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Generational Differences in Life Course Trajectories of Indonesians in Their Mid-twenties

Comparing Millennials and Older Cohorts

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ABSTRACT

Life course events related to the transition to adulthood have been a critical part of social transformation within society. One's birth cohort or generation is argued to be one of the important determinants in explaining attitudes, beliefs and behaviours towards life course events. Therefore, to have a thorough understanding of the demographic behaviour of a society, it is important to examine generational differences in life course trajectories. Taking advantage of longitudinal information from the RAND Corporation's Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS), this study examines generational differences in the occurrence and timing of marital unions, labour market entry, and first adult migration of Indonesians. By using descriptive and regression analysis, this study compares whether the life course transitions experienced by Indonesians in their mid-twenties have

changed between the current young adult generation, the millennials, and older cohorts, i.e., Generation X and baby boomers. The study found distinctive characteristics in the transition to adulthood for each generation. Moreover, remarkable variations in educational attainment across the generations have had critical effects on the demographic behaviour patterns of young Indonesians. The findings of this study can provide insights into societal changes in Indonesia and act as a basis for designing social policies to anticipate potential future trends.

INTRODUCTION

Life course transitions are an integral part of an individual's life cycle. People face various options at critical stages in their life trajectories. Their choices might be shaped by distinctive attitudes, beliefs and behaviours and create societal changes over time. Major life course events, such as getting married, entering the labour market and moving out from the parental home constitute critical phases of transition to adulthood and play important roles as markers for social transition and intergenerational change in a society (Berngruber and Bethmann 2022).

An individual's birth cohort or generation may act as an important determinant of the shifts in the patterns of transition to adulthood. Birth cohorts reflect structural changes over time in a country, including changes in the governmental system and economic development (Vidal and Lutz 2018). Therefore, *cohort effect* explains how each generation has different behaviours due to variations in the temporal situations they experience. However, birth cohorts may not be sufficient to explain changes in people's behaviours over time. Variations in people's attitudes and behaviours can also be influenced by period and life course effects (Duffy 2021). The *period effect* demonstrates how attitudes and behaviours of societies change consistently across generations in response to a major event that affects everyone, such as a pandemic or economic crisis. The *life course effect* shows how people's preferences and attitudes change as they encounter major life events, such as leaving the parental home, getting married, or entering the workforce. Every shift in societal values and attitudes over time can result from one or a combination of these three effects.

Viewing variations in demographic-related events through the lens of generational differences enables a more nuanced understanding of

individuals' life trajectories, demographic transitions, and the embedded time and place contexts (Bailey 2009). Demographic events—such as getting married, entering the workforce, or moving out from the parental home—are highly associated with the generational dynamics of a society (Berngruber and Bethmann 2022). For example, the occurrence and timing of marital unions and childbearing vary across generations (Van Winkle 2018). In contrast, variations in employment trajectories across cohorts are found to be relatively negligible (Van Winkle and Fasang 2017). Moreover, it has been argued that the prominent reason why some postpone entering the workforce, setting up a family and delaying migration till a later age is their prolonged duration in education. This is particularly the case among the younger generations (Mulder 1993). Consequently, there is a greater tendency towards late and protracted transition to adulthood among younger cohorts, whereas the older cohorts mainly experienced transition events at earlier ages (Billari and Liefbroer 2010).

Although there have been extensive studies of generational behaviours in the Indonesian context, research focusing on cohort behaviours related to demographic events is still scarce. As a highly populous developing country that has experienced rapid economic growth and social transformation in the past few decades, Indonesia provides a unique context for studying demographic behaviours. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in knowledge by examining generational differences, particularly regarding the occurrence and timing of life events that mark the transition to adulthood, i.e., marital union, entry into the labour force and migration. This chapter addresses the following research question: To what extent can the demographic behaviours of young Indonesian adults be explained by generational differences? The generational analysis in this study contributes to the existing research by providing a more nuanced understanding of demographic behaviours across generations and the contextual factors that shape individuals' and societies' values and attitudes in the Indonesian context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Life Course Transitions Across Generations

Life course is defined as an "age graded sequence of socially defined roles and events enacted over historical time and place" (Elder, Johnson,

and Crosnoe 2003). In other words, life course illustrates the transitions experienced by specific population groups and shows the general patterns of particular institutional norms (Aybek 2011). The changing influence of structural constraints and opportunities and individuals' preferences and characteristics over time are critical in explaining variations of life course trajectories (Mulder 1993). Additionally, multiple factors potentially increase or diminish individuals' propensity to experience particular life events, and all these factors are not necessarily isolated from each other (Schittenhelm 2011).

Life events related to the transition to adulthood, in particular, are considered critical markers in individuals' life trajectories (Berngruber and Bethmann 2022). The standard life trajectories in young adulthood usually start with completion or termination of schooling, followed by labour market entry, moving out of the parental home or to a new region, and family formation (Shanahan 2000). The timing of the initial experience of these follow-up life events acts as a strong basis for understanding the normative social conditions and cultural context of a society. Moreover, shifts in the age patterns of these events can illustrate fundamental contextual changes in a country's social, political, cultural and economic spheres (Berngruber and Bethmann 2022).

Age at marriage has been a critical determinant of population dynamics in a country (Qibthiyyah and Utomo 2016). Many countries have experienced fertility declines during the last few decades. This decline is mainly due to the use of modern contraception as part of family planning programmes since the late 1960s (Qibthiyyah and Utomo 2016; Warwick 1986). In addition, the expansion of education and labour market opportunities has influenced delays in marriage and childbearing, resulting in lower fertility rates (Qibthiyyah and Utomo 2016). Unsurprisingly, in the more developed countries with low fertility rates, family-related transitions, marital unions and childbearing are generally experienced later (Hofäcker and Chaloupková 2014). Rising individualism, a value characterized by the habit of living alone and the practice of prioritizing individual needs, is believed to affect the postponement of marital union among younger cohorts (Mulder 1993). However, while social values related to family norms have been observed to be changing gradually over time, it is suggested that the ideal norms for the occurrence and timing of marriage are still followed by all generations, particularly in less developed countries (Hofäcker and Chaloupková 2014). Therefore, Van Winkle (2018) suggested that differences

in family trajectories are more likely to be influenced by spatial variation than by generational distinctions.

A different trend can be observed in employment trajectories. These trajectories involve individuals' entry into the labour market and their efforts to gain adequate employment and pursue successful working careers (Kogan et al. 2011). Prior studies found that changes in employment trajectories across birth cohorts are relatively insignificant (Biemann, Fasang, and Grunow 2011; Van Winkle and Fasang 2017; Virtanen et al. 2011). Further, the presence of a large number of baby boomers in the population amid the lack of extensive job opportunities during their adulthood created a situation of excess labour supply (Saragih, Widodo, and Prasetyo 2016). This puts the baby boomer cohort in tight labour market competition and results in high unemployment among them. Meanwhile, younger generations such as Generation X and millennials, have experienced rapid development of labour market structures alongside technological advancement, which has provided extensive working opportunities (Frian and Mulyani 2018; Gunawan et al. 2020). In many developing countries, rising informal economic activities in recent years have also acted as a critical determinant in the younger generations' entry into the labour force at earlier ages (Ginsburg et al. 2016; Jones et al. 2016). It can be said that the employment trajectories of each generation are shaped within the country-specific labour opportunity structures.

Life course events related to housing transitions are commonly marked by leaving the parental home or moving to a new region. This situation can be influenced by one or a combination of several events in the transition to adulthood. Family formation, labour market participation and schooling influence one's aspirations and evaluations regarding preferred living environments. This situation may result in the initiation of migration. During young adulthood, in particular, the onset of family and employment trajectories might act as a critical push factor to move out from one's place of origin (Plane, Henrie, and Perry 2005). Mulder (1993) explained that, for older generations, marriage-related motives had been the main feature in migration during their young adulthood. However, this consideration is less significant for younger cohorts. Their postponement of marital union to a later age is argued to be the main reason for this phenomenon. For the younger generation, increasing education participation rates have a higher significance in their migration trajectories. In recent years, pursuing tertiary education has become a prominent motive for migration in the

initial years of adulthood. However, the extended years that they spend in education have decreased the level of migration during the later years of their adulthood due to their subsequent entry into the workforce.

Family, employment and migration trajectories are critical factors in explaining individuals' life course. Moreover, variations in educational attainment across cohorts generate distinctive opportunities in different trajectories throughout their life course. This situation results in variations in the occurrence and timing of individuals' major life events (Mulder 1993; Uhlenberg 1996). However, the generational differences could be negligible if all generations hold the same cultural values and social norms and are exposed to similar patterns of external events that influence and shape their life course (Hobcraft, Menken, and Preston 1985; Ting et al. 2018).

Life Course Events in the Indonesian Context

As one of the most populous countries in the world, Indonesia has experienced rapid growth in population size, from 119.2 million in 1971 to 270.2 million in 2020 (Statistics Indonesia 2021a, 2021b). The 2020 census found that the population is dominated by Generation Z (28 per cent) and millennials (26 per cent), followed by Generation X (22 per cent), baby boomers (11 per cent), post-Generation Z (11 per cent), and pre-boomers (2 per cent) (Statistics Indonesia 2021b). The rapid growth in population over the years has been accompanied by economic growth and social development that have shaped a country-specific opportunity structure.

As in other countries, Indonesia's demographic dynamics over the years have been marked by the expansion of educational opportunities owing to several developments. Before the 1970s, school-age children or the baby boomer generation faced inequalities in educational provision (Bjork 2005; Thomas 1969). During the 1970s and early 1980s, the Indonesian government started its effort to bring equal access to education by establishing primary schools in every village (Rosser 2018). In the mid-1980s the government legislated compulsory education for six years and then extended it to nine years in the mid-1990s (Suharti 2013). A large-scale, intensive national effort to improve access to education has increased the educational attainment of Indonesians from an average of 1.1 years of schooling in 1950 to about 8.7 years of schooling in 2015 (Barro and Lee 2013).

That the younger generations have benefited from the development of the education system can be observed from their increasing enrolment

rates, compared with the older generations. In addition, Suharti (2013) revealed that about 66 per cent of the Gen X cohort completed primary school, but only 44 per cent continued to junior secondary school. The millennial cohort showed remarkable progress in terms of graduating from primary school (81 per cent) and continuing to junior secondary school (66 per cent). The significant improvement in Indonesians' educational outcomes can be seen in the increasing proportion of the population aged 15 years and above who have completed junior secondary school i.e., from only 20 per cent in 1980 to 56 per cent in 2015 (Muhidin 2018).

A country's education system is expected to affect demographic behaviours across generations. For example, increased human capital development might impact supply and demand in the labour force. In Indonesia, the changing nature of the labour force, alongside the country's evolving economy in recent decades, implies a growing need for workers with middle-level technical skills (Suryadarma and Jones 2013). Jones et al. (2016) found that the rapid growth of the informal sector in Indonesia's big cities and metropolitan areas has also resulted in high labour absorption of low-educated workers. For instance, an inordinately high share of Gen X with lower educational backgrounds and from rural areas worked in the informal sector as self-employed workers or agricultural workers as of 2014 (Kudrna, Le, and Piggott 2021). While the minimum age for employment, according to Indonesian law, is 15 years of age (ILO 2014), the informal sector is rarely bound by this regulation. Therefore, it is not uncommon to find that most Indonesian labourers have started their employment trajectories at relatively younger ages (Suryadarma and Jones 2013). Rather than the cohort effect, the employment trajectory has been greatly affected by major macro-level events, such as the global financial crisis of 1998. During this period, many people, particularly baby boomers and Gen X, were unemployed (Permata, Yanfitri, and Prasmuko 2019).

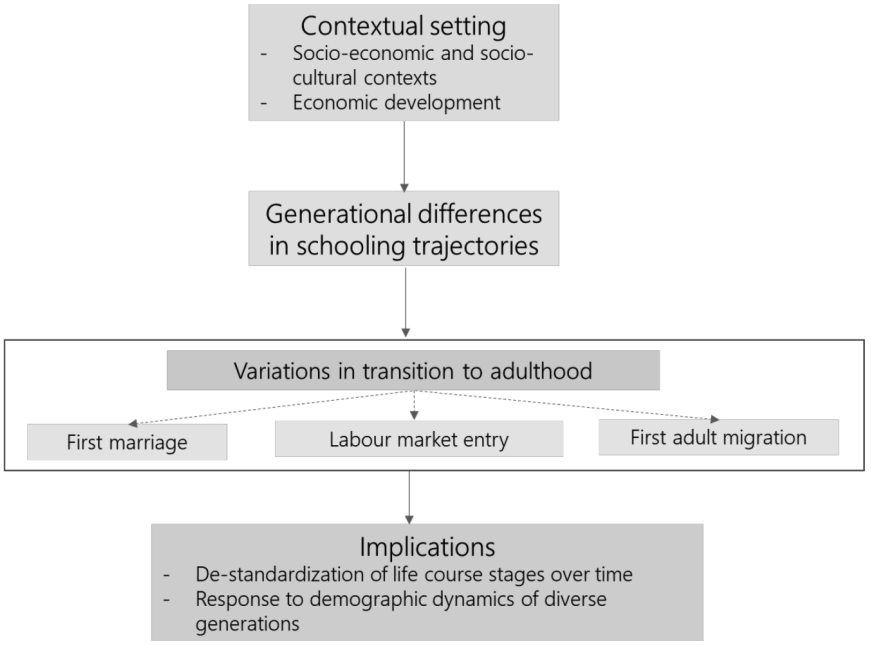
The preferred arrangements of life course events among Indonesians seem to be completing schooling first, getting a job and then getting married (Sundaram 2005). Moreover, the minimum age for marriage was regulated by Indonesia's Marriage Act in 1974, which ruled that the minimum age for marriage is 16 years for females and 19 years for males.[1] Statistics Indonesia (2017) found that one in five Indonesian women aged 20–24 was married by 18 years of age. However, there was a shift in the age of marriage across cohorts. About 37 per cent of female baby boomers were married between the ages of 15 and 19, while fewer than 10 per cent of millennials were

married during this age period (Nobles and Buttenheim 2008). Also, the average age at marriage was 19 and 21–22 for female baby boomers and millennials, respectively (Adioetomo, Posselt, and Utomo 2014; Sundaram 2005). The pattern among the male population showed delayed marriage, but there was also an increase in the average age at marriage from 24 years for baby boomers to 26 years for Gen X (Adioetomo, Posselt, and Utomo 2014). Another study, by Jones (2004), found that almost one-sixth of Gen X women aged 30–34 and living in Jakarta had delayed marriage and were still single. The postponement of marriage by the younger generations is argued to be influenced by wider access to higher education and longer time spent in school (Sundaram 2005; Utomo and Sutopo 2020).

Migration in Indonesia is mainly motivated by family- and economic-related reasons (Muhidin 2018). Family-related reasons include getting married or following family members, while the spatial movement for working and looking for work is categorized as economic-related reasons. However, among the young population, there has been an increasing trend in recent years of migration to pursue higher studies (Muhidin 2018). Migration is considered an essential element that is closely linked to some stages during the life course transition (Pardede and Muhidin 2006). Migration in Indonesia is highly concentrated in the early twenties (Bell and Muhidin 2009). It is also suggested that nearly half of young Indonesians have experienced spatial movements before age 30 (Muhidin 2018). Data from the Intercensal Survey in 2015 showed that the share of individuals who have migrated at least once is relatively similar across cohorts. Among Gen X, nearly a third have migrated at least once while the corresponding figures for baby boomers and millennials are approximately 27 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively.

Previous empirical studies of transition to adulthood events in Indonesia and other countries have emphasized the importance of contextual settings in explaining the occurrence and timing of life course events. Educational trajectories, especially, have been highlighted as the prominent factors in explaining various patterns of transition to adulthood across birth cohorts. Figure 1.1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study. Socio-economic and cultural settings as well as economic development are noted as important considerations when examining generation differentials in education trajectories. This study argues that differences in educational attainment across generations shape variations in transition to adulthood events, i.e., first marriage, entry into

FIGURE 1.1
The Study Framework



the labour force and first migration. Therefore, a deeper examination of generational differences serves as a critical foundation for obtaining a more nuanced understanding of demographic dynamics among young adult Indonesians.

DATA AND METHOD

This study examines the occurrence and timing of major life events during young adulthood across generations in Indonesia. It uses data from all five waves of the Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS), a multi-topic longitudinal survey conducted by the RAND Corporation, USA, and several Indonesian universities that includes various demographic information (Frankenberg and Karoly 1995; Frankenberg and Thomas 2000; Strauss et al. 2004, 2009; Strauss, Witoelar, and Sikoki 2016). The survey collected retrospective information on major life transitions such

as education, marital status, employment, and migration in each wave. In its initial run in 1993, IFLS interviewed 7,224 households with more than 22,000 individuals in thirteen provinces. It followed the sampling frame of the 1993 national socio-economic survey by Statistics Indonesia, hence the household selection for the initial wave represents 80 per cent of the Indonesian population (Strauss, Witoelar, and Sikoki 2016). Subsequent IFLS waves were conducted in 1997, 2000, 2007 and 2014/2015.[2] Due to its limited geographical coverage, analysis of IFLS data sets should not be seen as depicting a representative profile of the Indonesian population. However, IFLS provides a more nuanced understanding of the demographic behaviours of the population since it offers richer information than other nationwide surveys.

This study observed 30,422 individuals born between 1945 and 1989. For generational analysis, this study classifies these samples into three groups based on their birth year, i.e., baby boomers (born between 1945 and 1965), Gen X (born between 1966 and 1979), and millennials (born between 1980 and 1989). The samples are restricted to individuals aged 25 years at the latest wave they participated in to ensure that all participants have experienced a similar age span. Based on the birth year categorization, the shares of generations in the sample are relatively proportionate, with baby boomers comprising about 31 per cent, Gen X about 38 per cent and millennials approximately 31 per cent.

Plane et al. (2005) argued that various critical life course events occurred within young adulthood, such as leaving the parental home, family formation and childbearing, and entering the labour market. The present study specifically focuses on the occurrence of major life events by the age of 25 that can be marked as a mid-point of young adulthood. Moreover, previous studies have shown that marriage, entry into the labour force, and migration in the Indonesian context generally peaked around late adolescence and the early twenties (Muhidin 2018; Suryadarma and Jones 2013).

This study conceptualizes the occurrence and timing of major life course events by looking at the participants' year of first marriage, labour market entry, and initial youth migration. Annex 1.1 lists the questions from the IFLS modules that were used for this study. The first step of the analysis examines the propensity of each generation to experience major life course events by the age of 25. By employing logistic regression models, this study explores factors related to the occurrence of marriage,

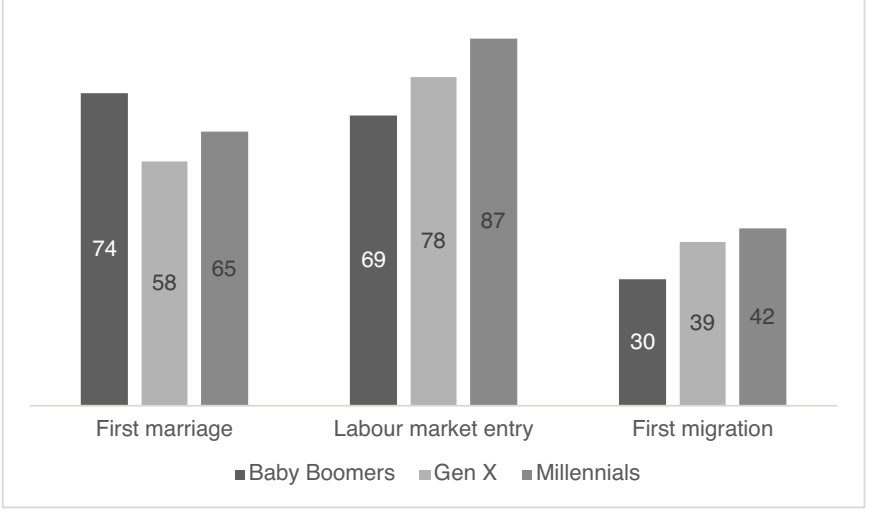
employment, and migration across generations. The explanatory variables included in the models are sex, highest educational attainment, hometown type, and ethnicity. Next, the Kaplan-Meier survival estimator is applied to estimate the yearly hazard of the occurrence of the observed life events across generations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1.2 presents the share of the population in each generation that has experienced major life course events: first marriage, labour market entry, and first migration. It is shown that the majority of individuals in each generation have married and started to work by the age of 25. However, the share of married individuals is lower for younger cohorts. While nearly three-fourths of baby boomers were married by the age of 25, only 58 per cent of Gen X and about two-thirds of millennials had entered a marital union by that age.

Further, the level of labour market participation in the mid-twenties is notably higher for the youngest cohort. Millennials show a significantly high level of labour market entry at a younger age, with about 87 per cent

FIGURE 1.2
The Proportion of Individuals Who Experienced Major Life Events by the Age of 25



starting their employment trajectories by age 25. The rise of digital-based jobs in recent years has been crucial in the absorption of many young workers into the labour market in Indonesia (World Bank 2021).

Moreover, about 42 per cent of millennials had moved out from their hometowns before turning 25, a remarkable increase from the migration rate for baby boomers. The improvement of regional connectivity through ease of transportation might explain the increased share of migration among the younger generation. However, this situation could also imply a stronger influence of migration determinants in recent years, such as wider gaps in employment and education opportunities between regions (Malamassam 2022).

Increasingly, Indonesia's established school systems and improved educational attainment could critically affect individuals' trajectories. Figure 1.3 shows the changes in educational outcomes across generations in Indonesia. Millennials are better educated than the older generations. Remarkably, the proportion of those with primary level education or below decreased by about 50 per cent between the baby boomer generation and Gen X. Only about a fifth of the millennials did not proceed with their schooling beyond primary level. Additionally, the share of tertiary-

FIGURE 1.3
The Distribution of Highest Educational Attainment by Generations

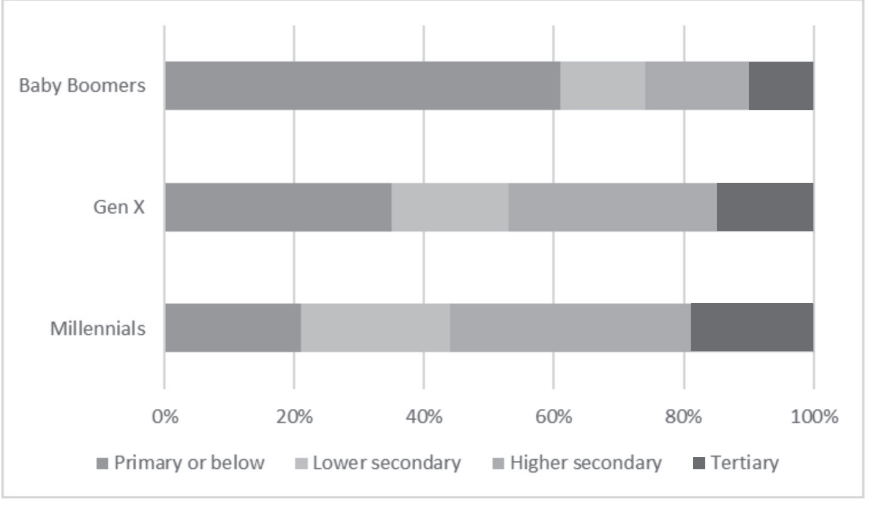


TABLE 1.1
Pearson Chi-Square Test for Association between Marital Status, Labour Market Entry, and Migration Status at the Age of 25 by Generations

	Baby Boomers		*Gen X*		*Millennials*	
	Labour market entry	*First migration*	*Labour market entry*	*First migration*	*Labour market entry*	*First migration*
First marriage	39.03**	10.04**	32.71**	4.71*	0.92	1.31
Labour market entry		55.85**		57.00**		45.48**

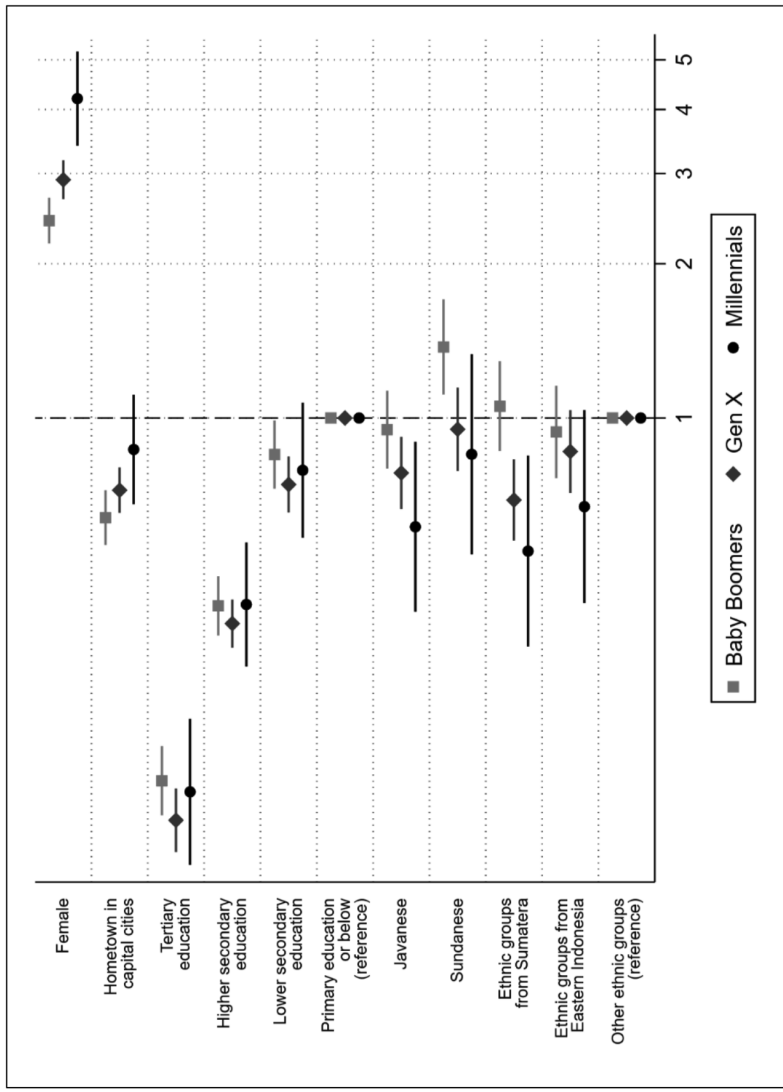
Notes: * and ** indicate significance at the 95 per cent and 99 per cent levels, respectively.

educated individuals in the millennial generation was nearly twice that of baby boomers.

Transition to adulthood events might not necessarily be isolated from one other (Schittenhelm 2011). One's exposure to a particular life event can lead to exposure to transitions in other life trajectories. Table 1.1 illustrates that, in general, the occurrences of first marriage by age 25 are significantly interlinked to labour market entry and first migration. However, the millennial cohort shows a slightly different pattern since the association between the first marriage and the other two events is statistically insignificant. This situation could imply that the earlier transitions to the labour market and migration by millennials decrease their propensity to get married at younger ages. Also, the weak association suggests an older age at first marriage for the younger generation compared with their older counterparts.

The choice of demographic behaviour across cohorts might indicate that contextual changes and social norms shift over time within society. Therefore, it is important to look at the variations in the factors that determine major life events between generations. Figure 1.4 shows the estimations of first marriage occurrence for the three generations. In every generation, females are consistently shown to have a higher likelihood of being married by the age of 25. It is also shown that there is no significant difference in the occurrence of marriage between those who grew up in capital cities and non-capital cities for the youngest cohort. Moreover, the effects of education on delayed marital age are persistent across cohorts. The tertiary-educated group has the lowest likelihood of being married at

FIGURE 1.4
Logistic Regression Estimates of First Marriage by the Age of 25



earlier ages compared with their less-educated counterparts. Interestingly, the effects of cultural background are significantly lower for the younger generations. This finding may illustrate that cultural norms have less influence on family trajectories for the millennial generation.

The predicted probabilities for labour market entry by the age of 25 among baby boomers, Gen X and millennials can be observed in Figure 1.5. Tertiary-educated individuals are consistently shown to have a lower propensity to be employed by the age of 25 across all generations. Prolonged schooling trajectories have caused delayed entry into the labour force for highly educated individuals. Moreover, tertiary-educated individuals from Gen X show the lowest likelihood of being employed at younger ages. This finding might indicate the period effect on the variations in the labour participation rate. A large proportion of Gen X in their early twenties experienced the global financial crisis in 1998. During this period, the labour market was greatly affected and the unemployment rate was extremely high (Permata, Yanfitri, and Prasmuko 2019). Further, it is interesting to note that millennials show a different pattern of labour market entry by educational attainment. It is estimated that educational attainment has no significant impact on labour market entry by millennials. The rapid economic growth in recent years has led to more opportunities in the informal sector, especially in the low-productivity services sectors, partly powered by digital technologies, but embedded with precarious and unsecured employment conditions. This type of work is generally not tied to working age regulations; consequently, low-educated workers can be employed at very young ages. The development of the informal sector, alongside the expansion of formal economic activities, has been a major feature of economic growth in Indonesia's metropolitan areas (Jones et al. 2016). This situation might have worked as a critical catalyst for the millennials' high rate of labour participation at younger ages regardless of their educational background.

Figure 1.6 shows the likelihood of migration by individuals in each generation by the age of 25. There is no significant difference between millennial men and women in their youth migration behaviour. This pattern differs from the two older generations, where females are less likely to migrate than males. This difference could conceivably be shaped by variations in the situations they experience during their lifetimes. Millennial females are more likely to have access to opportunities elsewhere due to shifting gender-specific social norms in recent years, which can be seen

FIGURE 1.5
Logistic Regression Estimates of Labour Market Entry by the Age of 25

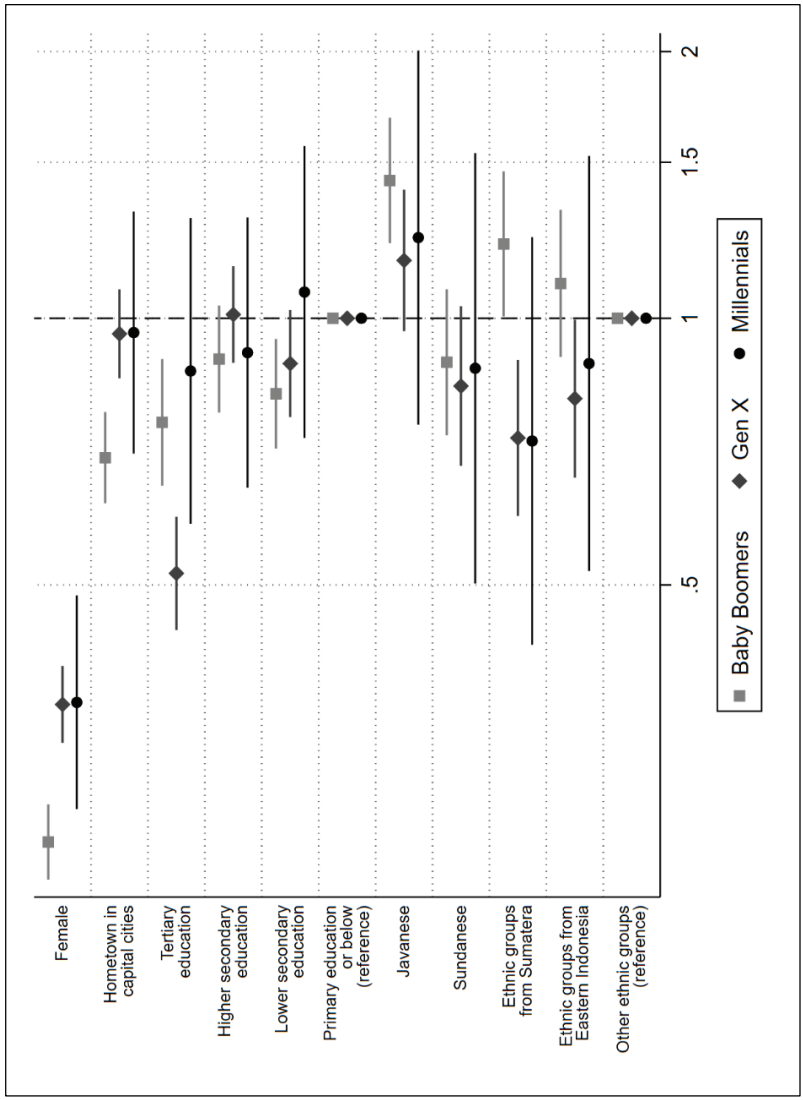
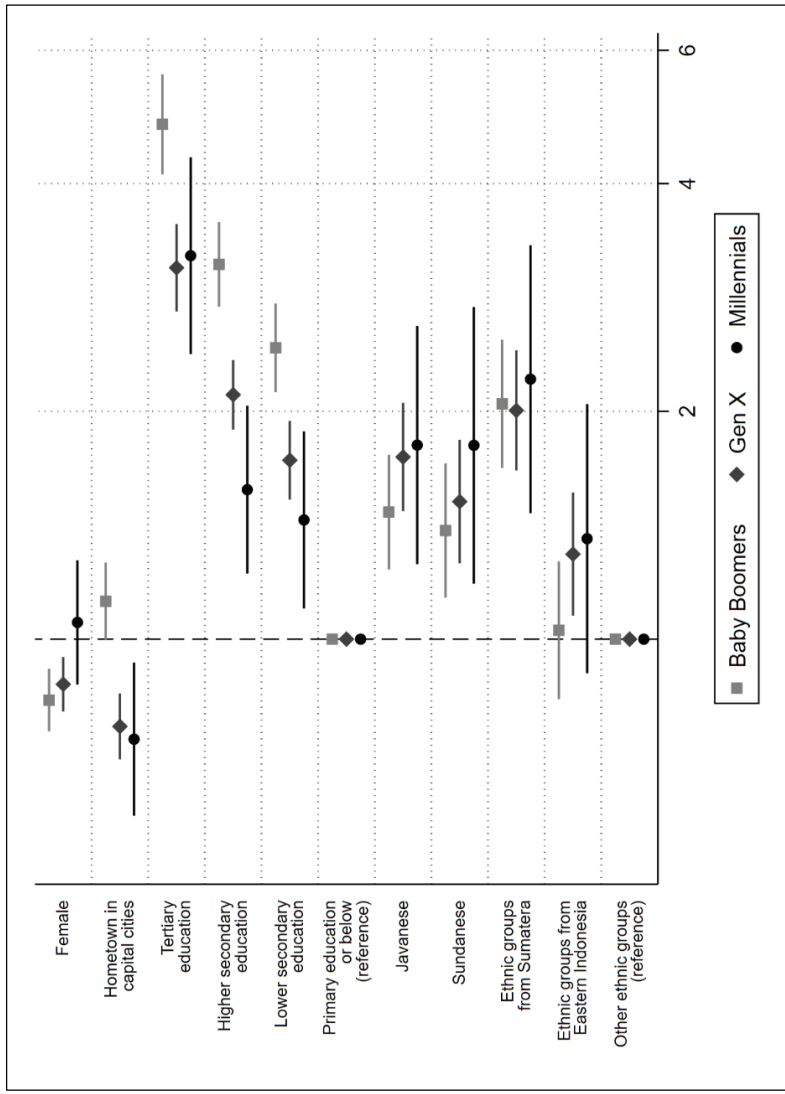


FIGURE 1.6
Logistic Regression Estimates of First Migration by the Age of 25



in their increased participation in higher education and the labour market (Afkar et al. 2020; Schaner and Das 2016). In the Indonesian context, while the issues of gender inequality persist, the gap between males and females in access to education and the labour market has been narrowing in recent years (Statistics Indonesia 2021c).

To get a better understanding of whether the onset of life course trajectories varies across birth cohorts, this study runs the Kaplan-Meier model to estimate the yearly hazards of entering into first marriage, entering into the labour force, and migrating for the first time across the birth cohorts. The yearly hazard of the first marital union by generation is presented in Figure 1.7.

The most noticeable difference between the cohorts can be observed in the high level of child marriage (below 15 years old) for the baby boomer cohort. The child marriage rate greatly decreased for Gen X and millennials. On the other hand, millennials show the highest probability of getting married after age 20. They still generally indicate a high tendency to be married by their mid-twenties, but there is an emerging pattern of postponement of marriage to later ages. A possible explanation for the shift in the average timing of first marriage by millennials is the longer years spent in school (Sundaram 2005; Utomo and Sutopo 2020). As explained in the earlier section, more than half of Indonesia's millennials attended senior high school and above, which is in contrast to the older generations. While the timing of the first marriage may have shifted, the younger generations tend to still follow the standard order of transition to adulthood by completing or terminating school before forming a family through marriage.

Moreover, earlier labour market entry might also influence delays in marriage by millennials. As shown in the previous Chi-square test, there is no significant association between getting married and entering the labour market at younger ages as millennials might enter the labour market but not get married before they hit 25 years of age. This situation implies that participation in the labour force could have the critical effect of delaying the age of marriage.

Figure 1.8 shows that the yearly probability of entering the labour force by the age of 25 is varied by generation. About a tenth of the population in each generation started to work during adolescence (below 15 years of age). Baby boomers have the highest likelihood of working from the initial years of young adulthood, while those from Gen X show

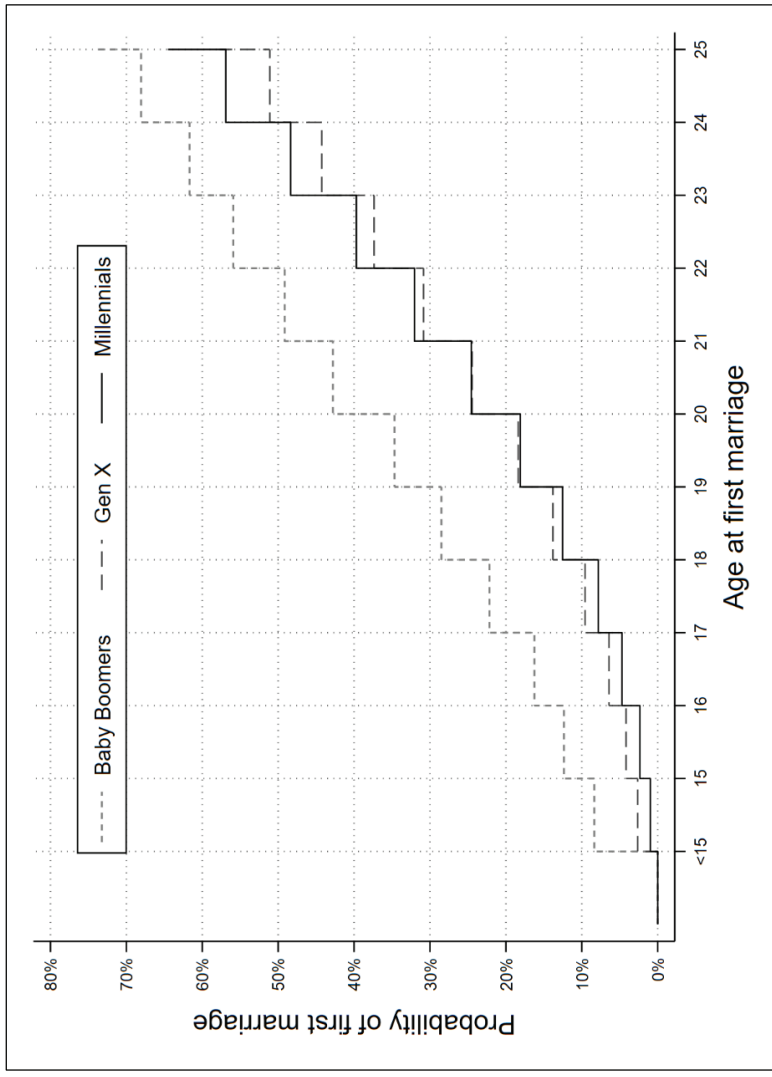
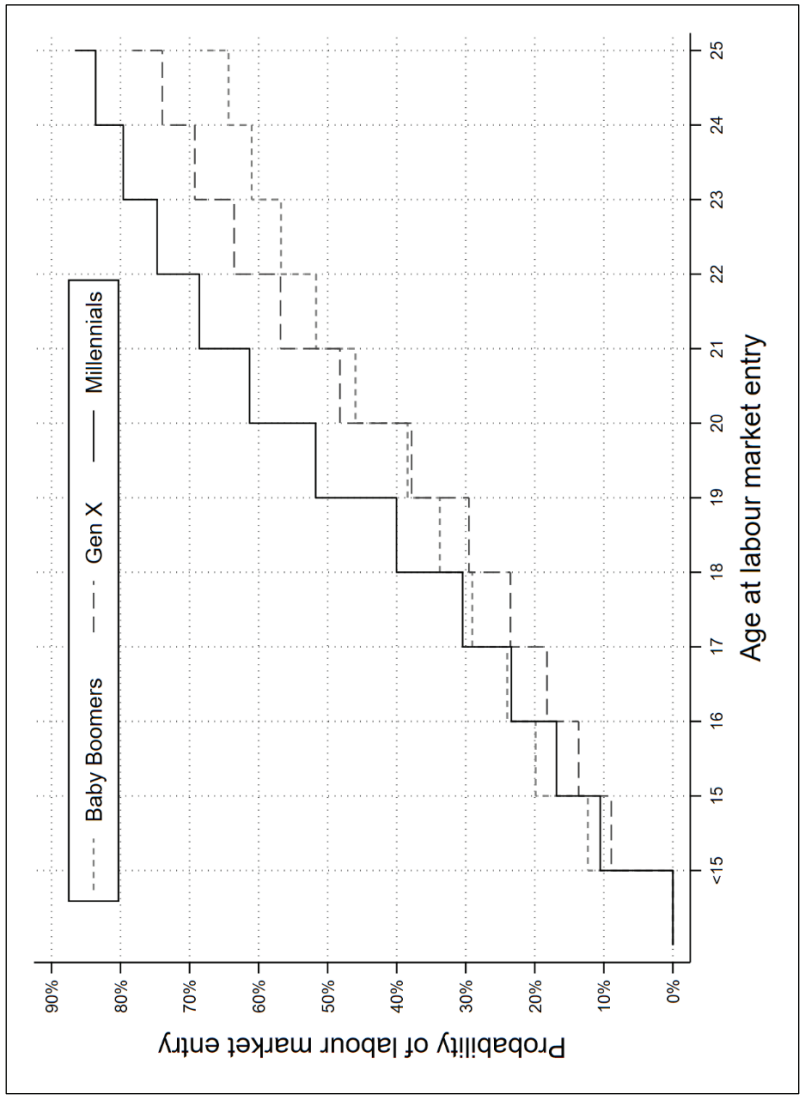


FIGURE 1.7
Probability of Age at First Marriage by Generations

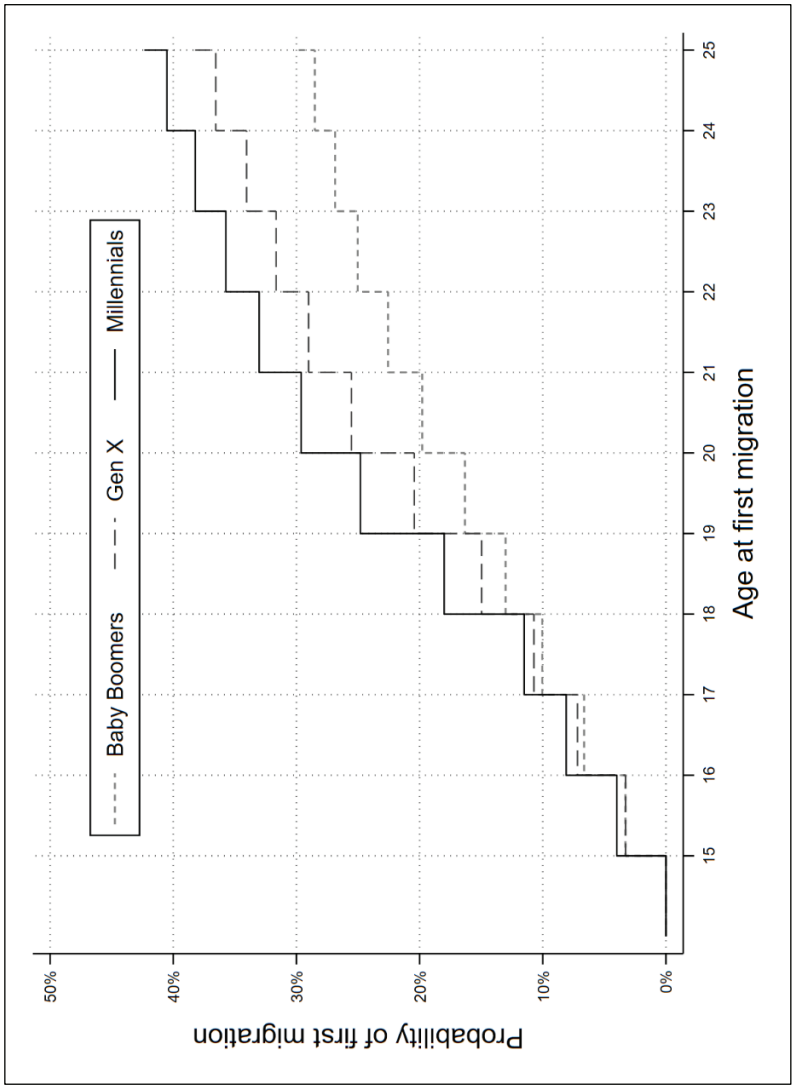
FIGURE 1.8
Probability of Age at Labour Market Entry by Generations



the least likelihood of entering the labour force in young adulthood. However, millennials soon catch up. They show an increasing likelihood of starting their employment trajectories between the ages of 18 to 19, with the likelihood of entering the labour force by that age being higher for millennials than for baby boomers and Gen X. This finding seems to corroborate the fact that millennials stay longer in school, which may delay their participation in the labour market, while at the same time, the rise of digital-based jobs provides opportunities for young adults to enter the labour market early.

Figure 1.9 captures the pattern of the yearly hazard of first migration by cohort. In general, at the age of 25, about four out of ten millennials and Gen X would have migrated at least once, while only about a third of baby boomers migrated at age 25. From the ages of 15 to 17, the migration rates are relatively similar for each cohort. However, the probability of migrating for the oldest cohort tends to only increase at a steady rate towards the end of the observed period. This pattern indicates the limited effect of life course transitions on migration by this generation (Bernard, Bell, and Charles-Edwards 2014). On the other hand, the probability of migrating progressively increases around 18–20 years for the younger cohorts, although the likelihood for those from Gen X is slightly lower than that for millennials. The progressive increase of first migration probability at these ages, particularly for the millennials, might be due to the contextual changes and structural incentives that have supported youth migration in recent decades. In the Indonesian context, easier access to information, rapid advances in the means of communication, and the development of transportation networks have had a critical effect on migration, allowing for more long-distance migration, as well as a more dispersed pattern of origin–destination in recent years (Malamassam 2022; Sukamdi and Mujahid 2015). Notably, rural areas in the eastern part of Indonesia have become increasingly important as destinations. The proportion of highly educated migrants who have moved towards this region has increased significantly between 2000 and 2010 (Malamassam 2022).

FIGURE 1.9
Probability of Age at First Migration by Generations



CONCLUSION

This study focuses on generational comparisons of transition to adulthood events. The analysis of demographic dynamics by generations illustrates the expansion of education in Indonesia and progress in regional development. The remarkable variations in educational attainment across the generations have had critical effects on demographic behaviours over time. Also, the examination of generational differences in life course events illustrates the expansion of labour market opportunities and the improvement of regional connectivity in recent years.

This study fills the knowledge gap regarding the demographic aspects of generational differences in the Indonesian context. The more nuanced understanding of the transition to adulthood across generations that this research has sought to provide can serve as an important basis for population and human capital development since it provides insights into societal changes over time.

Due to data availability, the scope of this study is limited to the older millennial cohort. Further studies that explore the variations in life events of younger millennials, as well as the Gen Z cohort, would help to obtain deeper insights into the demographic dynamics of young adult Indonesians. Also, this study examined the life events of interest separately. A sequential analysis is needed to better understand the effect of generational differences on demographic behaviour.

ANNEX 1.1
List of Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS) Questions Used for Analysis in This Study

Variable	*IFLS Question(s)*
Educational attainment	*Module DL* What is the highest education level attended?
First marriage	*Module KW* What is your current marital status? How many times have you been married? Which year did you [first] get married? How old were you when your [first] marriage started?
Labour market entry	*Module TK* When did you start working full-time for the first time? What was your age when you started to work full-time for the first time?
First migration	*Module MG* What is the name of your birthplace when you were born? When you were 12 years old, did you live in the same place where you were born? What was the name of the place where you lived when you were 12 years old? Have you ever moved after the age of 12? Have you ever moved across villages to live at the new location for more than 6 months? What is the name of the destination? When did you move to [destination]? How old were you when you moved? Note: This study only considered movement across districts as migration. Those who moved between villages in a district are considered as never having migrated.

Notes

1. Indonesia's 1974 Marriage Act was revised in 2019. Based on the revised act, the minimum age of marriage for Indonesians is 19 years for both male and female. This study refers to the initial version of the act since the focus is on millennials and older generations who were not subjected to the minimum age legislated by the revised act.
2. For the subsequent waves, IFLS attempted to re-interview all original respondents of the households in the first wave, including those who had moved house. In each wave, there was a significant increase in the number of households interviewed, the additional households being split-off households from the earlier waves. About 89 per cent of the original households in the first wave were re-interviewed in all subsequent waves. For the subsequent waves, the household retention rate was more than 90 per cent. In its fifth wave, a total of 16,931 households were interviewed and about 24 per cent of them were split-off/new households.

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