary to the situation in China, there is unfortunately no longitudinal data available for Thailand, so we rely on cross-sectional data. One difference to the Study by Chen and Liu (2012) is that we investigate both physical health (self-rated health and also health based on functional/ADL/IADL difficulties) and (self-rated) mental health of the grandparents who take care of grandchildren. Our preliminary results (not controlling yet for selection bias into caring for grandchildren) indicate that those who provide intense care as well as occasional care of their grandchildren report both better physical health and mental health, with different magnitude for each intensity level of care. We will address the issue about selection bias by using an instrumental variable approach, where we use an exogenous shock (i.e. the death of both parents of the grandchildren) as sub-group analysis to control for selection.

Our datasets contain information about activities of the elderly (community club/elderly club/ community activities engagement) and we will include this information in our analysis.
Touchanun Komonpaisarn is a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics at Chulalongkorn University (CU). Her main research areas are health economics and micro econometrics. Dr Komonpaisarn obtained a PhD in economics from the University of Texas, Austin. She is a member and secretary of the Master in Health Economics and Healthcare Management Program at the Faculty of Economics at CU.

Elke Loichinger is a lecturer at the College of Population Studies at Chulalongkorn University and a guest researcher at the Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) at Laxenburg, Austria. Her research interests include population projections and various aspects of population aging, foremost prospects of labor supply in aging societies and developments of health status. She holds a MPP in Public Policy from Duke University, USA, and a PhD in statistics from the Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria.
Antecedents and Consequences of Volunteering among older Singaporeans

Angelique CHAN
Centre for Ageing Research and Education, Duke-NUS Medical School Singapore
Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore
angelique.chan@duke-nus.edu.sg

Grand H.-L. CHENG
Centre for Ageing Research and Education, Duke-NUS Medical School Singapore
grand.cheng@duke-nus.edu.sg

Volunteering has various health benefits and contributes to longevity for older persons and hence, it is crucial to understand factors influencing volunteering in this age group. Studies in Western countries have documented the importance of human capital (e.g., education, income), cultural capital (e.g., values, attitudes), and social capital (e.g., family ties, social networks) in volunteering. However, there is only a handful of relevant research in older Asian populations. This research gap warrants attention because different ethnic groups have different orientations and concerns, and these may qualify the motivations for volunteering. Our research context is Singapore, a multicultural society with three main ethnic groups being Chinese, Malays, and Indians. The Singapore Ministerial Committee on Ageing has recently released a $3 billion action plan for successful aging that aims to help locals “age confidently and lead active lives, with strong bonds with family and community”. Documentation of factors predicting volunteering in older Singaporeans is of paramount importance. Using data from the Panel on Ageing and Transitions in Health Survey (PATHS), we explore the determinants of volunteering across older Chinese, Malays, and Indians in Singapore. Also, we are interested in whether volunteering is associated with better health outcomes (self-rated health and number of depressive symptoms) through enhanced resilience, and we use a mediation model to address this possibility. An understanding of the factors associated with volunteering will allow for more targeted government programs aimed at increasing volunteerism among older adults.

Angelique Chan holds joint appointments as Associate Professor in the Signature Program in Health Services and Systems Research, Duke-NUS Medical School and the Department of Sociology, NUS. She is the founding Director of the Centre for Ageing Research and Education, CARE, at Duke-NUS. Her current research examines disability transitions, mortality, and the effects of social support on health, caregiver burden, and use of long-term care services. She has consulted widely both local and international and sit on several national committees on ageing and education.

Grand Cheng is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Centre for Ageing Research and Education (CARE) of Duke-NUS Medical School. One of his research interests is social relationships and health, and he is now examining the psychosocial processes of sleep among older adults. He also studies work and social mobility, and identity and group processes.
Beyond Healthcare:
Social Participation and Late-life Cognitive Functioning in Taiwan

CHI Chiao
Institute of Health and Welfare Policy, College of Medicine,
National Yang-Ming University, Taiwan
cchiao@ym.edu.tw

Many studies have focused on the complexity of health care access, coverage, and utilization in caring older people with poor cognitive functioning. This study yet hypothesizes that social participation promotes later-life cognitive functioning beyond the availability of healthcare such as National Health Insurance (NHI) program. Two research questions are investigated. Is social participation independently associated with later-life cognitive functioning? What social and lifestyle factors may better characterize social participation of Taiwanese older adults in the period of NHI?

Using a population-based natural experiment study design, data from the Taiwan Longitudinal Study on Aging (TLSA, 1993-2007) are analyzed. Social participation is operationalized using items that measured social engagement in TLSA. As indicated, older participants reported whether they ever participated in group activities through any one of six types of social organizations: hobby-related clubs, religious or church groups, political groups, retired or elderly-related associations, or volunteer groups. Lifestyle factors refer to health lifestyle behaviors. We employ mixed-effects models to estimate the effects of social participation and NHI on cognitive functioning over time and explore possible social and lifestyle factors associated with social participation while taking community development, concurrent health status, medical care utilization, and family living arrangements into consideration.

Preliminary findings from mixed-effects models showed a significant increase in overall cognitive functioning after the establishment of the NHI program (β=0.18, p<0.01). And, being active in social activities is also significantly associated with a higher level of cognitive functioning (β=0.12, p<0.01). The preliminary investigation suggests significant and independent effects of social participation and NHI on late-life cognitive functioning. These results underscore the importance of social participation beyond healthcare, which warrants further analyses and models exploring social and lifestyle factors characterizing social participation of Taiwanese older adults.

Chi Chiao, is Professor in Institute of Health and Welfare Policy, National Yang-Ming University, Taiwan. Her primary research interests are to investigate the demographic and social processes that influence health and related behaviors of vulnerable groups, including women, adolescents, and older adults. Her current research is exploring issues on social disparities in changes and differences in mental health and related risky behaviors via cross-national data sets by using multilevel approach.
Health and Well-being of Older Workers in Indonesia

Firman WITOELAR
SurveyMETER, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
fwitoelar@surveymeter.org

In a country where social programs to support the elderly and pension schemes are lacking, older population may continue to work until relatively late in lives. This continued participation in the labor force may be affected by wealth, health, as well as individual preferences. At the same time, the prolonged involvement in the workforce may also take a toll on their health and well being, particularly for those who remain in the workforce due to lack of other means of support.

Using data from the multiple rounds of the Indonesia Family Life Survey including the newly available IFLS5 (2014), the paper will focus on the health and well-being of the older employees in Indonesia. The paper will study the pattern of labor force participation of individuals aged 45 and above including job sectors, occupations, hours worked, and job characteristics and investigate the relationship to health and well-being. Various health measures will be considered including self-reported health measures such as physical activities, general health symptoms, activities of daily living and physical functioning (ADL, IADL), doctor diagnoses of chronic conditions, as well as objectively measured health or biomarkers such as BMI, blood pressure, hemoglobin levels, timed sit-to-stand, grip strength, balance test, and timed walk. The paper will also look at measures of mental health including measures of depressive symptoms, hedonic well-being, as well as job and life satisfaction. Differences between gender, urban-rural, and education will be examined as will the differences between agricultural and non-agricultural work, and pension-eligible and non-eligible employment. Information about non-coreident family members and transfers, which is available in IFLS, as well as access to government social assistance programs will be taken into account when considering the means for old-age support that the elderly workers may have. Finally, by taking advantage of the panel dimension of the data, the paper will be able to look at the changes in the various health and well-being outcomes across the multiple rounds of the IFLS.

Firman Witoelar is a research economist at SurveyMeter. His research interest is in the area of microeconomics of development and with particular interest in health behavior and outcomes, education and labor market outcomes, ageing, and household surveys. Witoelar was a Co-Principal Investigator of the Indonesia Family Survey Wave 4 (2007) and is currently a Co-PI of IFLS 5. Before his current appointment at SurveyMeter, Witoelar was a Rockefeller Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Economic Growth Center, Yale University (2004-2006), and a research economist at the World Bank, Washington, DC (2009-2013). His international field experience include setting up tracking operations and provide training in Tanzania and Uganda on how to track respondents in nationally representative longitudinal household surveys. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Michigan State University (2004).
Productive Aging in Vietnam: 
Current Status, Determinants and Policy Recommendations

Giang Thanh Long
Institute of Public Policy and Management, National Economics University, Vietnam
giang.long@ippm.edu.vn ; longgt@neu.edu.vn

This research, using data from four nationally representative surveys, namely Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey (VHLSS) from 2002 to 2014 and Vietnam Aging Survey (VNAS) in 2011, will explore the situation of productive activities among older people (those aged 60 and over) in Vietnam. In this research, productive activities cover income-generating as well as family and community caring/participating work. We will explore these activities with different individual and household characteristics. In particular, using statistical tests and econometric models, we will identify the determinants of these activities among older people. Based on the results, the research will propose some policy recommendations to promote productive aging, so as to reach ‘active aging’ goal.

Giang Thanh Long is an Associate Professor and Director of the Institute of Public Policy and Management (IPPM), National Economics University, Hanoi; Senior Researcher at Institute of Social and Medical Studies (ISMS), Hanoi; Affiliate Research Fellow of the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing, University of Oxford. His research interests include the economics of aging and health protection for older people, using actuarial and micro-simulation techniques to provide evidence-based policy studies. His research outcomes have been published widely, including Asian Economic Journal, Asia Pacific Migration Journal, Asia Pacific Population Journal, Asia Pacific Development Journal, Asia Pacific Economic Literature, Development and Change, International Social Science Journal, Journal of Population Ageing, and Social Sciences and Medicine. He was a member of the drafting team for the Vietnam’s Social Protection Strategy 2011-2020; and a key member of taskforce and research group for reforming social assistance system in Vietnam, under MoLISA.
Changing Patterns of Occupation and Earning of Elderly in India

Laishram LADUSINGH
Melody THANGAJAM
International Institute for Population Sciences, India
lslaishram@iips.net

The paper makes an assessment of the changing level of gender differential in work participation and occupational structure of elderly in India. The research questions the paper addresses are what determines the gender gap in real earning of elderly, whether the gender gap in real income is narrowing over time and what factors account for the earning gap over time. Using data for two rounds of India Human Development Survey it is found that work participation of elderly in India has increase from 13.3 percent in 2004-05 to 16.4 percent in 2011-12, more significantly for males from 19.4 to 23.3 percents and marginally for females from 7.1 to 10.1 percents. In 2004-05 the proportion of elderly workers in agriculture and animal farming, labourer, business, salaried and professional and part time worker were 17.8, 55.9, 8.4, 12.8 and 5.1 percents respectively which have change to 17.6, 53.2, 2.7, 12.2 and 14.4 percents in 2011-12. The mean working days of elderly in these occupations in order in 2004-05 were 121, 178, 210, 281 and 222 respectively and have change to 90, 181, 175, 319 and 118 days respectively in 2011-12. The mean annual earning for elderly engaged in the aforesaid occupations in order are Rs. 14277, Rs. 19315, Rs. 32932, Rs. 93880 and Rs. 44811 in 2004-05 and in 2011-12 after adjustment of inflation the corresponding mean earning are Rs. 11719, Rs. 27591, Rs. 30896, Rs. 109673 and Rs. 21078 respectively. The gender gap in earning has not change over time. Multigenerational living arrangement and residing rural areas are found to have deterrent effect on annual earning, while household income quintile has significant enhancing effect on annual earning but age and incidence of long term morbidities have no significant effect on annual earning. Contribution of endowment factors in gender gap in earning decreases over time.

Laishram Ladusingh, is Professor of Statistics and Demography at the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India. He teaches statistics, research methodology, survey research, ageing, clinical trials and design of experiments to postgraduate students. He holds postgraduate degree in Statistics and PhD in Population Studies. He is the key coordinator for implementing District Level Household & Facility Survey for the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. He has published papers in areas of economics of population ageing, social security, longevity and work, public health, stochastic modeling, maternal and child health in peer reviewed scholarly journals. He served as members of technical advisory committees of various government and academic bodies.

Melody Thangjam, has obtained MPhil Degree in Population Studies from the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India. She is currently pursuing her PhD from the Tata Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai. She is working as Project Officer at the International Institute for Population Sciences in the project “Counting Women’s Work Project” funded by the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Earlier she worked at TISS Mumbai as a Project Officer in the UNFPA-IEG-TISS-IEG project titled “Increased Awareness, Access and Utilization of Elderly Services. She has previously worked on various issues in the field of elderly well-being in India.
Cohort and Gender Differences in Paid, Formal, and Informal Activity Engagement in Korea

Yeonjin LEE
Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore
arileey@nus.edu.sg

Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG
Asia Research Institute, and Centre for Family and Population Research, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore
ariywj@nus.edu.sg

While researchers have paid attention to activities beyond the sphere of formal employment as life expectancy increased, studies have not fully considered the links between family and community-level socioeconomic resources and informal and formal activities. Activities in old age have been found to have positive association with older adults’ health and psychological well-being in many societies. Korea is an important case to examine given the fact that the share of the elderly population is increasing rapidly with one of the world’s lowest Total Fertility Rate (TFR), 1.25 in 2016. In an era of phenomenal socioeconomic transformation, not only is private support network shrinking, governmental support of the elderly remains limited. Korean men are known to retire very late, on average at age 71 despite an official retirement age of 60 to provide for old age. Because of structural inequalities embedded in the gendered hierarchy, Korean women are less likely to participate in full-time work and in national pension programs compared to men throughout their life course. Therefore, women are prone to be exposed to old-age income insecurity, which makes older women more likely to rely on family resources and networks from informal activities. Yet, recent studies found that gender roles have changed in the past few decades. Korean women have experienced a huge increase in higher education enrollment. However, little is known about how this increased educational attainment has affected paid work, formal and informal activities engagement for men and women over time, and to what extent the gender gap in these activities has decreased over time. In this paper, we investigate what factors influence older adults’ participation in paid labor activities and formal activities such as participation in religious, political, cultural, or other types of organizations as well as informal activities with neighbors and friends. We assess the relationships between three types of social engagements among Koreans aged 60–79 using the Korean Longitudinal Study of Aging (KLoSA), which was initiated in 2006 and followed up until 2014. We also investigate the extent to which these activities vary by gender and by cohort. In particular, we explore how older adults’ work experience, human capital, financial resources, offspring’s resources and community level factors are associated with changes in various forms of activities and whether the relationships are contingent on institutional and cultural contexts.

Yeonjin Lee is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Changing Family cluster in Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore. Her research interests are quantitative methods, social demography, social stratification, and health policy. Her recent studies shed light on health inequalities that arise from interactions between education, gender, and socio-cultural context. She will conduct research on the health inequalities in East Asian and Southeast Asian countries using demographic methods. She will specifically focus on gender differences in health care and aging process related with family support.

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung is a professor at the Department of Sociology and the Cluster Leader in the Changing Family in Asia research cluster in Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore. She chairs the Family, Children, and Youth Research Cluster in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in NUS. Professor Yeung’s current research includes various family demographic issues in Asia and in America. Her recent publications include edited special issues on Asian Fatherhood, Transitioning to Adulthood in Asia, and Shifting Boundaries of Care in Asia and a forthcoming volume on Economic Stress and Families in Asia.
India is undergoing feminisation of population ageing in recent years. These demographic changes further compounded owing to social structural changes related to gender asymmetries and weathering of joint-families over the life course. However, there is lack of understanding about how gender disparities in social resources (social cohesion and joint-families) might deprive potentials of productive ageing among older adults in Indian context.

This paper attempts to understand the extent gender differential in social cohesion and living arrangement, and its association with productive ageing in older adults in Indian population. Social cohesion is operationalized through measuring the extent of participation of older adults in various social, cultural/religious, political organizations, and community related activities in the neighbourhood. Productive ageing is measured through active participation of elderly in economic and social life spaces. Various domains related to participation of elderly in the social life spaces included extent of involvement of elderly in both the household decisions/activities and community/neighbourhood related activities.

Using data on 9852 elderly from the UNFPA-BKPAI project conducted across seven states in India during 2011, we examined gender disparities in social cohesion and living arrangement and its association with the productive ageing among elderly in Indian population. Descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis was undertaken to analyse the data. Data indicates wide gender gaps in social cohesion with declining share of elderly living with children. Elderly staying alone or without spouse, and with poor social cohesion, were less likely to engage in productive ageing than others.

Niharika Tripathi is a doctoral candidate under the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi - Senior Research Fellowship Program at the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India. She is working on her dissertation entitled ‘Gender and Elderly: Inheritance rights, family support, autonomy and well-being of elderly women in rural Uttar Pradesh, India’. Her major research interest encompasses issues on gender and population ageing, inheritance rights and women health, social capital and well-being of elderly, family life education and adolescent health. She earned a degree in Master of Population Studies from the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India in 2010. She received Bachelor of Arts (Honors) and Master of Arts in Sociology from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India in 2006 and 2008 respectively. She also participated in a training program on ‘Demographic Aspects of Population Ageing and its Implications for Socio-Economic Development, Policies and Plans’ by International Institute on Ageing (INIA), United Nations – Malta in November, 2011.

Praveen Kumar Pathak is an Assistant Professor of Geography at the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, Delhi, India. He earned PhD in Population Studies from the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India in 2015. His research interests are social networks and demographic behaviour; socioeconomic inequalities in population, nutrition and health; geospatial analysis of demographic/health outcomes. He has published research papers in several peer-reviewed journals with decent impact factors including PLOS ONE, Social Science and Medicine etc.
Examining and Theorizing Singapore Chinese’s Perception of Caregiving for Aged Parents

Corinne GHOH
Department of Social Work, National University of Singapore
swkgsnc@nus.edu.sg

Using the constructivist grounded theory method, this study examines how Singapore Chinese perceive and negotiate their caregiving responsibilities for their aged parents. The results show the complexity of how these children were involved emotionally, affectively and cognitively in managing their ambivalence of fulfilling their filial obligations. The strengths of the parent-child relationships coupled with their interactions with social, cultural, legal and economic domains are factors that impact decision making. This study discusses how the concept of filial piety cannot be viewed in dichotomized way of being filial or unfilial but a notion that is dynamic and can be negotiated. Implications for social work practice will be discussed.

Corinne Ghoh is an Associate Professor (Practice) of Social Work in the National University of Singapore. She holds concurrent appointments as Co-Director of the Next Age Institute at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Director of the Centre for Social Development Asia at the Department of Social Work. She is also an Associate Director with the Social Service Research Centre. Prior to joining the National University of Singapore, Corinne held several key appointments at the previous Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Singapore. She was the Director of Social Welfare, responsible for the administration of statutory functions under various legislations pertaining to the protection and welfare of vulnerable children and individuals and the Director of Rehabilitation, Protection and Residential Services Division in charge of administration and delivery of social services for vulnerable families, children and youths. Over the last 25 years of her experience in the social work field, she has been greatly involved in policy planning and development as well as in direct practice in areas pertaining to family and child welfare, child protection, family and elder protection and juvenile delinquency.
In this paper, we examine the notion of productive ageing in the socio-cultural, moral, institutional and demographic contexts of India. The concept of productive ageing with the emphasis on production (paid or unpaid) is limited in two ways: first, it excludes those who cannot (like the frail) or unwilling to produce and second, it implicitly assumes productivity and independence as globally recognized and valued ways to age. We take these two limitations as points of departure to conceptualize and investigate (un)productive ageing in India. In India, unlike in the west, dependence, transience and decline in old age are not considered as loss or failure to age well. Ageing in India draws on different moral-cultural scripts, family and kinship systems and institutional structures and the lived experiences of the elderly do not nicely fit into the Eurocentric models of productivity and independence in old age.

Drawing on primary qualitative data from 54 interviews with the elderly in south India and secondary quantitative data, we investigate (un) productive ageing by focusing on dependence and reciprocity in old age in India. Quantitative data are from Indian Human Development Surveys conducted in 2011-12 and UNFPA’s Building Knowledge Base on Population Ageing in India conducted in 2011. These rich and varied data sources help us to investigate the structure of intergenerational relations, interdependencies, reciprocity and productivity in old age. They also help in re-conceptualizing productivity in old age in an Asian context.

The productive activities that we examine are (1) those related to work participation among the elderly, (2) contribution by the elderly to the total household budget and its purpose (particularly use of the elderly population’s contribution for children and grandchildren’s education), (3) participation in social and community activities, volunteering, religious programmes and services. We also analyse time diary information in the BKPAI dataset – which is the primary source for our quantitative data – and that details routine daily activities including grandchildren caretaking, social visits, work for remuneration, etc.

We examine constraints as well as attitudes towards productive activities at older ages and in particular the implications for intergenerational relationships and dependencies. We expect that our contribution will be both empirical and theoretical. Based on the empirical evidence from India, we would like to suggest that productivity may be reconceptualised at least in the South Asian context.

Premchand Dommaraju is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Sociology at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His main research interest is in social demographic issues (marriage and divorce, families and households and ageing) with a geographical focus on South, Southeast and Central Asia. His publications have appeared in Population and Development Review, Demographic Research, Population, Population Studies, Population Research and Policy Review and Journal of Population Research. He is currently the associate editor of the journal Asian Population Studies.

Abhijit Visaria is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. He received his PhD and MA in Demography from the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation examined differences in son preference between Hindus and Muslims in India and Bangladesh, using measures of sex selection and sex differentials in child health outcomes. His current work focuses on measurement and implications of sex selection in Asia, particularly in the context of declining fertility desires.
Productive Aging of Korean Older People Based on Time Use

Ju Hyun KIM
Chungnam National University, South Korea
haha0929@cnu.ac.kr

The productivity of older people and their activities are evaluated very positively in the society, encouraging more participation. Beginning with a criticism of a current discourse on the productivity of older people falls short of enough consideration about our social reality and individual situations, this study examines the response and consequence seen in the Life-World of older people as Korea starts to hold a productive aging as a central value. This paper raises the following key questions. Is the Life-World of older people classified distinctively in terms of productive activity? Despite the situation of multiple interpretations about the group of older people, does the productive aging take on a uniformed appearance within the group? If not, which characteristics of older people bring differences in their participation in productive activities? And how does the difference relate to the meaning and life satisfaction in old age?

It classifies the group of older people based on the data taken from <2014 Time Use Survey> that helps examine the Life-World of older people materialized through productive activities. Using the <2014 Time Use Survey>, this study will conduct the Cluster analysis and multinominal logistic analysis on how difference influence the participation of productive activities among Korean older people. Especially, there was a significant difference in productive activities by gender. Male and female older people were also different in major participatory area, and it was found that female spent much more time in productive activities than male according to the amount of time spent in productive activities by a broad definition. The group of older people can be classified into several types of characteristics in terms of productive activities. This classification suggests the Life-World of older people is not homogeneous but it is multifaceted, showing their different desire and characteristics when participating in productive activities.

Ju Hyun Kim is a professor in Chungnam National University. She received Ph.D. in Sociology from the Seoul National University. Her research interests include family and social policy, Gerontology, Social welfare. She leads a team (P.I.) for the research on ageism in Korea and its implications for integrating Korean society. She is currently interested in the social rights and discrimination of elderly in Korea and Japan. There are some of recent publications: “Social Activities and Health of Korean Elderly Women by Age Groups”, in Educational Gerontology (2013) “Productive Activity and Life Satisfaction in Korean Elderly Women” in Journal of Women Aging (2013), “Family Caregiving by Elderly Korean Women and Their Quality of Life”, Gender, Care and Migration in East Asia (eds.) (2016 forthcoming, Palgrave Press.).
What is Productive in Lifelong Learning?  
Exploring lifelong learning among the baby-boomers in Singapore

THANG Leng Leng  
Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore  
lengthang@nus.edu.sg

Coined in 1982, the term "productive aging" is commonly associated with active participation in work, although it has since expanded beyond employment to include other dimensions of “work”, such as volunteering, care-giving and other activities that "produces good/service for society, whether paid or unpaid." (Bass, Caro and Chen, 1993). As an increasingly popular endeavor in later life, can lifelong learning be considered one of the “other activities” under the productive aging framework? How is lifelong learning connected to the notions of productive aging? This paper seeks to explore such connections as perceived by the baby-boomer learners in Singapore and examines the extent through which lifelong learning could play a significant role in enabling productive aging. Data for this paper is derived from a qualitative study of “lifelong learning among older adults in Singapore” (2012) which included a total of 64 interviews with learners and non-learners of the baby-boomer generation (age 50-64). Through a discussion of how both the learners and non-learners perceive lifelong learning, and the impact of their engagements as experienced by the learners, we suggest that lifelong learning could have an implication on productive aging beyond the notion of work. For example, learners often associate learning with happiness, and recount how learning provides an avenue for social participation through fostering new friendship with their course mates, and enhancing one’s technological and computer skills in strengthening existing social relationships, these impacts on social well-being may not have direct economic benefit, but could also enhance other dimensions of well-being and increases one’s level of social activeness. This paper hopes to promote productive aging in two levels: first, to provoke further re-thinking of what constitutes productive activities on the conceptual level, and second, on a practice level, we propose an intervention framework catering to the different levels of awareness and participation to encourage more efforts into lifelong learning among the baby-boomers.

**Thang Leng Leng** is socio-cultural anthropologist and Associate Professor at National University of Singapore (NUS). Her areas of research interest on aging is varied, ranging from intergenerational programs and relationships, family and caregiving, environmental gerontology to lifelong learning and active aging. She is currently Head of Department of Japanese Studies, and Deputy Director of Centre of Family and Population Research at NUS. She is co-editor in chief of Journal of Intergenerational Relationships (Taylor and Francis, USA).
Age-friendly Community and Productive Ageing in Hong Kong

WEN Zhuoyi
Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, Lingnan University, Hong Kong
zhuoyiwen@ln.edu.hk

World Health Organization (2007) promotes the idea of age-friendly cities in order to enable people to age actively and productively. In Hong Kong, the population aged 65 years and above is projected to rise from 13% in 2011 to 30% in 2041 (Census and Statistics Department of the Government of HKSAR, 2012). With this rapid growth of the elderly population, greater efforts are urgently needed to prepare for the shift in demographics and the challenges it brings to the Hong Kong society.

Based on the WHO’s framework, a pilot research on age-friendliness at community level and senior citizens’ productive engagement in Hong Kong, supported by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, has been implemented since 2015 in eight districts. The Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies at Lingnan University carries out the study in the Tsuen Wan District. 320 respondents took part in the survey studying the degree of age-friendliness and productive ageing in terms of volunteering and employment of their district. Among them, 77 participants further shared their perceptions and points of view in focus groups.

The survey results reveal, productive ageing in terms of volunteering and employment is modest at the community, though good community infrastructure and community service are in place. Qualitative data suggests, while opportunities of volunteering and employment are available, productive engagement is constrained by senior citizens’ poor health and physical fitness, illiteracy, no labour insurance for older employees and ageism. Moreover, Chinese culture under local community circumstance may act as pull and push factors of productive engagement. According to the ethical principles of filial piety and caring engagement, older people should enjoy their retirement years at home with their family members, and shoulder part of the caring role of their adult children, such as taking care of the grandchildren, providing instrumental support, and so on.

Thus, careful program designs for senior citizens in different health conditions, community education to reduce ageism, and policy advocacy are needed to underpin a more age-friendly community and productive ageing in Hong Kong.

Wen Zhuoyi is Research Assistant Professor at the Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, Lingnan University, Hong Kong. His primary research interests lie in the politics of social policy, social gerontology and welfare governance in China and Hong Kong. His research has been published in leading journals including VOLUNTAS, Public Administration and Development.
Towards Productive Aging: Insights from Rural Indonesia

Peter MCDONALD
University of Melbourne, and the Australian National University
Peter.mcdonald@anu.edu.au

Iwu UTOMO
School of Demography, The Australian National University
iwu.utomo@anu.edu.au

Robert SPARROW
Department of Economics, Wageningen University, The Netherlands
robert.sparrow@wur.nl

Ariane UTOMO
Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University
Ariane.utomo@anu.edu.au

There are presently 21 million Indonesians aged 60 years and over. This number is projected to rise to 48 million by 2035 when the percentage of the population at these older ages will be almost 16 per cent, double the present level. A high proportion of these older persons (57%) live in rural areas, commonly being areas from which younger people have moved to the rapidly growing cities and towns. This situation presents challenges for the traditional family-based aged care system in rural Indonesia. In addition to the out-migration of children and the ensuing loss of direct personal caring support, it has been observed that economic changes at the village level have been removing income sources especially for older, landless residents. Field research on the situation of older people in rural Indonesia has been limited.

This paper examines the needs of older persons in rural Indonesia for employment, income, health, daily care and social interaction and the extent to which their needs are met. We draw on a subset of data from an ongoing project in 12 selected villages across 8 provinces that have an older age distribution and where out-migration of the children of the older persons is significant. While the second stage of fieldwork is currently fielded, this paper evaluates the results of the first stage of data collection across three villages fielded in 2015: Giriasih in the district of Gunung Kidul (Yogyakarta), Winong in the district of Kebumen (Central Java) and Salo in West Sumatra. Upon conducting a full census of the elderly population in these villages, we analysed a series of interlinked datasets of 525 households, 739 respondents aged 60+, 136 adult children of the elderly respondent residing in the same village, and another 83 adult children who had migrated to Jakarta.

To identify the enabling and constraining contexts of productive aging, we first outline the elderly respondents’ living arrangements, well-being, health and disability status, mobility, their interactions with own children, their access to services, and their level and sources of income. Taking into account these village-level and individual-level correlates, we then examine the elderly’s engagement in income-generating activities, involvement in caregiving, in community and religious activities, in familial and community financial transfers, and in sustaining the social fabric of their village. Insights from in-depth interviews with service providers and village officials enrich our situational analysis of the rural elderly in Indonesia, identifying challenges and their strategies for a productive old age.
Peter McDonald is Deputy Director of the ARC Centre for Excellence in Population Ageing Research, Head of Demography Unit at the Centre for Health Policy, University of Melbourne, and Emeritus Professor of Demography at the Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University.

Iwu Utomo is Fellow at the School of Demography, The Australian National University.

Ariane Utomo is a Research Fellow at the Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University. This work is funded by the Australian Research Council Discovery project: Meeting the Needs of the Older Persons in Rural Indonesia.
Life After Retirement for Japanese Older Adults: Are They Productive?

Yasuhiko SAITO
University Research Center, Nihon University, Japan
saito.yasuhiko@nihon-u.ac.jp

Life expectancy at birth for Japan now reached at 87.05 for females and 80.79 for males in 2015. According to World Health Report by WHO, Japanese seem to have the highest healthy life expectancy. These reported years are for at birth. In aging society we probably better paying attention to numbers at older ages such as at age 60 or 65. Life expectancy at age 65 for females is 24.31 and 19.46 for males in 2015. This means that those who reach age 65 in 2015, on average, need to prepare for another 20 to 24 remaining years of life. What will they do during the remaining years of life? Using data from Nihon University Longitudinal Study of Aging (NUJLSOA) which started in 1999, we examine changes in life of those age 65 and above at baseline survey over the 10 year period. Some of them were still working, able to manage house chores, and help their children at baseline. How many of them were still working, managing house chores and helping their children? We describe changes observed over the 10 year period first. Then, we try to explain factors affecting such changes observed in activities over 10 years.

Yasuhiko Saito is a Professor at the University Research Center and Adjunct Professor at the School of Medicine, at Nihon University, Tokyo, Japan. He obtained his Ph.D. (Sociology) from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA. He is currently an Executive Committee Member of the International Social Science Council (ISSC) representing the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) and a Council Member of the Asian Population Association. He is a demographer by training and has been working on aging and health in both developed and developing countries in recent years. He has conducted a six-wave longitudinal survey on aging and health in Japan over the last 15 years. He is also participating in a comparative study on centenarians with researchers from Denmark, France, Sweden, and Switzerland.
Comparison of the Social Participation of the Elderly in Incheon-Gyeonggi Province (Korea) and Shandong Province (China)

Ik Ki KIM
Renmin University of China
ikki50@hanmail.net

Activity theory assumes a positive relationship between activity and life satisfaction of the elderly, and proposes that the successful aging occurs when the elderly stay alive and maintain social interactions. The elderly as getting older show lower rate of participation in various social activities. Social participation of the elderly may be a good indicator of the productive and successful aging of the elderly. In this paper, social participation indicates participating in the various activities including cultural and social activities of the elderly.

Korea and China in the East Asia are geographically very closely related. In addition to the geographical proximity, these two countries have shared many socio-cultural similarities in spite of some differences. The strong family planning programs under the strong government leadership in both Korea and China have accelerated the rapid processes of the demographic transition, especially in the process of the fertility transition.

The rapid process of the fertility transition has influenced the drastic changes of the population aging in both Korea and China, which turns out to be the fastest in the world. This paper shows the trends of the rapid processes of the population aging in both Korea and China, then compares the social participation of the elderly. This paper will compare the different patterns of the social participation of the Korean and Chinese elderly focusing on the similar but different cultural background. Finally, his paper possibly analyzes the determinants of the satisfaction of the social participation of the elderly in both countries. Regression analysis will be employed for checking the determinants.

The data for this paper were collected in Incheon-Gyeonggi Province in Korea and Shandong Province in China. Incheon-Gyeonggi Province and Shandong Province are the most closely located between Korea and China. The data are based on the same questionnaire at almost the same time, Chinese data in 2009 and Korean data in 2010. The number of the Korean data for the analysis is 1014, that for the Chinese data is 890.

Ik Ki Kim is Xin’ao International Outstanding Professor, College of Population and Sociology, Renmin University of China. His areas of research include population aging (comparison in the East Asia), urban sociology and urbanization, comparison of the East Asian culture, Korean wave, and social changes in the East Asia. Professor Kim was professor at Department of Sociology, Dongguk University, a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Michigan and Sophia University in Tokyo.
Productive Aging: 
Comparative Analysis between Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam

Vipan PRACHUABMOH  
College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand  
vipan.p@chula.ac.th

John KNODEL  
University of Michigan, USA; and  
College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand  
jknodel@umich.edu

Bussarawan TEERAWICHITCHAINAN  
School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University, Singapore  
bteerawichit@smu.edu.sg

In Southeast Asian societies, reciprocity relationships between adult children and elderly parents are the social norm. Adult children have filial responsibilities to care for and support their elderly parents, while older persons are expected to assist their adult children, families, and communities. Rapid globalization and increasing importance of technological skills might impact on norms and public perceptions of older people (OP). OP may be perceived as a burden or less productive due to advanced age and low and out-of-date education thus hindering productive aging. More recently, the concept of productive aging has been introduced as a means of promoting quality of life and well-being of OPs and as a way of promoting OPs involvement in community and economic development. However, comparative research on country-level differences in productive engagement of OPs is still limited.

This paper compares and contrasts the prevalence and profiles of productive aging among three ASEAN countries—Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam—and identifies the underlying factors associated with it. The three countries make an interesting comparison given that they share certain cultural features common to Southeast Asia but contrast sharply in their levels of economic development and degree of population aging. Three national surveys are employed: the 2012 Myanmar Aging Survey, the 2011 Viet Nam Aging Survey, and the 2011 Survey of Older Persons in Thailand. The paper focuses on several broad dimensions of productive aging, including work participation, provision of financial support to children, participation in household chores, grandchild care and care for other household members. The results reveal that in all three countries, a substantial proportion of OPs are engaging in these productive activities at least to some extent. The factors that have significant association with productive aging are gender, age, marital status, work status, household wealth, number of household member, and health status.

Vipan PRACHUABMOH is Associate Professor and Dean at the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from University of Chicago, USA. She was awarded fellowships from the University of Chicago Un-endowed and Hewlett Fund, and the Population Council. She is a demographer whose main research interests lie in the fields of fertility, aging, and population policy. During the past decade, her research works have been focused on issues related to population aging including the policy and plan on older persons in Thailand, community based long-term care system, preparation for old age, and contributions and values of older persons. She also serves as a member of National Committee on Older persons, committee on reformation system for the aging society of the National Reform Council, and the co-principal investigator of Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis.
John KNODEL is Research Professor Emeritus at University of Michigan and international affiliate of the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University. He conducted collaborative research on a wide range of social demographic topics in Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand but also in Cambodia and Vietnam and most recently in Myanmar. During the last two decades his studies focused mainly on issues related to the older aged population including the AIDS epidemic impact on older persons, how migration of adult children affects older age parents, intergenerational family support exchanges, and broad assessments of the situation of older persons including comparative analyses involving Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. His research involves both quantitative and qualitative methods. Current research focuses on long term care of older persons, widowhood and grandparental care of children left behind by migrants from Myanmar to Thailand. Virtually all his work is done in collaboration with colleagues in the region.

Bussarawan TEERAWICHITCHAINAN is Associate Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean for Research and Program Development at the School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University. She is also affiliated with the Changing Family in Asia Cluster, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Her research interests include social demography, the life course and aging, population health, inequality, and sociology of family. She conducts research on these topics in the context of Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam, Thailand, and Myanmar. She received a PhD from the University of Washington. She was a past fellowship recipient of Fulbright, the Social Science Research Council, RAND, and the Population Council.
Engagement in productive activities serves two important needs among the aging population. It encourages the older people to continue making social and economic contributions. It also provides an ideology to counter ageism. Few studies have examined its implication on the quality of life even though such engagements are usually quite common among aging population in developing countries with inadequate or nonexistent public welfare system. In this study, we examine the implication of such practices in China and India, both of which have a rising aging population and are projected to account for about two-fifths of the world’s elderly population by 2050.

Specifically, we examine how early life circumstances affect physical and financial conditions and through them affect the relationship between economic and social engagement and quality of life. We further evaluate the moderating role of family structure in the process. Finally, we examine the gendered nature of these relations. Our China-India comparison is motivated by their differences in developmental trajectories, welfare regimes and social context of aging. We are interested in understanding how societal contexts shape the relationship between productive engagement and quality of life. We use data on respondents aged 50 and above for China and India from the Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health WAVE 1 (2007/2010).

Preliminary results show that productive aging defined by both economic and social engagement have mixed effects on quality of life among aging population in both countries. Overall, engaging in economic activities significantly improves quality of life for Chinese men and women and Indian men, but not for Indian women. Men do not benefit from social engagement. The benefits of social engagement for women depend on their physical limitations, wealth and coresidence with spouse, children, and grandchildren. Older population with poor childhood circumstances face more physical and financial limitations in their old age, which further restricts their capability of benefitting from engagement in productive activities.

Dhiman Das is a Research Fellow in the Changing Family in Asia research cluster at the Asia Research Institute in the National University of Singapore. Dr Das completed his PhD in Economics at the City University of New York. He also has an MPhil in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University in India. He was previously employed at the Hunter College, City University of New York and the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (New Jersey) in the United States. He has published in Economic Inquiry; Economics of Education Review; Health Economics, Policy and Law; Marriage and Family Review, Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior and Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health among others.

Hu Shu is a Research Fellow in the Changing Family in Asia research cluster at the Asia Research Institute in the National University of Singapore. As a family sociologist, her research interests center on how family origin, gender, and the state shape the lives and wellbeing of individuals at different stages of the life course. She received her PhD in Sociology from National University of Singapore in April 2015. Her research during graduate school focused on parental labor migration and adolescents’ transition to high school in rural China. She has also done research on transition to adulthood of young people, and changes and continuities of marriage values in China. She has published in The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science and Chinese Journal of Sociology.