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## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **POPULATION CHANGE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**

T. Champion and J. Falkingham (Eds)

Rowman & Littlefield (London), 2016. No. of pages: xiv + 259, Price \$44.95 (paperback),

ISBN: HB 978-1-78348-591-8, PB 978-1-78348-592-5

Every so often, in order to understand the present, it is wise to look back on where we have come from, and how we have changed. In doing so, we may also gain insights into what is ahead and attune our minds to how we might respond to future challenges. This is certainly apparent in population studies, and we have Tony Champion and Jane Falkingham to thank for creating this edited volume of papers that provide a series of reviews of various dimensions of demographic and social change in the United Kingdom over the last 25 years. Timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the publication of Heather Joshi's landmark collection on *The Changing Population of Britain* (1989, Blackwell) and produced on behalf of the British Society of Population Studies, the editors have delivered a book that will serve as a benchmark in demographic research for the next 25 years.

The book is divided into 11 chapters, the first of which is written by the editors and provides an overview of population change and its drivers, the dynamics of age and ethnic composition and changing family and household structures, making reference to subsequent chapters where particular issues are dealt with in more detail. Chapter 2, by Evandrou, Falkingham, and Vlachantoni, follows up Thane's gerontological theme in the Joshi collection with time series analyses of the changing age structure of the population aged 65 and over and of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. One particular statistic that stood out for me as being particularly dramatic was the reported rise in the number of centenarians from 860 in 1965 to 14,450 in 2014! The authors go on to consider the significant implications of this aging process for the provision of health and social care for the elderly, whereas Marshall and Nazroo, in the following chapter, unpick the experience of old age, suggesting a dichotomy between those in more affluent situations for whom life postretirement is often healthy and associated with participation in social, civic and cultural activities, and those with fewer resources whose lifestyle is likely to be inhibited by poorer health and will therefore involve less participation.

The focus of the book changes direction in the next two chapters, picking up on a theme that was almost entirely absent from the Joshi collection. In Chapter 4, Bijak, Disney, Lubman, and Wiśniowski summarize the trends in international migration and their socioeconomic composition in the post-war period and pay particular attention to the trends and policies relating to refugees and asylum seekers. Given the UK's imminent departure (Brexit) from the European Union (EU), it was interesting to hear the authors' views, based on recent research by "experts" (Dustmann and Frattini, 2013; Rowthorn, 2015), that the UK was gaining in net financial (public revenue) terms from migration flows from the European Economic Area (EU plus Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein). They also point out the uncertainty about the actual magnitude of international migration (in both directions) that is created by the deficiencies of the current instrument used for measuring international migration, the International Passenger Survey.

One data source that has proven valuable for the analysis of immigrant fertility is the Labour Force Survey which is used by Dubuc in Chapter 5 to distinguish foreign-born women (the immigrant generation) and UK-born women with ethnic parents (the second generation). Dubuc shows us how the differential between fertility rates of ethnic groups reduces over time not only due partly to the global fertility transition but also due to intergenerational conversion as an increasing proportion of ethnic minorities are made up of second generation women. While she presents clear evidence of inter-ethnic convergence, she also recognizes the impact that other factors, such as social and educational inequalities, may have on ethnic group fertility. This issue highlights a more general observation that the book would have benefited from a further chapter which considered how the population's educational characteristics, together perhaps with its social class and occupation characteristics, and have changed over the last 25 years.

Following on from the theme of fertility, Henz uses cross-sectional data from the General Household Survey and the General Lifestyle Survey between 1972 and 2011 in Chapter 6 to examine selective changes in the family context of children: the changing size of the sibling group; children living with a single mother; and mothers in employment. Education appears to be important again here; in families where the mother has a low level of education, there are more siblings, a greater level of living with a single mother, and a mother who is more likely to be unemployed. In families where the mother is more educated, children are likely to have fewer siblings, have a father present and a mother in employment. As family structures have changed, so has household composition and the implications of household dynamics on the demand for housing are examined in Chapter 7 by Berrington and Simpson. While the average household size has remained fairly stable in the 21st century, it has been a population growth through aging and international migration that has outpaced the volume of new houses being built, with the resulting lack of homes, particularly affordable homes for young adults. The authors explore the evidence for “concealed families”, using data from the 2011 Census to show that 13% of all families in England and Wales were concealed in other households.

Chapter 8 is written by Champion and returns to the theme of migration, although in this case referring to the mechanism that is driving much of the spatial redistribution of the population within the UK, the internal migration component of population change. Champion is the one author in this volume who contributed to the earlier collection edited by Joshi and is therefore able to update his own previous analysis, demonstrating, for example, that the north–south divide in migration terms, a key theme 25 years ago, is still a national concern although the drivers have changed. This chapter also provides evidence of the recovery of urban populations and the role played by migration together with the declining frequency with which people are changing residence in England and Wales, particularly over relatively short distances.

While Dubuc's analysis of immigrant fertility draws attention to the significance of second generation immigrant fertility, the growth and increasing diversification of the ethnic minority population over the last 25 years has also been remarkable. Finney and Catney, in Chapter 9, document how this diversity has changed since 1991 by examining the population dynamics of different ethnic groups. They consider demographic differences between ethnic groups before looking at the geographies of ethnic diversity, segregation and mixing, and the role of

internal migration in redistributing the minority populations. Data from the last three censuses suggest that ethnic minorities are dispersing from areas in which they are concentrated to less diverse areas.

As Coast and Freeman indicate in Chapter 10, sexual relationships and sexual and reproductive behavior and attitudes are key components of population health and well-being. The authors report on some of the major shifts in sexual behavior in the UK since the 1980s, which include the falling age at first intercourse, the increasing number of sexual partners, and the increase in same-sex activity. Their analysis kicks off by showing us how attitudes have changed since 1980 and how policies reflect these changes. Thereafter, they present trends in contraception and unintended pregnancy, abortion, and various sexually transmitted diseases. As with most of the other chapters in this book, they identify the imperative for social policy makers to respond to the trends in human behaviour.

One of the main problems in undertaking analyses of change over an extended period such as the last 25 years involves identifying data sets and constructing time series that provide consistent definition and measurement of the variables involved, including geographical areas when spatial analysis is involved. This message is clear from several chapters of the book but no better example is with the measurement of the changing geography of deprivation, a subject that is addressed by Norman in the final chapter of the book. Norman develops a deprivation index for small areas in Britain based on similar variables derived from each census between 1971 and 2011 and shows us that while deprivation has been declining overall, some parts of the country, such as Inner London and Glasgow, remain persistently deprived.

In summary, Champion and Falkingham have brought together contributions that collectively provide an authoritative portrayal of the transformations occurring over the last quarter of a century. While each chapter offers new insights into changes in the structure and composition of the population or the underlying behavioural processes and their outcomes, the volume as a whole provides a comprehensive and very useful synthesis of the complex and interrelated nature of sociodemographic dynamics. It is indeed a worthy successor to Joshi's collection published in 1989 and one that I feel sure that many academics and policy makers will refer to in the years ahead.

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