

分担研究報告

2. 「保育サービスの需要と供給の分析」

厚生労働科学研究費補助金政策科学推進研究事業

「こどものいる世帯に対する所得保障、税制、保育サービス等の効果に関する総合的研究」
分担研究報告書

保育サービスの需要と供給の分析

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研究要旨

本研究では、保育サービスの需要側である子供をもつ女性がどのような保育ニーズに直面しており、それに対してどのような保育サービスが現在、供給されているのか、データやインタビュー調査に基づく実状把握を行った。同時に、育児休業制度や家庭内保育が出産行動や母親の就業に及ぼす影響も分析した。

A 研究目的

本研究の目的は、保育サービスの需要側である子供をもつ女性がどのような保育ニーズに直面しており、それに対してどのような保育サービスが現在、供給されているのか、統計データやインタビュー調査に基づき実状を明らかにすることにある。同時に、育児休業制度など、仕事と育児の両立支援策と言われる政策が女性の労働供給や出生率に及ぼす影響も実証的に把握する。

B 研究方法

保育に関する既存統計の収集、および『国民生活基礎調査』、『社会生活基本調査』、『消費生活に関するパネル調査』などの調査個票を利用し、個々人や世帯の属性を踏まえた実証分析を行う。また、母親達へのインタビュー調査やアンケート調査を独自に実施し、その結果を利用する。

(倫理面への配慮)

データを使用の際には、個人が特定されないように十分留意するとともに、個人情報

の流出のないように細心の注意を払う。

C 研究結果と考察

研究会やワークショップでの議論を踏まえて、研究成果を以下の7論文にとりまとめた。

「Childcare System in Japan」(周・大石・上枝論文)では、日本の保育制度を海外の研究者にもわかりやすい形で概観・解説した。そこでは①日本の幼児保育・教育に占める認可保育所の位置づけを明らかにした上で、②保育サービスにまつわるマクロ的なコスト及びコスト負担の実状を示し、③コストの大半を占める人件費について保育士労働市場の特性を踏まえて分析した上で、④現在の問題点を説明した。

「保育士労働市場の現状」(周・金子論文)では、保育サービスの供給側として、保育士の労働市場に注目している。保育士の労働市場の特性を把握することを目的に、資格制度の概要、社会福祉士制度における保育士職の専門性、他の専門職との比較にお

ける特徴や無認可保育施設における保育士の現状を調査した。その結果、保育士の労働市場は二重労働市場仮説が適合する多くの特徴を備えていることを明らかにしている。

「保育コストの現状と規制緩和」(上枝論文)では、保育サービスのコストとして、供給側である地方自治体の保育所運営費と需要側である児童の保護者が負担する保育料の両面から考察を行っている。その結果、①国基準の運営費に加えて自治体独自の加算分や減免措置のために市区町村の負担が大きく、受益者負担の割合は低いこと、②保育所運営費の多くを占めているのは人件費であり、認可保育所と無認可保育所では保育士の勤続年数や賃金構造が異なっていること、③待機児童解消のために現在行われている規制緩和による企業参入の限界をコスト面から明らかにしている。

「Child Care Services, Extended Families, and Female Labor Force Participation in Japan」(岸論文)では、総務省『平成8年社会生活基本調査』の個票を使用して、有配偶女性の労働供給に及ぼす施設保育と親族などによるインフォーマルな保育の影響を把握している。具体的には、保育所などでの施設保育と三世帯世帯、夫の労働時間が女性労働供給に及ぼす影響を推定する方法を採っている。その結果、①保育所が利用可能であること、三世帯世帯であること、夫の労働時間が長くないことは母親の労働供給を促進する要因となっている、②保育所など施設保育と親族による保育はある程度代替的である、などが明らかになった。

「The Effect of Family-friendly Working Arrangements and Child-care

Services on Fertility in Japan」(滋野論文)では、(財)家計経済研究所『消費生活に関するパネル調査』の個票を利用して保育サービスや育児休業制度の利用可能性が子供数に及ぼす影響を把握した。その結果、①女性が就業を中断する最大の要因は第1子の出産であり、出産と就業の継続が困難であることが出生率を引き下げていること、②育児休業制度は第1子の出産確率を高める効果を持つが、制度の利用可能性は、実際には限定的であること、が明らかになった。

「The Effect of Childcare Costs on Mothers' Labor Force Participation」(大石論文)では、厚生労働省『平成10年国民生活基礎調査』の個票をもとに就学前児童のいる母親について、認可保育所の利用実態や保育料が労働供給に及ぼす影響を、保育サービス利用と労働供給の同時性を考慮しながら計測した。その結果、①母親の労働供給の保育料に対する価格弾力性は有意にマイナスで、とくに市場賃金が低い階層の母親は保育料に敏感に反応している、②シミュレーション結果では、保育料引き下げ政策は、母親の低賃金就労を促進するため、効率性の点で問題がある。一方、保育料を引き上げると低所得世帯の母親の就労が抑制され、子供のいる世帯間での所得格差は拡大すること、などが明らかになった。

「保育需要と保育の質の評価—母親達へのフォーカス・グループ・ディスカッションの結果から—」(上枝・大石論文)では、本研究事業で独自に実施したフォーカス・グループ・ディスカッションから得られた知見と、同じく独自に実施した保育サービス利用に関するアンケート調査の結果から、母親達の保育の質に対する評価を定性的・

定量的に把握している。その結果、①大卒以上で賃金水準が高い母親ほど保育の質に対するこだわりは強く、良質な保育サービスを受けるために高い保育料を支払ったり、転居したりするといった経済的な負担を厭わない傾向が観察される、②大卒者とは対照的に短大卒以下の専業主婦グループは、保育料に敏感な上、保育サービスを利用する際に利便性を重視する傾向がみられる、③こどもの年齢や性格によって、需要する保育サービスの内容や質の評価は異なっている、などが明らかになった。

D 結論

保育サービスの供給については、供給側のコストの大半を占める人件費が問題となるが、それは保育士の労働市場が二重労働市場となっていることが大きく影響している。保育士の待遇における公私間格差を縮小し、買い手独占構造を解消することで、保育サービス供給の増加が見込まれるが、保育士のインセンティブを確保し、質の低下を防ぐ方法を今後、さらに研究する必要がある。

実際、保育を巡る規制緩和が進むなかで、保育の質と価格に対する配慮は重要である。高学歴で人的資本が高い母親達は、高い保育料を負担する用意がある半面、保育の質に非常に敏感である。規制緩和が認可保育所の質の低下をもたらす場合、こうした母親達は行き場を失って非労働力化してしまう恐れがあり、効率性の観点からは望ましくない。こうした層の保育ニーズに対応するためには、良質な保育を提供する民間事業者の参入を促進するような誘因づけが必要であろう。

現行の認可保育所のように低価格での保

育サービスが利用可能であることは、出生率や子供を持つ女性の労働供給にプラスの影響を与えている。しかしながら、子供をもつ母親の就業機会は、いわゆる103万円の壁に納まるような低所得での就労に実際上限定されており、認可保育所の運営に多額の公費が投入されていることを考慮すると、そうした労働供給が促進されることが必ずしも効率性と公平性観点から望ましいとは限らない。

また、保育料に上限がある現在の認可保育所制度のもとでは、高所得世帯の母親にも多大な便益が与えられている。

結局のところ、保育政策を通じた再分配政策には限界があり、女性の就業環境を改善するために制度的な枠組みの見直しが必要である。具体的には、女性の本格的な就労に抑制効果をもつ税制や社会保障制度を見直すことや、正規就業における長時間労働の是正が求められよう。

E 健康危険情報

なし

F 研究発表

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G 知的所有権の出願・登録状況

1. 特許取得

なし

2. 実用新案登録

なし

3. その他

なし

Childcare System in Japan

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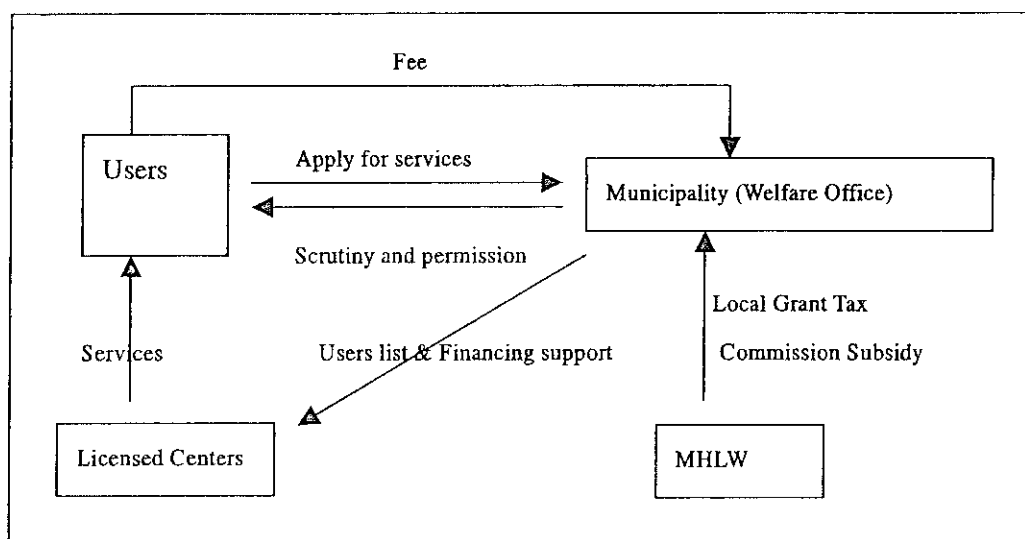
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1. Overview of the Japanese Childcare System

Government plays a principle role in running of childcare system in Japan. In specific, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) is responsible for regulating new entries into the market by setting a minimum standard in staff-child ratio, space of nursery room per child and capacities etc. Moreover, about 70% daycare centers are licensed ones who must receive strict supervision from the government as an exchange of its financial supports. For example, it is not the licensed daycare centers but the municipality's welfare office that can decide who can use the service, how much the service should be charged, and how to distribute the profit (see Graph 1 for details).

Graph 1 Mechanism of Licensed Daycare System



Not until the amendment of Child Welfare Law in 1997, no users were able to select a particular licensed daycare center by themselves. It was the local welfare office that examined each applicant's need for childcare and decided who should be approved of with a consideration of the applicant's working status and family resources. The amendment enabled parents to select preferable daycare centers, but in areas with obvious shortage of daycare services, the local welfare office still plays decisive role.

As of April 2001, there are 22,272 licensed daycare centers in Japan, which were taking

care of 1.83 million, or 26 percent of preschool children. Furthermore, 55.8% of the licensed daycare centers were running by local governments directly, others running by private organizations (see Graph 2). Charge for licensed daycare services ranges between 0 and 80,000 Yen per month, depending on the household income, age of the child, number of siblings¹, and residing municipalities. Besides these facilities, there exist 9,437 non-licensed daycare centers taking care of 222 thousand preschool children on December 2000. Non-licensed daycare centers generally have more freedom in management but few financial supports from the government. As a result, fee of the non-licensed centers is uniform for all users and the charges are averagely much higher than those of the licensed centers².

Graph 2 Childcare Facilities in Japan (As of April 2001)

		Competent authority
Daycare centers	Licensed (22,272)	Publicly-run (12,437)
		Privately-run (9,835)
	Non-licensed (9,437*)	
Kindergartens (14,375) (for children 3 years old and over)		MEXT
		Publicly-run (5,932)
		Privately-run (8,443)
MHLW: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare		
MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology		
*As of Dec. 31, 2000.		

On the other hand, there are 14,375 kindergartens, 58.7% of them were running by private organizations. They are supervised by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and provide care and education for more than 1.75 million preschool children aged 3 years and older. Fee of the public kindergartens is generally lower (at most 10,000 Yen per month), while the private kindergartens usually charge 20,000 to 30,000 Yen per month. However, working mothers are less likely to use these kindergartens primarily because

¹ Fee for the second or third child using licensed daycare center is discounted up to 50% in most municipalities.

² Charge for non-licensed daycare centers ranges between 50,000 and 100,000 Yen per month, depending on the length of service utilization, service content, convenience of its location and so on.

their open time is too short (4 hours a day for example).

2. Childcare Arrangement of Preschoolers: Descriptive Statistics

2.1 Who Are Taking Care of the Preschool Children?

Table 1 outlines the primary childcare arrangements in the daytime by the mother's working status. According to the results, 44.6% of the working mothers are using licensed daycare centers for childcare in the daytime, and only 4.9% of them choose to use non-licensed daycare centers. For household with working mothers, grandparents also play an important role as caregiver, especially when the child is under 1 year old.

Table 1 Primary Childcare Arrangement by Mothers' Working Status (%) N=3,781

Primary care arrangement	Total	Not working	Working		
			Total	Employed	Self-employed, etc.
Parent	49.7	68.3	12.9	8.6	23.5
Grandparent	9.1	5.8	15.5	17.2	11.4
Licensed daycare centers	19.8	7.2	44.6	48.8	34.6
Non-licensed daycare centers	2.1	0.7	4.9	5.9	2.4
Kindergartens	16.4	16.9	15.4	13.3	20.5
Other arrangements	1.1	0.8	1.8	1.9	1.6
Unknown	1.8	0.3	4.8	4.3	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Oishi(2002)³

Note: 34% of mothers are working and 24% of the working mothers are salaried workers.

On the other hand, although most (68.3%) non-working mothers are taking care of the children in the daytime by themselves, there also exist a significant proportion (7.2%) of non-working mothers who are using licensed daycare centers regularly. The probable reasons could be as follows: (1) Admission to licensed daycare centers could be forwarded for reasons other than the working status of mothers such as sicknesses of parents, nursing care needs of

³ Oishi (2002) employed 3,781 household samples with two parents and at least one preschool children from 1998 Basic Survey on People's Life, which is conducted by MHLW every 3 years.

other household members and so on; (2) Some mothers are taking a childcare leave; (3) Some non-working mothers pretended that they were working somewhere; (4) some areas, especially rural areas, have enough capacity to admitting use of licensed daycare centers without strict work requirement.

Kindergartens account for 16.4 percent of childcare arrangement of all preschool children, but the ratio is lower when the mother is employed (13%). It is interesting to see that self-employed mothers are more likely to use kindergartens than employed mothers. This may be because self-employed mothers have more freedom to arrange their working hours than other working mothers do.

Table 2 demonstrates the primary care arrangement by age of the youngest child. In a word, the younger the child, the less likely to use daycare centers, the more likely mothers care the child by themselves. For instance, only 4.3% of child under 1 year old are cared by licensed daycare centers, while more than 30% of children older than 3 years old are cared by centers in the daytime.

Table 2 Primary Childcare Arrangement by Age of the Youngest Child (%)

Primary care arrangement	Total	Age of the youngest child						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Parent	49.7	78.7	68.4	64.0	36.5	14.4	11.7	12.7
Grandparent	9.1	14.5	13.7	11.7	6.0	2.2	1.4	1.4
Licensed daycare centers	19.8	4.3	12.8	17.8	31.3	31.5	32.5	23.9
Non-licensed daycare centers	2.1	0.9	2.6	3.6	1.5	2.6	1.8	0.0
Kindergartens	16.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.5	45.3	47.4	56.3
Other arrangements	1.1	0.8	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.0
Unknown	1.8	0.9	0.9	1.3	0.9	3.2	4.5	5.6

Source: Oishi(2002).

2.2 Who Are Richer? Users or Non-users of Daycare Centers

Table 3 summarizes average income of the households by the category of childcare arrangement. Households using non-licensed centers or kindergartens are relatively richer not

only in the absolute value but also in the relative value of income adjusted by equivalence scale. On the other hand, incomes of other three kinds of household do not differ with each other significantly.

Table 3 Household Income, by Primary Childcare Arrangement

	No. of obs	Average	Average	Father's	Mother's
		income	income, EQV		
million Yen					
Total	3819	6.793	2.296	4.938	0.697
		(4.662)	(1.430)	(3.248)	(1.509)
Parent / Grandparent	2232	6.596	2.241	4.960	0.411
		(4.648)	(1.240)	(2.820)	(1.133)
Licensed daycare centers	757	6.774	2.225	4.051	1.430
		(4.533)	(1.562)	(3.050)	(1.894)
Non-licensed daycare centers	81	7.212	2.561	4.923	1.554
		(5.056)	(1.609)	(3.727)	(2.491)
Kindergartens	628	7.341	2.517	6.003	0.577
		(4.707)	(1.641)	(4.315)	(1.486)
Other arrangements	45	7.239	2.333	4.338	0.683
		(4.397)	(1.087)	(2.393)	(1.197)

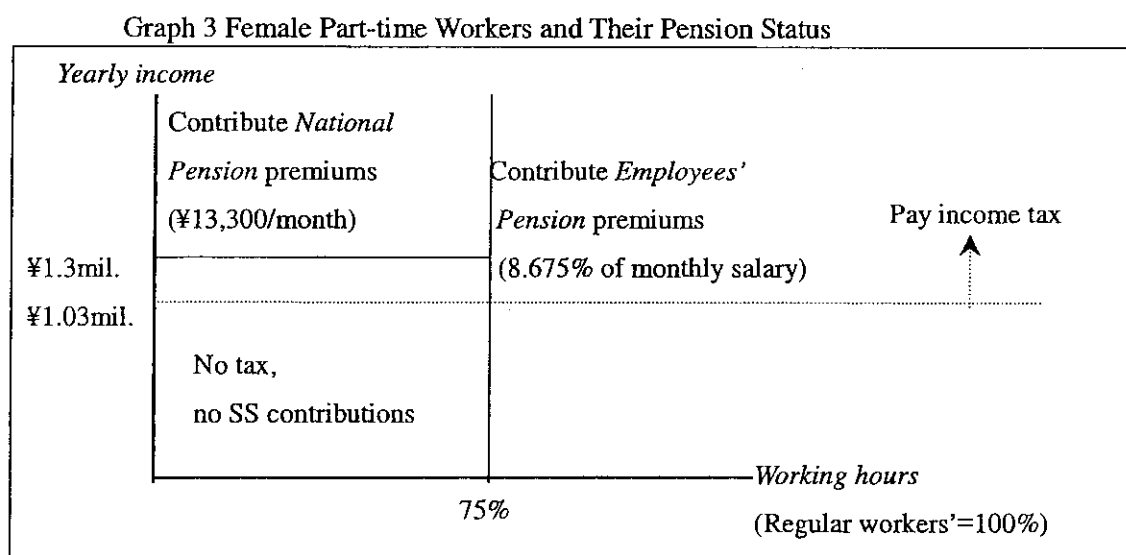
Source: Oishi(2002)

Note: (1) Standard errors in parentheses. (2)EQV adjusted income=(average household income)/EQV, where EQV= 1+ 0.7*(number of adults -1) + 0.5*number of children.

Turning to the contribution of mother and father to the household income, we find that mothers using daycare centers averagely earn more than mothers in other categories. For example, mothers using licensed daycare centers contribute to 21.1% of overall household income, while mothers with the children cared by themselves or grandparents contribute to only 10.3% of overall household income, and mothers using kindergartens earn only 7.9% of overall household income.

Average incomes of mothers, users or non-users of daycare centers, are quite low in Japan partly because of the tax system. Specifically, under the current tax system, most mothers have strong incentives to work less than 1.03 million Yen per year otherwise the income deduction

for dependent spouse (0.38 million Yen) will no longer be applicable to their husbands and they must pay income tax as well. Moreover, if she makes more than 1.3 million Yen a year, or if her working hours reach 75% of the regular workers, she could no longer enjoy exempt from social insurance premium (Graph 3).



For fear of losing these tax and social security benefits, many housewives choose to work part-time in Japan⁴. Table 4 verifies the above hypothesis by showing that only one-third of mothers using licensed daycare centers are paying income tax and social insurance premiums.

Table 4 The Taxation Condition of Mothers' Incomes, by Primary Childcare Arrangements (%)

	Total	Parent / Grandparent	Licensed daycare centers	Non-licensed daycare centers	Kindergartens
No earnings	67.4	79.6	33.1	38.8	73.7
With earnings	32.6	20.4	66.9	61.3	26.3
Paying income tax	16.3	10.7	31.2	38.8	11.9
Paying SS premiums	18.4	12.1	36.5	41.3	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Oishi(2002)

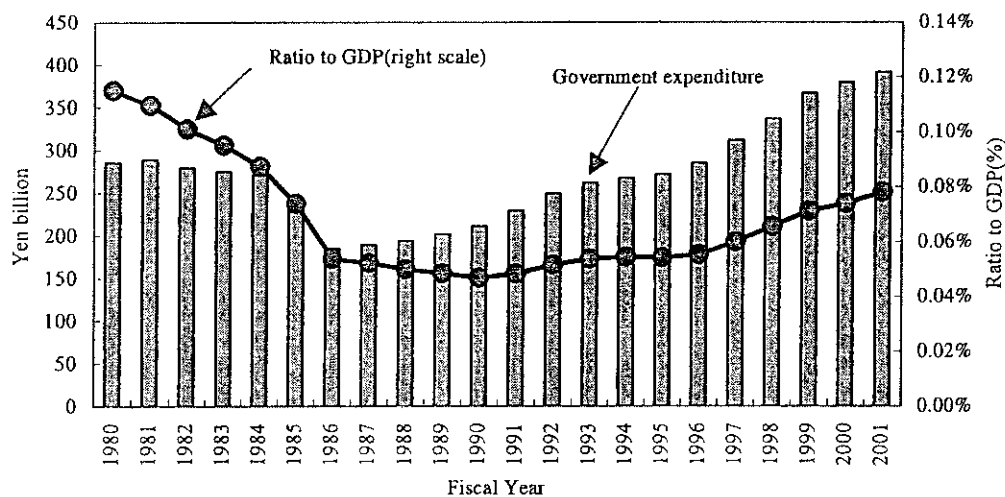
⁴ Hourly wage rate of part time workers is, on average, 67% of that of the female regular workers, and in comparison with that of male regular workers, it is 44%. (Wage Census 2002 by MHLW)

3. Costs of Childcare Services

3.1 The Shifts of Government Expenditure for Childcare Services

Because of the financial difficulty caused by the two oil crises, the government spending on childcare business shrank sharply during the early 1980s. It was not until 1989 when the total fertility rate of Japan renewed a historically low record that the government began to allocate more resources in childcare business in order to promote birth rate (Graph 4). Along with the declining birthrate, the national budget for licensed daycare business has been climbing up and reached as high as 407.1 billion Yen in 2002⁵. However, in terms of the ratio of childcare spending to GDP (0.08%), it is still below the level of early 1980s. In addition, as we will see in section 3.3, only a small portion of total daycare expenditure is financed by national budget.

Graph 4 Trends of National Spending on Licensed Daycare Centers



Source: *White Paper on Child Care 2002*, p.23

3.2 Composition of Childcare Costs

A large amount of expenditures happen when running the licensed daycare centers. The commonest expenditures are labor cost, equipment maintenance cost, management cost, and cost for lunch services. Although there is no national aggregate statistics on the composition

⁵ Besides the running cost, government also subsidized licensed daycare centers for the maintenance of building and facilities. For example, central government has provided 20 billion yen and local governments have provided a total of 10 billion Yen to licensed daycare centers for facility maintenance.

of childcare costs, labor cost is obviously the largest item in overall expenditures of licensed daycare centers in many municipalities. For example, in Chiyoda-city, Tokyo, the share of labor cost was 80% in FY2000. Because many of the licensed daycare centers in Japan were established in the 1960s and 1970s, and because most childcare workers, especially those in public daycare centers, were hired at a seniority-based wage system, labor cost rises with the average age of childcare workers (see Section 4 for details).

3.3 Who Afford the Childcare Costs?

According to an estimate of MHLW, total childcare expenditures for licensed daycare services in 2001 amounted to 1,600 million Yen, or 0.32% of GDP. These childcare expenditures are shared among central government, local government and users. Specifically, 50% of the deficits (A-B) are covered by national budget, 25% by prefecture budget, and 25% by municipality budget (Graph5).

Graph 5 Burden Sharing of Running Costs for FY2001 (Yen billion)

Total Expenditures: 2000 or more (estimated value)				
Standard Cost Settled by MHLW (A) 1600				Additional Municipality Budget
Real Charge for Users	Additional Municipality Budget	National Budget (D)	Prefecture Budget (E)	Municipality Budget (F)
470	220	450	230	230

Nominal Charge for Users	
(B)	690

Note: National Budget (D)=(A-B)*50% ; E=F=(A-B)*25%

To be emphasized, although the central government (MHLW) has set a standard expenditure criterion for each licensed daycare centers, many municipalities have been infusing additional budget to lessen the burden of users and to subsidize labor costs of daycare centers in hiring temporary staffs⁶ and improving benefits of childcare workers. Taking a consideration of the additional subsidies from municipalities, we found that the total operating expenses for licensed

⁶ Because the minimum staff-child ratio set by the government is low by international standard, especially for children aged 3 years and older.

daycare services could exceed 2 trillion Yen⁷, while the exact number is not known.

3.4 Heavy Burden of Municipalities: The Case of Chiyoda-city

In Chiyoda-city, actual running costs are 3.5 times of the standard costs criterion set by MHLW. Contributions of national budget, prefecture budget, Chiyoda-city budget, and users' charges to the actual running costs are 7.4%, 3.7%, 80.0%, 6.5% respectively (Graph6). Dividing total operating expenses by the number of children cared at licensed daycare centers in Chiyoda-city, we get the average yearly cost per child of 3.0 million Yen, which is about 15 times of the actual childcare charge. In other words, households using licensed daycare centers in Chiyoda-city receive a total of 2.8 million Yen benefit in-kind per year. Because of this heavy fiscal burden, many municipalities are reluctant either to expand admission to licensed daycare centers or to build new daycare centers.

Graph 6 Share of Running Costs in FY2000: the Case of Chiyoda-city (Unit: million Yen)

Total Expenditures 1323 (100%)					
Standard Cost Settled by MHLW 375 (28.3%)					Additional Municipality Budget 917 (69.3%)
Real Charge for Users	Additional Municipality Budget	National Budget	Prefecture Budget	Municipality Budget	Other
86 (6.5%)	93 (7.0%)	98 (7.4%)	49 (3.7%)	49 (3.7%)	30 (2.4%)
Nominal Charge for Users 179 (13.5%)					

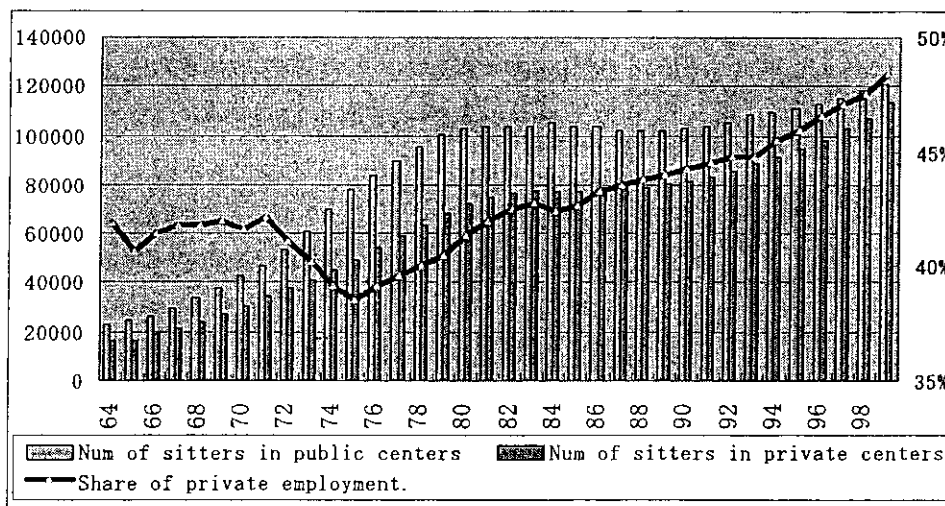
4. The Childcare Labor Market in Japan

4.1 Introduction

Child minder has been one of the most longed-for jobs of little girls in Japan. According to the survey on primary school students by Daiichi Life Insurance Company, child minder has always been the most or second most adorable profession of small Japanese girls since 1990.

⁷ Fukuda (2001) estimates that the total operating expenditures of licensed daycare centers in 1998 should be around 2,000 billion Yen, or 0.4% of GDP in that year.

Graph 7 Number of full-time child minders in public and private child-care centers



Source : "Investigation Report of Social Welfare Facilities", MHLW, 1964-1999

Graph 7 shows that there are more than 232 thousand child minders working fully time at 12,849 licensed daycare centers⁸ around the country in 1999. Graph 1 also informs us that the ratio of child minders employed by the private daycare centers has been increasing since the end of 1970s. In consequence, private daycare centers employ almost half (48.4%) of the total childcare labors in 1999. On the other hand, part time child minders, whose number is also increasing recently, account for only about 10% of the overall employment of licensed centers⁹. Like many other countries, 95% of the child minders are female in Japan.

4.2 Qualification System of Child Minders in Japan

98% of the child minders in Japan retain a qualification of childcare. Childcare Qualification System launched in 1949, and it provides two absolutely different paths for qualification acquisition. The first way is to graduate from some 2-year Childcare Training School¹⁰ authorized by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW), where childcare qualification will be awarded automatically with the graduation. The second way is to receive a qualification test held in each prefecture annually. The examination pass rate differs from 8 to 15%, depending on the test year and the test area. 90.8% people obtain childcare qualification by the first way in 1999, and the other 9.2% obtain it by examination.

⁸ If not specially mentioned, the following discussions are all about LICENSED childcare centers. Non-licensed daycare centers account for only a small portion (around 10%) of the overall childcare labor market.

⁹ Source: "White Paper on Child Care"(2001), Institute of Child Care Research, P.268

¹⁰ These childcare training schools include college, junior college, higher vocational school, and other facilities, which have given training to 3.4%, 81.1%, 13.2% and 2.2% of the overall school-path childcare qualification obtainers respectively in 2000.

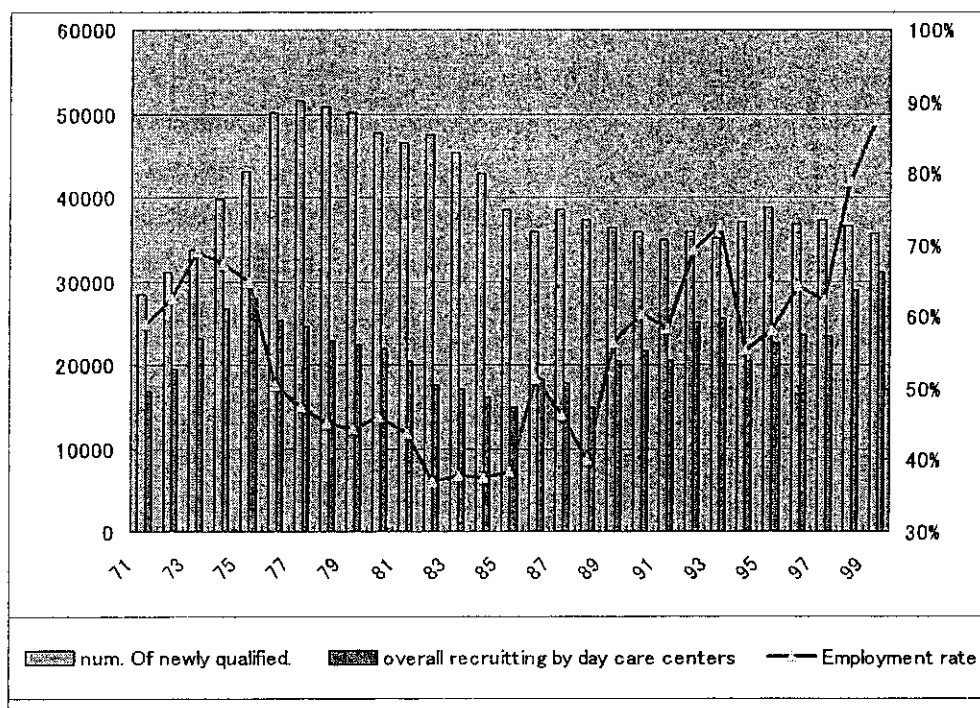
Soon after the first (1973) and second (1979) oil shocks, childcare qualification acquisition was unprecedented popular among young women and more than 50 thousand persons claimed the qualification each year. Since 1990, however, the childcare qualification has been offered on a quite stable pace, ranging from 35 thousand to 40 thousand per year.

4.3 Motivation of Qualification Acquisition

Many people acquire childcare qualification not only for future employment as a child minder. We suppose that young women pursuing the childcare qualification could also be motivated by some other reasons such as investment in self-value at the marriage market, hobbies, insurance for uncertainties, or simply preparation to be a mother.

Graph 8 suggests some likely correlation between the employment rate of childcare qualification obtainers and the business cycle: The better the economic condition, the fewer qualification obtainers choose to work as a child minder. For instance, the employment rate dropped significantly (see, around 30-40%) during the period of bubble economy in 1980s, and rebounded after the crash of bubble economy. Moreover, we can also read a significant rise of employment rate either before or after the oil shock of 1974. Today, more and more young people choose to work at the daycare center soon after acquiring the childcare qualification. In 1999, while the Japanese economy was still in a big recession, the proportion of qualification obtainers choose to work at daycare centers was as historically high as 87.2%.

Graph 8 Proportion of childcare qualification obtainer working at daycare centers



Source of recruiting data : "Investigation Report of Social Welfare Facilities(IRSWF)", MHLW, 1964-1999

Source of employment rate: Investigation data, Bureau of Children and Family, MHLW.

Note: Employment Rate=(overall recruiting by day care centers)/(number of new qualification obtainer)

4.4 Economic Status of Childcare Workers- Comparing With Other Professions

Although child minder has been one of most favorite profession among Japanese young women, childcare workers are not necessary in a better economic status than their counterparts. Table 5 gives a comparison of average yearly income and working hours per month of child minders in private daycare centers with those of nurse and female junior college graduate working in the service sector.

Table 5 Comparison of the economic status of child minder and other career labors

	Child minder	Hospital Nurse	Female junior college graduate in service sector
Average age	31.9	34.1	32
Average tenure	7.9	6.7	-
Average working hours per month	188	178	-
Average yearly income (¥1,000)	3646.8	4837.7	4814.4
Wage rate (Yen/Hour)	1616.5	2264.8	-

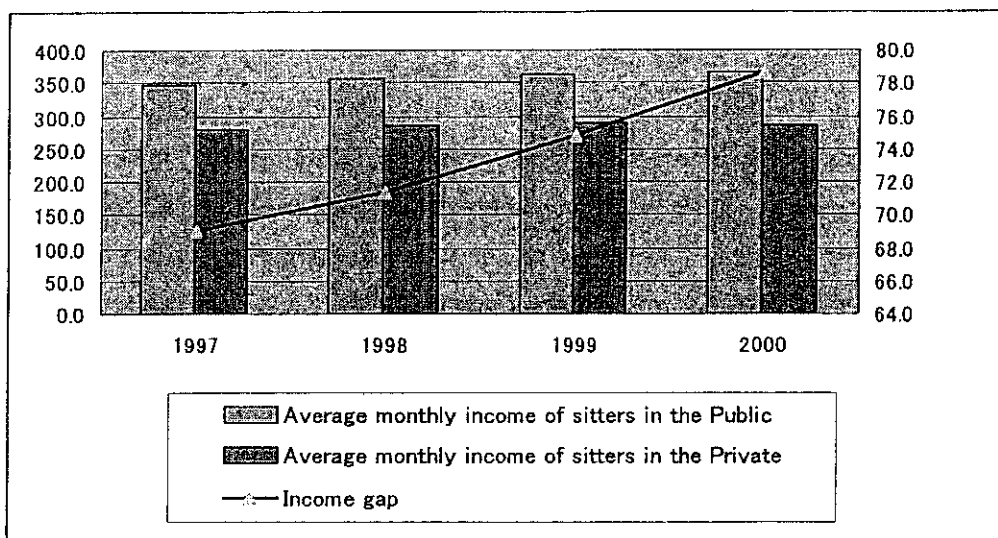
Source: "Wage Census", MHLW, 2001

Although there exists a lot of similarity in career path between child minder and hospital nurse, child minders are definitely worse paid than the hospital nurses. Given the poorer payment, child minders have been working longer than the hospital nurses. In consequence, the average wage rate of child minders is about one quarter lower than that of the hospital nurses. Compared to the overall female junior college graduate in service sectors, the child minders in private daycare centers is also significantly poorly paid.

4.5 Dual Labor Market: Gap Between the Public and Private Sectors

It is well known that there exists huge gap in working condition and cash payment between the child minders in private daycare centers and those in the public ones.

Graph 9 Income gap between child minders employed in private and public daycare centers
(unit: ¥1,000)



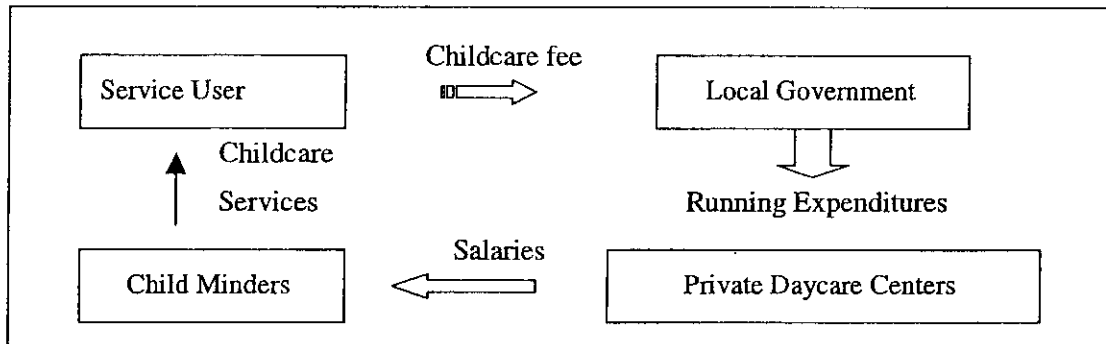
Notes : 1) Average monthly income of child minders in the public day care centers were calculated basing on the income of general administrative jobs from the "Income Survey of Local Civil Servants" (1997-2000). 2) Average monthly income of child minders in private day care centers were calculated from the "Wage Census" (1997-2000).

Graph 9 shows that the average cash payment of child minders in public daycare centers is about 20% higher than that of the private centers. Moreover, this payment gap is expanding year by year, mainly because the income growth of public sector is relatively faster than that of the private sector and because the childcare labors in public centers averagely have longer job tenure than their private counterparts do.

It is not so hard to find out what account for the gap in cash payment between public and private sectors. Not until very recently¹¹, child minders in public daycare centers was treated equally in payment with that of the general administrative job of local civil servants, which also means their incomes will rise bit by bit with their age until the retirement. On the other hand, income of child minders in private day care centers is determined in totally different mechanism like follows:

¹¹ MHLW decided to reform the income system of child minders in public sector in 2000, and their income base are turned from the administrative job to the welfare job whose income profile is a flatter one with age.

Graph 10 Mechanism of salary determination of child minders in private sector



Private daycare center provides services but does not charge the users directly. Local government, as an intermediate agency, decides who will get the service and how much they should pay for the service. Government (MHLW) financed the private daycare centers running expenditures that are substantially commensurate with the number (not the tenure) of staffs. As a result, salaries of most child minders in private daycare centers generally stop rising in the fifth year of employment.

Furthermore, child minders of public sector are enjoying a better security in retirement allowance, medical care services as well as in job stability¹². In addition, because many municipalities have been subsidizing public daycare centers in hiring temporary childcare workers, upon the standardized labor by the central government, public daycare centers could employ relatively more child minders to take care a fixed number of children.

Therefore, we define the public childcare centers as a primary labor market and the private childcare centers as a secondary market. The childcare labor market exhibits the characteristics of dual market not only because of the treatment gap between the public and private sectors, but also because the fluidity of labor between these two sectors is quite rare. It is especially difficult for child minders in private daycare centers turning over to the public employers. Maximum age (no older than 30 in most prefectures) limitation for job application and competitive selection race (see 1 of 20 candidates in Osaka in 2000) are two of the highest hurdles for job switching of childcare labors in private centers.

5. Major Problems in Childcare Market

Residents in Japan's metropolitan areas are suffering from a chronic shortage of licensed

¹² Turnover rate of childcare labors in private centers (14.1%) is about 2 times higher than that of the childcare labors in public centers (5.6%). Source: Investigation Report of Social Welfare Facilities 1999, WHLW.