

## Book Review

*Contemporary Demographic Transformations in China, India and Indonesia*, by C. Z. Guilmoto, G. W. Jones, (eds.). Springer International Publishing AG, Switzerland, 2016, pp. v+342, ISBN: 978-3-319-24781-6.

Asia comprises of 29 percent of the earth's land surface and 60 percent (4.7 billion) of the total world population in recent years. However, 40 percent of the world population is concentrated in the three Asian countries – China, India, and Indonesia often called the demographic giants of Asia. The book under review is edited by Christophe Z. Guilmoto and Gavin W. Jones. This book attempts to provide the demographic transformations of these three Asian giants. The book is divided into five parts and twenty-two chapters. The introductory chapter of the book entitled 'Forty Percent of the World' by the editors themselves, is a brief introduction of various chapters of this book. It provides a comparative picture of demographic change in China, India, and Indonesia in a broader perspective and focuses on some of the major linkages and singularities across the three countries.

The first part of the book consists of four chapters (2-5) that focus on mortality trends across China, India, and Indonesia. The second chapter portrays an impressive mortality transition in China in the past six decades. In the third chapter, the author recognizes that there is extreme heterogeneity in mortality indicators across major regions in India. Chapter four presents the direct and indirect mortality estimation, and trends of childhood mortality rate in Indonesia. The fifth chapter provides an overview of the mortality trends across China, India, and Indonesia based on the first three chapters of this part. It describes that the subnational heterogeneity is pronounced because the health situations prevailing within these demographic giants is extreme, and this variation may still be visible in 20 years and will impact future birth cohorts, with out-migration as the main outlet to reduce inequalities.

The second part of the book deals with the level, trends, and determinants of fertility across China, India, and Indonesia. The sixth chapter examines the period of fertility statistics from the sixth national population census of China conducted in 2010. It shows that the TFR<sub>1</sub> dropped significantly due to the late marriage and postponement of childbearing; however, the TFR<sub>2</sub> and TFR<sub>3</sub> rise somewhat in China. In chapter seven, the editor compares India's fertility decline with the tortoise of the famous fable – a slow but regular decline which is bound to continue further in the next two decades. Chapter eight offers an in-depth discussion of the estimation issue involved in the understanding of sudden interruption of Indonesia's thirty years old fertility decline. In the last chapter (nine) of this part, the editor provides an overview of the fertility trajectories of the Asian giants, which elaborate that there was a similar fertility regime in these countries in the past with obvious differences in the speed of the fertility decline.

The third part presents the different education scenario in China, India, and Indonesia. Chapter ten shows the changing pace of expansion for a different level of education and the pattern of educational attainment by gender and residence in China. This chapter finds that China's tertiary education expanded even faster than upper secondary education. Chapter eleven highlights the facts regarding India's education – a steady growth of literacy with a limited cohort replacement, universality in primary school enrolment, and the expansion of post-primary education without a similar growth pace. The author summarises the educational trends of Indonesia in chapter twelve. Though the country attains an encouraging improvement in terms of enrolment over recent decades, it is still far from achieving the

objective of universalization of nine-year compulsory basic education. In chapter thirteen, the author emphasizes the importance of compulsory schooling that reaches somewhat to the junior secondary level in these countries.

Part four consists of four chapters that cover the migration pattern of the Asian giants. Chapter fourteen observes that the migrants of China are much more interested in moving in three eastern megacities of China – Changjiang Delta, Pearl River Delta, and Beijing/Tianjin area, which received more than 40% of migrants nationwide. In chapter fifteen, the author focuses on the changing pattern of migration in India in recent times. The finding indicates that male migration has declined, maybe because of insufficient employment opportunities; on the other hand, increased female migration, perhaps the result of increased long-distance marriages. By employing the National Population Census 2010, chapter sixteen identifies that the urban population in Indonesia has increased significantly, though the core cities experience slower growth than the peripheries of large cities. In chapter seventeen, the editor concludes that urbanization is increasing in all three countries. However, the urbanization in India is still behind those of China and Indonesia's 50% urban landmark.

The fifth and last part of this book draws a broader picture of the population aging of China, India, and Indonesia. Chapter eighteen describes China entering the era of aging society before the country becomes modernized, often described in China as "Getting old before getting rich". It also depicts that the country will end up with a smaller group of younger people to support the expanding group of elderly people in the coming years. In chapter nineteen, the author raises questions about the relationship, roles, and responsibilities of individuals while discussing different aspects of population aging in India. Using the data from the last three population censuses, chapter twenty illustrates some of the challenges of aging in Indonesia. It also examines the role of migration in the process of aging, in particular. Chapter twenty-one highlights the differentials in aging trends and patterns in these three countries with those in the regions of which they are a part. In the final chapter, the author summarises all the previous sections, paying attention to their interpretations.

This book beautifully captures the standard demographic variables of fertility, mortality, education, migration, and aging of the Asian giants. The title of the book is pervasive in all the chapters of the book. Despite the issues of data quality in several chapters, this book is a great addition to understand the demography of the three Asian giants at a glance.

**Chaitali Mandal**

Project Officer

International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai

Email: [chaitali.geo@gmail.com](mailto:chaitali.geo@gmail.com)