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

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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

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![Pie chart showing geographical distribution of papers.]

**Empirical and theoretical papers gathered by geographical region**

- East Asia: 37%
- South-East Asia: 24%
- South Asia: 27%
- Other: 12%
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

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**
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
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)

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 **ADBI 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.

Feel free to ask us any question.
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