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# The development of population research institutions in Asia

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## Background: the development of population research institutions prior to the 1960s

In this chapter, the terminology, population research institutions, is used broadly to include any institution in which population research is conducted including universities, statistical and other government agencies and, rarely in the case of Asia, private organizations. The first formal associations and institutions in the field of population studies date from the 1920s. While the history of the discipline itself lies in academic studies in Europe, the history of the discipline's institutions lies initially in the United States and the main driving forces were philanthropists and advocates rather than scientists.

The Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems which can claim to be the first institution in the field of demography was founded in 1922, interestingly with research on the demography of East Asia as its rationale. Warren Thompson was appointed as its director and it was located at Miami University in Ohio. Thompson was soon joined by Pascal Whelpton and the two worked together for over 30 years. The philanthropist Edward Scripps was a successful media magnate who was concerned about the effects that population pressure might have upon the countries of the Far East (Zunz 2012). Consistent with Scripps's view, in his 1929 book, *Danger Spots in World Population*, Thompson argued that the effects of population pressures in East Asia, the Indian Ocean and Central Europe (including Italy and Germany) would be 'certain to make trouble in the not distant future' (Thompson 1929; Notestein 1981). Thompson took the neo-Malthusian position that vigorous family planning programmes were the solution to these population pressures.

Mainly at the instigation of American philanthropists and the family planning advocate, Margaret Sanger, a World Population Conference was convened in Geneva in September 1927. The conference resolved 'that a permanent international organization be created for the object of studying population problems in a strictly scientific spirit'. Professor Kiyo Sue Inui, as Japan's representative at the conference, was co-opted to serve on the committee set up to define the constitution as its only Asian member. At the time, he was lecturing at Waseda and Tokyo universities but he was a graduate of the University of Michigan and had had a previous appointment at the University of Southern California. The constitutional committee met on

4 July 1928 in Paris as the First General Assembly of the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems (IUSIPP). No Asians including Professor Inui were present.[1] The International Union was created as a union of national committees, not of individuals and, at the first assembly, it was agreed that 21 countries could set up national committees. The only Asian nation to be allocated a national committee was Japan. This was partly because Asian countries that were colonies were considered to be part of the colonial power rather than entities in themselves. While national committees were set up in the United States and several European countries, I have found no evidence that a national committee of the International Union was ever established in Japan or in any other Asian country. However, within the Japanese bureaucracy, the Institute of Population Problems (now the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research) was set up in 1939.

The new Union was constituted with a very long list of statutes and regulations. One particular sub-statute provided a vehement and eccentrically-worded rejection of the activists and philanthropists who had organized the financial support that had helped to create the Union. Statute 1(e) reads:

> The Union confines itself solely to scientific investigation in the strict sense, and refuses either to enter upon religious, moral, or political discussion, or as a Union to support a policy regarding population, of any sort whatever, particularly in the direction either of increased or diminished birth rates.
>
> *(IUSSP 1985: 35)*

In October 1928, a national committee was established in Britain known as the British Population Society. Its membership included such luminaries as Julian Huxley, Lord Beveridge and John Maynard Keynes (IUSSP 1985). By the time of the second General Assembly in London in June 1931, only 14 national associations had been created. Notably, in the land of the Union's President, Raymond Pearl, the American National Committee of IUSIPP was not formed until 4 February 1931, almost three years after the creation of the Union. Pearl's term as president of the Union was marked by vilification by his peers in the field of biology because he had questioned the science of eugenics. Louis Dublin, a statistician at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company who, at the time, was strongly opposed to birth control was the first head of the American National Committee. He also took a very strong stance that science should not be contaminated by advocacy. Parallel to the American National Committee of IUSIPP and with essentially the same membership, the Population Association of America (PAA) was established on 7 May 1931. In the United Kingdom also, a parallel organization to the British Population Society, the Population Investigation Committee (PIC), was set up in 1936. It seems that the national associations were attempting to avoid the politics and strictures of the International Union especially, at least in the case of the PAA, in relation to policy advocacy and family planning. The PAA was slow to get moving but received major impetus through the establishment of the Office of Population Research (OPR) at Princeton University in 1935, with Frank Notestein as its first director.

Through the 1930s, the International Union was plagued by political differences related to fascism. In 1931, two competing international conferences of the Union were held, one in London and one in Rome. In 1935, the Berlin meeting of the Union was boycotted by the American National Committee and by individuals from other countries. Despite its troubled history, the International Union staged a very successful conference in Paris in 1937. At the 1937 meeting, Adolphe Landry, an economic historian and member of the French Parliament (for Corsica), was elected as president of the Union. In 1932, as French Minister for Labour and

Social Welfare, Landry had instigated the France-wide system of cash support for families with children as a pronatalist policy placing him firmly on one side of the pronatalist–antinatalist debate that had bedevilled the International Union, but, as evidenced later when he successfully defended a takeover of the Union by the wartime German administration, Landry was vehemently anti-fascist.

Activities of the International Union essentially ceased during the Second World War. Most national committees ceased to function while others had become embroiled in wartime propagandist activities (Population Index, published by the Office of Population Research, 1947: 284). Landry had remained president of the Union throughout the war years and, in 1947, he was instrumental in the reorganization of the old International Union as the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP). He became the first president of the IUSSP, now reconstituted as an association of individuals rather than of national committees. This took place in the context of the mushrooming of major new population institutions immediately after the war.

In 1946, the United Nations Population Division was created with Frank Notestein as its head. The UN Population Commission was set up and held its first meeting. The French national demographic institute, INED, was also opened in 1946. In the United Kingdom, the British Population Society was wound up and the Population Investigation Committee took on its role. The PIC, led by David Glass, was located at the London School of Economics, which in 1947 opened a new Department of Demography. Also in 1947, the Australian Government, in creating the new Australian National University (ANU) specified demography as one of the four disciplines that the new university must include and a demographer, W. D. Borrie, was appointed as the university's first appointment in social sciences. A Department of Demography was set up at ANU in 1952.

In the 1950s, many new centres of population studies opened in universities in the United States, mainly with funding from the Ford Foundation (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986); and the United Nations created regional training centres in demography in Bombay, now Mumbai (Asia-Pacific), Santiago (Latin America and the Caribbean) and Cairo (Africa). The aim of the UN centres was to produce local demographic expertise in developing countries to address issues of rapid population growth and urbanization. In 1953, the Population Council opened its doors with funding from John D. Rockefeller III and he then served as its first president.

The demography of Asia was a major issue of interest to the newly emerging centres of population research in the United States. In this context, in the 1950s, Princeton University's OPR produced a series of influential books on the issue of population in Asian countries including *The Population of India and Pakistan* (Davis 1951), *Population Growth in Malaya* (Smith 1952), *Colonial Development and Population in Taiwan* (Barclay 1954), *The Population of Japan* (Taeuber 1958), and *Population Growth and Economic Development in Low-Income Countries* (Coale and Hoover 1958).

The last of these books argued that economic development in Asian countries was constrained by high levels of fertility because available capital at both the national and the household level needed to be devoted in large measure to the care and nurture of the 40 per cent of the population aged less than 15 years. Fewer children, they argued, would provide the opportunity for more productive investment of capital and enable a stronger focus on developing the human capital of the next generation of workers, both essential features of economic development. In more recent times, this argument of Coale and Hoover has become known as the 'demographic dividend' whereby, with a fall in fertility and the number of children, the population concentrates in the working ages thus providing a 'dividend' to the economy (see Chapter 24).

Interestingly, two senior American demographers who were strong proponents of this approach, Warren Thompson and Frank Lorimer, worked with the MacArthur administration in early post-war Japan, not surprisingly advocating a decline in Japan's birth rate (Hodgson 2003). In 1948, a Rockefeller Foundation delegation including demographers, Frank Notestein and Irene Taueber, visited China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia to obtain a perspective on issues of population growth. Notestein allegedly became convinced during this mission that fertility control could be implemented prior to economic development (counter to his own demographic transition theory) and that, in reverse, population control was a desirable strategy to promote economic development and to counter the spread of communism (Balfour 1950; Hodgson 1983; Caldwell and Caldwell 1986; Szreter 1993; Williams 2011). Caldwell (2005) argues that, in the late 1940s, Notestein and the OPR at Princeton were not quite as strategic in their thinking as this implies. While this is probably correct, with the communist victory in China, the motivation for fertility control programmes became even stronger and the OPR had established an intellectual base for action. By the early 1950s, both Japan and India had policies in place to lower the level of fertility. While the idea of development through fertility control was conceptualized as a support to development through capitalism, later it was also a central rationale of China's one-child policy (Potts 2006) along with, ironically, the Club of Rome arguments about limits to growth (Greenhalgh 2003).

Thus, the development of population institutions prior to the 1960s was associated with the 'big politics' of liberal democracies, fascism, capitalism and communism, and with the advocacy or otherwise of family planning as a means of dealing with rapid population growth. In these debates, population growth in Asian countries figured prominently from the 1920s onwards but, by 1960, there were very few population institutions in the Asian countries. India was the main exception to this. As already mentioned, the UN set up the Demographic Training and Research Centre in Mumbai in 1956 to train people in the region in the science of demography. The Centre, now the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), a deemed university, has, for 50 years, maintained its place as the leading population research and training centre in Asia. Early in the 1950s, the Ford Foundation was involved in the creation of the National Institute of Family Planning and the National Institute for Health Administration and Education in India (Minkler 1977). Also in the early 1950s, the Khanna study was commenced in the State of Rajasthan to demonstrate (unsuccessfully as it turned out) that family planning programmes could be effective in poor populations (Williams 2011). A similar study, the United Nation's Mysore study, was carried out in 1951–1952 (United Nations 1961). In relation to foreign engagement in the development of population institutions in India, Rao has written:

> It is not possible to understand the Indian family-planning programme without reference to the international actors who set the agenda, primarily in the United States (US). Indeed it has been argued that 'a small group of men and women' in the US many of them bankrolled by the Rockefeller Foundation, gave shape to the global population movement (Connelly 2003: 128).[2] The post-war population control movement comprised a closely-knit group of public and private organisations including the Rockefeller Foundation, the Population Council, the Ford Foundation and the USAID, along with its counterparts in other Western countries.
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> *(Rao 2004: 27)*

Of course, prior to the 1960s, national statistical agencies in many Asian countries (often supported by experts from the United Nations Statistical Division) provided basic population data and these agencies often provided research that was important in population and development

planning, but the raison d'être of these organizations was not population. The relative deficit of population institutions in Asia at the end of the 1950s became an abundance in the following 20 years. The early post-war years were the beginning of the end of the colonial era and, one by one, developing countries gained independence. In the context of the Cold War and the approach to population issues developed in the United States in the 1950s, it could be seen as inevitable that population institutions would emerge in the newly independent countries of Asia.

## The establishment of population institutions in Asia in the 1960s and 1970s

Much has been written about the emergence of family planning programmes in Asian countries from the 1960s onwards. In this literature, a central controversy is the extent to which the observed outcomes were the product of American institutions, notably USAID, the Ford Foundation, the Population Council and the Rockefeller Foundation for the most part acting in concert and backed by a small number of centres in American universities notably Princeton, Chicago, Michigan and North Carolina (Reed 1976; Minkler 1977; Hodgson 1983; Caldwell and Caldwell 1986; Harkavy 1985; Rao 2004; van der Tak 2005a, 2005b and 2005c; Caldwell 2005; Connelly 2008). While not attempting to address the broader aspects of this controversy, there is little question that these American institutions were heavily involved in the development of population institutions in Asia from 1960 onwards.

An early example of the engagement of the Population Council (with Notestein as its president) in institutional development in Asia is recounted by Ronald Freedman:

> In 1960, the Population Council subverted me by sending me to the Third World for the first time. They sent me to India for two months and on the way back I stopped in Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, and I became interested in what was going on there. The Population Council then asked me if I wanted to be involved in the Taiwan work.
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> *(van der Tak 2005c: 73)*

Soon afterwards, the Ford Foundation funded the creation of the Population Studies Center in the University of Michigan on the basis that it would be involved in family planning research in Asia and in the training of Asians in population research. The Taiwan Population Studies Center was then established within the Provincial Health Department of Taiwan in 1961. Freedman, with advice from Bernard Berelson of the Population Council, was instrumental in the conduct of the Taichung study that became a model for family planning programme development in Asia (Freedman and Takeshita 1969; Caldwell and Caldwell 1986; van der Tak 2005c). The Taichung study was conducted by the Taiwan Population Studies Center with financial support from the Ford Foundation and the Population Council (Freedman et al. 1964). John Takeshita, a Michigan graduate, was the in-country advisor.

As a result of the success of the Taiwan model, Freedman went with Marshall Balfour of the Rockefeller Foundation to the Republic of Korea. In December 1961, the Korean Government adopted a family planning programme as part of its public health services. Supported by the Population Council, a study similar to the Taichung study began in Koyang in 1962 led by Sook Bang, a Michigan graduate, at Yonsei University College of Medicine (Sook et al. 1963). Freedman refers to John Ross (also a Michigan graduate) in the Korea research context as 'an important figure over the years in fertility and family planning research' (van der Tak 2005b). Michigan was joined as a player in this endeavour in 1963 when the Ford Foundation provided

support to the Community and Family Study Center in the University of Chicago led by Donald Bogue (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986). Bogue recounts:

> In the early days of the family planning program in South Korea, we offered two workshops on family planning communication there and that helped result in a steady stream of people from Korea coming to the University of Chicago for training at the master's and Ph.D. level. Many of the leaders of the present Korean family planning movement are from there. The same could be said for India. We trained a large number of people from India at the master's and Ph.D. level.
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> *(van der Tak 2005c: 46)*

The interconnectedness of people and institutions is indicated by the fact that Bogue had been a foreign adviser at the UN's Demographic Training and Research Centre in Bombay in the 1950s and returned to the University of Chicago to create a centre focused upon family planning research (van der Tak 2005c; Caldwell and Caldwell 1986). Then, in the early 1970s, Haryono Suyono, having completed his PhD at Chicago, returned to Indonesia via Korea to study the family planning programme in that country. Back in Indonesia, Haryono then played a fundamental role in the implementation of the Indonesian family planning programme (van der Tak 2005c).

Despite these apparent successes, there was only so much that the American foundations could do within their funding constraints and in the face of powerful voices in the United States and elsewhere that were opposed to government-sponsored family planning, but the funding situation changed with the appointment in 1965 of Reimert Ravenholt to the position of Director of the Office of Population of USAID. Ravenholt began a major, vigorous and often controversial programme to support the provision and distribution of contraceptives in developing countries, and the nationals of these countries were provided with scholarships to be trained in a small number of United States universities to return to their countries as academic demographers and government planners or to run family planning programmes (Gillespie 2000). Based on the success of the Mysore study in India (UN 1961), the Taichung study in Taiwan and the Indianapolis study in the US, USAID and/or the Foundations also provided financial support for the gathering of data that would assess the progress of family planning in these countries. One such example was the 1973 Indonesian Fertility-Mortality Survey (McDonald et al. 1976). Later, the major international comparative fertility survey, the World Fertility Survey, was funded largely by USAID as was subsequently and until today, its successor, the Demographic and Health Surveys. The Ford Foundation and the Population Council (with funding from USAID) supported the development of population centres in universities and government agencies in developing countries and foreign experts to assist in the process (Harkavy 1985; Caldwell and Caldwell 1986). Typically, a new population centre would be headed by a national who was a recent US-trained graduate and who had been selected specifically for that purpose. This person would then recruit a cadre of young people from among local university students. Finally, foreigners would be brought in to provide expertise and support.

As it was essential to have high-level, political backing for this policy direction, it was necessary to gain the support of the leaders of the countries involved. In 1967, 30 heads of governments in developing countries signed a Declaration on Population strikingly worded as follows:

> As Heads of Governments actively concerned with the population problem, we share these convictions: We believe that the population problem must be recognised as a principal element in long-range national planning if governments are to achieve their economic

> goals and fulfill the aspirations of their people. We believe that the great majority of parents desire to have the knowledge and the means to plan their families; that the opportunity to decide the number and spacing of children is a basic human right. We believe that lasting and meaningful peace will depend to a considerable measure upon how the challenge of population growth is met. We believe the objective of family planning is the enrichment of human life, not its restriction; that family planning, by assuring greater opportunity to each person, frees man to attain his individual dignity and reach his full potential.
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> *(Ayala and Caradon 1968: 3)*

Among the Asian countries, this statement was signed by the leaders of India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The statement was endorsed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations but much of the effort in obtaining the signatures was made by John D. Rockefeller III and the Population Council.

The Taiwan model of the establishment of an in-country population research institute with an adviser linked to an American or other international university with funding from an American or international agency (e.g. United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNFPA) was soon replicated in many other Asian countries. Examples were the University of the Philippines Population Institute (1964), the Demographic Institute of the University of Indonesia (1964), the Population Research Center of Seoul National University (1965), the Population Research and Training Center of Chulalongkorn University (1966), the Department of Demography of the University of Tehran (1970), the Institute for Population and Social Research of Mahidol University (1971), the Office of Population Studies of the University of San Carlos (1971), the Mindanao Center for Population Studies (1971), the Demographic Training and Research Unit (later the Department of Demography) of the University of Colombo (1973), the Center for Population Research and Training of Gadjah Mada University (1973), the Center of Demographic Studies of Shiraz University (1974), the Population Studies Center of the National Taiwan University (1974) and the Population Studies Department at the University of Jordan (1979). The study of demography also became prominent in this period in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In Japan, the Nihon University Population Research Institute (NUPRI) was created in 1979 and has continued to be a strong, university-based centre until today.

Outside of universities, important also was the creation in 1963 of the world's longest-running demographic surveillance site at Matlab, in what was then East Pakistan but is now Bangladesh. The Matlab field site has been run by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) which, as an international centre, has made Matlab a focal point for a great deal of innovative population research over 50 years. Other non-university centres of note established in this period are the demographic groups in the Pakistan Institute of Development Studies and the Indonesian Institute of Social Sciences (LIPI).

Caldwell and Caldwell (1986) have detailed the story of the establishment of the first of these institutes, the University of the Philippines Population Institute. UPPI emerged as the result of a Ford Foundation mission in late 1962 to investigate the possibility of setting up population research and training programmes in South-East Asia. The model that they recommended was one where the developing country centre would have the backing of leading universities in developed countries and be staffed by nationals returning from graduate training in the United States or other developed countries. Mercedes Concepcion, completing her PhD at the University of Chicago, was the only person that met this criterion at that time. The plan that the Foundation would support a programme at the University of the Philippines

led by Concepcion was discussed with the university and it came to fruition in 1964. Also in 1964, Nathanael Iskandar was appointed to lead the newly-created Demographic Institute in the Faculty of Economics of the University of Indonesia from which position, he went to complete a PhD degree at the OPR in Princeton. When he returned in 1968, a major programme of support was initiated involving the Ford Foundation, the Population Council and USAID.

Like Concepcion and Iskandar, most of the early heads of these new centres had been trained outside the country in which the centre was located, often in the United States and most had in-country, foreign consultants in the early years of their establishment. Most received financial support from American funding agencies. Most were also engaged in research on the levels and trends of fertility and the impact of new family planning programmes with international funding backing the research. Often, these centres provided short-course training to their fellow nationals working in government agencies or in regional universities. A prominent example of this was the training course provided in the early 1970s by the Demographic Institute of the University of Indonesia (Iskandar and Jones 1974).

While the discussion above has emphasized the role of American organizations in the development of population research institutions in Asia, some non-American organizations also played prominent roles. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) became active in the field after its creation in 1969 and by the end of the 1970s had become the most prominent funder of population research in Asia. It was to take on an even larger role in the 1980s. Universities like the Australian National University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine also played significant roles. Probably most significantly, the International Institute for Population Studies (IIPS) in Mumbai trained very large numbers of students from the Asian region in demography and spawned a large number of demographic research centres in India itself.

At the end of the 1970s, the institutional structure for population research was strong across most of Asia. Research strength was focused upon fertility and family planning reflecting the interests of the international funding agencies and, to some extent, the countries themselves. However, attention was also given to demographic estimates underpinning population projections required for planning purposes and to such areas as urbanization, internal migration and mortality. The solid foundation established in the 1960s and 1970s, however, was not sustained in later years.

## Population institutions in Asia from the 1980s onwards

Ravenholt was removed from his USAID position in 1979 and a more conservative tide of politics in the US brought an end to the Ford Foundation support of population programmes. Most Ford population posts were terminated by 1981 (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986). While from 1980 onwards, this left room for other American foundations such as Mellon, Hewlett, Packard and MacArthur to move into the field, their support was mainly project-based rather than institutional and was never particularly oriented towards Asia. Reflecting levels of development, these foundations have been much more active in supporting population research in sub-Saharan Africa.

Strong support for population institutions in Asia in the 1980s was provided by UNFPA and by World Bank country agreements in which matching funds were provided by the national government. The Australian Government also provided support through its Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Population Programme, initially funded by UNFPA. UNFPA also funded the International Population Dynamics Program at the Australian National University, which worked with population institutions in Asia in the 1980s to assist them in their research and training activities. Most of this support in the 1980s went to the centres that had been

created through the 1960s and 1970s with the support of US institutions, although such support was no longer available for the countries that had become wealthier by this time. By the 1990s, these external funding sources had also dwindled and population research centres were left to find their own support. This was done more successfully in some countries than in others.

Indonesia provides an example of this progression that is at the less successful end. In the 1980s, World Bank funding through the Indonesian State Ministry of Population and Environment was used very much in the same way as Ford-USAID support had been used in the 1970s – a few strong centres were identified as leaders and they then provided training and assistance with research to smaller centres spread across the archipelago (Utomo 2015). Funding was also available from UNFPA and from the Australian Government. However, when the Ministry of Population and Environment was closed in 1993, World Bank funding was transferred to the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) which was more interested in the delivery of family planning services than in training and research. Since that time, population centres in Indonesia have languished having to rely upon contract income often not in areas related to mainstream demographic issues. The 2011–2015 8th Country Programme between the Government of Indonesia and UNFPA contains the following planned outcome:

> Strengthened capacity of national and subnational institutions to analyse and use data on population and development on the MDGs and ICPD-related issues for policy formulations.
> *(UNFPA Indonesia 2011: Table 2)*

Leaving aside the references to MDGs and ICPD, this was the agenda of the American funding in the late 1960s, almost 50 years earlier, suggesting that the earlier strength of the Indonesian population research centres had fallen away. The university study of population also declined in the Republic of Korea as the original leaders such as Tai Hwan Kwon of Seoul National University retired.

With a history of the development of population institutions roughly similar to that of Indonesia, Thailand has had more success in maintaining the strength of population institutions as international funds dwindled. The centres in Mahidol and Chulalongkorn universities remain strong. Mahidol provides a successful training programme in demography in English for students from other countries. Another example of continued strength is the Department of Demography at the University of Tehran. This department was able to absorb the sudden shock of relative international isolation resulting from the Islamic revolution and re-emerged very strongly to have a major influence on the direction of population policy in the mid-1980s. It has subsequently built on that strength to be a highly viable organization today. More commonly, however, as the nature of funded research changed, the population institutions in most Asian countries struggled to maintain their existence, with the majority diverting their focus to other areas of research.

In Japan, continued strength in the field of demography has been due mainly to the work of NUPRI and individuals such as Noriko Tsuya, who led research on Japan's rapidly ageing population. In more recent times, two government agencies, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research in Japan and the Korean Institute for Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA) in Korea have been prominent in demographic research.

Whether population research and training institutions have floundered or flourished in Asian universities seems to be related to the extent to which external funding has been replaced by mainstream support through the country's higher education system. Another factor is the extent to which the institution has been able to generalize its activities or to act independently rather than engaging only with the latest political interests of either national governments or

international agencies (Jones 2005). India is the classic example of success in this regard. There are numerous successful population institutes that engage in training and research related to population and development issues in India. The Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provides 100 per cent funding to a network of 18 population research centres spread across India mainly located in major state universities (see http://mohfw.nic.in/showfile.php?lid=1269), with IIPS Mumbai playing a coordinating role. The Indian approach is similar to that used by the National Institute of Child Health and Development to fund population research centres in American universities.

## The development of population research in China in the 1980s

So far, there has been no mention of China because it has its own story. In China, population research was essentially off the agenda until the emergence of planned control of population growth at the end of the 1970s. Of this time, Susan Greenhalgh writes:

> Population experts were needed to help the party define and then reach its (planned population) goals. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, China was home to one of the most rapid institutionalizations of a field of population studies in history. … the mission the new field was assigned was not to build population science for science's sake. It was to develop population science to assist the state in solving the country's population problems.
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> *(Greenhalgh 2003: 167)*

In 1980, Ansley Coale provided an intensive series of lectures at the People's University to around 60 people from 12 Chinese universities and various government agencies. He found a keen desire to learn and to gather the necessary demographic data. This was then realized in the 1982 census and the 1982 Fertility Survey (Coale 2000). Also in the 1980s, UNFPA, with Aprodicio Laquian as its representative in Beijing, played an important role in supporting selected university population centres in China through research funding and international training of staff.

Like India, strong government support for population institutions in China has led to the development of a large number of well-established centres today. Notable among these are the following universities: Renmin, Peking, Fudan, Xi'an Jiaotong, Wuhan, Zhejiangin, Fujian Normal and, most recently, Shanghai. Population research is also prominent in the Institute of Population and Labour Economics and the Institute of Sociology in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the government agency, the China Population and Development Research Center. Today, population research is strong in China but it lacks an international perspective because it has tended to eschew international engagement. In the past, this may have been due to sensitivities surrounding the one-child policy, but it may also have been caused by a sense among Chinese demographers that China was enough – we don't need to know about the rest of the world. As China grapples with its low fertility rate and rapid ageing of its population, it might be predicted that Chinese demographers will be more likely to draw on the experiences of other countries.

## The Asian Population Association

The Asian region was the last region in the world to create a regional population association. The association was set up in 2008 and held its first conference in 2010 in New Delhi. Subsequent conferences have been held in Bangkok in 2012 and Kuala Lumpur in 2015. The association is particularly important in providing a means for relatively isolated population researchers to

present their results in an international forum. Given the poor state of population research institutions in many countries in Asia, this is an important means through which improvement can occur. The number and quality of papers presented by young Asian demographers at the 2015 conference is an indication that the future of population research may be brighter than in the recent past.

## The future of population research and training institutions

Demography is a small discipline and it will never attract mass numbers of students. As such, it is difficult to justify the discipline to academic administrators who are motivated first and foremost by student numbers. At the same time, in order to maintain its quality and its relevance, it is important that the discipline is based in university settings where it can contribute to and learn from theoretical developments in cognate disciplines. Outside of academia, demography is about numbers and methods. As indicated by experience in India and China (and in the United States), the discipline can flourish in universities if governments recognize that the discipline has national significance that requires government support.

With the success of family planning programmes in many countries in Asia, funding levels fell for university-based population institutes. Often this led to the demise or decline of institutions that had flourished in the past. Countries that have allowed this situation to occur now find themselves devoid of good population researchers at a time when new demographic issues have emerged. The new priorities for research include low fertility, population ageing, the growth and management of megacities, internal and international migration and associated labour market issues, changes in family functioning and population and environment. In selected countries, the issue of rapid population growth remains important. In addressing these important areas of research, countries need a core of highly qualified demographers who are able to interact with economists, sociologists, environmentalists and other disciplines. Increasing fertility from low levels is proving to be a much more intractable issue than lowering it from high levels. The incessant movement of people to the largest cities also presents unprecedented challenges for planners. Countries are looking around for local demographic expertise often to find that it is not there.

## Notes

1 Inui wrote *Quantitative Phases of the Japanese Population Problem*, published in 1929 by the League of Nations Association of Japan. *Volume 17 of Documents of the Third Conference, Institute of Pacific Relations, Kyoto, Japan, 1929*, Institute of Pacific Relations Conference (Kyoto).

2 Connelly was in fact arguing against this proposition and for the greater significance of actors in the countries themselves. From my perspective as an observer of family planning programmes in Asia, there is no doubt that the spectacular successes of the programmes in Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Iran were driven by the nationals of those countries, albeit many of them having been trained in the United States.

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