

The multidimensional well-being of Asian senior citizens: a systematic review.

The views expressed in this presentation are the views of the author/s and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this presentation and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use. The countries listed in this presentation do not imply any view on ADB's part as to sovereignty or independent status or necessarily conform to ADB's terminology.

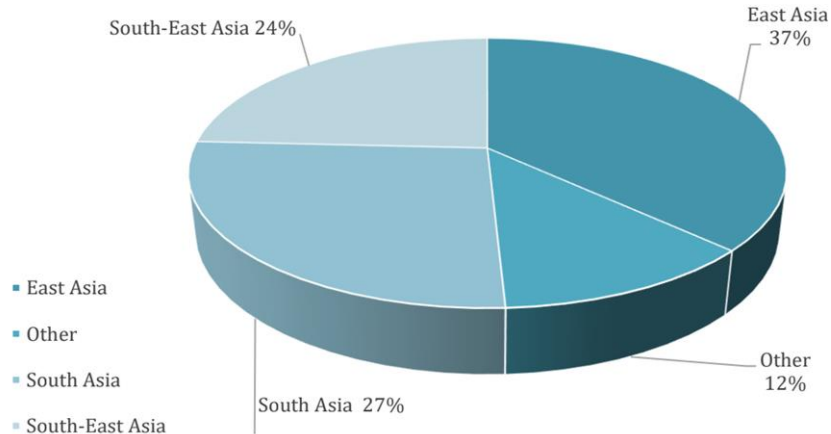
Dr. Dil B. Rahut and Ms. Alessia Destefanis (2021)



THE PAPER

❖ **Systematic review** on elderly's well-being in developing Asia

- Aims at **identifying**, **selecting**, and critically **analysing** all relevant research related to a specific topic
- Not answering structured questions of causality through econometric methods



Empirical and theoretical papers gathered by geographical region

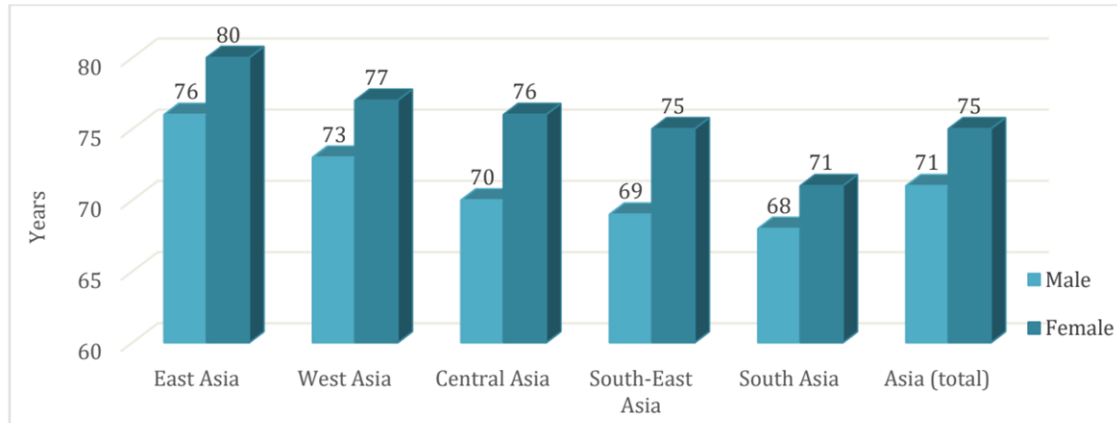
AN AGING WORLD



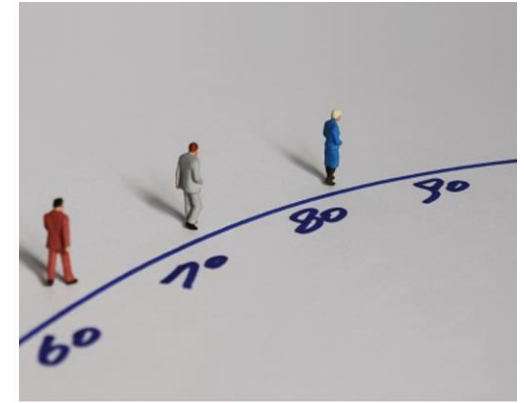
- ❖ Since the 1960s, decline in both fertility and mortality rates
 - **Rapidly aging global population** (Bloom et al., 2010)
- ❖ Aged population is currently at its highest level in human history (United Nations, 2015)
- ❖ Yet, the situation is expected to keep **worsening** in the next decades (United Nations, 2019)
 - In 2019, 703 million persons aged 65 years or over in the world
 - In 2050, the number of older persons is projected to double to 1.5 billion

WHAT ABOUT ASIA?

- ❖ Increase in life expectancy in Asia-Pacific countries
 - Live up to more than 70 years (Statista Research Department, 2021)
- ❖ Decrease in average fertility (OECD and WHO, 2020)
- ❖ Significant **challenge** for Asian developing economies



Source: Population Reference Bureau. (2020).



IMPACTS and CHALLENGES

An increase in the share of elderly population is seen as:

- ❖ **Harmful** for potential economic growth (Otsu and Shibayama, 2016)
 - Elderly are economically less productive or unproductive
- ❖ **Threatening** public social safety nets systems
 - Aging bodies suffer from limited regenerative biological activities, age-related diseases and disabilities (He and Tang, 2021)
 - Significant socio-economic facet marked by retirement, relocation to new living arrangements, as well as deaths of some beloved ones (Kadariya et al., 2019)



Unexpected challenges for those countries where old-age support systems are weaker

SITUATION IN ASIA

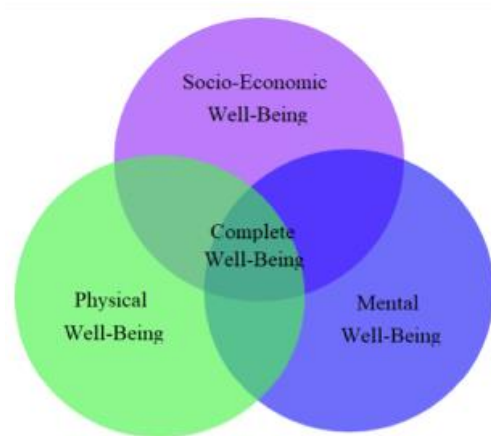
- ❖ Previously, intergenerational support and coresidence (Huda, 2020; Teerawichitchainan et al., 2015)
- ❖ Industrialization and internationalization → substantial **change in family values** and role of filial piety (Silverstein et al., 2006)
 - Disruption of traditional family norms
 - Empathization of new values:
 - Individual achievement; economic independence; socio-geographical mobility
- ❖ Nuclear family as the most appreciated family structure in South-East Asia
- ❖ Life of elderlies has been **heavily impacted** by structural changes



Senior citizens have now started to seek help from the State

MULTIDIMENSIONALITY

- ❖ Asian economies have to cope with an unexpected issue
- ❖ Have to provide well-being to the elders
 - Complex task for Governments in developing countries (Khan and Husnain, 2019)
- ❖ **Multidimensionality** of the concept of well-being
- ❖ Well-being depends on the **socio-economic**, **physical**, and **mental** conditions
 - Indirect **links** between the three main dimensions



SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

- ❖ Presence of **inequalities** → at gender, social or economic levels
- ❖ Disparities in:
 - Income and expenditures (Wang et al., 2017)
 - Dwelling ownerships and housing conditions (Tran and Vu Van, 2017)
 - Role played within society and relative attributed status (Rahman et al., 2009)
- ❖ Constantly aggravate an individual's thoughts, triggering in turn precarious mental health conditions



MENTAL WELL-BEING

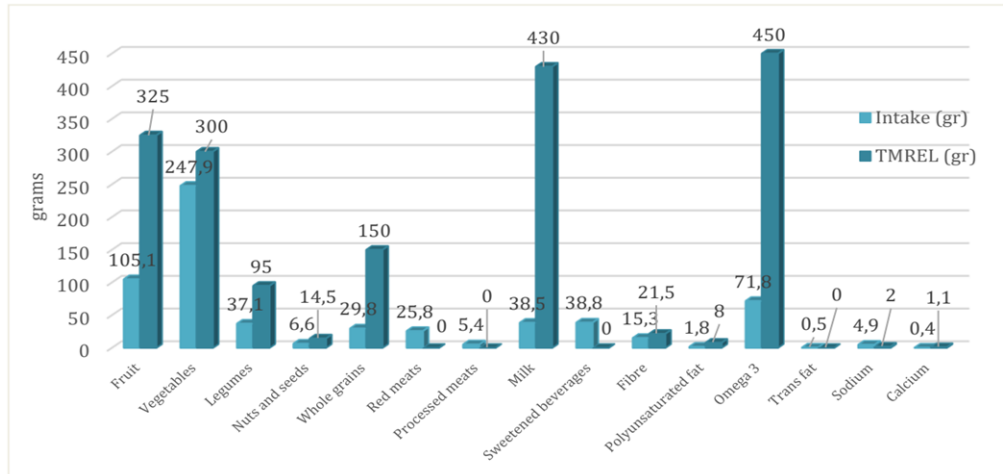
- ❖ Bad living conditions can boost **deathly diseases**, e.g. depression (Subramaniam et al., 2016)
- ❖ Yet, feelings of anxiety, loneliness and fears of death can be decreased by:
 - Frequent interactions with family members and surrounding communities (Thanakwang et al., 2012)
- ❖ Elderlies' mental status heavily relies on their **relationships** with adult children
- ❖ Mental health can be improved also through constant participation in **leisure** activities:
 - Religious celebrations (Tran et al., 2017)
 - Outdoor physical exercise (Bhamani, et al., 2015)



PHYSICAL WELL-BEING



- ❖ Attention to the physical wellness of elderly people
 - Reinforced by an active **lifestyle** (e.g., Bishwajit et al., 2017; Li et al., 2019; Yeh et al., 2018)
 - Importance of frequency and type of exercise
- ❖ Typical changes in body mass index (BMI) → **Healthy diet** is necessary (Agarwalla et al., 2015)



Source: Institute for health Metrics and Evaluation. (2020).

AMELIORATION IN POLICIES

- ❖ Considerable **improvements** in policies aimed at supporting all individuals
- ❖ Yet, there remain areas where amelioration is needed
 - Inadequacy has strong consequences on the life of citizens → overall degree of well-being of elderlies
 - Most striking effects will be seen in the long run (if the situation does not promptly change...)
- ❖ Local policymakers should **identify** and **consider** the main issues present in their countries
- ❖ Priorities **ad-hoc policies** at the local, regional, and national levels

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

- ❖ Precarious access to **public healthcare** due to different socio-economic conditions
 - Scarcity of medical infrastructures, skilled doctors and geriatric departments
(Teerawichitchainan et al., 2015; Chen, 2020)
- ❖ Almost non-existent **pension systems** (Kaushal, 2014)
- ❖ Shortage of **infrastructures** dedicated to elderlies (Banjare et al., 2015)
- ❖ Effects of the double burden of **malnutrition** (Chern and Lee, 2015)



OUR NEXT STEPS

- ❖ Findings from the systematic review → challenging for Asian economies to cope with a rapidly aging population
- ❖ New **ADB** project in collaboration with the Dhaka Institute of Health Economics (Bangladesh)
 - *“Examining the Well-Being of the Elderly in Bangladesh”*
 - Collect primary data in Bangladesh (quantitative-based questionnaire)
 - Examine the problem faced by the Bangladeshi elderlies and the factors influencing their well-being



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



All the images used in this presentation follow the Creative Commons (CC) licenses guidelines.

Feel free to ask us any question

Contact information:

alessia.destefanis98@gmail.com

drahut@adbi.org