Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.
A comparative analysis of population growth in China and Egypt: people, policies and prospects

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Politics)

in the School of People, Environment and Planning

at Massey University, Albany Campus, New Zealand

Yang (Tom) Yu

2011
Abstract:

Despite their geographical locations and historical disassociations, China and Egypt face one essential identical issue in common--the problem of over population. This study compares population growth in China and Egypt in terms of people, policies and prospects for economic development. It argues that China and Egypt faced a population crisis that was undermining economic development since the 19th century and this issue of excessive population growth continues to be on the top of the political agenda in the 21st century. Furthermore China and Egypt both have experienced three stages of population development in terms of family planning policies. For China, the first phase of family planning programs began in the 1950s and this was followed by further waves of development in the 1960s and the one child policy in the 1970s. For Egypt, the first phase of Cairo’s family planning program began in 1965 and this was also accompanied by two more stages of development, one in the 1970s and the other in the 1980s. The results of these family planning programs were impressive. China and Egypt both experienced extraordinary fertility decline since the 1980s. Despite these achievements in family planning however, China and Egypt is expected to experience further waves of population increase in the foreseeable future. This would no doubt continue to challenge these countries’ prospect for economic development.

Key words: total fertility rate, replacement level fertility, the demographic transition, Malthusian population trap, China, Egypt, population, economic development.
Acknowledgement:

I would like to thank my supervisor Nigel Parsons who has helped me tremendously during the long process of writing this thesis. I would especially like to thank Nigel for his patience and encouragement and for providing me with detailed guidelines of the various chapters of this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr Beth Greener and Chris VDK for the conservations that I had with them during my short trip to Palmerston North. Both of them have commented on the first draft of my thesis and provided me with insightful comments.

Lastly I would like to thank my dearest mother Yehe-nara for her unconditional support and unlimited financial contribution.
Table of content:

Chapter 1
Introduction
Dynamic of human population growth
China’s population issues
Egypt’s population issues
Research aims and objective
Research question
Thesis structure

Chapter 2
Introduction
Demographic instruments: the total fertility rate
The total fertility rate of China and Egypt
The total fertility rate: critical evaluation
Demographic instruments: the demographic transition
Demography transition in China and Egypt
Demography transition: critical evaluation
Demographic instrument: Malthus population trap
Malthus and China
Malthus and China: critical evaluation
Malthus and Egypt
Malthus and Egypt: critical evaluation
Comparative method
Comparative method: critical evaluation
Policy transfer
Policy transfer: from Brazil to Ecuador
Policy transfer: China and Egypt
Policy transition: critical evaluation
Conclusion and summary

Chapter 3
Introduction
Primary and secondary sources
Fertility change and developmental idealism-------------------------------31
Developmental idealism and China------------------------------------------32
Developmental idealism and China: critical review--------------------------32
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------33
Developmental idealism and Egypt------------------------------------------34
Developmental idealism and Egypt: critical review--------------------------35
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------35

Family planning literature and China---------------------------------------36
Family planning literature and China: critical review------------------------37
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------38
Family planning literature and Egypt---------------------------------------39
Family planning and Egypt: critical review---------------------------------39
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------40
Female empowerment literature and China-----------------------------------40
Female empowerment and China: critical review-------------------------------41
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------42
Female empowerment literature and Egypt-----------------------------------43
Female empowerment and Egypt: critical review-------------------------------43
Gaps for the thesis--------------------------------------------------------44
Conclusion and discussion-----------------------------------------------44

Chapter 4
Introduction---------------------------------------------------------------46
China: geography and demography------------------------------------------46
Egypt: geography and demography------------------------------------------48
Social and economic indicators--------------------------------------------50
Social and economic indicators: China-------------------------------------51
Social and economic indicators: Egypt-------------------------------------53
Historical background-----------------------------------------------------56
Manchu Qing Empire in China---------------------------------------------56
Stage one: high morality rates-------------------------------------------57
Stage two: declining mortality rates and development---------------------58
Malthusian population trap in China--------------------------------------61
Chapter 5
Introduction--------------------------------------------72
Policy setting: political overview of China----------------------72
Policy Setting: political overview of Egypt-----------------------74
China’s national population policy response-------------------76
The Great Famine: 1958-1976-------------------------------------78
Third Family Planning Program and the One Child Policy: 1977 to the present---80
China’s one child policy: debates and effects---------------------82
China’s provincial policy responses-----------------------------84
China’s local response: Hongtong county of Shanxi province------85
China’s local response: Dalian City----------------------------86
Egypt’s national population policy response---------------------87
The First Phase: 1965-1972--------------------------------------90
The Second Phase: 1973-1984------------------------------------93
The Third Phase: 1985 until the present-------------------------95
Egypt’s provincial policy responses-----------------------------97
Egypt’s local response: Minya----------------------------------97
Egypt’s local response: Cairo and Alexandria--------------------99
How do Chinese and Egyptian policies compare?------------------101
Conclusion and discussion-------------------------------------103

Chapter 6
Introduction--------------------------------------------105
Future prospects: China----------------------------------------105
Prospect for demographic transition in China---------------------106
Future prospects: Egypt------------------------------------------107
Prospect of demographic transition in Egypt----------------------108
What can China learn from Egypt?-----------------------------109
What can Egypt learn from China?-----------------------------111
List of tables

Figure 1.0 World Population By Region 2025-----------------------------------------------3
Figure 2.0 Feelings about having one child more or less than ideal------------------------28
Figure 3.0 Literature Review-----------------------------------------------------------------45
Figure 4.0 China’s six largest minority groups in 2000-------------------------------------47
Figure 4.1 China’s demography-------------------------------------------------------------48
Figure 4.2 Population of Egypt--------------------------------------------------------------50
Figure 4.3 China’s official GDP figures------------------------------------------------------51
Figure 4.4 Urban-Rural Illiteracy in 2009-----------------------------------------------------52
Figure 4.5 Education attainment in China------------------------------------------------------53
Figure 4.6 Egypt’s GDP growth---------------------------------------------------------------53
Figure 4.7 Structure of Egypt’s labour force 2007-------------------------------------------54
Figure 4.8 Labour and education: Egypt-------------------------------------------------------