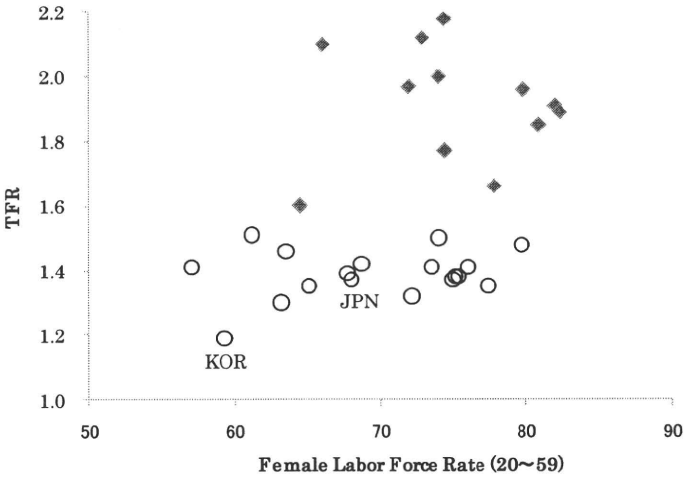
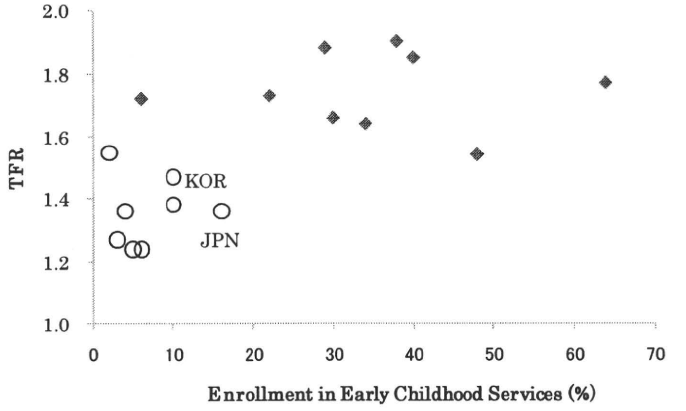
Northern-Western European countries have succeeded in improving the compatibility and the negative impact of female work on fertility is thought to have disappeared or even turned positive. In low fertility countries, however, it is thought that the compatibility is still low and female work sustains the negative impact on fertility. In Japan, many micro analysis shows that mother's work still has the negative effect on fertility (Asami et al., 2000; Oi, 2004; Oyama, 2004; Sasai, 1998; Shichijo and Nishimoto, 2003; Tsuya, 1999; Fukuda, 2004; Fujino 2002; Yashiro, 2000; Yamagami, 1999; Yamaguchi, 2005). This could be true for Korea and Taiwan (Suzuki, 2009, p. 17; Tung and Yang, 2005, pp. 51-52).

**Figure 4. Female Labor Participation and Fertility**




LABORSTA, OECD Family Database

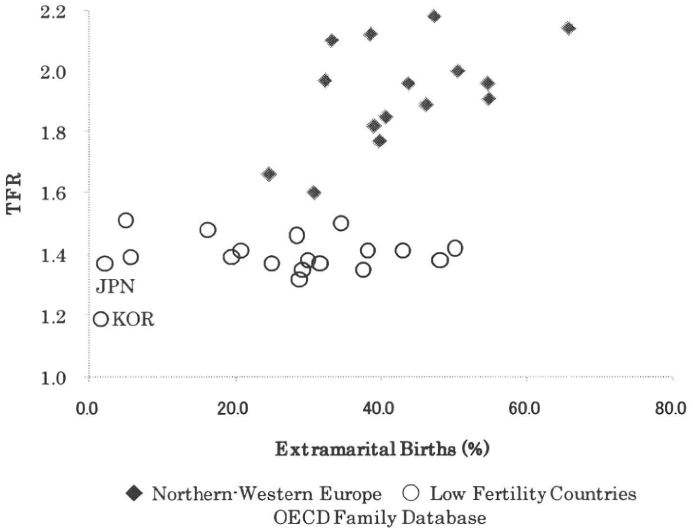
**Figure 5. Early Childhood Service and Fertility**




OECD (2004), Council of Europe (2004)

Figure 5 shows the correlation between early childhood services for under age two around 2000 and the TFR in 2000. Unlike in low fertility countries where childcare is mother's supreme role, Northern-Western European countries developed non-parental childcare activities involving baby sitters, tutors, childcare workers and other professionals. It is thought that the weak parent-child tie in this region had an important role in promoting the use of early childhood services and thus improved the compatibility between work and the family. In contrast, countries with strong family ties are still clinging to maternal care. According to the Third National Family Survey in 2003 by NIPSSR, 82.9% of Japanese wives agreed that, "A mother should not work, but should take care of her child for three years after birth." Such an emphasis on the mother's supreme role could be the factor that curbs the effect of childcare service on fertility. According to Retherford and Ogawa (2006, p. 36), Japan's low enrollment rate of young children in day-care centers is not because of the short supply of service but because of mothers' wanting to raise their children on their own.

**Figure 6. Extramarital Births and Fertility**



OECD Family Database

Figure 6 shows the relation between the proportion of extramarital births and fertility. The increase in cohabitation and extramarital births during the second demographic transition could be attributed to the weak familism in Northern-Western Europe. It is possible that the notion of marriage as contract rather than sacrament and the emphasis on individual autonomy helped to disconnect reproduction from marriage. While the figure suggests that the rise in extramarital births does not necessary lead to fertility recovery, the proportion of 20% or more seems to be the necessary condition for moderately low fertility. In fact, the recent fertility recovery in Southern European countries is accompanied by the delayed second demographic transition, namely the

spread of cohabitation, extramarital births and marital instability (Billari 2008, pp. 9–11).

As have seen so far, countries with Northern-Western European cultural background are characterized by weak family ties, high position of women, early independence of a child, high compatibility between work and the family, participation of non-family members in childbearing, and weakened marriage institution. Because of these extraordinary family patterns, those countries could avoid lowest-low fertility even under the postmodern economic and social changes. Union formation did not delayed so much in prolonged human investment because of the norm of early home-leaving and economic independence. The compatibility between work and the family quickly improved because non-maternal childcare activities involving baby sitters, tutors, childcare workers and other professionals were common. Gender equity was achieved swiftly both in formal and informal spheres because women's position was already high in ancient ages. The decline in marriage institution was immediately compensated by increase in cohabitation and extramarital birth.

## Traditions of Feudal Family and Confucian Family

Low fertility countries without such extraordinary family pattern as Northern-Western Europe can be divided into two family patterns. One is the offspring of feudal family in Southern-Eastern Europe and Japan, and the other is the offspring of Confucian family in Korea and Taiwan. Considering that metropolitan areas such as Shanghai, Hong Kong and Macao have extremely low TFR less than one, offspring of Confucian family seems to be more likely to suffer from low fertility than Europe and Japan.

Feudalism is a loose integration of feudal loads that had own military powers and laws. This type of political structure existed in ancient China but shifted to the centralized agricultural bureaucracy (Cumings, 2005, p. 72) after the Qin dynasty. The elaborated imperial examination system after the Tang dynasty marked the establishment of familistic Confucian social system in China. The Yi dynasty of Korea enforced Confucianism on Korean people and Korean society became more Confucianistic than China immediately before the modernization.

These countries were sharply contrasted with Japan in the early 19th century that was similar to Medieval Europe. The decentralized and loosely integrated political system of Japan allowed the competition between feudal loads (daimyos). Since the master-servant relationship was the principle of the society, loyalty was more valued than filial piety which was the most fundamental value in a Confucian society. Since

the imperial examination system was not introduced, the society was more closed in terms of social mobility. On the other hand, Japanese family household or "ie" could include a member who was not related with blood. This feudal and less familistic value system prevented nepotism and promoted the rule of law. The sharp contrast between Japan and other Eastern Asian society developed a view that Japan stands as an isolated civilization while Korea and Vietnam are included into Chinese (Confucian) civilization (Huntington, 1996)

In the feudal family system, the parent-child relation and conjugal relation were seen from rights and obligations between autonomous persons. Although the family relation was by no means egalitarian, inferiors like child or wife were thought to have rights in addition to obligation. Women's position was relatively high and the idea of contract was common in family relations. If Northern-Western Europe is the most typical case of feudal family system, Southern Europe and Japan can be seen as the case of feudal family influenced by patriarchic and authoritarian pattern of Roman family, Islamic family or Confucian family.

The Confucian family pattern can be contrasted with these feudal family patterns. Filial piety is absolute obligation because it is the law of nature. A child was totally powerless and rightless against the father and the idea of contract was out of question. This was very different from the Samurai family in Japan in which filial piety was conditioned by returning debt to parents (Kawashima, 1957). While the family was the basic model for all social organization in Confucian society, the Samurai family had its model in master-servant relation (Goode, 1963).

The contrast between Japanese family and Confucian family can be seen in the position of woman immediately before the modernization. Westerners visited Japan in the 18th and 19th centuries wrote as follows:

> As no Japanese has more than one wife and she is not locked up in the house as in China but is suffered to keep men's company and walk abroad when she pleases, it was therefore not difficult for me to get a sight of the fair sex of this country in the streets as well as in the houses. (C. P. Thunberg, 1775, cited in Screech, 2005, p. 110)

> There is one feature in the society of Japan, by which the superiority of the people, to all other oriental nations, is clearly manifest. Woman is recognized as a companion, and not merely treated as a slave. Her position is certainly not as elevated as in those countries under the influence of the Christian dispensation, but the mother, wife, and daughter of Japan, are neither the

chattels and household drudges of China, nor the purchased objects of the capricious lust of the harems of Turkey. The fact of the non-existence of polygamy, is a distinctive feature, which pre-eminently characterizes the Japanese, as the most moral and refined of all eastern nations. (M. C. Perry, 1856, p. 462)

The student of Asiatic life, on coming to Japan, however, is cheered and pleased on contrasting the position of women in Japan with that in other countries. He sees them treated with respect and consideration far above that observed in other quarters of the Orient. They are allowed greater freedom, and hence have more dignity and selfconfidence. (W. E. Griffis, 1876, p. 551)

Table 2 summarizes the family patterns in China, Korea and Japan in the 19th century. As already mentioned, filial piety was the fundamental ideology of a Confucian society and women were rigidly segregated from the formal productive sector. In China, both men and women succeed father's surname and does not change even after marriage. This patrilineal pattern was imported to Korea. Nakane (1970) emphasized the difference between "dozoku" in Japan from Chinese patrilineal clan. In Japan, an adopted son or a married daughter loses his/her membership of the family of orientation. Although both paternal and maternal lines are considered as kinship, paternal line is more emphasized.

Table 2. Family Pattern Immediately before Modernization

| | China | Korea | Japan |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ideology | Filial piety | Filial piety | Loyality |
| Woman's Position | Rigid segregation | Rigid segregation | Relatively equal |
| Kinship Group | Patrilineal | Patrilineal | Bilateral or weakly patrilineal |
| Marriage | Exogamy | Exogamy | Endogamy |
| Adoption | Within clan, Generation is considered | Within clan, Generation is considered | Free |
| Inheritance | Equal among sons | Weak primogeniture | Primogeniture |
| Household Structure | Joint family or circulation of parent | Stem family | Stem family |

In a Confucian society, a marriage within a patrilineal clan was strictly prohibited.

It was very important in Confucian ancestor worship to adopt a son from the younger generation of one's own patrilineal clan. When a legitimate heir was dead, the new heir was adopted form one generation younger group of the clan. The rule was rigidly followed by yang-bang class in Korea (Eun, 2009). On the other hand, the Japanese had a tendency of consanguineous marriage and adoption from outside the kinship group was common after the 12th century (Guan, 2009).

In China, the land was equally inherited among sons. The nuclear family of each son co-resided or lived proximately with parents. When sons lived apart, the elderly parent was circulated among the households of sons (Sudo, 2005, pp. 100-101). Korean family in the 19th century showed a pattern of partible inheritance with a favor for the eldest son who co-resided with parents (Shima, 2004, p. 82; Park, 2008, pp. 121-122). The Samurai family pattern with maintenance of the family property, non-partible inheritance by the eldest son and formation of stem family household gradually became prevalent in all social strata (Mosk, 1995; Hirai, 2008).

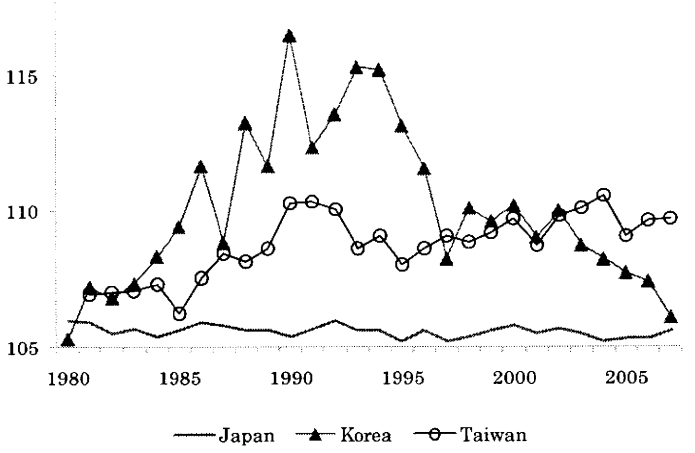
Although there are some similarities between Korea and Japan in terms of inheritance and locality, the basic pattern is the contrast between the Confucian family in China and Korea and the feudal family in Japan. The feudal political and family pattern at least indirectly helped Japan's success since the late 19th century. On the other hand, the Confucian pattern that emphasizes social integration, dislikes competition and challenge and insults productive labor functioned as an obstacle to modernization of China and Korea (Pye, 1985; Hayashi, 1997). It was after the 1960s that Confucian values started promoting the economic development in Eastern Asia (Kim, 1992; Hayashi, 1997).

## Post-Modernization and Confucian Family Pattern

Many countries in Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and German speaking countries suffered from lowest-low fertility with the TFR of 1.3 or less. According to the OECD family database, some countries such as Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Italy and Spain experienced the TFR less than 1.2. However, it seems that no European country, as Japan, has experienced the TFR less than 1.1. So far, Japan's lowest record is 1.26 in 2005, which is close to Germany (1.24 in 1994), Greece (1.26 in 2001) and Portugal (1.22 in 2003). On the other hand, Korea recorded 1.08 in 2005 and Taiwan 1.05 in 2008. This could be the result of the Confucian family pattern that is more distant from Northern-Western pattern than other parts of Europe or Japan. Then, it could be said that the more distant the family pattern is from Northern-Western Europe, the lower the TFR goes down.

One prominent example of the Confucian family pattern is its strong son preference. As shown in Figure 7, Korea and Taiwan showed abnormally high sex ratio at birth after the 1980s. Such abnormal ratios were not observed in Europe or Japan. While the ratio returned to the normal range in Korea recently, Taiwan is still fluctuating around 110.

**Figure 7. Sex Ratio at Birth**

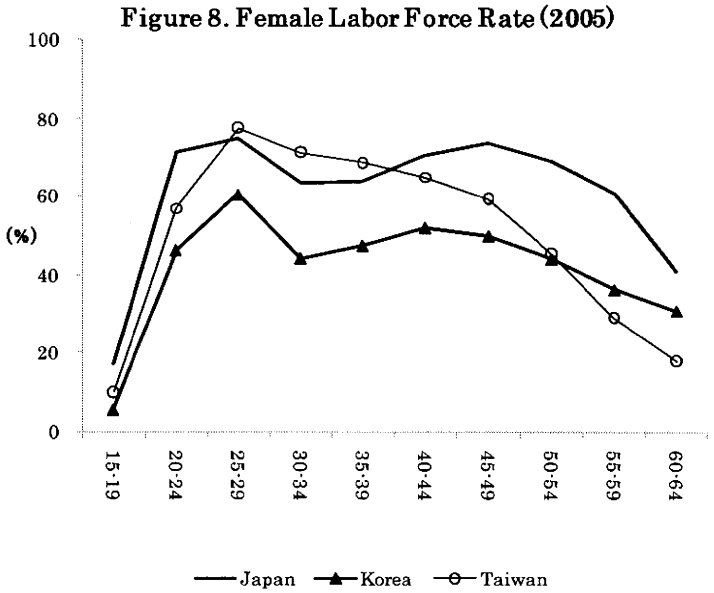



Enthusiasm for educational attainment is a Confucian element that promoted the economic development after the 1960s. In the post modern era, however, the educational fever has been raising the direct cost of children and promoting fertility decline. This can be seen as the cost of openness of a Confucian society. The imperial examination system guaranteed the opportunity regardless of wealth or the family background. Thus, a Confucian society was more open to social mobility than a feudal society. Today's educational fever suggests that Korean and Taiwanese people believe the openness of own society. Arita (2006) pointed out that such a belief in Korea is imaginary and the openness of Korean society is not necessarily high in Eastern Asia and shows the trend toward closeness. He explains the belief of openness with governmental intervention such as abolishment of entrance examination to high schools.

Figure 8 shows the age pattern of female labor force participation rate. While the M-shape was observed in Taiwan in the 1970s (Sechiyama, 1996), the recent pattern shows monotoneous decline after the late 20s. On the other hand, the M-shape is still apparent in Japan and Korea. The educational attainment of a woman is not closely connected with occupational attainment in these two countries. The gender difference in employment rate among highly educated men and women in Korea is second largest in OECD countries and that in Japan is third largest (Choi, 2008, p. 66). Highly

educated women in Korea tend to show lower employment rate and higher probability of retirement at marriage or childbirth than women with low education (Haruki, 2006, p. 68). Sechiyama (1996, p. 230) attributed the lack of educational effect on women's career attainment to the robustness of patriarchy in Korea.

**Figure 8. Female Labor Force Rate (2005)**




The effect of education is much higher in Taiwan than in Japan or Korea. Thus, Sechiyama (1996) assumed that the class of housewife is more likely to disappear in Taiwan. The gender equity in formal sector is also high. According to newspapers, the GEM score of Taiwan is much higher than Japan or Korea (Macroview Weekly, January 2, 2008). However, such high gender equity has not yet improved the compatibility between work and the family. While the age profile of female labor in Northern-Western Europe shows a plateau patter with no significant decline between 25 and 49, Taiwan shows a monotoneously declining pattern similar to Southern European countries. The TFR which was lower than Japan and Korea in 2008 also suggests that Taiwan has some serious problem in the compatibility.

The contrast between high gender equity and strong familism in Taiwan is even more puzzling. Iwai and Yasuda (2009) summarized the results of East Asian Social Survey modules included into JGSS, KGSS, CGSS (General Social Surveys in Japan, Korea and China) and TSCS (Taiwan Social Change Survey) in 2006. Table 3 shows the results about familistic attitudes. The Taiwanese respondents showed the strongest familism in seven questions among ten. Considering low fertility and the abnormal sex ratio at birth, it is difficult to say if Taiwan is less patriarchy and familistic than Korea.

Table 3. Familism in Eastern Asia

| | Taiwan | Korea | Japan | China |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One should give priority to the happiness and benefit of the family than one's own. | 28.5 | 21.5 | 4.4 | 9.3 |
| A child should pay effort to make parents to be proud of. | 34.2 | 18.3 | 2.7 | 19.5 |
| A wife should help her husband's family when both families need help. | 8.2 | 7.8 | 1.5 | 3.2 |
| Three generation household is desirable. | 72.2 | 58.4 | 67.5 | 59.5 |
| The eldest son should inherit more property. | 3.0 | 6.1 | 1.5 | 2.8 |
| A child who took care of parents should inherit more property. | 8.8 | 26.1 | 9.4 | 9.6 |
| A father's authority should be respected whatever the situation is. | 25.9 | 31.1 | 3.9 | 17.6 |
| It is more important for a wife to support her husband's work than her own work. | 12.8 | 12.8 | 1.8 | 5.1 |
| A husband should work outside and a wife should keep the house. | 15.4 | 9.7 | 2.2 | 5.6 |
| It is allowed to lay off women before men in a recession. | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1.5 |

Percent of "strongly agree."
Iwai and Yasuda (2009)

## Conclusion

The uniqueness of Japan in Eastern Asia is so apparent that many scholars including Huntington regarded Japan to be an isolated civilization. The difference from Chinese (Confucian) civilization increased when Samurai class built the feudal political system. Thus, Japan was more similar to Europe than to China long before Fukuzawa Yukichi declared "escape from Asia" in 1885. On the other hand, Korea became more and more similar to China because of the small Sinocentristic policy during the Yi dynasty.

Confucian features of Korea and Taiwan partly weakened during the colonial period. Japan governed Taiwan in 1895-1945 and Korea in 1910-1945. The inefficient familistic and nepotistic bureaucracy was replaced by the economic rationality and the rule of laws. According to Eckert (1991), the miraculous economic success of Korea and Taiwan has its root in the colonial period. The development dictatorship of Park Chung-Hee and Chang Ching-Kuo governments was simply a rehash of the development program by the Japanese Governor-General in the 1930s.

While the Japanese colonialism succeeded in launching economic development in Korea and Taiwan, it failed in changing more deeply rooted socio-cultural features including the family pattern. The ethnocide policy since the 1930s attempted to deprive ethnic name, language and belief by implanting Japanese culture. The result was a disastrous failure. While the Korean and Chinese family pattern remained intact, only hostility against the Japanese rule was amplified.

The preserved Confucian pattern played a positive role in the economic development until the 1980s. In the postmaterial era, however, the Confucian family pattern resulted in lowest fertility in the world. Each country has different problems in overcoming low fertility. While Korea has difficulty in gender equity and the compatibility between work and the family, Taiwan still suffers from son preference and strong familism. Japan's reluctance to accept foreign workers can be a major obstacle in maintaining economic competitiveness.

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# 東アジアの低出生力と家族パターン

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本稿が提示する仮説は「家族パターンが北西ヨーロッパ的パターンから遠いほど、後期産業化段階に達したときの出生率は低くなる」というものである。北西ヨーロッパおよび英語圏先進国は封建家族の子孫であり、伝統的に権利・義務関係が明確で、契約の観念が発達しており、女性の地位が比較的高く、親子間の紐帯は比較的弱かった。これに対し南ヨーロッパと日本は封建家族の子孫ではあるが、北西ヨーロッパに比べ家父長的で権威主義的な家族パターンを持つ。韓国・台湾や中国は儒教家族の子孫であり、南欧・日本よりさらに家父長的・権威主義的家族パターンを有する。出生力の文化決定論は、東アジアの低出生力の理解における家族パターンの重要性を示唆する。低出生力は、低経済成長と若年労働市場の悪化、教育投資の重要性の増大、伝統的性役割の後退といった後期産業社会における変化への自然な反応である。しかし伝統的家族パターンが北西ヨーロッパ型から遠いほど、急速に変化する社会経済的環境とゆっくりとしか変化しない家族パターンの間の葛藤は大きい。本稿は韓国・台湾の極端に低い出生力を、儒教家族と封建家族の差異という観点から考察する。

# 東아시아의 低出産力과 家族패턴

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本稿가 提示하는 가설은 "家族패턴이 北西유럽적 패턴으로부터 멀수록, 後期産業化段階에 이르렀을 때의 出産力은 낮아진다"라는 것이다. 北西유럽 및 英語圈 先進國들은 封建家族의 後孫이며, 傳統的으로 權利·義務關係가 명확해서, 契約의 觀念이 發達하고, 女性의 地位가 比較的 높고, 父母와 子息間의 紐帶는 比較的 약했다. 이에 대해 南유럽과 日本은 封建家族의 後孫이지만, 北西유럽에 비해 家父長的이고 權威主義的인 家族패턴을 가진다. 韓國·台灣과 中國은 儒敎家族의 後孫이며, 南歐·日本보다 더욱 家父長的·權威主義的 家族패턴을 가진다. 出産力의 文化決定論은 東아시아의 低出産力을 理解하기 위해서 家族패턴이 重要하는 것을 시사한다. 低出産力은 低經濟成長과 若年勞動市場의 惡化, 敎育投資의 重要性 增大, 傳統的 性役割이 後退와 같은 後期産業社會의 變化들에 대한 自然스러운 反應이다. 그러나 傳統的 家族패턴이 北西유럽형으로부터 멀수록, 急速히 變化하는 社會經濟的 環境과 천천히 變化하는 家族패턴의 葛藤은 크다. 本稿는 韓國·台灣의 極端的으로 낮은 出産力을 儒敎家族과 封建家族間의 差異라는 觀点에서 考察한다.

# Very Low Fertility and Pronatal Policy Interventions in Japan

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Japan is presently the most aged country in the world because of lower fertility than most of other developed countries. According to the United Nations, the position will be kept until 2050 although Korea and Taiwan are following up quickly. Japanese government has been paying efforts to recapture fertility since the early 1990s. However, the TFR is still far below the replacement level. A cultural deterministic view of fertility suggests that the far the family pattern from Northern/Western European pattern, the lower the TFR goes down. This explains why Korea and Taiwan show lower fertility than Japan. It is difficult for countries with very low fertility to regain moderately low fertility through governmental efforts because some factors such as extramarital births, home-leaving and maternal role are beyond the family policy. While gender equity and work-life balance are well accepted political goal, the case of Taiwan casts skepticism toward the effectiveness of gender orientated policies. Still, a government needs to continue policy interventions so that the young people can believe in the social support for childrearing.

## Fertility Decline and Population Aging

Demographically, two sources of population aging are an improvement in human longevity and a declining population growth rate (Lee, 1994). The former effect, called the "life cycle effect" or the "individual aging effect," refers to the increasing probability that an individual will live longer than before. The latter effect is called the "rate of growth effect" and refers to the impact of the growth rate on population age structure. An increasing population is young because larger weights are given to younger cohorts. Thus, a decline in the growth rate makes the population older than before.

The effect of fertility decline on age structure is quite straightforward; it always promotes population aging through the rate of growth effect. On the contrary, the effect of mortality decline is less clear. While it promotes population aging through the individual aging effect, it discourages aging because lower mortality implies a higher growth rate. Actually, the stable population theory suggests that a mortality decline

[3] The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and not those of the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

that is neutral of age will not change the age structure at all. In such a case, the effect of individual aging is exactly balanced by the higher growth rate (Keyfitz and Caswell 2005, pp. 140–141). Thus, the effect of actual mortality decline depends on the age pattern of mortality improvement. It is known that when the life expectancy at birth arrives at around 65, old-age mortality starts declining faster than young–age mortality. Thus, it can be said that mortality decline promotes population aging in countries if life expectancy at birth exceeds 65. In the case of Japan, the turning point was in the 1950s. However, the main cause of population aging is fertility decline, because of its directness.

Figure 1. Total Fertility Rate

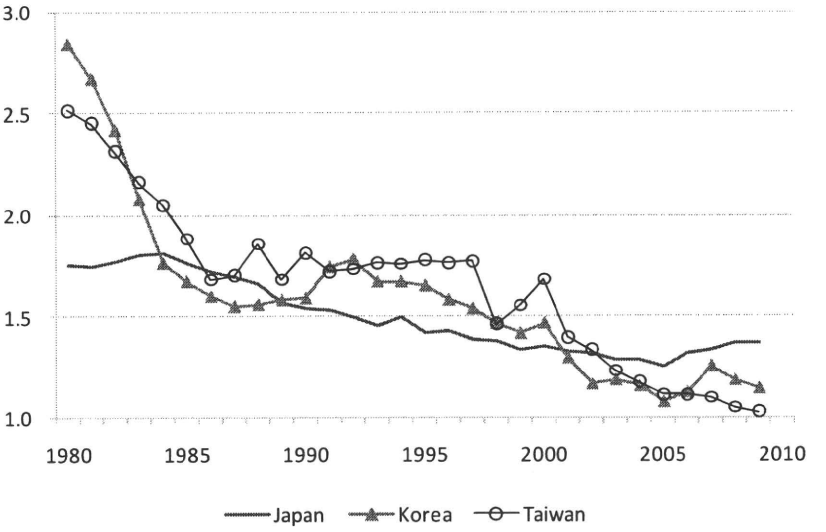
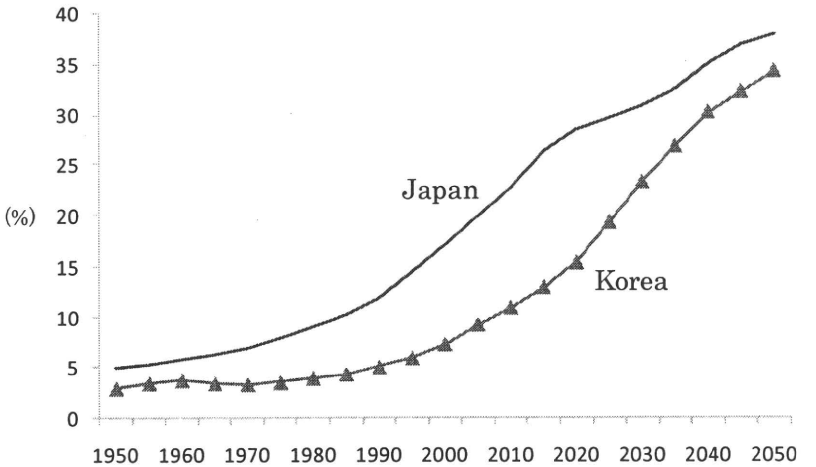



Figure 2. Percentage Aged 65 or Over

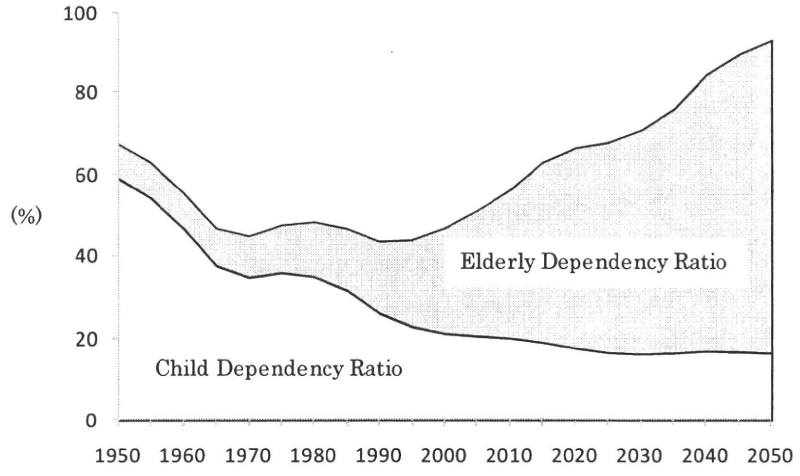



UN, World Population Prospects 2008

Figure 1 shows the TFR (Total Fertility Rate) in Japan, Korea and Taiwan. The TFR in Japan declined steadily from 1.75 in 1980 to 1.26 in 2005. Since then, the TFR showed a small recovery to 1.37 in 2009. Korea has been showing lower TFR than Japan since 2001. The figure in 2009 was 1.15, lower than Japan by 0.22. Taiwan has been showing lower fertility than Korea since 2006 and the figure 2009 was 1.03.

Figure 2 shows the proportion of the elderly population aged 65 and over predicted by the United Nations Population Division (2008). Due to lower fertility and lower mortality than other developed countries, the figure of Japan in 2010 (22.6%) is highest in the world. It is predicted that Japan will keep the position. The figure in 2050 (37.8%) is still highest in the world. The figure of Korea in 2010 (11.0%) is lower than most other developed countries. However, Korea is predicted to suffer from extremely rapid population aging. The figure in 2050 (34.2%) is the second highest in the world. It should be noted that the results are based on a relatively optimistic scenario that the TFR of Japan and Korea in 2045-2050 will recover to 1.60 and 1.59, respectively. If Korea stays at much lower fertility level than Japan, Korea will exceed Japan in population aging long before 2050. The governmental official projection in Japan by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (2007) projected that the proportion will be 39.6% in 2050 under a more pessimistic assumption that the TFR in 2050 will be 1.26. The projection by the Korea National Statistics Office (2006) predicted that the proportion will be 38.2% assuming that the TFR will be 1.28. The projection in Taiwan by the Council for Economic Planning and Development predicted that the proportion will be 36.7% in spite of a pessimistic assumption that the TFR will stay at 1.1.

Figure 3. Dependency Ratios in Japan




Census, NIPSSR (2007)

Figure 3 shows the child dependency ratio, defined as the ratio of the population under 15 to that between 15 and 64, and the elderly dependency ratio, defined as the ratio of the population over 65 to that between 15 and 64, in Japan predicted by the NIPSSR (2007). The sum of these two ratios is the total dependency ratio. The decline in total dependency ratio due to fertility decline is called "demographic gift" or "demographic bonus" (Mason, 2001, p. 9). While Japan enjoyed this gift between 1970 and 1990, the rapid aging of the population started elevating the total dependency ratio after 1990. According to the NIPSSR (2007), the elderly dependency ratio of 30.5% in 2005 will swiftly reach 51.2% in 2025 and 76.4% in 2050. The total dependency ratio of 2050 implies that there will be 93 net consumers for 100 net producers, compared with 51 net consumers today.

According to the NIPSSR (2007), the absolute number of the population over 65 will be 33.8 million in 2015, which is 31.1% larger than the 25.8 million of 2005. This implies that the population change will induce a 2.7% annual increase in public pension expenditure between 2005 and 2015. While the total population of Japan has already started declining, the elderly population will not decline until 2043. The younger elderly group, aged between 65 and 75, will shrink after 2015 when the baby boom cohort becomes the older elderly group. The proportion of the elderly in the older group, aged 75 years and older, will grow from 45.2% in 2005 to 63.0% in 2050.

While the elderly population keeps growing, the working age population between the ages of 15 and 64 will decrease rapidly. The predicted working age population in 2050 is 49.3 million, which is 41.6% smaller than the 84.4 million of 2005. This implies that, under constant capital and labor productivity, the demographic change will induce a negative economic growth of -1.2% annually, between 2005 and 2050. While the decline in the number of older workers aged 50 and older will be moderate, the number of young and middle aged workers will decline more rapidly. Such a fall in the labor supply of skilled young workers is very problematic, under rapid technological development and globalization (McDonald, 2005, p. 1).

It is expected that the aging of the population will eventually boost economic growth because elderly people have more assets than younger generations, and this suggests that capital intensification will occur. However, such a "second dividend" effect would be small in Japan, because only a relatively small portion of consumption by the Japanese elderly comes from asset-based reallocations (Lee 2007, p. 31).

## Pronatal Policy Interventions in Japan

Table 1 summarizes the development of pronatal policy measures in Japan. The

Japanese government was surprised by the historically low TFR of 1.57 in 1989 and started an inter-ministry committee to create measures to cope with the declining fertility in 1990. The amount of the child allowance was raised in 1991, while the period of payment was shortened to keep to the budget. The Childcare Leave Law (formally "Law Concerning the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave") was established in May 1991 and enforced in April 1992.

Table 1. Pronatal Policy Interventions in Japan

| Year | Policy Measures |
|---|---|
| 1991 | Government's Guideline "Toward Satisfactory Conditions for Healthy Childbearing" |
| | Amendments to Child Allowance Law |
| | Childcare Leave Law |
| 1994 | Angel Plan (1994~1999) |
| | Amendments to Childcare Leave Law |
| 1997 | Amendments to Child Welfare Law |
| 1999 | New Angel Plan (2000~2004) |
| 2000 | Amendments to Childcare Leave Law |
| | Amendments to Child Allowance Law |
| 2002 | Ministry of Health "Measures for Decreasing Children Plus One" |
| 2003 | Law for Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation |
| | Law for Measures to Cope with Decreasing Children Society |
| | Amendment to Child Allowance Law |
| 2004 | Support Plan for Parents and Children (2005~2009) |
| 2006 | New Policy to Cope with Low Fertility |
| 2007 | Important Strategy to Support Children and the Family |
| 2010 | Visions for Children and Childrearing |

In December 1994, the government publicized the Angel Plan for the period between 1994 and 1999. The program emphasized the compatibility between work and childcare and public support for childrearing. As a part of this program, amendments to the Childcare Leave Law were made to support income and exempt social security premium payment in 1994. In 1997, a major reformation was made to the Child Welfare Law to provide working mothers with satisfactory daycare services.

In December 1999, the government released the New Angel Plan for the period between 1999 and 2004. This document asserted the need to improve gender equity and working conditions. In May 2000, an amendment to the Childcare Leave Law determined that 40% of wages should be paid during the leave. The child allowance, which was previously available only for children less than three years old, was expanded to also cover preschoolers. The cabinet adopted the "Zero Waiting List for Daycare Program" as a political goal in July 2001. As a result, the daycare center enrollment rate of children under age two increased from 15.6% in 2001 to 20.3% in

2007. At least a part of the difference from Northern European countries, where the rate is higher than 40%, should be attributed to the cultural pattern that emphasizes the mother's supreme role of childrearing.

The Next Generation Law, enacted in July 2003, required local governments and large companies to submit their own programs to foster new generations. At the same time, the Law for Measures to Cope with Decreasing Children Society ordered the Cabinet Office to prepare new measures to prevent further rapid decline in fertility. An expansion of the child allowance, to cover children in the third grade of primary school, was enforced in April 2004.

In December 2004, the government declared the Support Plan for Parents and Children (New-New Angel Plan) for the period between 2004 and 2009. The document emphasized the role of local governments and companies in providing childcare supports and improving gender equity. In addition, the document pointed out the importance of economic independence of the youth. From fiscal year 2006, the child allowance was expanded again to cover children in the sixth grade of elementary school. In addition, the Support Plan for Mothers' Reentry to Labor Market was implemented. The plan includes such measures as starting a course at vocational schools for mothers reentering the work force, helping mothers who attempt to start businesses, and running "Mothers' Hello Works" for job-seeking mothers.

In June, 2006, the government announced the New Policy to Cope with Low Fertility. The monthly cash benefit of the child allowance was raised from 5,000 yen to 10,000 until the third birthday of a child. However, Japan's child allowance was means-tested until 2009, and approximately 15% of children were eliminated in 2003 because of their parents' high income (Suzuki 2006, p. 10). The cash benefit during childcare leave was raised from 40% to 50% of wages. According to the Basic Survey of Employment Management of Women in 2005, 72.3% of eligible female workers actually took the leave. The ratio of the number of leave-takers to annual births in 2005 was 11.1% (Suzuki 2007, p. 21).

The Important Strategy to Support Children and the Family in 2007 focused on the issue of compatibility between work and the family and aimed at the materialization of the "work-life balance." The agreed Work-Life Balance Charter proposed to raise the employment rate and productivity while reducing the number of temporary workers, to shorten working hours while seeking better family life, and to improve flexibility and gender equity in workplaces.

In January 2010, the government publicized a new action program called Visions for Children and Childrearing. The main goals are that "the growth of children is supported socially and young people can grow securely," "desired pregnancy,

childbearing and childrearing can be materialized," "communities can support childrearing through various networks," and "both men and women can achieve the work-life balance."

## Cultural Deterministic View of Fertility

It is apparent that a highly developed country inevitably suffers from below-replacement fertility. As shown in Table 2, only a small portion of well developed countries including the United States, New Zealand and Iceland succeeded in regaining the replacement level. Although some countries such as France, Australia and the United Kingdom are approaching the replacement level, most developed countries still remain at the below-replacement level. If we apply the critical line of 1.5 by McDonald (2005), moderately low fertility with the TFR above 1.5 can be found in Scandinavia, French speaking countries and English speaking countries. On the other hand, very low fertility with the TFR of 1.5 or less can be seen in German speaking countries, Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Eastern Asia. Most of the Southern/Eastern European countries that suffered from lowest-low fertility in the 1990s (Kohler et al., 2002) have escaped from that level. Thus, the front line of fertility decline has been replaced by Eastern Asian advanced countries.

Table 2. TFR of OECD Countries in 2008

| Country | TFR | Country | TFR |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Zealand | 2.18 | Czech Republic | 1.50 |
| Iceland | 2.14 | Switzerland | 1.48 |
| Turkey | 2.14 | Spain | 1.46 |
| United States | 2.12 | Bulgaria | 1.42 |
| Ireland | 2.10 | Latvia | 1.41 |
| Mexico | 2.10 | Italy | 1.41 |
| France | 2.00 | Austria | 1.41 |
| Australia | 1.97 | Croatia | 1.40 |
| United Kingdom | 1.96 | Poland | 1.39 |
| Norway | 1.96 | Cyprus (3,4) | 1.39 |
| Sweden | 1.91 | Slovenia | 1.38 |
| Denmark | 1.89 | Germany | 1.38 |
| Finland | 1.85 | Japan | 1.37 |
| Belgium | 1.82 | Portugal | 1.37 |
| Netherlands | 1.77 | Malta | 1.37 |
| Canada | 1.66 | Lithuania | 1.35 |
| Luxembourg | 1.60 | Hungary | 1.35 |
| Greece | 1.51 | Slovak Rep | 1.32 |
| | | Romania | 1.30 |
| | | Korea | 1.19 |

OECD Family Database