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Abstract

**Age-structural Transition in Indonesia:
The Problem of Macro- and Micro- Linkages**

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Because age structures evolve gradually and unevenly, population ageing may have varying implications for different age groups. Relative cohort size may oscillate over time, for example, where larger or smaller birth cohorts create an age-structural 'echo' as they pass through their own childbearing years. Older generations that experienced moderate levels of childbearing may then be "squeezed" in later life when they turn out to have relatively fewer children on whom they may rely. Marked improvements in longevity over age 60 may compound this problem by increasing the number of generations that certain younger cohorts need to assist. Clearly, relationships between several younger and older cohorts need to be considered. This paper reviews the fragmentary demographic evidence available on cohort oscillations in 20th-century Indonesia, raising the question of how we can assess whether squeezes implied by relatively small past cohorts are now shaping people's lives. The current capacity of ageing research to answer this question is considered in terms of two approaches: analysis of intergenerational transfers based on household surveys; and combined methodologies that build surveys into ethnographic and life course research.