

It has become apparent that demographic theories cannot predict fertility changes. The prediction of classic demographic transition theory that fertility will fluctuate around the replacement level was rejected by the postwar baby boom and subsequent spread of below replacement fertility. Cyclical change that asserted by Easterlin (1978) was denied when it became apparent that most developed countries cannot secure the replacement level. Then, the second demographic transition theory (van de Kaa, 1987) that asserted that low fertility is the result of value change toward individualism and secularization and predicted that fertility decline will proceed together with post-modern family changes such as increase in cohabitations, extramarital births and divorces failed due to the emergence of lowest-low fertility. A paradoxical situation appeared in the 1990s that fertility is lower in countries with more robust marriage institution and stronger familism.

When lowest-low fertility was a phenomenon occurring only in Europe, it was natural to look for features common in lowest-low fertility countries. However, once lowest-low fertility spread out from Europe, the appropriateness of this attempt became questionable. Rather, the phenomenon seems to be a natural response to socioeconomic changes in the postmaterial era. In this respect, those countries that have avoided lowest-low fertility should be seen as exceptional and as requiring explanation. Such countries include Nordic countries, Western European countries except for German speaking countries, and English speaking countries. Since English speaking countries are assumed to have the Anglo-Saxon family pattern as modal model, these countries are called "Northern-Western European countries." Such Northern-Western European family pattern is contrasted to that in "low fertility countries." As McDonald (2005) pointed out, the latter includes German speaking Western European countries, Southern European countries, Eastern European countries, the former Soviet Union members, and Eastern Asian advanced countries.

Reher (1998) asserted that the contrast between weak family ties in Western and Northern Europe and strong family ties in Southern Europe has deep historical roots. In contrast to the Oriental family system that affected Southern Europe, the Occidental structure was based on the conjugal pair, and women had a higher position in the northern part of the continent. The Reformation changed the meaning of marriage from a sacrament to a civil contract, enhanced women's position further, reduced parental authority, and promoted individualism (Reher, 1998, pp. 213–214).

Figure 4 shows the correlation between the Gender Empowerment Measures (GEM) in the UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008 and the TFR in 2008. The correlation is high (0.726) and the discrimination is very impressive. McDonald (2000) stated that fertility falls to very low levels when gender equity rises in

individual-oriented institutions but remains low in family-oriented institutions. However, it seems enough to refer to gender equity in formal sector (GEM) to predict fertility. The strong correlation suggests that Northern-Western gender pattern with the deep historical root plays an important role to sustain moderately low fertility in these countries.

Figure 4. Gende Empowerment and Fertility

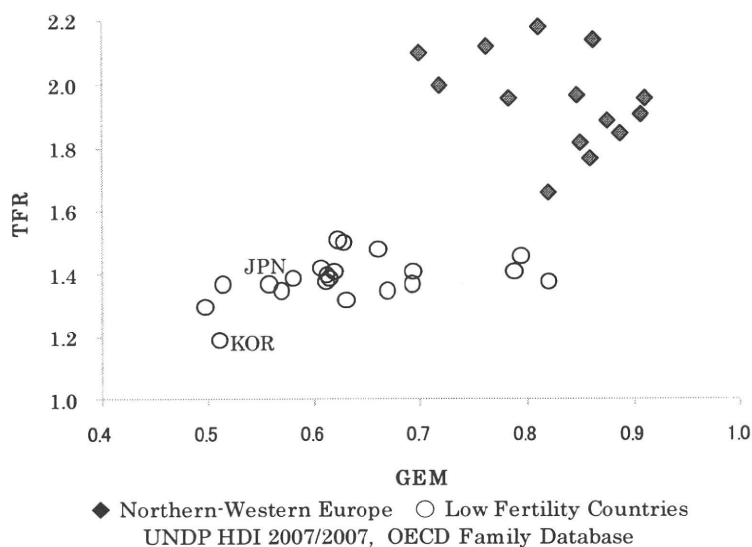


Figure 5. Home-Leaving and Fertility

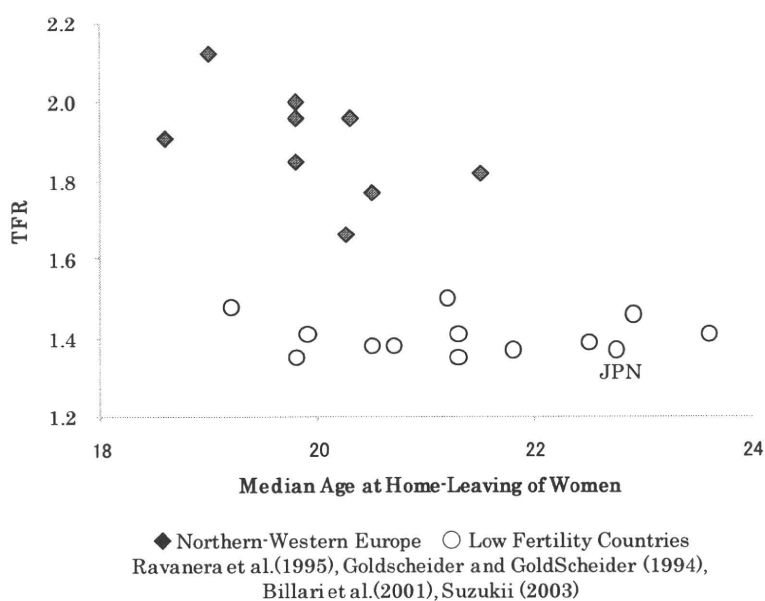
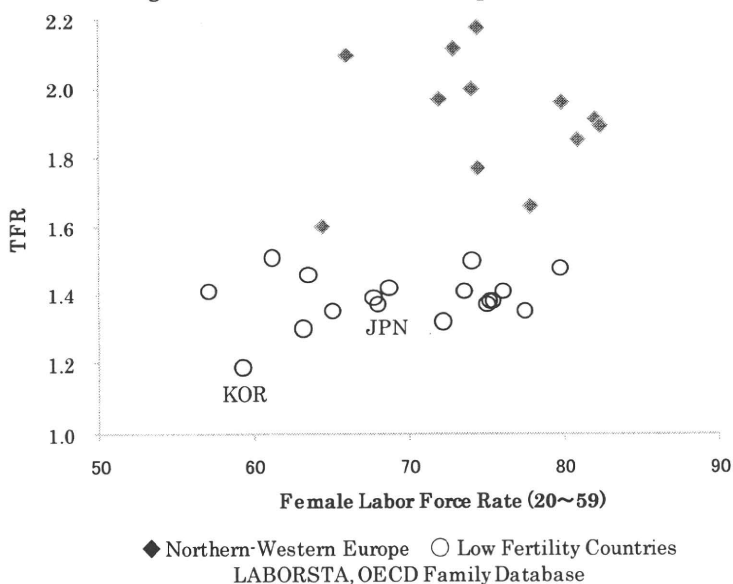


Figure 6. Female Labor Participation and Fertility



Another prominent feature of Northern/Western Europe and their descendents is early home-leaving. In these countries in the pre-industrial era, young men and women left the parental home before marriage to work as servants (Reher, 1998; Wall, 1999). The tradition of the majority of men and women leaving home before marriage still remains today (Billari et al., 2001, pp. 18–19). Premarital home-leaving is thought to promote union formation through both consensual union and formal marriage, while Southern European adolescents are suffering from postponement syndrome, which discourages autonomy and weakens their ability to make decisions in their own lives (Dalla Zuanna, 2001; Livi-Bacci, 2001). Figure 5 shows the correlation between the median age at home leaving of women born around 1960 and the TFR in 2008. It is apparent that women in Northern-Western European countries tend to leave earlier than low fertility countries. The median age at home-leaving of Japanese women (22.8) is only after Italy (23.6) and Spain (22.9).

Figure 6 shows the relationship between the female labor force participation rate in 2006 and the TFR in 2008. The relationship turned from negative to positive in the mid 1980s (Engelhardt and Prskawetz, 2005, pp. 2-3; Billari and Kohler, 2002, pp. 20-21; Atoh, 2000, p. 202). However, this change in aggregate data does not imply an emergent change in the relationship but an increase in unobserved heterogeneity in the compatibility between work and the family (Suzuki, 2008, pp. 34-35). 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 7. Early Childhood Service and Fertility

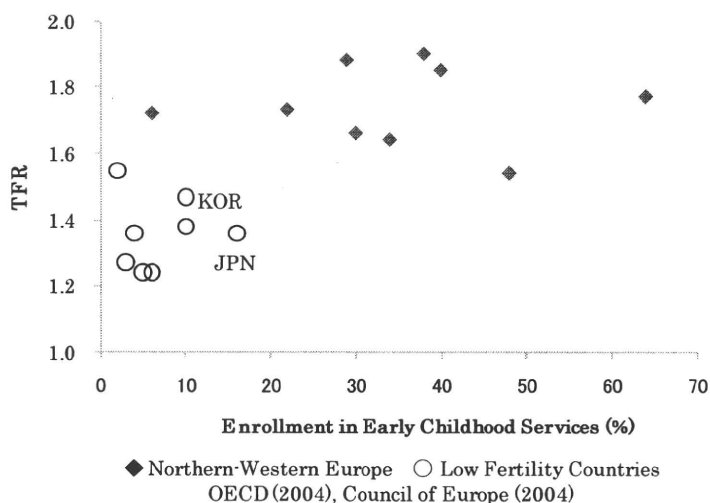
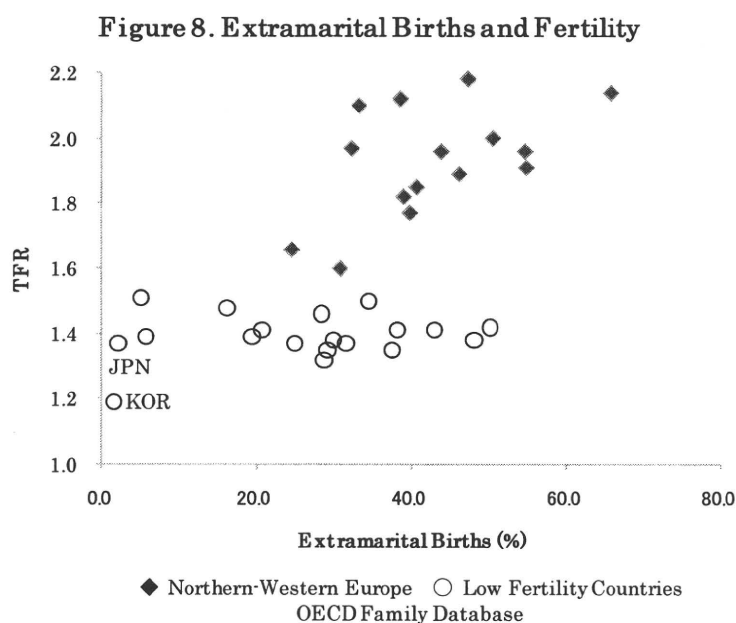


Figure 7 shows the correlation between early childhood services for under age two around 2000 and the TFR in 2000. Unlike in low fertility countries where childcare is mother's supreme role, Northern-Western European countries developed non-parental childcare activities involving baby sitters, tutors, 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 8 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. Table 3 summarizes the lowest level of TFR experienced by OECD countries. 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. While Russia experienced a drastic decline in life expectancy in the early 1990s, the bottom of TFR was 1.16 in 1999. On the other hand, Korea recorded 1.08 in 2005 and Taiwan 1.03 in 2009. 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.

Table 3. Lowest TFR of OECD Countries

Country	TFR (Year)	Country	TFR (Year)
Turkey	2.14 (2008)	Canada	1.49 (2000)
Mexico	2.10 (2008)	Netherlands	1.47 (1983)
Iceland	1.93 (2002)	Denmark	1.38 (1983)
New Zealand	1.89 (2002)	Luxembourg	1.38 (1985)
Ireland	1.85 (1995)	Switzerland	1.38 (2001)
United States	1.74 (1976)	Portugal	1.33 (2007)
Australia	1.73 (2001)	Austria	1.33 (2001)
France	1.66 (1994)	Hungary	1.28 (2004)
Norway	1.66 (1984)	Greece	1.26 (2001)
United Kingdom	1.63 (2001)	Japan	1.26 (2005)
Belgium	1.51 (1985)	Germany	1.24 (1994)
Finland	1.50 (1973)	Poland	1.22 (2003)
Sweden	1.50 (1999)	Italy	1.19 (1995)
		Slovak Republic	1.19 (2002)
		Spain	1.16 (1998)
		Czech Republic	1.13 (1999)
		Korea	1.08 (2005)

OECD Family Database

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 lords (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 4. Family Pattern Immediately before Modernization

	China	Korea	Japan
Ideology	Filial piety	Filial piety	Loyalty
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



Table 4 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.

### Policy Effectiveness and Cultural Pattern

When we compare the bottom in Table 3 and the current level in Table 2, we can find examples of considerable fertility recovery such as in Spain (1.16 to 1.46), Italy (1.19 to 1.41) and Czech Republic (1.13 to 1.50). If governmental policy matters, Japan needs more efforts. Table 5 compares governmental expenditure on childcare as a percent of the net national income. In 2005, Japan spent only 0.4% of national income on childcare. The level was same as the United States but was lower than Southern European countries. While Japan has been expanding the family policy program, it depends on deficit government bonds. The situation causes skepticism on durability of the program and people cannot be sure if the social support for childcare continues into the future.

Table 5. Expenditure on Childcare as % of NNI (2005)

Country	%	Country	%
Iceland	1.38	Portugal	0.49
Denmark	1.37	Australia	0.48
France	1.13	Germany	0.44
Sweden	1.12	United States	0.40
Finland	1.10	Japan	0.40
Belgium	0.93	Austria	0.36
Norway	0.88	Ireland	0.35
Hungary	0.87	Poland	0.34
New Zealand	0.84	Switzerland	0.25
Italy	0.72	Korea	0.20
Mexico	0.66	Canada	0.18
United Kingdom	0.64		
Czech Republic	0.64		
Netherlands	0.55		
Spain	0.53		
Slovak Republic	0.52		

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Korea and Taiwan have been showing lower fertility than Japan. Regardless to the cause of difference, this implies that Korea and Taiwan may need more spending on pronatal policy than Japan. While Japan has been enlarging the child allowance program, other Eastern Asian nations have not yet launched it. This may make the difference in governmental spending bigger than in 2005.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Eastern European countries succeeded in raising fertility by spending 10% of national budget on prenatal policy intervention (Caldwell, Caldwell & McDonald, 2002). If the national budget is between a quarter and a half of the national income, this implies spending 2.5~5% of NNI. As suggested in Table 5, such a huge spending is impossible in today's liberalistic nations.

The contrast between small governmental effort and relatively high fertility in English speaking countries suggests that the pronatal policy is not the primary factor. It is supposed that moderate fertility in the United States is sustained by cheap labor of undocumented immigrants, and is contrasted with high-quality childcare services provided by the governments of welfare states such as Sweden (McDonald, 2002). While welfare state approach is questioned of its sustainability, parents that are used to high-quality service cannot accept low-quality service provided through market as in the United States. In addition, people in Eastern Asian nations seem to have strong expectation to governmental role in fertility issue. In the International Opinion Survey on Low Fertility Societies conducted by the Cabinet Office of Japan in 2005, respondents were asked which agency is responsible to cope with low fertility problem. While only 9.6% of American respondents chose "the nation," 34.3% of Japanese respondents and 62.9% of Korean respondents answered that the nation is primarily responsible to cope with low fertility.

The recuperation of fertility in Southern European countries is related with the delayed second demographic transition (Billari, 2008). These countries witnessed a sharp rise in the proportion of extramarital births since the latter 1990s to show 31.6% in Portugal, 28.4% in Spain and 20.7% in Italy in 2008. Although Cyprus (5.6%) and Greece (5.0%) show lower proportions, they are still higher than Japan (2.1%) and Korea (1.5%). Considering that most of the OECD countries with moderately low fertility of the TFR of 1.5 or more show the proportion of extramarital births of 20% or more, it is doubtful if moderately low fertility can be achieved without such a rise in extramarital fertility.

It is not clear whether other cultural patterns of Northern/Western Europe such as early home leaving and non-maternal childcare have invaded in Southern Europe. In any case, these cultural patterns are beyond the family policy. Even though the late home leaving is a reason of low fertility, it would be difficult to persuade parents to push

out their children from home earlier. If many parents believed that it is essential for a young child to be taken care of by own mother, the opportunity cost would remain high and the compatibility would not be improved. Even if the key of moderately low fertility were the high proportion of extramarital births, a government should not attempt to raise the number of welfare mothers. Because of these “beyond policy” elements, it would be impossible for Eastern Asian low fertility countries to achieve moderately low fertility within a short period. If the family pattern is really important, Korea and Taiwan might experience more difficulty than Japan because the difference from European family pattern is larger for Confucian families than for Samurai families.

On the other hand, gender equity and the compatibility between work and the family are very acceptable political goals. The strong correlation between the GEM and TFR in Figure 4 suggests that this is the primary cause of low fertility, as indicated by many studies (McDonald, 2000; Rosenbluth, 2007; Tsuya, 2009). However, the combination of high gender equity and low fertility in Taiwan (Lee ML, 2009) casts serious skepticism for this perspective. Because Taiwan does not have the M-shaped age profile of female labor force participation (Sechiyama, 2006) and labor participation is high for mothers of infants (Shirahase, 2007), the compatibility between work and the family should be higher than in Japan and Korea. The situation suggests a doom possibility that a governmental effort toward gender equity and compatibility may not induce the recuperation of fertility.

Available policies such as baby bonus, family allowance, parental leave, nursing leave, flexible working, guarantee of promotion, support for re-entry to labor market, priority in housing, and support for educational cost have already been practiced in France and Eastern European countries by the 1970s (Caldwell, Caldwell and McDonald, 2002). Although it is unclear which measure is most effective, the solution to low fertility lies in providing an assurance to young people that they will be supported by the society when they marry and have children (McDonald, 2009). Fertility will recover when most people believe in such a message.

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## 日本の低出生力と出生促進策

鈴木 透 (国立社会保障・人口問題研究所)

他の先進国に比べ低い出生率のため、日本は現在世界で最も高齢化が進んだ国である。国連によるとこの地位は 2050 年にも変わらない予想だが、韓国・台湾等が急速に追いついて来ている。日本政府は 1990 年代初頭から出生力回復のための努力を続けて来たが、合計出生率はいまだに置換水準を大きく下回っている。出生力の文化決定異論は、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合計出生率は低くなることを示唆する。韓国・台湾の出生率が日本より低いのは、これによって説明される。婚外出生、離家のタイミング、母親の育児役割といった要因は家族政策の範囲外にあるため、低出生力国が緩出生力を回復するのは難しい。一方で性平等やワーク・ライフ・バランスは政策目標として受け入れやすいが、台湾のケースはジェンダー志向的政策の有効性を疑わせる。それでも若者が子育てに社会的支援が得られると確信できるよう、政府は政策介入を継続する必要がある。

## 日本の低出産力과 出産促進策

도루 스키 (日本 国立社会保障・人口問題研究所)

다른 先進國들보다도 낮은 出生率때문에 日本은 現在 世界에서 가장 高齢化가 進行된 나라다. 유엔에 의하면 이 地位는 2050 年에도 변함없는 豫想이지만, 韓國·臺灣等이 急速히 따라잡아 오고 있다. 日本政府는 1990 代 初盤부터 出生力 回復을 위한 努力을 繼續해 왔으나, 合計出生率은 아직도 置換水準을 크게 밀돌고 있다. 出生力の 文化決定論은, 家族패턴이 北西유럽적 패턴으로부터 멀수록 合計出生率은 낮아지는 것을 示唆한다. 韓國·臺灣의 出生率이 日本보다 낮은 것은 이것에 의해 說明된다. 婚外出産, 離家の 時期, 어머니의 育児役割과 같은 要因들은 家族政策의 範圍外에 있기 때문에, 低出生力國이 緩出生力을 回復할 것은 어렵다. 한편 性平等이나 워크라이프밸런스는 政策目標로서 받아들이기 쉽지만, 臺灣의 케이스는 젠더 志向的 政策의 有效性을 疑心시킨다. 그래도 젊은이들이 育児에 社會的 支援을 얻을 수 있다고 確信할 수 있도록 政府는 政策介入을 繼續할 必要가 있다.

