

singlehood in Singapore. Our preliminary findings, that marriage was still considered as a desirable state by the majority of respondents, are consistent with the findings of these earlier surveys. However, our interviews with eight of the respondents suggest an increasing ambivalence towards the desirability of marriage among a number of Singaporean singles, especially single women over the average marriage age. Two more respondents appeared to have completely lost faith in marriage. The rising divorce rates in Singapore¹⁶ seem to have discouraged some singles from getting married to avoid suffering from marital break-ups. Seven respondents in our study stated that many of their married friends or relatives have serious marital problems and are trapped in unhappy marriages or are divorced, which weakens their desire to marry.

The economics of marriage

The perceived costs associated with marriage, such as housing and the wedding ceremony itself affect singles' attitudes to marriage. A number of our respondents mentioned that the rising cost of the marriage ceremony, housing and raising children has become a deterrent for Singaporean singles to get married. Quah (2003) suggests that the traditional roles of men as providers tend to keep an increasing number of single men busy up to their mid-thirties to equip themselves before getting married. Our study finds that economic stability is considered one precondition of marriage, especially for single men, and that traditional gender role expectations of men as providers and women as housekeepers tend to cause single women to be increasingly cautious about marrying a man with poor earnings prospects.

Homogamy (marriage market rigidities)

In Singapore, there is a "marriage squeeze" for less educated men as well as for educated women, resulting from educational trends (sharp increases in the number of young women completing upper secondary and tertiary education) and conventions about age differences between spouses and appropriate marital partners. Chinese men tend to marry a woman with a lower education and lower income than themselves while tertiary educated women are reluctant to marry 'downwards'. Thus we observe high proportions remaining single among tertiary educated females and lesser educated males (see Table 1).

Koh (2011) argues that hypergamy has been fading over time in Singapore. Our interviews throw some doubt on this conclusion. Three successful female respondents stated frankly that they wanted to marry a man of equal or better socio-economic status, for various reasons. For instance, they want to maintain their life quality after marriage; or they don't want their partners to feel too much pressure and eventually lose their masculinity; or they don't want to give away their assets if their marriages fail. Due to the difficulty of finding a suitable local mate, more Singaporean men are marrying foreign wives (Jones and Shen,

¹⁶ The general divorce rate for males (per 1000 married resident males) increased from 6.1 in 1990 to 7.7 in 2009 and the general divorce rate for females rose from 6.1 to 7.3 during the same period of time (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2010).

2008). Many Singaporean men perceive the main cause of delayed marriage among Singaporean women to be that they are picky and demanding in finding a suitable partner.¹⁷

Individualism and focus on career

Our study suggests that freedom and independence present an attractive alternative to marriage to many single Chinese Singaporeans. They are also more likely to give priority to career advancement, financial stability and material success than to marriage and procreation. Marriage is only considered after a stable career has been established. This is consistent with the findings of a previous survey (MCYS, 2009) and the study of Koh, 2011. A competitive global economy demands long working hours. Singles in this global city face issues of work pressures including very long hours of work. Almost all the respondents mentioned that they had dedicated themselves to their careers. They very often work overtime and sometimes had to take work home to do outside office hours. A number of them mentioned that Singapore's work culture and especially long working hours are a hindrance to active social life and efficient dating.

Although they live together in the same apartment, the relationships between the single and the family are not particularly close if we only consider their daily activities. Only about half (11 respondents) spend time and do daily activities (such as chatting and watching TV; having meals together is rare) with their family every day. More than half of our respondents only spend time with their family once a week or less than that, typically having a meal on weekends. It is more often friends rather than family who provide satisfying sources of emotional support for singles. Nevertheless, the independence between singles and their families in daily activities does not mean their relationships are remote. In fact, consistent with previous research on several Southeast Asian countries (e.g. Situmorang, 2007; Tan, 2009), our study also finds that the economic support and care responsibilities between singles and their families are very strong.

Raymo (2003) argues that changes in the desire for children are more important in understanding marriage behaviour than changes in the desirability of marriage itself. Our findings suggest weakening of the desire for children and changes in the acceptance of out-of-wedlock birth are both important in understanding delayed marriage and non-marriage (Jones, Zhang and Chia, forthcoming). Nine out of our 23 respondents were ambivalent about procreation, considering children not important to them or optional, while another six respondents (all males) accepted children born out of wedlock.

Some implications

¹⁷ "Do single Singaporeans need yet another dating campaign?", <http://sg.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20100813014355AA6ndsS&r=w>, accessed on 26/08/2010.

To what extent is non-marriage in Singapore voluntary or involuntary (i.e. through force of circumstances)? Educational and economic homogamy seem to remain strong in Singapore, reinforcing the selective “marriage squeeze” in the local marriage market elaborated by Jones (2007: 464-5) and the increase in international marriage. But rather than drawing too sharp a distinction between the voluntary or involuntary aspects of non-marriage, it may be more important to note that there are frequently stages in adult singlehood. Voluntary singlehood in the early to mid-20s relates to the idea that there is still plenty of time to marry, and relationships can be pursued without marriage being the overriding goal. Most of those in their 20s want to get married eventually. They have chosen to be single in the current life stage or just watch or wait for the right partner to appear. By the early 30s, the feeling that the ideal partner has not appeared and that there may be more urgency appears for some, especially females aware of their biological clock. On the other hand, some respondents found that having children was not important to them, and was certainly not a factor driving them to accept marriage to a less-than-ideal partner. But for others, singlehood becomes more involuntary at this stage, with an awareness that the right partner may never materialize.

Singlehood seems to be widely accepted among the general public in Singapore, perhaps because it has now been prevalent for long enough to change traditional notions that marriage is essential. Singles do not feel strong social and familial pressure to marry, and little social stigma and discrimination.

What of Singapore’s place in the second demographic transition (SDT)? Lesthaeghe (2010) argues that all the features of the Second Demographic Transition except procreation within cohabiting unions have spread to several advanced Asian populations including Singapore, though Japan leads the way. This is supported at least to some extent by other studies for Singapore (Eng, 1997; Pereira, 2006; Wang and Tan, 2007). Some findings from our Singapore case, though admittedly based on a small number of mainly highly educated respondents, do echo the second demographic transition as reported in many Western societies (such as increasing acceptance of premarital sex and cohabitation, increasing individualism in marriage, great value attached to freedom, independence and self-actualization, decreasing desire to have children, increasing acceptance of out-of-wedlock births, and increasing acceptance of casual and multiple dating relationships). Our study suggests singles tend to regard marriage as a personal issue rather than a social and familial duty, leading singles to stress their personal freedom and choice in terms of whether to marry and when to marry. These findings may have implications for the Singapore government’s SDN programs. There is more than a hint that these programs may train Singaporeans to be more effective ‘daters’, but this does not necessarily mean that more marriages will result.

FACTORS AFFECTING MARITAL FERTILITY

While extended singlehood is prevalent in Singapore, the fact remains that most Singaporeans do eventually marry. To understand fertility trends, we need to understand factors influencing the childbearing decisions of those who marry. The high costs of raising children in Singapore – both the monetary costs and the opportunity costs - are clear to all Singaporeans. There is a range of opportunity costs of raising a family in a big city environment with its logistic problems of arranging children’s activities, societal emphasis on economic success and plethora of alternative activities for those without family encumbrances. Women face the brunt of the problems of raising a family, and in particular the opportunity costs of interrupted career development. Neither the labour market conditions, employer and co-worker attitudes, nor husband’s or potential husband’s attitudes make it easy for women to combine full-time work with raising a family. Singapore men show a reluctance to assume more of the childcare and household maintenance activities, even when their wives are working full time. The time commitments required by full-time employment make for wrenching conflicts with the mothering role. The conflicts are exacerbated by the strong societal expectations in East Asian societies about intensive parenting and raising the “successful” child, the burden of which falls heavily on the mother. If the child fails to live up to expectations, it is the mother’s reputation that suffers most. All this poses a stark dilemma for women who would like to combine childbearing with a career. The opportunity costs of childrearing they face are great.

Rising education of women has played a key role in the very low fertility reached in East Asia, including Singapore. It is not the high level of education *per se* that is important. High levels of female education in some northern and western European countries, the United States, Australia and New Zealand have not prevented them having close to replacement levels of fertility at present. Rather, it is the extraordinarily rapid expansion of education - more so than in the West - in the East Asian institutional context - that is the key. This has compressed the time interval in which family and society can adjust to the new set of opportunities, challenges and constraints faced by women in the region. The tensions between making the most of the opportunities opened by their education and raising a family is particularly acute for educated women.

POLICY ISSUES

Earlier in the paper, the Singapore government’s policies toward marriage have been discussed. Here I will summarize briefly its policies towards fertility within marriage.

Singapore started earlier and has gone further than the other East Asian countries in some areas of policy designed to influence fertility, particularly in the use of tax rebates to encourage early childbearing, the scale of child allowances, fairly generous maternity leave provisions, subsidization of child care and specific programs to encourage marriage. Policy

developments over time have been described in detail in Wong and Yeoh, 2003; Saw, 2005; Yap, 2009; and Straughan, Chan and Jones, 2009. Here I will simply highlight a few of the key policy changes.

Policies introduced in Singapore around 1987 and extended in 1990 included income tax relief for children, childcare subsidies for working mothers, and granting of income tax relief for the foreign maid levy for working mothers. In 2000, a set of additional measures was introduced, prominent among which was the baby bonus scheme, a two-tier payment involving an outright cash component and a co-saving component matched dollar for dollar by the government, for second and third children. In 2001, eight-week paid maternity leave was extended to the third child.

In 2004, a slew of additional measures was introduced, including, among others, extension of the baby bonus to first and fourth children; parenthood tax rebates; application of paid maternity leave to the fourth child, and its duration for all births extended from 8 to 12 weeks; and contraction of work week for civil servants to five days, though with extended working hours on the five days. Working mothers were also eligible for tax relief where grandparents or in-laws look after children aged below 12.

In 2008, a further set of revisions to the Marriage and Parenthood (M&P) Package was introduced, budgeted to cost the government S\$1.6 billion, double that for the 2004 measures (Lee, 2008). The baby bonus scheme was extended to fifth and subsequent children, and cash payments for the first and second child were also increased. Tax reliefs for children and for working mothers were increased. Paid maternity leave was extended from 12 to 16 weeks, the last eight of which can be taken any time over a year from the child's birth. Employers who fire pregnant women for no good reason in the last six months of their pregnancy must pay their maternity leave benefits. Previously, this applied only to firings in the last three months of pregnancy. Finally, subsidies to working mothers for childcare centre costs were doubled from \$150 per month to \$350 per month, covering about half of the fee charged by the average childcare centre.

An ideological shift was apparent in the post-2000 population policies with regard to men's role in the family. In 2000, paternity leave of three days was introduced for fathers who worked as civil servants. Compared with 12 weeks of maternity leave for mothers, this is not much, but symbolically it is very important, signifying that fathers should be involved in childcare. In addition, men were now able to take unrecorded childcare leave. In the 2008 M&P Package, paid childcare leave was extended to six days a year for each parent when the child is below age six, and unpaid infant care leave was introduced, giving each parent six days a year when the child is less than two years old. The government argued that this was a more flexible arrangement than giving paternity leave, the take-up rate for which in Scandinavian countries is not very high.

Fertility has not responded as hoped, and this may well reflect the fact that the baby bonuses

and tax concessions for children are not substantial enough to make much of a dent in the high monetary costs of raising children. Moreover, the culture in many Singapore workplaces remains unfriendly to those who prioritise family over responsibilities to the firm, and this discourages women from having a child that may hurt their career prospects and relationships with workmates. Nevertheless, it could well be that Singapore's more comprehensive policies to support marriage and childbearing go a long way towards explaining why fertility rates in Singapore, though disappointingly low from the perspective of the Singapore government, are higher than in other major cities in the region, as noted earlier.

The dilemma – migration can redress the balance, but is politically problematic

Despite all policy efforts, Singapore's fertility rate remains stubbornly low, and the population structure is such that the population would begin to decline before long in the absence of net migration. Singapore has no difficulty in attracting skilled migrants from many source countries (not to mention unskilled labour migrants, who outnumber the skilled migrants in Singapore at any given time), and in theory, this can always be relied on to redress the balance of declining labour force, and ultimately declining population, resulting from ultra-low fertility. Indeed, migration has played a key role in raising the growth rate of the Singapore population over the past decade far above what it would otherwise have been. This is evident from a comparison of the Singapore population as projected by the United Nations in 2000 (using an assumption of limited net migration) with the actual 2010 figure. The United Nations projected a population of 4.604 million; the actual figure was 5.076 million, more than 10 per cent higher.

Events in recent years, however, have demonstrated that high immigration brings with it social tensions that are difficult to deal with. Singaporeans complained of feeling like strangers in their own country, of crowded subways and buses, of rising house prices, of increasing traffic congestion on the roads, and of dealing with shop assistants who could not communicate with them. This backlash against the rapidly rising number of foreign-born in Singapore was evident to the government, which responded with a drastic cut in the number of applicants granted permanent residence in 2009 and 2010.¹⁸

Final thoughts

Globalization, neo-liberalism, and consumerism provide the context in which the life goals of individuals and families in Singapore are determined, and in which uncertainty increases

¹⁸ The number of permanent residence permits granted in the early 2000s was in the 30,000 to 40,000 range. This shot up to 52,300 in 2005; 57,300 in 2006; 63,627 in 2007; and 79,167 in 2008. The evident public disquiet led to a drop to 59,460 in 2009 and a drastic cut to 29,265 in 2010. It is significant that the government faced an election in 2011, and was well aware of the electoral liability of the immigration issue.

about whether these goals can be met. Indeed, this is the case throughout the East Asian countries - Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, and Singapore. Patriarchy and Confucianism continue to play a role in creating societies in which the goals of economic advancement and population replacement are on a collision course.

It appears that in these East Asian countries the state and individual families are as one in their belief that children should be pushed to high performance in education. The belief is so strong that the tyranny of the *Juku* or cram school in Japan is legendary, and similar situations exist in South Korea (with its *kwawe* cram schools),¹⁹ Taiwan and Singapore. When the Singapore government announced in 2010 that it planned to abolish the primary school entrance examination, sat by 6-year old children, and later to also abolish end-of-year examinations for Primary 1 and Primary 2 children, this was greeted by howls of protest from many parents, who thought it signalled the decline of educational standards. Many parents in Singapore take two weeks' vacation to assist their 12 year olds manage the trauma of the primary school leaving examination, which plays a major role in determining the future life course of the child. Interestingly, similar attitudes can be seen in China, where, "even when schools cut back on extra classes or try less exam-oriented teaching methods, parents make up for this by sending their child to more supplementary classes, hiring tutors, or buying extra study materials" (Crabb, 2010: 397, citing Tang, 2005).

The emphasis on education is commendable, albeit sometimes taken to obsessive extremes. However, it is unfortunately one factor pushing fertility down to ultra-low levels. Many young Singaporeans are unwilling to contemplate parenthood until they are confident that they can play the role of the ideal parent. For those who do marry, the rather stark quality-quantity trade-off in raising children in the Singapore context deters most of them from having more than one or two children.

The economic success achieved in the East Asian countries, and Singapore, has much to do with the high quality human capital they have achieved through this emphasis on pushing children to strong educational performance. The dilemma is that the advanced economy so created will be enjoyed by increasingly fewer citizens and may itself be put at risk by the downward spiral in labour force and (with some delay) in population size. There is a great irony in the apparent fact that the very pressures to prioritize economic growth and the human capital factors that can contribute to it – long hours of work, involvement of women in the workforce on much the same terms as men, strong pressure on children to perform outstandingly in school, and the extra tuition and coaching that is considered indispensable for reaching this goal – contain the seeds of an inability of the population to replace itself.

Is there some way out of this dilemma? Perhaps we should be looking to the experience of those Western countries where fertility remains relatively high – a motley group actually, comprising the Scandinavian countries, France, USA and Australia, among others. If we

¹⁹ I understand that at senior high school level, a large majority of students attend *kwawe*.

look for key explanatory factors, we might say (rather crudely) that gender equity does it in Scandinavia, money does it in France, and the culture of minority populations – Hispanics and blacks and religious fundamentalists - does it in the USA. Thus no one “silver bullet” for raising fertility in East Asian countries to near-replacement levels emerges from their examples. But I would venture to say two things about East Asia generally, and Singapore in particular: (1) Greater gender equity in the household would help alleviate the stark choices facing women choosing between a career and family – or trying to juggle both; (2) Less single-minded attention to children’s educational performance, and more family-friendly workplaces, would help raise the birth rate, albeit perhaps at the sacrifice of some economic growth.

References

- Boling, Patricia, 2008, “Demography, culture and policy: understanding Japan’s low fertility”, *Population and Development Review*, 34(2): 307-326.
- Bumpass, Larry L., Ronald R. Rindfuss, Minja Kim Choe and Noriko O. Tsuya, 2009, “The institutional context of low fertility: the case of Japan”, *Asian Population Studies*, 5(3): 215-236.
- Chan, D., 2002, *Attitudes on Family: Survey on Social Attitudes of Singaporeans 2001*, Singapore: Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports. Available online at http://www.mcys.gov.sg/MCDSFiles/Resource%5CMaterials%5CAttitudes_on_Family.pdf
- Choe, Minja Kim, 1998, “Changing marriage patterns in South Korea”, in Karen Oppenheim Mason, Noriko O. Tsuya and Minja Kim Choe (eds), *The Changing Family in Comparative Perspective: Asia and the United States*, Honolulu: East-West Center, pp. 43-62.
- Chua Beng Huat, 1995, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy in Singapore*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Crabb, Mary W., 2010, “Governing the middle-class family in urban China: educational reform and questions of choice”, *Economy and Society*, 39(3): 385-402.
- Eng, K.K. 1997. "Inventing a moral crisis and the Singapore State." *Asian Journal of Womens Studies* 3(1):36-70.
- Eun Ki-Soo, 2007, “Lowest-low fertility in the Republic of Korea: Causes, consequences and policy responses”, *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, 22(2): 51-72.
- Jones, Gavin W., 1990, “Fertility transitions among Malay populations of South-East Asia: puzzles of interpretation”, *Population and Development Review*, 16(3): 507-537.
- Jones, G.W. 2004. "Not "when to marry" but "whether to marry": The changing context of marriage decisions in East and Southeast Asia." Pp. 3-56 in *(Un)tying the knot : ideal and reality in Asian marriage*, edited by G.W. Jones and K. Ramdas. Singapore: Asia Research

Institute, National University of Singapore.

Jones, Gavin W., 2007, "Delayed marriage and very low fertility in Pacific Asia", *Population and Development Review*, 33(3): 453-478.

Jones, G., & Shen, S-H., 2008. International marriage in East and Southeast Asia: trends and research emphases, *Citizenship Studies*, 12(1), 9-25.

Jones, Gavin W., 2009, "Recent fertility trends, policy responses and fertility prospects in low fertility countries of East and Southeast Asia", paper presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Recent and Future Trends in Fertility, United Nations Population Division, New York, 2-4 December 2009.

Jones, Gavin W. and Bina Gubhaju, 2009, "Emerging trends in marriage in the low fertility countries of East and Southeast Asia", *Asian Population Studies*, 5(3): 237-265.

Jones, Gavin W., Zhang Yanxia and Pamela Chia Pei Zhi, forthcoming, "Trends and implications of rising singlehood in East and Southeast Asia. A Singapore case study", submitted for publication.

Koh Eng Chuan, 2011, "The state of marriage in Singapore", in Gavin Jones, Terence Hull and Maznah Mohamad (eds), *Marriage Trends in Insular Southeast Asia: Their Economic and Socio-cultural Dimension*, London: Routledge.

Lee Siew Hua, 2008, "Big perks for big families", *Straits Times*, 21/8/2008.

Lesthaeghe, R. 2010. "The Unfolding Story of the Second Demographic Transition." *Population and Development Review* 36(2):211-251.

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), and the Committee on the Family, 2004, *State of the Family in Singapore*, MCYS.

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), 2009. "Family First: State of the Family Report 2009." Singapore: National Family Council (NFC) & Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

Ono, H., 2003, "Women's economic standing, marriage timing and cross-national contexts of gender", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65: 275-286.

Periera, Alexius, 2006, "Singapore's family values: do they explain low fertility?" *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, 21(1): 65-84.

Quah, Stella R., 1998, *Family in Singapore: Sociological Perspective*, 2nd Edition, Singapore: Times Academic Press.

Quah, 1999

Quah, Stella R., 2003, *Home and Kin: Families in Asia*, Singapore: Eastern Universities Press.

Raymo, James M., 2003, "Educational attainment and the transition to first marriage among Japanese women", *Demography*, 40(1): 83-103.

Raymo, J.M. and H. Ono., 2007, "Coresidence with parents, women's economic resources,

- and the transition to marriage in Japan." *Journal of Family Issues* 28(5):653-681.
- Raymo, James M. and Miho Iwasawa, 2005, "Marriage Market Mismatches in Japan: An Alternative View of the Relationship between Women's Education and Marriage", *American Sociological Review* 70: 801-822.
- Raymo, James M. and Miho Iwasawa, 2008, "Bridal pregnancy and spouse pairing patterns in Japan", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70: 847-860.
- Raymo, Iwasawa and Bumpass, 2008
- Retherford, Robert D., Naohiro Ogawa, and Satomi Sakamoto, 1996, "Values and fertility change in Japan", *Population Studies*, 50(1): 5-25.
- Retherford, Robert D, Naohiro Ogawa and Rikiya Matsukura, 2001, "Late marriage and less marriage in Japan", *Population and Development Review*, 27(1): 65-102.
- Retherford, Robert D. and Naohiro Ogawa, 2006, "Japan's baby bust: causes, implications and policy responses", in Fred R. Harris (ed), *The Baby Bust: Who Will Do the Work? Who Will Pay the Taxes?*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers: 5-47.
- Rindfuss, Ronald R., Larry L. Bumpass, Minja Kim Choe, and Noriko O. Tsuya, 2004. "Social Networks and Family Change in Japan." *American Sociological Review* 69: 838-861.
- Saw Swee Hock, 2005, *Population Policies and Programmes in Singapore*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Singapore Department of Statistics, 2010, *Population Trends 2010*.
- Straughan, Paulin Tay, Angelique Chan and Gavin Jones, 2009, "From population control to fertility promotion: A case study of family policies and fertility trends in Singapore", in Gavin Jones, Paulin Tay Straughan and Angelique Chan (eds), *Ultra-low Fertility in Pacific Asia: Trends, Causes and Policy Issues*, London: Routledge.
- Teo, Youyenn, 2010, "Shaping the Singapore family, producing the state and society", *Economy and Society*, 39(3): 337-359.
- Tey Nai Peng, 2007. "Trends in delayed and non-marriage in Peninsular Malaysia" *Asian Population Studies* 3(3):243 — 261.
- Tsuya, 2006
- Tsuya, N.O. and L. Bumpass (eds), 2004, *Marriage, Work and Family Life in Comparative Perspective: Japan, South Korea and the United States*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Wang Zheng-Xu and Ern-Ser Tan. 2007. "Self-expression, Asian values, and democracy: East Asia in comparative perspective," in Russell J. Dalton and Doh Chull Shin (eds.), *Citizens, Democracy and Markets Around the Pacific Rim: Congruence Theory and Political Culture*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Wong, Theresa and Brenda S. A. Yeoh, 2003, "Fertility and the family: an overview of pro-natalist population policies in Singapore", Singapore: Asian Metacentre Research Paper

Series no. 12,

Yap, M.T. 2008. "Ultra-low fertility in Singapore: some observations ", in *Ultra-low Fertility in Pacific Asia : Trends, Causes and Policy Issues*, edited by G.W. Jones, P.T. Straughan, and A. Chan. London: Routledge.

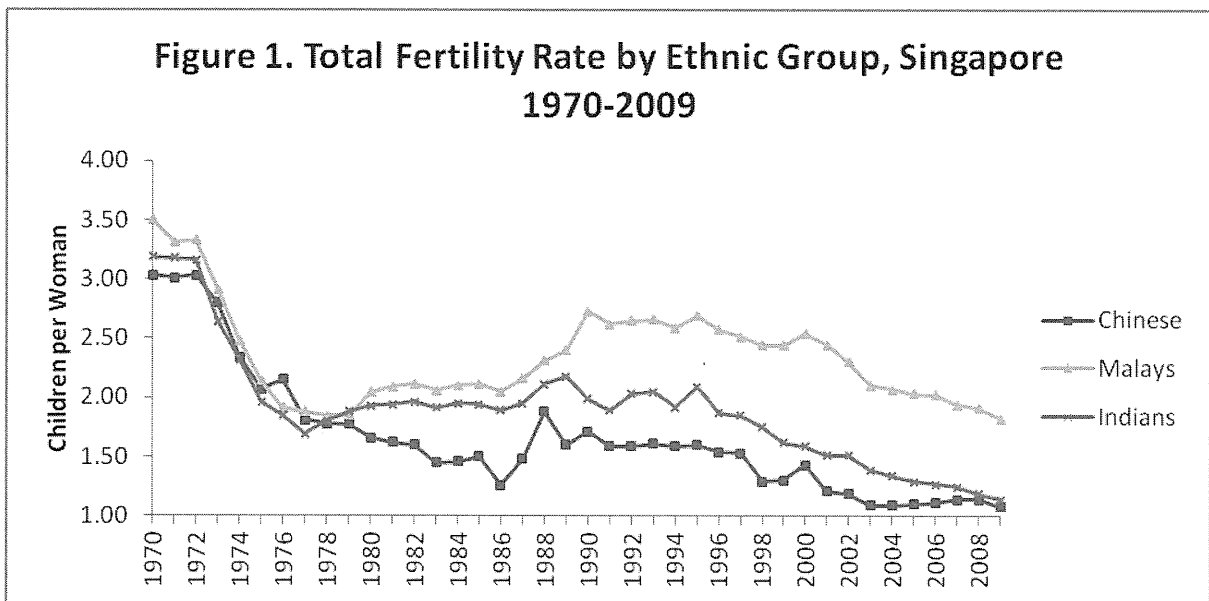
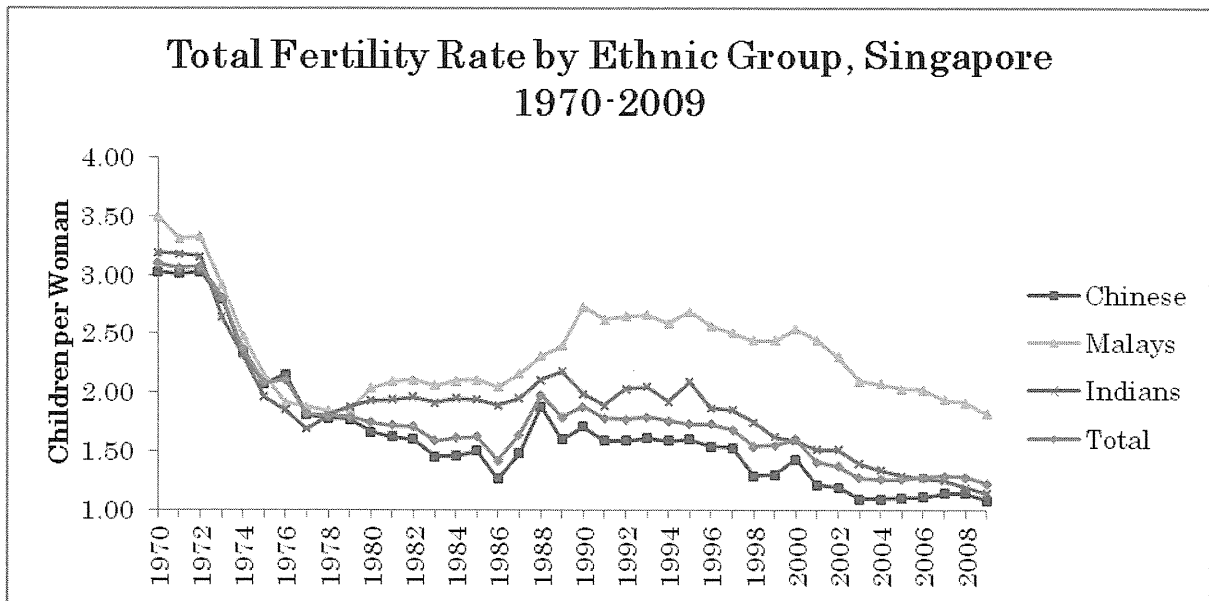


Figure 2: Trends in Proportion Single among Women and Men Aged 35-39, 1970-2005

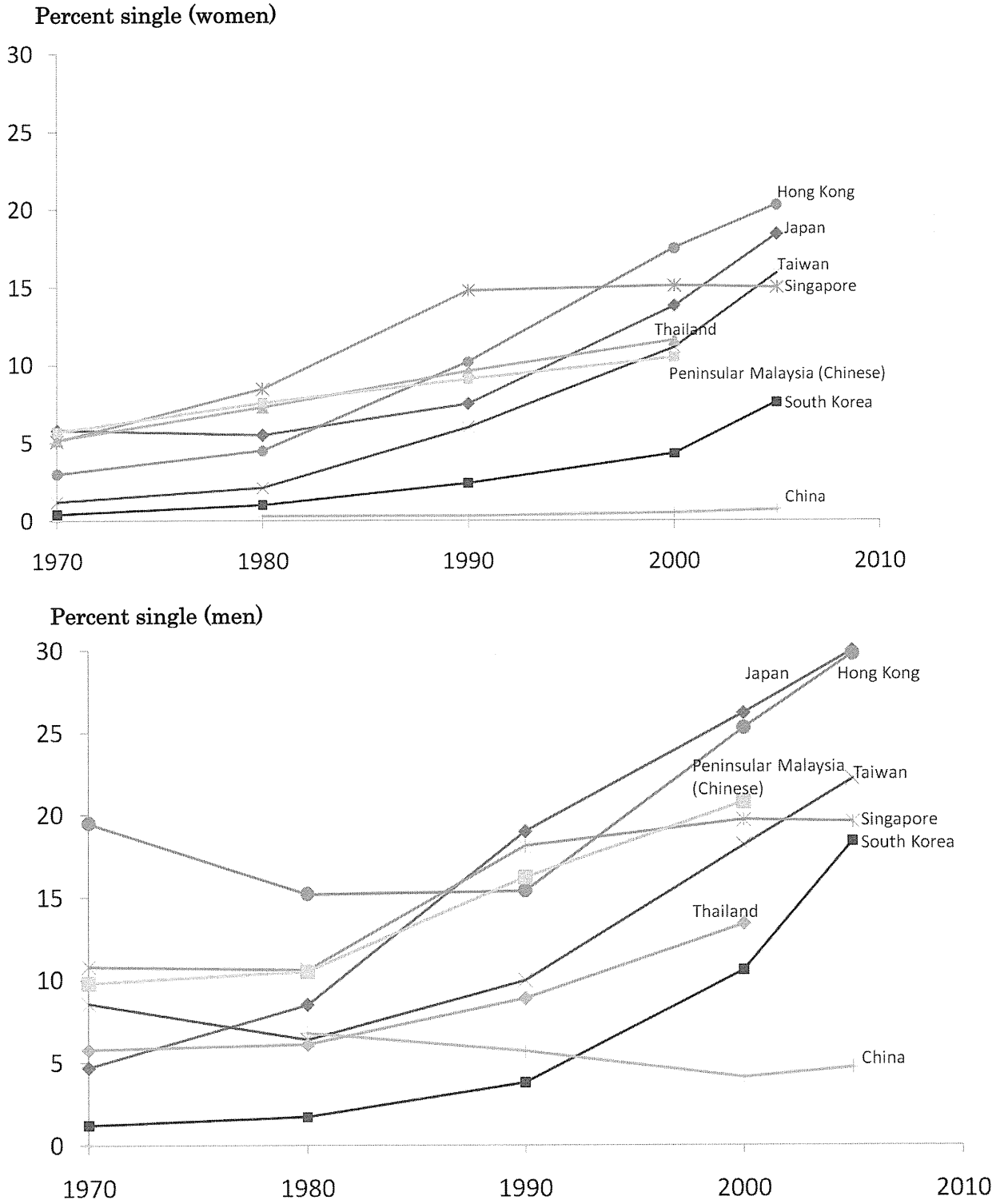
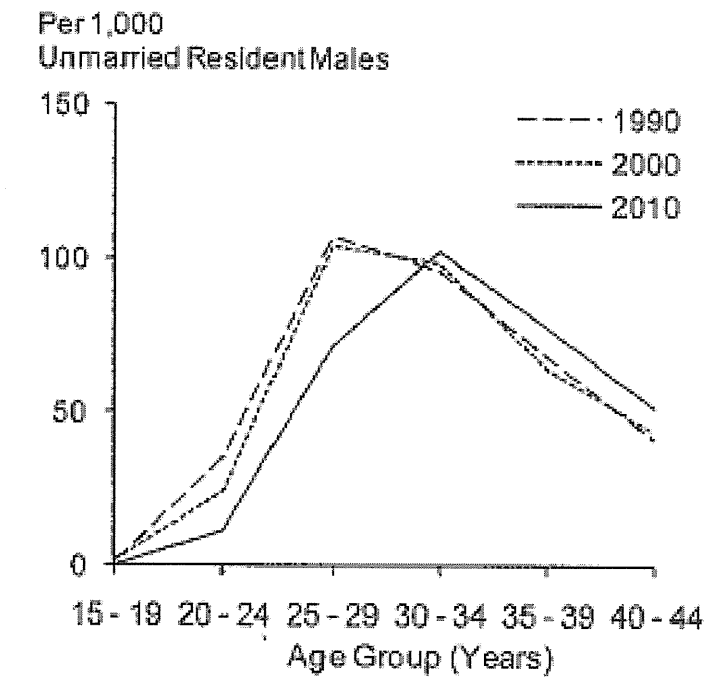


Figure 3: Singapore: Age-sex specific marriage rates, 1990-2010



Source: Singapore Department of Statistics, Yearbook of Statistics Singapore 2008

Table 1. Proportion never-married by age, sex and educational level, Singapore (percent), 2000, 2005 and 2010

Sex and age group	Below Secondary			Secondary			Post-secondary			University		
	2000	2005	2010	2000	2005	2010	2000	2005	2010	2000	2005	2010
Female												
25-29	21	21	23	30	34	35	43	47	52	54	56	62
30-34	13	13	13	17	17	18	23	24	27	27	28	28
35-39	10	10	9	14	14	13	20	17	18	23	20	21
40-44	9	10	9	15	14	12	20	18	16	22	21	19
Male												
25-29	62	67	64	58	63	64	70	69	74	69	73	76
30-34	40	42	39	29	35	38	28	33	37	28	32	35
35-39	28	29	29	18	22	25	15	18	21	13	14	17
40-44	21	23	23	14	14	18	9	12	14	7	8	11

Source: Yap, 2008, Table 8.3; Singapore Population Census 2010

Table 2. Trends in age-specific proportions single for Chinese Singaporean men (proportions expressed as percentages)

Age group	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
25-29				67.0	72.7	78.1
30-34	23.3	22.6	36.9	32.7	36.8	42.2
35-39	11.9	11.4	19.3	21.8	21.5	23.7
40-44	7.7	8.8	11.5	16.5	16.9	17.0
45-49	6.2	7.0	8.5	11.5	14.5	14.8

Source: (Jones, 2004; Jones and Gubhaju, 2009; 2010 Census report)

Table 3. Trends in age-specific proportions single for Chinese Singaporean women (proportions expressed as percentages)

Age group	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
25-29				45.0	51.3	61.3
30-34	11.1	17.8	22.4	21.6	25.6	29.8
35-39	5.8	9.3	15.6	17.1	17.0	19.9
40-44	3.6	6.7	12.3	15.0	16.0	16.2
45-49	3.4	4.6	7.9	13.5	14.4	14.8

Source: (Jones, 2004; Jones and Gubhaju, 2009; 2010 Census report)

