DISAFFECTED YOUTH IN ASIAN CITIES: SINGAPORE AS A MODEL
FOR THE DIFFUSION OF THE YOUTH BULGE EFFECT

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my supportive and loving parents, David and Gennelle Pipes, who have been a great source of encouragement and advice through this process.
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Abstract

The youth bulge hypothesis suggests that there is a link between a high proportion of youth (aged 15-24) and the growth of political instability. This thesis addresses the hypothesis and applies it to the urban environment in seven Asian cities. First, population data was gathered to identify the particular years of youth bulge in the past fifty years. The history of each urban center was then examined to determine whether a link with youth bulges could be identified. Singapore was used in a case study of how the effects of a youth bulge can be diffused. Singapore’s particular political environment, its detail-oriented leaders, and a series of government policies have given Singapore incredibly stability, even during decades of youth bulges. The factors involved were investigated, and compared with conditions in certain Asian nations which have had or will have distinct youth bulges.
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Chapter 1

The Youth Bulge Hypothesis

1.1 Introduction

Youth are an incredibly volatile demographic group. They have the idealism and mobility to pursue their dreams at whatever cost. They are the group most likely to incite revolution and rebellion to achieve those dreams. As hypothesized by Fuller (1990), the likelihood of political instability increases when there is a threshold proportion of youth present in a population. Increased competition for jobs and education frustrate youth, often towards political action. Urban centers are even more susceptible to these forces, as youth flock to the cities in search of educational and employment opportunities. The intent of this thesis is to study the historical and current applicability of the youth bulge hypothesis to cities in Asia, using Singapore as the primary case study.

1.2 Background

Population scholars have long tried to establish a link between population dynamics and political instability. Thomas Malthus in 1798 tried to link high rates of population growth with increasing instability when he predicted that population growth would eventually outstrip food production. He determined that there were two possible checks on population growth: the primary preventative checks involved moral restraint and advocated abstinence. The positive checks included famine, plague, and war – the natural results if preventative measures failed to limit the
growth of population (Malthus, 1798). Nazli Choucri in 1973 theorized that: "[A] vicious cycle sets in: increasing population leads to political instability; a situation of political instability may then intensify population pressure in its turn by making it difficult for the national government to undertake effective programs to contain or reduce the resulting pressures on resources" (Chourcri, 1973). However, despite their best efforts, scholars were unable to link population growth as a whole with unrest, so solutions have been sought in the population structures of a society. As scholars examined the structures of a society, they observed how the demographic transition influenced instability.

In demographic transition, countries move through a leading mortality transition, then many experience a lagging fertility transition. All countries start out with high birth rates and death rates. As each country moves through demographic transition, it goes through periods of high population growth towards a time of low population growth, when birth and death rates are low. It is in the intermediate stages that instability is most evident. As mortality rates decline with improved medical knowledge, countries face a high population growth rate. This time is followed by a decline in birth rates, which means that there is a population bulge with a particular age group. The people born before this group were afflicted by high mortality rates, and those born after the decline in birth rates make up a smaller cohort. As this cohort ages, it enters the turbulent times of youth, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four or even up to twenty-nine.

In revolutionary situations ranging from Tudor England to modern Iran, political upheaval has been preceded by a surge in the numbers of young adults. These young
people are often competing for limited opportunities to achieve elite political and economic positions (Goldstone in Diehl, Gledistch, eds. 2000). Large youth cohorts are often drawn to new ideas and heterodox religions, challenging older forms of authority. In addition, young people are more mobile than their older counterparts without the responsibilities to family and career, and they can be more easily gathered together for political action. In the State Failure Task Force study, youth bulges were found to be the major predisposing factor for ethnic conflict in the post-World War II world. It has even been claimed that without a youth bulge, ethnic conflicts seldom occur (Goldstone, in Diehl, Gledistch, eds. 2000).

With the youth bulge hypothesis, Gary Fuller (1990, 1998) identified a relationship between a large proportion of youths in a population and political instability. The youth bulge hypothesis states that “when the fourth and fifth age cohorts (that is, those aged 15 to 19 and 20 to 24) represent twenty percent or more of a country’s population, political unrest almost certainly occurs” (Fuller, 1990). Fuller found that this relationship has been strong for the past fifty years.

This analysis can be taken one step further, to examine the phenomenon in units smaller than countries. Cities tend to attract young people in search of education and employment, particularly in countries that are becoming less agrarian and more industrialized. According to Fuller and Hoch (1998), “almost all developing world cities have had youth bulges most of the time since 1950”. Cities tend, therefore, to exhibit a perpetual youth bulge. Does the youth bulge hypothesis still apply? Is it possible to link the existence of youth bulges with instability? Asia is a particularly interesting focus because it contains countries with rapidly growing populations, an
obvious influence of the youth bulge, and countries where youth deficits are
developing. In short, Asia offers a compete arena for viewing age structure transition.

If it can be shown that youth bulges in Asian cities are linked with political unrest,
is this always the case? Are there any situations where the youth bulge does not
contribute to instability? Since the formation of the city-state of Singapore in 1965,
political instability has been unheard-of despite significantly large groups of ethnic
and religious minorities. Singapore, as a city-state, also has a large youth cohort.
The young adults between 25 and 29 can arguably be included with those between 15
and 24 because of the importance of higher education to Singaporeans, which means
that they do not enter the workforce and compete for jobs until their later 20s. In each
census year from 1957 onward, Singapore experienced a youth bulge when the terms
of definition include those aged 15 to 29 and the youth share of population is greater
than twenty percent. If the definition is restricted to those aged 15 to 24, a youth
bulge would be still evident in both the 1970 and 1980 censuses. Urban centers like
Singapore are more likely to experience youth bulges because of the inevitable draw
of young professionals to cities for work. Singapore is, however, famous for its
stable political scene, with virtually no opposition to the ruling People’s Action Party
(PAP). How has Singapore managed to avoid the political instability many other
Asian cities experience with youth bulges?

1.3 Conceptual Framework for the Youth Bulge Theory

The proposition that a high proportion of youth in a population may cause violent
conflict is not new. In the late 1960s, Herbert Moller showed the importance of
economic depression on the largest Germany youth cohorts ever in explaining the rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s (Urdal, 2002). This link was also observed in the French Revolution of 1789 which coincided with a significantly large youth bulge brought on by rapid decrease in infant mortality during the previous several decades. This idea has taken on new meaning in recent decades, as countries attempt to prevent a rise in instability and to predict possible areas of instability.

Political instability within a state is a concern for that state as well as any nation that desires a healthy relationship with that state. The United States of America would like to avoid political instability in any country with which it has trade or diplomatic relations. In the early 1980s, Gary Fuller was a visiting scholar with the Office of Global Issues in the Central Intelligence Agency. There, he developed a tool to help the United States predict potential areas of political instability on an international level. He theorized that when the youth of a country was twenty percent or higher of the entire population, political instability was likely. He called this phenomena a “youth bulge”. A youth bulge occurs when there are dramatic shifts in demographic variables. Most significantly, a steep drop in infant and child mortality, followed by a subsequent drop in fertility produces a youth bulge about twenty years later (Xenos, 1999). As a youth bulge develops, there will be an increased demand for jobs and education, which a country may not be prepared to accommodate. Countries will experience instability if young people remain undereducated and jobless, as unrest spreads throughout the youth. Young people are most likely to take political action, so it is understandable that this age bracket would be most indicative of political instability.
Fuller’s first case study was on Sri Lanka, where two distinct youth bulges (one for the Sinhalese, the other for the Tamils) coincided directly with political instability in the government. Since then, much has been written and theorized about this predictor, and Fuller has also done several studies extending his initial findings. Using census data from the United Nations and the United States Census Bureau’s Rural and Urban Projections (RUP) collection, Fuller has now analyzed 22 countries in Asia, and has found a strong link between a high number of youths in a population and political instability.

In academic circles, the youth bulge concept has been developed and applied to many different countries as well as on a sub-national level. One of Fuller’s former graduate students, Joan Butler, studied each of India’s eighteen states and developed a test called the Youth Index. The Youth Index measures the relative size of the youth bulge age groups in each state, and creates a ranking system. Butler searched for reports of unrest in each Indian state and ranked them according to frequency and intensity of unrest. She placed this ranking alongside the Youth Index and saw a high correlation of 75.9 percent between youthfulness and social unrest. She also tested other demographic indicators, the crude birth rate and the rate of population growth and did not find a significant correlation between these variables and political unrest. This study further validated the use of the youth bulge as an indicator for political instability (Butler, 1990).

The concept of the youth bulge has also been taken into consideration on a broader time scale. Jack Goldstone (1991) researched two century-long waves of the breakdown of states across Eurasia. In places as diverse as England, France, the
Ottoman and Chinese empires, he identified similar processes and linked them to demographics. Goldstone (1991) noted that the breakdown seemed to occur when states experienced three problems simultaneously: 1) financial problems as a result of population pressure; 2) divisions among the elite because of heightened competition for resources and positions; 3) a high potential for the mobilization of popular groups because of increased grievances and predisposing social patterns. One of the predisposing social patterns is a high proportion of youth in the population of the country. Goldstone (1991) demonstrated that in England, numbers of urban youth were at their peak precisely during its periods of greatest political instability, the 1630s.

Samuel Huntington (1996) has also examined the 20th century’s resurgence of cultural and religious identity as a political force. He noted that large, dynamic groups of youth tended to form the front line for many of the social movements, particularly the Islamic resurgence of the 20th century. Joining CIA analysts (CIA 1990; Population and Development Review 1990), Huntington (1996) agreed that when 20 percent of the population was young people aged 15-24, a youth bulge had been formed.

David Bloom and Richard Freeman (1986) and Howard Wriggins (1988) developed a framework called “generational crowding” whereby youth numbers had an influence on politics through the effects on distribution of scarcities and the misdistribution of demands relative to the capabilities to meet those demands. Isidor Wallimann and George Zito (1994) clarified the type of youth that will become
politically active, namely those that are not integrated into the labor market nor those who have strong familial ties.

The youth bulge hypothesis has also been applied in a prescriptive manner. In demographics, it has been used to inform policies for national governments. As a nation recognizes a recent drop in fertility following a sharp decline in infant mortality, it can begin to prepare for the time when the youth bulge comes of age. Programs to encourage later marriages, having children later and increasing the intervals between children are intended to prevent the population explosion one would expect from a large youth cohort's offspring. Without any policies, it is expected that a youth bulge cohort would produce about one-third more births than a cohort of average size (Xenos, 2002). A youth bulge does not necessarily result in instability. Asian nations that are experiencing youth bulges today can respond proactively, not just to stem the future population explosion, but to prevent political instability.

A youth bulge is not the sole factor contributing to instability. In 17th century England, it was not just that there were a large proportion of youths, but that there were a large number of young urban men who were disenfranchised by the existing land inheritance system because they were not the first born. There were not the resources available to give these men work to do, and in their frustration they turned towards political action (Xenos, 2002).

The concept of a youth bulge has been widely accepted as an indicator for future instability. Recent articles from Nepalese and Filipino journals and newspapers demonstrate a faith in this concept to help their nations better predict instability. In
Nepal, the concern over rising unemployment as a result of the youth bulge has driven the government to look at a link between unemployment and insurgency. Unemployed youths are frequently offered jobs within the rebel Maoist group, and as unemployment rises in Nepal, an increasing number of young men are prepared to join any group that might offer them a job, insurgent or not (Dhakal, 2002).

In the Philippines, concern arose after Peter Xenos of the East-West Center's Population and Health Program presented a lecture on the youth bulge concept and demonstrated how the Philippines can expect pressure due to their high proportion of young people. Xenos predicted that the youth population of the Philippines would reach its peak in 2025, creating an immense strain on education and job resources. As demonstrated in local newspapers, Filipinos are calling for preventative measures to be taken to protect the country from the pressures on education and the job market through that time (Tan, 2001). According to Peter Xenos, policymakers need to examine education, health, and employment programs, expanding them to accommodate the future needs of a growing young population (Xenos, 1999).

In the United States in 1998, John C. Gannon, Chairman of the National Intelligence Council called the youth bulge the "intelligence challenge for the next generation" (Gannon, as quoted by Heinsohn, 2002). George J. Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence, placed his faith in the predictive quality of the youth bulge concept when he testified before the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence: "Demographic trends tell us that the world's poorest and most politically unstable regions - which include parts of the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa - will have the largest youth populations in the world over the next two decades and beyond...
The problems that terrorists exploit—poverty, alienation, and ethnic tensions—will grow more acute over the next decade. This will especially be the case in those parts of the world that have served as the most fertile recruiting grounds for Islamic extremist groups” (Tenet, as quoted by Heinsohn, 2002). According to Craig Romm of the San Diego Union Tribune, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Pakistan all have median ages under the age of nineteen are among the fastest growing and youngest populations of the world (Romm, 2002). Clearly the United States is willing to place its hope in the youth bulge concept as a predictor of future instability.

The youth bulge concept can be highly influential for national and sub-national policymaking. Not only would a country try to avoid a future population explosion, but it would desire to avoid the tendency for political instability. As the research shows, both occurrences are real and likely. As the concept is refined and broadened to include every nation and its history, its usefulness as a predictive tool will only increase in value.

Further research into this area will include a greater emphasis on the influence of urbanization on the youth bulge. It is possible that some countries that do not show a significant youth bulge in the past fifty years will have them on a more localized level, particularly in cities where grassroots political activism often begins.

This thesis intends to explore the ramifications of applying the youth bulge theory to urban areas. It evaluates the distinct issues involved with having a large youth cohort in an urban area. It relates these issues to the concern for political stability. It discusses the validity of diffusion, as implemented by the city-state Singapore and identifies the potential to use Singapore as a model for other Asian cities to emulate.
1.4 Questions

The following questions will facilitate this exploration.

1) Is there a link between youth bulges in Asian cities and political instability? To answer this question, the following must be evaluated: What is the historical and geographic distribution of youth bulges in Asian cities over the past fifty years? Has political instability coincided with these youth bulges? What Asian cities are predicted to have youth bulges in the next twenty years?

If there has not been instability coincident with a youth bulge, why not? How have cities avoided the threat a youth bulge brings to political stability? If cities on the whole experience a perpetual youth bulge, how can a link be established? Is the threshold (twenty percent or more) too low for cities? If it were raised, do bulges coincide with instability?

2) How does the case of Singapore compare with other Asian cities? This question must be evaluated through the following discussion: Why has Singapore not experienced political instability despite a youth population that has frequently been over twenty percent of the total population? Has the Singaporean government made policies directed particularly at diffusing the effects of the youth bulge? Has the Singaporean government made policies that indirectly diffuse any potential unrest due to the youth bulge? Are there independent factors that have contributed to Singapore’s high level of stability?

Is Singapore an anomaly? Or can Singapore be used as a model in prescribing government action for future youth bulges in Asian cities?
1.5 Rationale

Understanding the demographic shifts in a country is critical in aiding in its development. According to a recent report by Population Action International, “recent progress along the demographic transition...is associated with continuous declines in the vulnerability of nation-states to civil conflict” (Cincotta, et al., pg 12, 2003). The report also stated “the demographic factors most closely associated with the likelihood of an outbreak of civil conflict during the 1990s were a high proportion of young adults - a phenomenon referred to as a youth bulge - and a rapid rate of urban population growth” (Cincotta, pg 13, 2003). Asian countries are experiencing both rapid demographic change and urbanization. In examining the youth bulge in urban environments, this study will take both demographic factors and apply them to the youth bulge hypothesis.

This is a distinctly geographic study, considering both the environmental conditions of demographic factors and the impact they have in human interaction. Focusing particularly on one area of the world lends the project a regional flavor.

This research project has significant implications. If youth bulges usually have a negatively exacerbating effect on the stability of a government, perhaps there are prescriptive methods to help disperse this effect. If one Asian city-state has been able to diffuse the pressure of a youth bulge, even possibly channeling it into higher economic productivity, perhaps it can serve as a model for other cities experiencing the same pressure. Baby booms are a result of a high fertility rate (usually coupled with declining infant mortality rates), which find fruition in the youth bulge several
decades later. This means that youth bulges can be predicted several decades in advance, and countries can prepare for the dramatic rise in the proportion of young adults in their populations. Years before the pressure of youth builds, governments can be prepared to diffuse any problems and redirect the energy of the young adults away from instigating unrest.

Singapore is a highly developed nation, and yet it has a very diverse population with potentially destabilizing ethnic and religious undercurrents. It is not unlike other Asian cities where youth bulges are prevalent. However, political instability is not commonly linked to Singapore, and it begs the question, why not? This research project will attempt to answer that question and determine whether any prescriptive methods can be applied to other countries experiencing urban youth bulges.

1.6 Methodology

1. Census Data Survey:

The primary source of data was census information from each Asian city examined. This data I obtained through the International Database of the Census Bureau. This data needed to be considered accurate and also very detailed. Unfortunately, not many Asian nations have age and sex distributions for urban, rural, and total populations from the past fifty years. The countries from which I was able to obtain enough information were Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, The Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, and Singapore.

2. Archival Review:
I then performed an in-depth archival and literature review to understand what was going on politically in each Asian city during the period of time studied to determine whether political instability was present. Symptoms of political unrest include riots, demonstrations, protests, and any violent upheavals. Political unrest is also sometimes more covert. I was careful to take note of any activity that seemed symptomatic of unrest.

In the case study on Singapore, I took a more in-depth look at the actions of the government to determine how the youth bulge was diffused. I used data from the Singapore Statistical bureau and government documents to include speeches given by former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew in reference to family planning.

1.7 Data Analysis

1. Population statistics for each Asian city examined were specific enough that population pyramids could be constructed in five-year increments from 1955 through 1995.

2. The young adult populations, ages 15 to 24, were then aggregated and their total size calculated as a percentage of the population. The cohort of youth aged 25 to 29 were included with those aged 15 to 24 as an alternative assessment of the youth bulge (See Figures 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18).

3. A time series of the results was developed to identify youth bulges in each Asian urban population and compared with youth bulges in their total populations.

4. I then compared patterns of urban youth bulge against incidents of political instability within the urban centers of each nation examined. To measure political
instability, a threshold level was used to indicate a minimum intensity warranting the label “instability”. In Joan Butler’s 1990 MA geography thesis from the University of Hawai‘i on the youth bulge as applied to Indian states, she chose an event approach analysis which dictated the threshold level of a minimum of one death or multiple injuries for an event to be labeled a violent destabilizing event and an attendance of at least 200 people to warrant the label of a non-violent destabilizing event (Butler, 1990). This measurement was applied to each Asian city to ensure that the term “political instability” was not used loosely.

5. I then compared the six Asian nations’ urban youth bulge phenomenon with the city-state of Singapore’s stable history. I identified possible sources of diffusion of the effects of the youth bulge in Singapore, and compared these factors with the Asian nations examined. For example, economic growth in Singapore has been unprecedented. I compared the growth in Singapore with the growth in other Asian nations as a possible explanation for Singapore’s unique stability. As each factor was compared with the other nations, I identified the factors that probably had the greatest diffusing impact and which gave Singapore the stability it has enjoyed.

6. Finally, the question was answered: Can Singapore be used as a model for other Asian nations with increasing urbanization? I examined whether the factors that enabled Singapore to diffuse the effects of the youth bulge were applicable to other Asian nations, taking into consideration the uniqueness of the Singaporean government and political structure.

1.8 Directions
Chapter 2 will first examine the common characteristics of Asian cities, and urban areas in general. Next, the cities studied will be identified and the connection between their years of youth bulge and incidents of political instability will be drawn. Then, using fertility data and population pyramids, future youth bulges are predicted. Chapter three will deal with Singapore: its history, its population policy, and finally the application of the youth bulge. It will be shown that Singapore has channeled the youth towards economic growth. Then government policies that help to alleviate the effects of the youth bulge will be examined, along with other factors that influence political stability. Finally, in Chapter 4, I summarize my findings and offer some concluding remarks and recommendations.
Chapter 2

The Asian City and the Youth Bulge

2.1 Background

Cities are centers of industry, education, and politics. Therefore, the residents of urban areas almost always have better access to information, technology, and goods. Because of this accessibility, urban areas are also often the first to experience demographic transition. In the first stage of demographic transition, birth rates and death rates are high. As medical care improves, death rates begin to fall. As cities typically receive priority in health care, they move more quickly than the rest of the country to the second stage of demographic transition - high birth rates and falling death rates. In this stage, there is often a baby boom that causes rapid population growth. As a population continues through demographic transition, birth rates then begin to fall. This is likely to occur in urban areas sooner than in rural areas, as urban families are not agrarian and dependent on having many hands to help with farm work. Because cities are also characteristically densely populated, there is not enough room for many large families. As a result, fertility tends to decline in urban areas much more quickly than in rural areas. It is this decline in fertility rates that in turn creates a large youth bulge approximately twenty years following the baby boom. The large baby cohort has been preceded by and followed by relatively smaller age cohorts. Because cities move more quickly through demographic
transition than countries as a whole, their youth bulges are critically important to the
stability of the population.

Cities also attract young workers and students that contribute to preexisting youth
bulges. It is the rural-urban migration that may also prolong a youth bulge.
Furthermore, urban populations are typically very diverse in socio-economic terms
and, in an area with higher population density, these various groups are brought into
much closer social contact than they would experience in a rural environment. If
properly facilitated by local government and community leaders, these interactions
might have positive outcomes. However, socio-economic diversity can often lead to
adverse economic and political competition. Furthermore, it is also in cities where
cultural misunderstandings and historical grievances most often surface. Urban
housing and job markets can clearly highlight the disparity between access to
education, money, and political power.

It has been predicted that Asia will become increasingly urbanized over the next
several decades (Asian Development Bank, 1997). It is further expected that
Southeast Asia and the People’s Republic of China will have the fastest rates of
urbanization up to 2010. By 2015, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) predicts that
Asia will have 272 cities with more than one million inhabitants. The number of
mega cities with more than ten million inhabitants will rise from nine in 1995 to over
twenty in 2025.

Rapid urbanization is often considered to have an influence on instability and
there are clear reasons for this expectation. Population Action International (2003)
developed a test to link rapid urban growth with the likelihood of civil conflict. In
their analysis, they found that countries with high urban population growth rates, at around four percent per year, were about twice as likely to experience conflict compared to those growing at less than four percent per year. It is predicted that much of the world's population growth in the next twenty-five years will occur in the cities and urban regions of Asia (Population Action International, 2003). According to Cincotta et al. (2003) at Population Action International, “for centuries the site of criminal activity, social protest, and labor unrest, urban areas - particularly those in Asia - are increasingly the principal locus of ethnic and religious conflict”. Clearly, urban areas in Asia are of special concern for the youth bulge hypothesis, as the youth bulge effect can be exacerbated by the rapid urbanization experienced in this region.

2.2: Examples of Asian City Youth Bulges

2.2.1 Introduction

Using the International Database of the Census Bureau, I collected data on several key Asian nations. Unfortunately, the Database did not have detailed information for all Asian countries for the past fifty years. Even with the countries where I was able to obtain information, it rarely covered all five decades. However, for seven nations, I was able to get age, sex and urban, rural, and total residence distribution for the years covered. I found this information for the countries of Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, and Singapore. This gave me the tools to compare youth proportions in urban areas with those in the countries as a whole. In each Asian city evaluated, it was demonstrated that the youth cohort was always slightly higher in urban areas than in the total country. This difference could
be as small as 0.3 percent (South Korea, 1990) and as large as 4.4 percent (South Korea, 1970). Indeed, in some countries, a youth deficit is beginning to afflict the rural areas where many young adults are migrating to cities for work and education. This is a phenomenon common to a developing nation, where urbanization is rapidly transforming the traditional agrarian society.

Does this difference in youth bulge proportions between urban and total areas affect the way the youth bulge is defined? Is the threshold indicator of twenty percent youth share in a population too low for cities where there is a higher share of youth than in the rest of the country? If the twenty percent threshold is kept, most Asian cities will demonstrate a perpetual youth bulge, even when the countries do not exhibit a youth bulge as a whole. This makes it very difficult to identify a link between a bulge and instability. Several solutions may be found. The first solution is to raise the threshold when analyzing urban areas. This option comes with the disadvantage of having to generate another percentage specific to urban areas. Since there is not a consistent percentage difference between urban and total youth shares across the countries examined, such a change would be simple conjecture. The choice of the twenty percent threshold was derived empirically by Fuller (1990) who noted that instability almost always developed at this level, and sometimes even at levels below twenty percent. Another possibility would be to define an urban bulge as one that coincides with a country-wide youth bulge. This solution would promote the notion that whatever is happening in the cities is a reflection of the entire nation. However, this is a dangerous assumption to make as the city may often be the focal center of unrest, even when there is relative stability in the rest of the country. For
example, during the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 in China, thousands of peasants flooded into the urban areas to support the student protests, but stability outside cities remained. Additionally, this solution might exclude some years or some countries where the difference between urban areas and the entire country is particularly large. In Indonesia, for example, in 1980 and 1990, there is a three to four percent difference in youth share between urban areas and the country as a whole. Therefore, it is evident that there is not a youth bulge in the entire country, yet twenty-three percent of urban areas did consist of young adults. Clearly, urban youth bulges may appear even in the absence of a country-wide youth bulge. A third option would be to examine only the peak youth bulges in the city. This solution might exclude some bulges however that, while not the largest, had a particular influence on stability in that year. For example, Malaysia in the 1970s experienced the greatest number of destabilizing events, even though the peak youth bulge occurred in the 1980 census. The fourth option, and the one used in this thesis, is to observe the urban bulges exclusively, and also to look specifically at peak urban bulges whether they coincide with a country-wide bulge or not. Their distribution is charted below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Malaysia</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
<td>No Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Urban ('61)</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>No total</td>
<td>No total</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>No Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Urban ('71)</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Urban and Total</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Youth Bulges and their Locations, 1955-1995
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Neither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Neither</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were several occasions when the youth bulge was restricted to urban areas. By studying these incidents of youth bulges in only urban areas, it was possible to isolate and study the urban effect on the bulge. If the bulge was not having an effect on an urban level, perhaps the threshold for the bulge is too low for urban areas. The incidents of urban-only youth bulges were Indonesia in 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990; Japan in 1955 and 1960, Malaysia in 1970; the Philippines in 1970; Thailand in 1970; South Korea in 1960, 1965, and 1970; and Singapore in 1970 and 1980. It is significant that the bulges in urban areas took place at roughly the same time throughout the countries studied. This is indicative of a larger demographic transition effect taking place through Asia.

It is also interesting to note that an urban youth bulge tends to precede a country-wide bulge. After the country has experienced its youth bulge, the urban areas do not continue to experience a bulge. It appears that urban areas are not only the forerunners of youth bulges, but also good diffusers of youth bulges. This would indicate that youth bulges are not necessarily perpetual in urban areas, but actually mirror the demographic transition occurring in the country as a whole. This means that as a country goes through the demographic transition, urban areas are the first to experience the next phase, suggesting that cities reach a zero growth rate before the rest of the country does. This makes sense considering the fact that urban areas tend to be the first to decrease in fertility due to the environment. Urban youth bulges probably last much longer than country-wide bulges, but are rapid in developing and
in receding. They are not necessarily perpetual. This only allows for an even greater risk of political instability unless countries are able to quickly mobilize and diffuse the divisive effect of the bulge in urban areas.

In 1980, all countries being examined excluding Japan experienced their peak youth bulge, which demonstrates a significant relationship between these countries: they were all going through the same phase of the demographic transition at the same time. They had already experienced low mortality rates, and fertility rates were reaching replacement level or even below replacement level. This makes a comparison with Singapore even more relevant and useful. What was going on in urban Indonesia, particularly in the 80s and 90s? How about cities of Japan in the 60s and 70s? What was the political climate of urban centers of Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand in 1970? What about Seoul, South Korea in 1960 and 1970?

2.2.2 Indonesia

Figure 1: Indonesian Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 2: Urban Indonesian Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 3

Indonesia's Youth: 1961-1990

Although there has not always been a country-wide youth bulge, there has been a urban YB every census year.
Indonesia has not experienced a country-wide youth bulge, but in every census taken, there has been a youth bulge among the urban population, peaking in the census years of 1980 and 1990. It has been postulated that Indonesia has diffused the effects of the youth bulge particularly well (Fuller, 1990). Despite that, in September of 1984 and in 1985, Jakarta reeled under Muslim riots. It is evident that instability increased as the size of the youth bulge increased through to 1990.

Opposition to President Suharto’s dictatorial rule grew steadily in the late 1980s and early 1990s, although many Indonesians were afraid to express their views openly. Suharto’s most vocal opponents were Islamic radicals and university students who were offended by the government’s corruption and human rights violations. In early 1978 widespread student demonstrations prompted the government to restrict activity on college campuses and freedom of the press. In 1987, students rioted in the capital of South Sulawesi, Ujung Pandang; two years later, students demonstrated in Java. In response to this threat to stability, the Indonesian government helped to suppress student movements by outlawing student councils. Furthermore, students are required to sign an oath that they will not engage in political activity or openly criticize the government. The Suharto regime saw that students were more willing to go to jail in expressing their political beliefs, rather than face expulsion from university. President Suharto essentially came to power through manipulating college students, and he further diffused any problems through national service requirements and incentives to migrate to other countries for work. The government also implemented a transmigration policy to encourage people to move from densely populated Java to other regions of the country. Since young adults tend to be more
mobile than any other age group, these transnational migrants were often largely youth. The Suharto regime also created an ideology called the Pancasila policy that focused on national unity and discouraged Islamic fundamentalism. Indonesian politics, often for reasons other than demographics, are particularly centralist. As a fragmented country with thousands of islands, Indonesia saw centralism as the only way to maintain control.

In the early 1990s many dissidents gave their support to Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of former president and freedom fighter Sukarno. When she was deposed as chair of the Indonesian Democratic Party by political rivals in mid-1996, protesters rioted in Jakarta. Although Megawati did not have the support of a large part of the Indonesian population, she was the first figure in many years to pose a challenge to the incumbent president.

With such a strong central government, any opposition was often suppressed. However, it is notable that the urban centers of Indonesia remained unstable. The economic crisis of 1997 plunged Indonesia into a seriously vulnerable position. An economic package was negotiated with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to save Indonesia's economy. The government was given a massive loan in return for promises to reduce government spending and reform the financial sector. The IMF stopped its payments in 1998 when it claimed that Suharto had failed to abide by their lending terms and when social unrest began to spread in Indonesia. Suharto fell from power amidst accusations of corruption. A new era was ushered in, and hopes were high that democratization would occur and freedoms increased. Still, Indonesia
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suffers from chronic instability, and it is clear that as long as a youth bulge exists in its urban centers, stability will be elusive.

2.2.3 Japan

Figure 4: Japan Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 5: Urban Japan Age-Sex Pyramids
Japan's post-World War II international role was a subject of domestic political debate in the 1950s. In addition, the Japanese public, fearful that Japan might be pulled into a war between the U.S. and Soviet blocs, also harbored doubts about the treaty. In the spring of 1960 the debate over ratification of a revised security treaty led to huge popular and student demonstrations and riots in urban centers like Tokyo and other large cities. These riots resulted in the cancellation of US President Eisenhower's visit to Japan, and the sitting prime minister, Kishi Nobusuke, was forced to resign. To many it seemed that Japan's postwar democracy was facing a major crisis. But the revised treaty was ratified by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)-dominated Diet, and by the end of that summer political calm had been restored.
Youth had an important role to play in political unrest in 1960s Japan, clearly in
synch with the increase in the size of the youth cohort, peaking in 1965. In 1966, there
was a nationwide student-led peace movement to protest the Vietnam War. In 1969,
there was violence on over a hundred school campuses. In January of 1969, Tokyo
University cancelled its entrance exams, and all buildings on campus were seized and
occupied by radical students. The unrest quickly spread throughout the country: by the
spring of that year, sixteen national universities had cancelled classes. Those protesting
the government and the University’s administration included Maoists, Trotskyites, and
anarchists. There was also violence between students split over ideological lines. They
demanded the termination of the US-Japan Security Treaty, the Return of Okinawa to
Japanese rule, the removal of American forces from Japanese soil, and the withdrawal of
imperialist forces from Vietnam. The students wanted to use those issues to incite a
national leftist revolution. Violence continued into 1970, notably demonstrated in the
hijacking of a JAL airliner to North Korea by radical students. As the youth bulge
diminished, however, student activism dissipated.

It is significant to note that political difficulties resurfaced in 1989 when Emperor
Hirohito died after a 62-year reign. Parties dissolved and split, and charges of corruption
abounded. However, the political difficulties did not result in instability. Neither were
popular or student uprisings evident, even though serious political fracturing was taking
place and trust in the government was greatly weakened.
2.2.4 Malaysia

Figure 7: Malaysia Age-sex Pyramids
Figure 8: Urban Malaysia Age-sex Pyramids
Clearly, the key decades to examine in urban Malaysia are 1970 and 1980, where the urban youth bulge was at its height. In 1974, it was decided that Kuala Lumpur be made a Federal Territory. Since then, as the administrative centre of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur has grown into a modern, multi-cultural, multi-racial and multinational metropolis that is the pride of the nation. Yet Kuala Lumpur has not been without its problems. Although Malaysia was by the mid-1960s a politically united country, internal political and social conflicts remained. Since 1957 the conservative Alliance Party had ruled with a large majority. This changed in the 1969 elections, when it lost many seats to the Chinese-based Democratic Action Party (DAP) and some seats to the Islamic PAS Party. Despite the luxury of legal privileges, Malays had a very weak hold on Malaysia’s economy. In 1969 only 1.5 percent of company
assets in Malaysia were held by Malays, and they had a per-capita income that was less than 50 percent of non-Malays. However, there was still much resentment directed towards the Malays, which was clearly displayed by the bloody riots following the 1969 election. Civil unrest brought on by racial tensions swept through the city of Kuala Lumpur, killing at least two hundred people and prompting a state of emergency that would last for two years, where the parliamentary system was suspended and Malaysia was ruled by a National Operations Council.

From September to December 1974 peasant farmers made their voices heard in demonstrations. In Kuala Lumpur, student rioting resulted in permanent government control being established on university campuses by June of 1975. In 1977, at least 15,000 people rioted in two weeks of violence in Kuala Lumpur. In response to the complaints made by Malays and other indigenous people groups, a new policy was established to increase the economic share of indigenous people to thirty percent by 1990

The National Front won two-thirds of parliamentary seats in the 1970s and 1980s. The present Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, took office in 1981, and began to develop Malaysia's industry. The policy favoring indigenous economic participation dominated the economic climate for the next two decades. The policy had resulted in resentment from Malaysians of Chinese descent who claimed that they faced discrimination in work and education. In 1987, the government responded to rising tensions between Malays and Chinese by arresting opposition leaders and suspending four newspapers. By 1989, some key party members from the National Front left to
form an opposition party. By 1990, they had formed a loose opposition coalition with the Islamic PAS, the DAP, and the small, left-wing People’s Party.

2.2.5 The Philippines

Figure 10: Philippines Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 11: Urban Philippines Age-Sex Pyramids
The census years with the peak urban youth cohorts were 1970, 1975, 1980 and 1990, with the biggest bulge in 1975. The 1970s marked the rise and dictatorial rule of President Ferdinand Marcos. By the early 1970s two separate forces were waging guerrilla war on the government: the New People’s Army (NPA), the militant wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a Muslim separatist movement based in the southern islands.

Government and opposition political leaders agreed to draft a new constitution to replace the American-authored constitution of 1935. The constitution would limit the president to two terms. The delegates in charge of drafting the new constitution never finished their work, however, and the 1973 presidential elections never took place. Marcos, citing the need for national security, declared martial law on September 21,
1972, which remained in effect through 1981. Congress was dissolved, opposition leaders arrested, and strict censorship imposed. A new constitution was established in January 1973, but transitional provisions attached to it gave Marcos continued absolute power, and elections were indefinitely postponed. Marcos ruled by decree. His government was riddled with corruption, cronyism and economic mismanagement.

When Marcos’ main rival, Benigno Aquino, was assassinated in 1983, opposition to his rule reached unprecedented heights with rioting on the streets of Manila. Marcos called an election in 1986 which both he and his opponent, widow of Benigno Aquino, Corazon Aquino, claimed to have won. ‘People Power’ won out in the end as tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Manila in a defiant display of support for the popular opposition leader, now commonly known as the People Power Revolution. A bloodless revolution, it demanded an end to Marcos’ twenty-year authoritarian reign. Within days Marcos and his wife Imelda fled the country.

Corazon Aquino took over the Presidency, and quickly freed political prisoners, repealed media censorship, and replaced many officials who were installed under Marcos’ rule. However, her authority was undermined when, in 1987, about 15000 demonstrators gathered at Manila’s Mendiola Bridge to demand land reform. What is now known as the Mendiola Massacre resulted in twenty deaths when the military opened fire on these demonstrators. It became clear that Aquino did not have control over the military.

Instability continued through Aquino’s rule and into the 1990s. With the subsequent election of Fidel Ramos in 1992 and important economic reforms, the country
finally began to experience a level of political stability. Ramos was the first former professional military officer to become president of the Philippines. He used his knowledge of the Philippine military to reestablish a tradition of civilian control over the armed forces. He also built on the process of restoring democracy to the Philippines by addressing the nation’s most difficult economic and structural problems. Ramos pursued an ambitious economic reform program based on privatization and deregulation, opening banking and business to foreign investment and transferring government assets to private ownership. In 1994 and 1995 the country had its first consecutive government budget surpluses. Despite many improvements, however, unemployment remained a serious problem because population growth continued to outpace the creation of new jobs. Voters signaled their support of the largely successful economic reforms by electing a majority of Ramos-backed candidates to the legislature in 1995.

In the early 1990s, meanwhile, secessionist Muslim groups renewed their guerrilla war in Mindanao. Negotiations between the Ramos government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) formally began in 1993 and resulted in a lasting peace agreement, signed in September 1996. Other rebel groups, including the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyaf, continued guerrilla activities. The MILF demanded an expansion of the Muslim autonomous region, while the more radical Abu Sayyaf group demanded a separate Islamic state.

For the 1998 elections, Ramos and the ruling coalition, Lakas-NUCD, gave their support to Jose de Venecia, the House speaker. Joseph Estrada, vice president under Ramos and a populist politician, entered the race as a candidate of his own party, the
Partido Masang Pilipino (Party of the Filipino Masses), which entered a coalition with two leading opposition parties. Estrada campaigned on promises to work toward improving the lives of poor Filipinos. He won the election with the widest margin ever in Philippine politics. The office of vice president went to Lakas-NUCD candidate Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a former senator and daughter of former president Diosdado Macapagal.

Ongoing peace negotiations with the MILF collapsed in 1999 when President Estrada adopted an all-out-war policy against all rebel groups. The military offensive displaced approximately 600,000 people in central Mindanao. By this time, more than 120,000 people were estimated to have died during the three decades of ongoing conflict between Islamic rebels and the Philippine government.

Meanwhile, the Estrada government faced a downturn in the economy brought on by the Asian financial crisis of 1997. The government sought to take steps toward fulfilling its promises to alleviate poverty and undertake land reform and agricultural development. Despite its rhetoric, however, the government did not make much progress in implementing its “pro-poor” platform. The opposition became more outspoken in its criticism of Estrada, and his administration became embroiled in allegations of cronyism and corruption. The corruption allegations led to Estrada’s impeachment by the House of Representatives in November 2000. His trial in the Senate was suspended in mid-January 2001, however, after the prosecution team resigned to protest the suppression of evidence. Thousands of Filipinos then took to the streets of Manila to demand Estrada’s resignation; however, Estrada retained strong support among the urban and rural poor.
Meanwhile, Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo formed a strong opposition alliance, the United Opposition, within the government. The massive demonstrations, resignation of most of the president's cabinet, and loss of support among top military officials led to Estrada's ouster on January 20, after the Supreme Court declared the presidency vacant. Macapagal-Arroyo was immediately sworn in as president. Since the beginning of her rule, stability has improved in Indonesia with a cease-fire agreement with the MILF.

2.2.6 Thailand

Figure 13: Thailand Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 14: Urban Thailand Age-Sex Pyramids
The largest urban youth cohorts were in 1970 through 1990, with the peak in 1980. Accordingly, these decades are examined for instability. Bangkok is the capital of Thailand, and is the largest and most dominant city of the country. It is an example of a
primate city, where the population is larger than the combined size of the next two largest cities. With 5.9 million people, Bangkok looms over the next largest city, Nakhon Ratchasima (278,000 people). As a result, it is the center of focus for the youth bulge theory testing.

University students were the catalyst to many political uprisings in the 1970s. With the largest university in the nation, Chulalongkorn University, located in Bangkok, this is hardly surprising. In 1973, there were sporadic student and worker demonstrations for five months. Although there were other parts of the population involved in the largest protests in Thailand’s history, Prime Minister Sanya later attributed the fall of the ruling military dictator to the power of the student movement.

A new constitution was approved in late 1974, and a new government was freely elected in early 1975. Political stability remained elusive, however, and 1975 saw periodic student protests over eight months of the year. In that year, the police went on strike to protest the weakness of the government. Additionally, right-wing groups began to emerge to counter the radical student movement. Elections in 1976 seemed to make little difference. Thailand became significantly divided between liberals and conservatives. When former military dictator Thanom returned from exile abroad in mid-1976, demonstrations grew into bloody battles on the streets of Bangkok between leftist students and Thanom’s right-wing supporters. In October the Thai military and police launched a bloody assault on students demonstrating at Thammasat University. As disorder spread, a military group led by Admiral Sangad Chaloryu seized control of the country and installed a civilian and former Supreme Court judge, Thanin Kraivixien, as
head of a conservative government. The response of the government to student protests was to clamp down on campus activism.

Thanin’s government proved to be more authoritarian than even the most repressive of the country’s military regimes. In October 1977 he was overthrown by Sangad and his group and replaced by General Kriangsak Chomanand. The many students who had fled Bangkok slowly began drifting back to a society that was slowly righting itself.

The military maintained tight reins on the government until a new constitution was adopted late in 1978, elections were held in mid-1979, and military leaders were sufficiently satisfied with the new order. The military then allowed the installation of a new cabinet headed by General Prem Tinsulanonda as prime minister. Elections in 1983 confirmed Prem as head of a new coalition government, and he was reelected in 1986. General Chatichai Choonhavan replaced Prem following elections in 1988, but in 1991 the military overthrew Chatichai and installed their own interim coalition government. When the military manipulated 1992 elections to guarantee a victory, demonstrations broke out in Bangkok calling for democratic reforms. The protests were violently suppressed. Thailand’s king then intervened, ending military rule and installing another interim prime minister, Anand Panyarachun.

In Thailand’s case, the peak youth bulge in 1980 did not coincide with peak instability. Rather, the most significant instability occurred in the 1970s. This would seem to support the idea that there is not a direct correlation between the size of the youth bulge and the level of political instability.
2.2.7 South Korea

Figure 16: South Korea Age-Sex Pyramids
Figure 17: Urban South Korea Age-Sex Pyramid
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Total Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The urban bulge in South Korea occurred from 1960 through 1990, with a peak in 1980, followed by a rapid decline. Accordingly, the years examined for instability will be from 1960 through 1990, with special focus on 1980.

After grossly rigged elections in 1960, students took to the streets, braving martial law to protest against President Syngman Rhee’s government. Many protesters were killed in battles with the police before the government resigned and Rhee went into exile in Hawaii. The opposition did not last long either, which was toppled by a bloodless military coup in 1961. The self-appointed leader General Park Chung-hee resigned from the army in 1963 and stood for election, winning the presidency. Educated in Japan, Park brought Japanese business notions to Korea, borrowing cash and technology from abroad and creating a nation of exporters. Though economically progressive, Korea remained politically backward.
The 1960s and, in particular, 1970s saw intense student rioting, electoral fraud, more martial law, assassination attempts and press censorship. Finally, in October 1979, Park Chung-hee was assassinated by Kim Jae-kyu, head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA). At his trial, Kim Jae-kyu testified that he killed Park to put an end to his increasingly authoritarian and erratic rule. Despite his seemingly noble concerns, Park’s assassination signaled the beginning of one of the most unstable periods in recent Korean history. It culminated in a violent civil uprising in the southwestern city of Kwangju. It is significant to note that the peak of the youth bulge in urban Korea coincided with the year of the riots in Kwangju, the peak of political unrest.

Park was succeeded by Major General Chun Doo-hwan, one of Park’s protégés and commander of the powerful Defense Security Command. Chun staged an internal coup to take control of the military, then persuaded the new president, Choi Kyuh-hah, and name Chun chief of the KCIA. By Chun’s persuasion, President Choi established martial law.

The situation came to a head in May 1980, only four months after Chun’s coup and elevation as head of the KCIA, when labor activists, students, and opposition politicians who were frustrated with the harsh military rule, began a series of nationwide demonstrations demanding democratic elections and an end to martial law. Chun responded by sending the military to crack down on the demonstrators. The demonstrators responded with rocks and firebombs.

On May 17, as protests were fading in most parts of the country, activists in the city of Kwangju defied military orders to end the demonstrations. Consequently, the
Martial Law Command arrested several opposition politicians, including Kim Dae-jung, now South Korea's president, and charged him with inciting rebellion. He was eventually sentenced to death. The following day, elite paratrooper units of Korea's Special Forces Command were ordered into the city. According to most accounts, they executed their mission with incredible brutality, killing many demonstrators. Frightened civilians, led by militant protestors, broke into police stations and armories and seized weapons to use in self-defense.

The Special Forces finally retreated to the outskirts of Kwangju, while the government tried to convince the activists to return the weapons in exchange for amnesty and democratic reforms. But negotiations were fruitless as both sides stood their ground. Finally, eight days into the uprising, the government in Seoul ordered riot-trained army units into Kwangju to clean up and restore order. It was carried out with minimal bloodshed. Only about a dozen people died, but the death toll for the entire uprising is still in dispute. The government says 191 people were killed in the uprising, but Kwangju officials and survivors insist the figure is closer to 2,000. They say they cannot prove it, however. Their claim is that the military took most of the bodies away and disposed of them.

In August 1980, Chun had the military junta name him president, replacing Choi. He ruled for nearly eight years before manufacturing the election of his longtime colleague, retired General Roh Tae-woo, as his successor. In 1996, Chun and Roh were convicted of mutiny, treason, and corruption in connection with the 1979 coup and the Kwangju massacre. Chun was sentenced to death and Roh to a long prison
term, but both were pardoned in 1997 by Kim Dae-jung after he was elected president.

"The Kwangju uprising in 1980 and the Tiananmen crisis in 1989," said Shin Dong-kim, an assistant professor of communications at Hallym University in Chuncheon, South Korea, "were massive and tragic and collective actions against dominant political powers and established regimes." Both, Shin said, "were failed attempts in terms of achieving immediate goals," but in the long run advanced the cause of democracy in Asia. Many now see the uprising as a milestone in the fight for democracy in Asia. Lynn Turk, former political secretary in the American Embassy in Seoul and author of the 1989 U.S. statement on Kwangju, agreed. The rebellion, Turk said, "directly paved the way for Korean democratization."

(Manguno, 2000)

2.3 Youth Bulge Predictions

Population Action International predicted the countries expected to have a high level of demographic risk of civil conflict by 2005. For Asia, they named Bangladesh, Bhutan, East Timor, Laos, and Nepal. Their assessment is based on the percent of young adults between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine out of all adults over the age of fifteen, an alternate measurement of the youth bulge. East Timor had the highest ratio, 49 percent of its adults over fifteen were predicted to be between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine. Significantly, East Timor is a brand new country, having just gone through a revolution that freed them from Indonesia. Population Action International also considered the effect of urbanization, and it is critical to
note that each of the Asian countries named are expected to urbanize rapidly by 2005, as quickly as 5.9 percent per year (as in Bhutan) (Cincotta, et al., 2003).

Beyond the immediate future, youth bulges are relatively easy to predict. A period of high birth rates followed by rapid fertility decline will, fifteen to twenty years later, produce a high proportion of youth in a population. As urban populations closely mirror the total country’s demographic transition, we can examine countries as a whole to determine future urban youth bulges. As the youth bulge is part of a stage in demographic transition, one only needs to examine the countries that are in the intermediate stages where birth rates are beginning to fall and death rates are low.

The Southeast Asian countries with the highest fertility rates in 1995-2000 were Cambodia (4.6 percent), East Timor (4.4 percent), Laos (5.8 percent) (Hirschman, 2001). All three countries had declining fertility rates, but they were still quite high. Falling fertility rates indicate a future youth bulge, and these three countries should be carefully monitored for political instability.

In South Asia, demographic transition is slightly behind Southeast Asia. In Bangladesh, the peak proportion of children under the age of 15 is expected between 2000 and 2005. This will give Bangladesh a youth bulge within the next two decades. The decline in India’s dependency ratio, a signal that the youth aged 15-24 have begun to outnumber those under fifteen, began in 1980. The dependency ratio is expected to continue its decline for the next decade and a half, indicating that youth remain a significant proportion of the population.

East Asia has recently enjoyed a smaller youth cohort, as in the cases of South Korea and Japan. It is unlikely that these countries will experience youth bulges in
the future. South Korea experienced rapid declines in the youth cohort beginning in the 1990 census, which, while over the threshold, was significantly smaller than the 1980 census. In 1993 and 1995, census data showed that both the total youth proportion and urban youth cohorts declined well below the twenty percent threshold.

Using the United States Census Bureau's International Database, we can find population pyramid projections for most countries. Using these pyramids, we are able to detect predicted bulges. For example, it is clear that Cambodia will have a high proportion of youth in the next few years, although birth rates are still high and might negate a youth bulge. See Appendix for population pyramids for other Asian nations through 2050.

Figure 19
Canbodia: 2025

Canbodia: 2050

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Chapter 3

A Case Study: Singapore

3.1 Background: Origin and Development of Singapore

Originally established as a minor trading post for the Sumatran Empire and a subsequent state for the Javanese empire in the middle of the 13th century, Singapore was thrust into the limelight when Sir Stamford Raffles arrived in 1819. The British had first established a presence over the Straits of Malacca in the 18th century to protect its trade from China to India from the Dutch. Sir Stamford Raffles, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen, argued that there needed to be a stronger British presence in the region, and after landing on Singapore, soon made treaties with Sultan Hussein of Johor and the Temenggong, the de jure and defacto rulers of Singapore. Singapore was thus thrust into the modern era. Because it was established as a tariff-free port, migrants were highly attracted to the new city. A military and naval base was established and the new colony flourished. By 1824, the British had secured a treaty with the Dutch whereby the Dutch withdrew all objections to British control over Singapore. The same year, the British made a treaty with the rulers of Singapore that ceded power over to the British in return for cash payments and pensions.

Singapore grew and developed under British control until World War II brought defeat to the British in Asia. The Japanese took over control of Singapore in 1941, and while the British were welcomed back after Japan’s defeat in 1945, they were not assured the right to rule. The 1950s saw growing nationalism among the multi-ethnic...
residents of Singapore. Lee Kuan Yew started the People’s Action Party (PAP), and in 1959 he was elected as the nation’s first Prime Minister. He held this position for the next thirty-one years.

Singapore briefly united with Malaysia in 1963, but by 1965 Singapore withdrew from the union and became a sovereign, independent and democratic nation. Singapore once again flourished, particularly under Lee’s control. He developed the city into an economic powerhouse, and managed the people through the limitation of political opposition and strict social organization.

Singapore entered the 1970s as a politically stable state with a high rate of economic growth. The one-party Parliament that emerged from the 1968 general election became the pattern, with the PAP winning all seats in 1972, 1976 and 1980. In the 1984 and 1991 general elections, the PAP won all but two and four seats respectively. Lee stepped down from power in 1990, succeeded by his party-mate, Goh Chok Tong. Lee remained in a supervisory role as the Prime Minister’s Senior Minister (SM).

The transfer of power went largely unnoticed, as most Singaporeans expected continuity and stability. Even before Goh took office, his heir apparent was already named. Lee Hsien Loong, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew’s son, was expected to take over after Goh retired. This gave Goh the difficult task of establishing credibility as a legitimate prime minister, and not Lee Kuan Yew’s puppet or the seat-warmer for Lee Hsien Loong. Goh established himself through building a rapport with Singaporeans that earned their trust and confidence. Compared to the highly intellectual Lees, Goh is an everyman, and Singaporeans identify with him. He is also humble enough to
sometimes defer to the wisdom of the older generation and the energy of the younger. The three key leaders have worked together to move Singapore forward (George, 2000). In his decade and a half of leadership, Goh has liberalized Singapore’s rigid social structure and democratized the election process for the president (a largely ceremonial role). He exercised his power towards establishing a more consensual style of government. Economically, Singaporeans were much better off in 2000 than they were in 1990, with a per capita increase in income of S$15,000 (George, 2000). PM Goh is expected to step down later this year, giving Lee Hsien Loong the reins of leadership.

3.2 Singapore’s Population Policy

Population control policies were first implemented in 1959, when the People’s Action Party won the national elections. In the election manifesto, the party claimed that the family planning projects currently in operation were inadequate to spread knowledge to the masses of Singapore. Following the elections, the government began to play a more active role in family planning. First, the Legislative Assembly voted to fund the Family Planning Association (FPA) for voluntary family planning. Singapore’s anti-natalist policy in the 1960s focused on four parts: government family planning, induced abortion, voluntary sterilization and disincentives to reduce the level of fertility (Swee Hock, 1999). In March 1965, a national family planning policy was implemented when the government took over almost all of the FPA’s clinics, simultaneously proposing a national population policy. In 1966, the Singapore Family Planning and Population Board (SFPPB) was established by an act.
of Parliament. This was a group charged with providing family planning services to
the general public. They continued their work through 1986.

Three other components to build a national population policy were established in
1969. First, the Voluntary Sterilization Act permitted men and women to get
sterilized. Secondly, the Abortion Act legalized induced abortion. This act generated
some opposition, but with the strict conditions of the Act, the provision of safe
abortions to women came into effect in 1970. Restrictions were removed in 1974
with a new Abortion Act.

The final components of the national population policy were introduced at various
times from the late-1960s through the 1970s. In 1968, maternity leave was restricted
to the first three children, and then in 1973 it was restricted to the first two children.
Accouchement fees (the price women paid for hospital care during childbirth) moved
from a standard flat-rate to progressively higher rates for higher birth orders in 1969.
Incentives for having fewer children crept into the school system, as well as the
Housing and Development Board that helped families purchase their own apartments.
There were incentives to promote sterilization, to include the reimbursement of the
accouchement fee after sterilization and paid maternity leave for civil servants who
undergo sterilization after childbirth.

These programs effectively reduced the fertility rates of Singapore from its peak
in 1957 to replacement level in 1975, and then even lower from then onward.
Replacement level is a term used to describe the fertility rate required to maintain a
stable population, where the population size neither increases nor decreases. The
important point about the rapid decline in fertility is how it facilitated the
development of Singapore's youth bulge. The 1957 birth cohort turned eighteen in 1975. Following their birth, each successive birth cohort was smaller, making their proportional size bigger. These are exactly the conditions needed for a youth bulge to develop, and as is often the case, it was a direct result of successful population control policies.

Figure 20

From 1979 onward, there have been two key major changes in fertility policies: in 1984 and 1987. In 1983’s National Day speech from the Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, he devoted much of his speech to what he saw as a “lop-sided procreation pattern” where the better educated women did not have as many children as the poorer, less educated women. As he believed that nature, rather than nurture,
provided the driving force to shape the intelligence of a child, he wanted to combat what he perceived as the lowering quality of the population.

Prime Minister Lee’s speech sparked a great deal of debate and concern over the premises on which he based his opinion. The government began to change the fertility policy in 1984 with the goal of improving the quality of the population. There were five main prongs to these changes: primary school registration, enhanced child relief, sterilization cash incentives, government hospital accouchement fees and graduate marriage matchmaking.

The first, primary school registration, was announced in January 1984. It was a pro-natalist eugenic policy that gave an advantage to children of better-educated mothers over children of lesser-educated mothers. This policy met with great resistance and resentment, both among well-educated women and lesser-educated women. In just over a year, the so-called “graduate mother” scheme was halted. The program did not effectively encourage graduate mothers to have more children, and non-graduate women resented the preferential treatment given to graduate mothers.

The second pro-natalist eugenic measure was announced March 1984. This changed the tax relief of five percent for each of the first three children of certain qualified women to a tax relief of five percent for the first child, ten percent for the second child and fifteen percent for the third child. At a maximum, women could claim S$100,000 for each child. The women eligible for this tax relief were all those who had passed the equivalent of high school. This scheme did not receive much criticism from the public and continues to be in operation. Its effectiveness is questionable, as there are many other factors that go into a woman’s choice to have
more children rather than just economic concerns. For example, a working woman will need to consider whether she has the time and resources other than money to have another child. Also, the tax relief offered does not cover the economic cost of having additional children.

The third measure was an anti-natalist eugenic program to discourage lesser-educated parents from having too many children. This program took the form of a cash grant of S$10,000 to women who were sterilized under certain conditions. These women had to be under thirty years of age, and get sterilized after one or two children. The parents could not have finished high school. There was a limit on combined monthly income of S$1500, and an individual income of no more than S$750 monthly. Both parents were required to be Singapore citizens or permanent residents. The final condition was that should the woman produce another child, she would be required to pay back the S$10,000 plus a ten percent compound interest per year.

This cash grant could have been used upon retirement, or could be used to assist in purchasing a Housing and Development Board (HDB) apartment. At the time, this grant covered approximately one-third the cost of an HDB apartment. This gave young, low-income families the opportunity to purchase their own home. Overall, this cash grant did not appeal to many eligible couples. Of the estimated 35,000 eligible women, only a small proportion chose to be sterilized.

The next change in the fertility policy was another anti-natalist measure. The accouchement fees in government hospitals were changed from being on a graduated basis, charging lower fees to lower classes to charging the same amount to every class.
of people, rising significantly for each additional child. For women who have a fifth child, the fee in the hospitals is S$1000 for every class. This has the effect of putting a relatively higher financial penalty on the poorer and lower-educated people.

The final fertility policy change was called the Graduate marriage matchmaking program. Unlike the other programs, this was not very well publicized, both to protect the individuals involved and because of the sensitive nature of the government becoming involved in matchmaking. The program gave opportunities for graduates to meet and socialize with one another, with the aim of them marrying and producing children. This was created to combat the late marrying age of many working women. The government organized social events and assisted graduates in marrying.

These policies combined failed to achieve their goals of improving the quality of the population while reducing the decline in fertility rates overall. In 1987, the family planning policy was reexamined and a new slogan developed: “Have Three or More if You Can Afford It”. This slogan encompassed two changes. The first relaxed some of the older anti-natalist policies, and the second introduced more pro-natalist measures. This was in response to a growing problem of labor shortage. For the first change, tax relief was increased for the third child, and increases were made in the child relief scheme to include monetary relief for higher order births. Also, uncharged leave time was taken away from well-educated women who underwent sterilization while it was retained for women with no high school diploma and three children. Additionally, compulsory sterilization and abortion counseling was initiated in 1987 for women with fewer than three children. The new pro-natalist measures included a tax rebate to couples who had a third child after January 1, 1987, and a tax
rebate in lieu of maternity leave not given to women who were having their third child. These were extremely successful policy changes especially because of their universal appeal: all Singaporean citizens have to pay taxes, so a tax relief is a welcomed incentive.

The population policy has essentially remained unchanged since 1987. As a result of the changes in 1987, the Total Fertility Rate increased from 1.62 in 1987 to 1.86 in 1990, but after that it went down once again. After a thorough investigation by the government into why couples are not having more children, some changes were made. The government found that more individuals were pursuing education and a career, so marriage and children were delayed. Married couples are finding it increasingly difficult to balance work with a family, especially with increasing demands in the workplace. Values are changing in Singapore: success is measured increasingly in the level of education and in one’s career. It is seen to be detrimental to success to have a large family. Parents want to provide the best for their children, so they want to ensure financial stability before having children. Additionally, there are many dual-income families where concern for the availability and cost of childcare influences their decision to have children (The Secretariat, Working Committee on Marriage and Procreation, Singapore).

In response, the government has attempted to remove the obstacles to having more children. Two measures were announced in the Prime Minister’s National Day speech in 2000. The first was the Children Development Co-Savings Scheme (also known as Baby Bonus) and the second was paid maternity leave for the third child. The Baby Bonus scheme is a grant the government pays for second and third order
births. For the second child, the government provides S$500 per year and for the third child, the government provides S$1000 per year. Additionally, the government will match the parent’s contribution per year for their higher order births. For the second child, the government will pay up to S$1000 per year, and for the third child, the government will pay up to S$2000 per year. The money goes into an account for the children’s educational and developmental needs. The grant lasts for the first six years of the child’s life.

The third-child maternity leave scheme gives paid leave time for up to eight weeks. The cost of the leave time would not be burdened by the woman’s employer, but by the government, with a cap of S$20,000. Both the Baby Bonus and maternity leave schemes are only applicable to Singaporean citizens who have legitimate children (the Secretariat, Working Committee on Marriage and Procreation, Singapore).

The government has also included several supporting schemes to encourage a shift in the environment to one that is more child-friendly. It has encouraged employers to promote families, and has led the way in civil service. To improve the work-family balance, the civil service now gives three days of paid marriage leave and also three days of paternity leave after the birth of the first three children. Furthermore, the civil service allows employees to use tele-working as an alternative for parents with young children, and has introduced the concept of flexi-time, which gives parents a more flexible work schedule.

The government has also been concerned over the quantity and quality of the Child Care Centers (CCCs). A Population Planning Section survey in 1997 found
that one of the biggest considerations of newly married couples contemplating family size was availability of child care. In response, the government is increasing the number of CCCs by twenty-five percent over the next five years. There will also be an improvement made to the training program of the child care providers. Subsidies for child care will increase to include non-working mothers (The Secretariat, Committee on Marriage and Procreation, Singapore).

The government is also focused on making home ownership easier, under the assumption that when a couple owns a home, they will feel more financially stable and able to have a family. Policies have also been implemented to improve public education on family planning and procreation, as well as improved opportunities for college-aged adults to interact socially (The Secretariat, Committee on Marriage and Procreation, Singapore).

3.3 Singapore and the Youth Bulge Hypothesis

Figure 21
(Last three age-sex pyramids generated by the International Database for the Census Bureau at http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbnew.html)
The population age-sex pyramids above show that Singapore has not been immune to demographic change and population pressure. In both the 1970 and 1980 censuses, the city-state experienced youth bulges (although the bulge has since dissipated and is not expected in the future according to the predicted age-sex pyramids). However, Singapore did not demonstrate the political chaos that has been observed in other urban centers of Asia. Whether done deliberately or unintentionally, Singapore has effectively diffused the negative effects of the youth bulge phenomenon, and has sometimes even steered a potential problem into immense success economically. Several factors and their direct role in diffusing instability brought on by the youth bulge will be discussed, including the People’s Action Party’s ability to limit opposition, the effect of compulsory National Service for men, educational opportunities, the government’s efforts to develop national pride, and the rule of law. Independent factors will also be examined, such as Singapore’s policies on censorship, its strong leadership, its lack of politicizing and Singapore’s lack of corruption, as well as Singapore’s employment history.

3.4 Singapore’s Economic Growth

Unemployment in 1970 was at an all-time high of 8.2 percent, followed by 6.5 percent in 1986, which is to be expected considering the high youth cohort of those decades. What is interesting, however, is that those two years were anomalies in their decades. There were several other years that were close to the same level, but it was not two decades of high unemployment, which suggests that the government successfully diffused the youth bulge problem possibly in response to the unemployment rates.
Certainly competition was fierce for jobs and access to education for this youth cohort, but Singapore actually diffused any potential for conflict, and instead experienced an economic boom in the 1970s with an average annual GDP increase of 9.32 percent (this is the highest average for any decade recorded). Even in the 1980s, the GDP increased annually at an average of 7.49 percent (Source: www.singstat.gov.sg). Not surprisingly, 1986 was the only year of negative growth in the twenty-year period.

It looks as though the Singaporean government used the excess educated youth to stimulate economic growth. This is a well-documented phenomenon. When there is a rapidly growing working-age population, economic growth also increases. With the high proportion of working-age people, there is a decreased dependency ratio, often termed the “demographic bonus” (Navaneetham, 2002). In South Asia from 1965 to
1990, the working-age population growth was slower than in East and Southeast Asia. This led to a significantly weaker economic growth performance, although other factors (demographic and non-demographic) also played a role (Asian Development Bank, 1997). Clearly, a larger work force is able to improve the productive capacity of any economy. Similarly, a proportionally large nonworking population will reduce the capacity of an economy since the dependent population still consumes although they are unable to produce. It follows that when the youth cohort of the 1970s and 1980s were children under the age of fifteen, the economy was less productive (Asian Development Bank, 1997).

The contribution demographic change makes to an economy’s development has been estimated at 0.5 to 1.5 percent of the annual growth rate of GDP per person. The Asian Development Bank list Singapore among seven Asian nations to have benefited most from demographic change between 1965 and 1990, on average contributing more than 1.5 percent of GDP growth per person (Asian Development Bank, 1997). It is important to remember, though, that unless jobs are created to meet the needs of the higher number of working-age people, such a benefit to the economy will be unlikely. It is clear that Singapore manipulated what they had to stimulate economic growth during the youth bulge years.

A main policy recommendation made by Population Action International addressing countries with youth bulges is that governments should promote entrepreneurship among youth and invest in training and job creation (Cincotta et al, 2003). Singapore’s emphasis on job creation has been tireless (George, 2000). The 1960s saw a series of programs to support job creation. At the time, labor-intensive
industries were encouraged, and the government set up developments in different regions of the city to encourage investment by local and foreign companies. For example, the Jurong Town Cooperation was established to develop Jurong. By 1970, 271 factories employed 32000 workers, and 100 more factories were under construction (US Library of Congress, 2003).

The 1960 Industrial Relations Act pushed through Parliament by Lee Kuan Yew helped to encourage foreign investment. Singapore once had a reputation for labor strikes, and this Act helped stabilize the labor situation. Trade unions were outlawed from negotiating promotions, transfers, employment, dismissal, and reinstatement, issues that were previously crucial in labor disputes. This helped make conditions of service, working hours, and fringe benefits more predictable and more attractive to investors. Additionally, compulsory retirement was set at the age of fifty-five, and overtime was limited to help alleviate the problems of unemployment. The Act was part of the government’s efforts to create in Singapore the conditions and laissez-faire atmosphere that had enabled Hong Kong to prosper.

Foreign investment was also attracted by such incentives as tax relief for up to five years and unrestricted repatriation of profits and capital in certain government-favored industries. United States firms accounted for forty-six percent of new foreign capital invested in 1972. European companies and companies from Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Australia also invested capital, and by 1972 twenty-five percent of Singapore’s manufacturing firms were either foreign-owned or joint-venture companies. Foreign investors were also lured by Singapore’s petroleum resources. Singapore was the natural base for development, exploration, engineering
and other support companies for the petroleum industry in nearby Indonesia. It was also the oil storage center for the Southeast Asian region. By the middle of the 1970s, Singapore was the third-largest oil refining center in the world.

By the early 1970s, full employment was reached. Soon, there was a shortage of skilled and unskilled labor. Singapore then shifted its industrial development towards highly skilled technological investment, and by the late 1970s and early 1980s, institutions like the research and development project, the Singapore Science Park, were established.

Singapore has had, by far, the greatest economic growth in the Southeast Asian region over the past fifty years.

Figure 23

Such economic success is a large contributor to the diffusion of the youth bulge. Singapore continues to have a high rate of GDP growth. From 1998 through 2002,
Singapore had, on average, the third highest growth per year of the countries surveyed (behind South Korea and the Philippines).

Figure 24

Statistical information obtained from the World Bank Data Query online at http://devdata.worldbank.org/data-query/

3.5 Government Policies and the Diffusion of the Youth

Bulge Effect

3.5.1 Limiting Opposition

In the decades of concern, 1970 and 1980, the PAP won nearly every seat in every election held. Through three elections in the 1970s, the PAP won every parliamentary seat. It was not until 1981 that the PAP lost a seat in Parliament to an opposition party. Debate has raged over whether Singapore is actually a one-party
state, or if the elections held are truly democratic, and the citizens of Singapore merely prefer the PAP to any opposing parties. The few opposition parties would claim that they are stifled and repressed. The statistics are staggering: the twenty-two opposition parties have held four seats at most in any election (Reuters, October 25, 2001).

How can Singapore claim to be a democracy with regular elections and somehow stifle all the competition to the PAP? Some would suggest that the country’s electoral system plays into the PAP’s favor. Singapore is divided into nine single seats and fifteen wards that group three to six candidates, although boundaries are sometimes redrawn. In the “first past the post” system, the party that wins the most votes in a Group Representation Constituency receives all the seats. This results in unequal representation. For example, the PAP might only win twenty percent of the vote in a given constituency, but even if eighty percent of the population voted for various opposition parties, if no other party received more than twenty percent of the vote, the PAP still wins the seat. And in a ward of three to six candidates, whichever candidate wins the most votes takes all the seats for his party.

The PAP-based government also sets the timing of voting and the length of campaigns. For example, the 2001 elections only afforded nine days of campaigning. This is a clear move to stability. While it may be argued that such a short campaign time oppresses the opposition, it is obvious that it does stabilize a potentially volatile situation.

The government is also able to change the constituency boundaries arbitrarily. The registration procedure for candidates is particularly complicated. In the 2001
elections, five out of thirty-four opposition candidates were disqualified because of mistakes on a form. Fear also plays into PAP control: the government keeps a record of each voter number, suggesting that perhaps voting is not actually secret. This may influence votes.

The PAP tends to respond to any perceived criticism of the government with lawsuits. The man who broke the PAP’s parliamentary monopoly in 1981 by winning a seat was J.B. Jeyaretnam of the Worker’s Party. He was famous for openly debating Lee Kuan Yew. Jeyaretnam lost his parliamentary seat in 2001 and was excluded from contesting elections due to a lost appeal against bankruptcy. He went bankrupt after going through several libel suits, some of which were related to the PAP. Also in the 2001 election, the PAP leaders threatened to sue the leader of the small Singapore Democratic Party for remarks he made about a loan the government made to Indonesia in 1997 (The Economist, November 10, 2001).

The PAP also uses financial incentives to buy votes, promising to place any housing estates that vote for the PAP higher on the waiting list for government-funded improvements. In the 2001 election, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong went as far as offering favor to an opposition constituency if 45 percent or more voted for the PAP.

While there is clear evidence to suggest that the PAP does a good job at stifling opposition, the truth of the matter is that forty years of incredible economic growth led by the city state’s ruling party is a pretty solid track record. Many Singaporeans are pleased with the government and there is no reason to vote for opposition. Lee Kuan Yew and the PAP have done an incredible job turning Singapore from a tiny
insignificant island off the coast of Malaysia into an economic powerhouse, one of Asia’s tigers. All the efforts made by the PAP to ensure their continued power are almost superfluous.

Would the youth bulge theory prove true if Singapore’s government did not stifle opposition? Such a conclusion is difficult to reach, and it has been shown that even in highly restrictive countries, instability as a consequence of a youth bulge may still occur. In 1989, China experienced a youth bulge, the same year as the Tiananmen Square massacre (Fuller, 1990). China is historically notorious for its suppression of free speech. It is also a true one-party state, with no opposition tolerated. It is clear that restrictions on free speech and political opposition do not necessarily protect a country from instability. In fact, they might exacerbate resentment already present, inciting instability. The other urban centers examined in this thesis have sometimes experienced martial law, other times been under the control of a dictatorship (Manila, for example). A high level of control and restriction on opposition does not necessarily diffuse the consequences of the youth bulge.

3.5.2 Compulsory National Service

The Singaporean government uses mandatory national service for men to redirect the energy of youth into productive service. Under the Enlistment Act of 1970 in the Singapore Statutes, male citizens and permanent residents are required to register when they are eighteen years old for two years in the Singaporean military. Some men apply to postpone their enlistment so they can finish their studies in Singapore. Most men, however, serve following high school and either postpone college, or do not attend college after their enlistment. The government has made it difficult for
men to find a permanent job if they have not completed national service. By channeling men into the military following their high school graduation, an important function is served. First, the men called into enlistment are eighteen, an impressionable age within the limits of our definition of youth. When they are sent into the military, they are taught about teamwork, and appreciation for the differences between people. Additionally, they are trained to respect their country and to emulate a loyalty that could, theoretically, demand their lives. Undoubtedly, national service gives Singaporean men a national pride that reflects the personal investment they made.

The obligation to Singapore’s military does not end after the two-year enlistment. Instead, Singaporean men are placed in the reserves and are subject to mobilization well into their middle-age years. This safely places men in obligation to the government beyond the years of youth.

Countries like Malaysia are trying to follow Singapore’s lead. From 2004, all able-bodied Malaysians, male and female, are required to spend three months in national service. The stated goal is better racial integration and a greater sense of national pride, which is a clear attempt at bringing stability to a potential source of conflict (The Straits Times Interactive, Nov 13, 2002). So far, the new program has experienced serious difficulty. Racial polarization has been a challenge to overcome, and the program seems to have been put together rather hastily. Opposition leaders are already calling for the suspension of the program until it can be better implemented (Netto, 2004).
The Philippines has no system of national service, and any youth service programs in existence are primarily faith-based and civic services like the Lions Club (Stroud, 2000). The same is true of Thailand and Japan, but in South Korea, there is an extensive compulsory national service system in place. There, all able-bodied men under thirty must serve a minimum of twenty-six months in the military. Some men evade this requirement, deliberately studying abroad through the age of thirty, and recently, going as far as to get extensive tattoos which would disqualify them from service.

3.5.3 Education

Singapore has six institutions of higher education: National University of Singapore; Nanyang Technological Institute; Singapore Polytechnic Institute; Ngee Ann Polytechnic; the Institute of Education; and the College of Physical Education. The Singaporean education system directs students fairly early onto different paths based on their academic performance and interests. By the time students are twelve, they are divided along three paths: special/express secondary education (for four years), normal, and normal (technical) secondary courses (four years followed by a yearlong course to catch them up to the same level as the special/express students. From this point, the options broaden further, with some students leaving school to find employment, others going on to junior college, and others finding specialized technical training. This complex educational system was developed to deal with the youth bulge that increased the demand for education.

In the 1960s and 1970s the education system, overwhelmed with the large numbers of children resulting from the high birth rates of the previous decades,
produced a minority of well-educated university graduates along with a much larger number of young people who had been selected out of the education systems following secondary schooling by the rigorous application of standards. The less-educated youth entered the work force with no particular skills.

In 1979, coincidentally the year before the highest youth bulge was recorded, major reforms in education resulted in the development of an elaborate tracking system intended to reduce the dropout rate and to ensure that those with low academic performance had some marketable skills when they graduated from school. During the 1980s, more resources were put into vocational education and efforts were made to match the graduates of the school system with the manpower needs of industry and commerce. The combination of a school system emphasizing testing and tracking with the popular perception of education as the key to social mobility and to the source of the certifications needed for desirable jobs led to high levels of competition, and parental pressure for achievement. In the decade following the highest bulge of youth, students had far more opportunities to continue in education than previously. Competition was for particular kinds of education, not further education in general. This enabled Singapore to redirect the frustration youth experience in competing for education towards themselves as the makers of their own destiny: the better their grades in school, the better their chances were of higher education. This is an important factor in preventing instability.

3.5.4 National Unity/Pride

A major source of political instability and tension, ethnic and religious differences, is subdued within Singapore. With its multi-ethnic population, the
Singaporean government has made great strides towards building a national identity. This has probably served to lower any potential tension between the three major racial groups: Chinese, Malay, and Indian.

The Singaporean government does not suppress ethnic distinction, but rather embraces the cultural differences as part of the larger Singaporean identity. Programs emphasizing national unity have developed a strong Singaporean identity. The annual celebration of Singapore’s establishment as an independent nation now spans a month, culminating in the National Day Parade. The National Day Parade is celebrated with all the vigor of a brand new nation: fireworks, symbolic dances that call for unity and teamwork, and ethnic performances, all in a packed stadium. A new patriotic song by a local pop star is adopted each year, extolling Singapore as a harmonious home to its citizens. This is significant in itself: the government is able to appeal to the youth of Singapore through co-opting pop stars to sing happy songs about Singapore. This flies in the face of expected teenage rebellion. Each year is given a different theme on which to focus: this year’s theme is “A Progressive Society”. A logo has been designed to celebrate this year’s National Day. The National Day website explains its particular symbolism:
The five vibrant brushstrokes spread outwards, like rays from a rising sun, signalling the beginning of a "NEW SINGAPORE".

The multi-coloured brushstrokes add vibrancy and diversity thus indicating the uniqueness of individual Singaporeans. They also remind us of traditional calligraphy representing our country's past and heritage.

Its energetic bold strokes symbolise the notion of "CREATIVITY AND DARE IN THE NEW AGE".

The image of shooting stars bursting forth in all directions evokes the idea of a "PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY" with an "INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK". The font used is similar to the past two years' logos to build on the existing NDP branding.

The number, "39" is incorporated into the word "Singapore" to link NDP 04 to our Nation's 39th birthday.

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Download the NDP 04 logo here.
See past years' logos here.
The theme for NDP 04 “A Progressive Society” illustrates the current progress of the nation amidst the uncertain and gloomy outlook both locally and globally. To echo PM Goh’s rally call, our situation is no worse than the early days of nation building. With collective faith and fighting spirit to face our problems head on, we will be able to overcome our challenges. We have done it before and we can do it again. Besides that, “A Progressive Society” demands a paradigm shift in our mindset. It requires an open mind and the willingness to adapt and adjust to changing conditions. More importantly, the future of our nation depends very much on the passion and commitment of all Singaporeans.

The tagline for NDP 04 is ‘Together, A New Singapore’ and the underlying message is ‘To build a better future for Singapore as we collectively meet challenges and secure our place in the global team.

It is clear that Singapore’s government goes to great lengths to establish a clear Singaporean identity. Consequently, Singapore’s citizens will first refer to themselves as Singaporeans before they identify their ethnic group. Indian Singaporeans would be hard pressed to identify the Indian state from which their ancestors arrived, although the majority of them are from Tamil Nadu and they speak the language Tamil. The Indian Singaporeans have been citizens for several generations, and consequently were not in India through its struggle for Independence and the breaking off of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Similarly, the Chinese living in Singapore have been there for several generations and are quite out of synch with the
political climate of Mainland China. Their ancestors arrived in Singapore long before China’s civil war, so Chinese Singaporeans tend to have a difficult time identifying with mainlanders. As a frequent visitor to Singapore, I have often found myself knowing much more about the situations in India and China than the local Indians and Chinese. Even when Singaporeans know about the situations in China and India, they do not identify themselves personally with the countries, despite many cultural similarities. Simply put, Singapore has developed ethnic cultures within its society that are unique to Singapore. This is not to say that the city-state is isolated; rather that the government has worked to establish a national identity that embraces ethnic diversity within its own boundaries.

Each segment of the society is given recognition and importance. Important Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Chinese religious holidays are celebrated by all with a work and school vacation. The government has worked hard to ensure socioeconomic equality between the races, although disparities remain. Four languages appear on all public spaces: Chinese, Malay, Tamil, and English. The national language is Malay, but the majority of Singaporeans speak English with one another, and in the 1960s and 1970s, Lee Kuan Yew mandated the use of English for teaching in schools because he knew how sensitive an issue language was (Cheng, 1995). Such efforts not only create a national identity but also protect Singapore from the ethnic and religious tension found in other multi-racial societies. It also protects Singapore from the sometimes unstable political climates of its member’s homelands. Apart from a few instances, Singapore has been safe from terrorist activity within its borders after 9/11, and the conflicts between mainland China and
Taiwan, India and Pakistan, or within Sri Lanka’s civil conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils (who share the same racial and ethnic background as most Indian Singaporeans), do not have a strong influence on Singaporean citizens. This was not always the case. In particular, Singapore once was called the “little China of Southeast Asia” because of the Chinese majority’s ties to the mainland. In the 1940s, many Singaporean Chinese donated money and supplies to support Mainland China’s war effort against Japan (Cheng, 1995).

3.5.5 The Rule of Law

The rule of law is firmly ingrained into the minds of Singaporeans. For each rule broken, there are consequences. Jokes are made about how legalistic a society Singapore has become, but for the average citizen, laws present themselves as very clear boundary lines not to be crossed. Enforcement is better in Singapore than most Asian nations. Singapore’s police force is not riddled with corruption and bribery. Rather, it is expected that crimes will be punished swiftly. Corporal punishment is utilized in Singapore, as is capital punishment. Capital punishment also exists in all the other countries examined in this thesis, but Singapore has the highest per capita use of the death penalty in the world, according to Amnesty International’s Annual Report on official judicial execution in 2004. In fact, Amnesty International stated that Singapore is believed to have carried out the highest number of executions per capita since 1994.

There are very specific regulations governing freedom of speech. Citizens are permitted to express their views verbally at Speaker’s Corner, inaugurated in September 2000 in Hong Lim Park. Although promises by authorities were made that
no speeches would be recorded, speakers still were required to register at the police
post near the corner before they were permitted to address a crowd. Interestingly,
although there are no restrictions on speaking out against the government at this
venue, there are constraints against controversial religious or racial discourse. This
signifies yet another effort to maintain unity and stability within Singapore’s multi-
ethnic society. Laws against libel and sedition do apply to the Speaker’s Corner
(Jayasankaran, 2000). Also of interest is the observation in September 2000 that the
majority of speakers in the park were middle-aged, not young adults (Staff writer,
The New Straits Times, September 2000).

Not only is there legal pressure to conform, but social pressure also encourages
citizens to abide by the laws. Singaporeans are proud that their country has a low
crime rate, economic prosperity, and a stable government. Most men have served or
will serve in the Singaporean military, instilling in them a sense of investment and
pride in the country. This reduces the incentive towards instability significantly.

3.6 Other Factors and the Diffusion of the Youth Bulge

Effect

3.6.1 Censorship

Singapore is well-known for its strict censorship of media, including editing
foreign films and television programs. Sexual content and violence are often edited,
given a higher rating than elsewhere, or they may be banned. Censorship is done in
the name of maintaining national unity and protecting stability. In recent years, this
censorship has gradually been loosened. New rating systems are being established for movie rentals, television programming, and movie theaters.

While entertainment censorship has been loosening, news media is a different story. Singapore’s newspaper business is dominated by the English daily, the Straits Times, a pro-government paper. There are several other papers in Malay, Chinese, and Tamil, but the Straits Times easily has the widest readership. Unexposed to varying political viewpoints, it only makes sense that few Singaporeans would call into question the validity or wisdom of government decisions. Singaporeans are accustomed to trusting their government to make decisions for them.

3.6.2 Leadership of Lee Kuan Yew

Singapore has the distinction of a strong core leadership, envisioned and implemented by the father of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew (now Senior Minister in the Prime Minister’s cabinet). Lee Kuan Yew is well-known internationally for his personal investment to transform Singapore into the wealthy port city it is today. Because of Lee, Singapore’s current state can be likened to that of an air conditioner. Singapore is “a society with a unique blend of comfort and central control, where people have mastered their environment, but at the cost of individual autonomy and at the risk of unsustainability (George, 2000). Cherian George, a former journalist for the Straits Times, has developed this metaphor further. First, Singapore as the Air-conditioned Nation is dedicated primarily to the comfort of its citizens. Comfort is placed above personal freedom or any other esoteric ideals. Instead, Yew and his successors believe that the Singaporean people would rather have an environment conducive to the pursuit of material happiness.
The central control part of Singapore as the Air-conditioned Nation shows that Singapore is a total systems approach to economic management. The government’s attention to detail has guaranteed its success. As a city-state, such detail is probably more practical than it would be in a large country. All the same, the comfort that Singaporeans experience is bought at the price of central control, and this model was clearly developed by the father of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew.

3.6.3 Lack of Politicizing

The way Singapore’s leaders speak to the citizens is quite unlike modern day politicians with their persuasive language and flattery. Following Lee Kuan Yew’s tradition, leaders often speak as if they are teachers lecturing their students, or even as coaches motivating their teams. Without great concern for political opposition, political leaders are able to speak candidly to their constituents, often challenging them to be a part of Singapore’s success, rather than a beneficiary of smart government policies. In a speech given to Civil Servants in 1965, Mr. Lee said “You lose nothing by being polite. The answer is ‘No’. but please say it politely and give the reasons” (Rodríguez, ed., 2003). In 1966, at the opening of the Third Asian Teachers’ Seminar, Lee said:

First, let me offer you my apologies for being fifteen minutes late... I was taught when I was a boy in school that first you must be punctual. I was also taught that when you do the act of discourtesy of not being punctual you must apologise. And so you see how important it is to catch a man young and early enough and imbue him with the kind of values which makes for a relatively smooth and frictionless society (Rodríguez, ed. 2003).
The lack of extravagant promises and emotive language is noticeable. With only nine days devoted to campaigning in each election, Singaporean politicians are not trained to be crowd-pleasers, but instead they take their role as public servants seriously. This kind of honest, hard-working image is crucial for Singaporean's trust in their leaders. This everyman's attitude gives Singapore's assurance that their leaders are working towards policies that will benefit all. It reduces the distrust common with highly political systems of governance.

3.6.4 Lack of Corruption

Singapore holds fast to the Confucian values of respect for authority, family, and learning. Under Lee Kuan Yew, the government developed through a focus on merit, and the majority of the leadership is held by the country's intellectual elites. This has given Singapore the reputation of being one of the least corrupt Asian countries (Lim and Baron, 1997). Such a reputation lends credibility to any action taken by the government, and gives citizens the confidence to trust its leaders to make decisions for them.

A recent poll in the Singaporean newspaper, the Straits Times, showed that most Singaporeans would rather work in a government job than in the commercial sector. The study showed that most business people, civil servants-turned-businessmen, and current scholarship holders are opposed to the idea of creating a system to turn scholars into entrepreneurs. Their view was that civil servants would be less inclined to move into the commercial sector because of the many perks to government work; the generous salary and the comfort of having a stable job are realities that will make them stay within the civil sector (Lee and Lin, 2004). Not only is there better job
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security, but salaries and other material benefits are lucrative. Singaporeans also prefer the work environments of the government sector. At the same time, there are severe punishments for public officials who stray the line of acceptable behavior as a civil servant. Singapore has numerous legislative acts prohibiting corruption. The Prevention of Corruption Act, signed into law in 1960 and amended as recently as 1998, addresses passive and active bribery committed by individuals in the public or private sectors in Singapore and by Singaporeans in another country. The government has also formally notified finance companies, insurer banks, and merchant banks on the prevention of money laundering.

This combination of benefits for service and punishments for corruption provides a safety net for the Singaporean government, guaranteeing loyalty and a high level of productivity from its employees.

### 3.6.5 Employment History

Most Singaporeans are aware of how their careers will progress, whichever field they pursue. The first ten or fifteen years in a career are used to pay for the luxury of seniority and later a lavish retirement package. As a result, most young Singaporeans in new careers tend to be workaholics. Fitting within the Confucian value on hard work and discipline, Singaporeans in the early part of their career often work long hours and it is no surprise that they do not have the time or energy to contemplate rocking the boat by instigating political unrest.
3.7 Summary: Singapore as a Model?

It is unlikely that any particular policy move made by Singapore during the 1970s and 1980s was designed specifically to diffuse the youth bulge. However, the policies already in place and those implemented during the key decades did effectively redirect the youth bulge into economic success. Certainly these policies may be implemented in the future with a clearer awareness of their effectiveness in dispersing the pressure from a youth bulge.

Can Singapore be used as a model for other Asian cities facing future youth bulges? Clearly there are many differences between Singapore and other cities, the greatest of which is the fact that Singapore is a self-contained city-state, not hindered or influenced by a hinterland or rural population outside the city. Significantly, Singapore can better control migration flows than can other Asian cities, just because it is a city-state. However, there are policies that the Singaporean government has implemented which may help diffuse the pressure from the youth bulge in other countries. Particularly when implemented in urban centers, the effect of these policies will trickle down to the non-urban parts of countries. Additionally, Singapore is already seen as a regional leader and many countries have begun to emulate its socio-economic development. Singapore’s national service program appears to have played an important role in diverting the energy of young men into service to their country and building national pride and unity. Their streamlined education program has helped direct competition for education towards the students’ performance. Singapore’s intentional programs to promote patriotism have also been effective in investing citizens in their country’s development, rather than allowing
them to develop into arm-chair critics. Singapore’s emphasis on job creation during
the youth bulge years was also critical in diffusing the competition for jobs. Asian
countries facing a rising population of youth would do well to promote investment
and entrepreneurialism with the goal of job creation. The government’s reputation
for a low level of corruption and a strong leadership core has given citizens much less
incentive to promote instability. Singapore’s enforcement of its many laws also
promotes an atmosphere of law-abidance. Such policies and practices, if
implemented in other Asian cities, could very well diffuse the pressure of a youth
bulge on political stability.

There is a larger question at hand. Even if Singapore is a nation whose policies
can be emulated by other Asian countries in their urban administration, should they?
Many economies in the Southeast Asian region already look to Singapore as a model
for their economic transitional and developmental strategies. Christopher Lingle, a
former visiting professor to the National University (NUS), is concerned that the
implications of such emulation. His concern is well-founded. After submitting a
response to an editorial in the International Herald Tribune, he was subsequently
questioned by police and later, after returning to the United States, requested to return
to Singapore to face charges that he had written remarks “contemptuous of their
judicial system” (Lingle, 1996). The remarks of concern constituted about twenty
words out of a 900-word article. Singapore is never named or specifically addressed,
although clearly the government interpreted the criticism to be directed at them.
Lingle argues that there have been clear costs to Singapore’s success in economics.
His concern is mostly over his impression that Singapore has failed to produce an open democracy that promotes individual rights and freedoms.

Lingle's concern is brought into focus with this thesis. It has been shown that the government of Singapore has averted any political instability that might have been brought on by a youth bulge, and even diffused the bulge to its own economic gain. However, as demonstrated by Lingle, it has also severely restricted individual freedoms. He goes as far as to describe the PAP's leadership as phobocracy, or "rule by fear". The prognosis Lingle gives for the economy of such an environment is not good. He predicts the slowing of economic growth, and suggests that Singapore's paradoxical authoritarian capitalism will give continual challenges to policymakers as they attempt to reconcile internal political isolation with the need to be responsive to outside economic pressures (Lingle, 1996). Should other Asian countries strive for such long-term difficulty? The stability that Singapore has enjoyed may not be permanent, and it clearly comes at a cost to personal freedom.
Chapter 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Findings

Referring to the project questions posed in the first chapter, we can easily assess our findings for this paper:

1) Is there a link between youth bulges in Asian cities and political instability?

This paper explored the relationship between the occurrence of youth bulges over the past fifty years and the development of political instability. Although I was limited in the number of countries I could examine, I did find six strong case studies that demonstrated a clear parallel between bulges and political unrest.

To overcome the concern that urban areas already experience a higher proportion of youth than a total country’s population, and possibly even have a perpetual youth bulge according to the threshold of twenty percent, I drew a distinction between urban bulges and total youth bulges. I examined more closely those bulges that occurred exclusively in urban areas. This helped me determine whether the twenty percent threshold level was appropriate for cities. I found that while bulges tended to be larger in cities, there were no perpetual youth bulges in urban areas, so I was able to draw a comparison between years without bulges and years with bulges. I found that urban instability did greatly increase during years of urban youth bulges.
2) How does the case of Singapore compare with other Asian cities?

Singapore is a clear example of a situation where political instability has not accompanied a youth bulge. Since Singapore is a city-state, it was best compared with cities in other Asian countries. Singapore has, however, enjoyed a significantly stable government, even during peak youth bulge years. The goal of this paper was to examine the factors that have helped Singapore diffuse the effects of the youth bulge.

I first noted that Singapore’s efforts towards job creation have effectively channeled surplus young workers into career fields and has given Singapore unprecedented economic growth. This appears to be one of the greatest contributors to Singapore’s stability.

The ruling party (PAP) and its ability to limit any political opposition has furthered Singapore’s stable political system. However, while the PAP has sometimes used underhanded techniques to protect its power, it has been speculated that Singaporeans actually prefer the status quo, and would not vote for the opposition even without the discouragement of the PAP.

Certain other government policies have had an impact on the youth bulge. I noted the significance of Singapore’s national service program which not only takes pressure off of the job market and universities, but it also serves to unite men of various backgrounds and gives them a sense of national pride. They are trained in the values for which Singapore stands, and learn about the importance of loyalty to their nation. At such a crucial age (eighteen), men develop the values that support Singapore’s decades of stability. Early on in their education, students in Singapore are directed towards specific career and educational goals. This has helped relieve
pressure on the main universities and also given a sense of purpose to students who may not qualify for further academic study.

The Singaporean government’s emphasis on national unity has paid off. Not only are young people taught in school and in national service about the importance of unity, but they see it every day in the way the government presents itself: Singapore is a multi-cultural country with many religious and racial differences, but they are all Singaporeans first. This sentimentality is seen particularly well in the annual National Day Parade that showcases Singapore’s cultural wealth while emphasizing the unique qualities of Singaporeans.

Singapore also has much to offer other Asian cities in terms of the rule of law. I observed that strict punishment and sure enforcement are a clear deterrent for breaking the laws. Also, the laws governing public discourse force clear boundaries onto freedom of speech. However, the public is generally in favor of stability and maintaining status quo, particularly their economic growth, and there is great stigma attached to law-breaking.

Singapore also has other factors that have helped diffuse the effect of the youth bulge. Most notable of these are the leadership of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, the lack of politicizing which enables government officials to view their roles specifically to serve the people, and the deliberately developed lack of corruption. Singaporeans in general trust their leaders, and little cause is found for rebellion.

Clearly there are many contributing factors that have helped Singapore alleviate any effects the youth bulge might have. Rather, Singapore has redirected the energy and ambition of its youth towards a higher level of economic output. Singapore has
implemented policies that indirectly affected its youth and provided for them in ways that maintained Singapore’s stability. It is doubtful that the Singaporean government created policies to deal specifically with the youth bulge, but stability has always been an important factor for Singapore’s development. A stable environment is one most conducive to economic growth, a factor that everyone clearly desires. Using the analogy of Singapore as the “air-conditioned nation”, the policies and decisions made by the government are logical and directed specifically at comfort and stability, sometimes at the expense of political and personal freedoms. Understanding also that Singapore is founded on Confucian ideals of community and family, it is easy to see why citizens are less concerned about their personal rights than overall stability for the country.

4.2 Recommendations

Is Singapore an anomaly? Or can Singapore be used as a model in prescribing government action for future youth bulges in Asian cities? While Singapore has many unique characteristics, there seem to be several ways in which other Asian cities may emulate Singapore to help alleviate the effects of the youth bulge. Compulsory national service, aggressive job creation, and the promotion of national pride and unity are three factors that effectively diffuse the effects of the youth bulge.

It is not necessary for other Asian cities to emulate all the unique qualities of Singapore, including its limitations of opposition and its censorship, but several factors are important: Singapore’s record as one of the least corrupt countries in the world puts it in good stead with its citizens, as does the rule of law and the clear
consequences for violations. These factors will help cities avoid instability at all times, whether during a youth bulge or in a youth deficit.

Further research in this area to quantify the difference particular factors make in diffusing the effects of the youth bulge is of critical importance. It was clear that certain factors played a greater role than others, but their direct effect on the youth bulge was difficult to quantify. As other countries begin to implement some of these factors in their cities, it may be easier to make a statistical estimate of the relative importance for each factor.

Singapore’s success in diffusing the effects of a youth bulge are inspiring. It is critical for countries that will soon experience youth bulges to take note of the unique policies and political climate of Singapore. Perhaps there are ways to import Singapore’s success and promote more stable societies, which will benefit all.
Appendix¹: Age-Sex Pyramid Predictions

Bangladesh

¹ Note: The following Age-Sex Pyramids were generated by the International Database for the United States Census Bureau at http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbnew.html.
Bhutan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Myanmar

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
China

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
East Timor

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Hong Kong

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
India

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Indonesia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Japan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Laos

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Malaysia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Mongolia

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Nepal

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
North Korea

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Pakistan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Philippines

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Singapore

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
South Korea

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Sri Lanka

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Taiwan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Thailand

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
Vietnam

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.
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