



ドイツ日本研究所 German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

International Symposium

November 6th and 7th, 2008 at the Center for the Advancement of Working Women (CAWW)

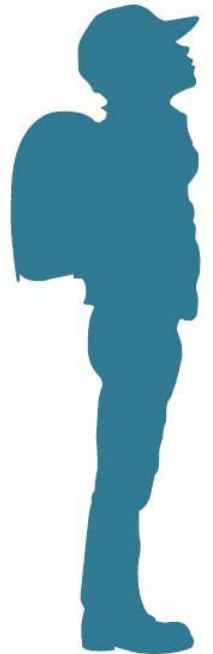
Fertility and Social Stratification Germany and Japan in Comparison

Friday, November 7th, 2008

Section 7: Employment and Education

**“Labor Market Structure and
Fertility in Japan, and Considerations
of Gender, Class and Education”**

PowerPoint by **Patricia Boling**
(Purdue University)



If you use any information from this presentation, please have the courtesy to properly cite this source. Thank you.

Labor Market Structure and Fertility in Japan

Patricia Boling

Associate Professor, Department of
Political Science & Women's Studies
Program

Purdue University, West Lafayette,
Indiana, United States

Education matters

- ❑ College education is helpful in the job market, but more so for men than women.
- ❑ Poor job market conditions affect workers entering the market in lasting and harmful ways.
- ❑ Women do not necessarily seek a college education in order to develop skills that help them in the job market.
- ❑ Employers are less likely to invest in lengthy firm-specific training for women whom they see as less attached to the labor force.
- ❑ The elderly are the poorest segment of the Japanese population: who will care for them as the numbers of young people and married couples decrease?

Total Fertility Rates

	1970	1980	1990	2005	2006
Germany	2,03	1,56	1,45	1,30	1,34 p
Italy	2,43	1,64	1,33	1,34	1,35 p
Greece	2,40	2,23	1,39		1,38 p
Spain	2,12	2,10	1,46	1,26	1,32 p
Japan	2,12	1,76	1,54	1,26	1,32
Finland	1,83	1,63	1,78	1,80	1,84
Iceland	2,81	2,48	2,30	2,05	2,07
Norway	2,50	1,72	1,93	1,84	1,90
Netherlands	2,57	1,60	1,62	1,71	1,71 p
France (Metropolitan)	2,47	1,95	1,78	1,92	1,98 p
United Kingdom	1,92	1,68	2,13	1,77	1,85
Ireland	3,85	3,24	2,11	1,88	
Australia	2,86	1,89	1,90	1,81	1,81
Canada	2,28	1,64	1,68	1,54	
United States	2,43	1,85	2,08	2,05	2,10
New Zealand	3,17	2,02	2,16	2,01	2,01

Structure of the talk

Review three standard arguments for low fertility:

- Delayed marriage
- Cultural explanations
- Family support policies

Turn to main thesis:

Low fertility is both a result and an indicator of structural barriers that make it difficult or impossible for women to work for pay while raising children

Delayed marriage

- Shift in marriage patterns
- Young women are more skeptical about entering into the traditional marriage bargain
- More women are pursuing higher education, and therefore marrying later and less
- Job insecurity causes marriage delay and avoidance

Cultural values related to stability and conservatism

- Not having children out of wedlock
- Expectations of intensive mothering and sharply gendered responsibility for childrearing and housework in societies where women do not earn much and cannot support themselves
- Orientation toward subsidiarity in familial social policies
- “Nations of Families”

Values related to change, flux, and new views of old patterns

- Gender equality
- More young people who attend college and/or work and live at home for longer before marrying
- Emergence of new satisfactions and expectations about marriage
- “Nations of Individuals”

Work-Family Reconciliation Policies

- Japan is a low social and family policy spender (Table 2)
- Policies have nonetheless improved since the mid-1990s with expansion of child care and paid parental leave (Tables 3 and 4)
- But child care and parental leaves fall short

Social and Family Expenditure Data

Country	1990		1995		2000		2003	
	Social	Family	Social	Family	Social	Family	Social	Family
Japan	11.2	0.4	13.9	0.4	16.1	0.6	17.7	0.7
U.S.	13.4	0.5	15.4	0.6	14.6	0.7	16.2	0.7
Australia	14.1	1.5	17.1	2.8	17.9	3.0	17.9	3.3
Ireland	15.5	1.6	16.3	1.7	13.6	1.8	15.9	2.5
Greece	18.6	0.8	19.3	1.2	21.3	1.1	21.3	1.3
Italy	19.9	0.8	19.8	0.6	23.2	1.2	24.2	1.2
Spain	20.0	0.3	21.5	0.4	20.4	0.9	20.3	1.0
Germany	22.5	1.7	26.6	1.9	26.3	1.9	27.3	1.9
France	25.3	2.5	28.3	2.7	27.6	3.0	28.7	3.0
Sweden	30.5	4.5	32.5	3.8	28.8	3.3	31.3	3.5

Japanese family support policies

program type	family allowances	maternity leave	parental leave	child care
benefits/ duration	From birth to age 3, ¥10,000/€75 per child; ages 3-12, ¥5000/€37a month per child for first 2 kids, ¥10,000/€75 per child thereafter	14 weeks, paid at 60% of usual wages	1 year job protected leave, paid at 40% of usual wages	sliding scale fees for high quality licensed child care centers (<i>hoikuen</i>), gov't support is 50% national, 25% prefectural, 25% local

program type	early childhood education	tax benefits	other/private
benefits/ duration	<i>yochien</i> , Japanese kindergarten: part- day, funded by user fees and gov't for children age 3 - 6	dependent child and spouse tax benefits	dependent child and dependent spouse benefits paid by employers

Proportion of young children in formal child-care arrangements

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Aged < 3</i>	<i>Aged 3 to mandatory school age</i>	<i>Public or private provisioning</i>
Denmark	1998	64	91	mainly public
Sweden	1998	48	80	mainly public
Ireland	1998	38 (<5)	56	mainly private
France	1998	29	99	mainly public
Finland	1998	22	66	mainly public
UK	1999	20	60	mainly private
Netherlands	1998	20	98	mixture
Portugal	1999	12	75	mainly public
Germany	2000	10*	78	mainly public
Italy	1998	6	95	mixture
Spain	2000	5	84	mainly public
Austria	2000	4	68	mainly public
Greece	2000	3	46	n.a.
Japan	2000	19	85	mixture
U.S.	2000	6**	53	mainly private

Problems with marriage delay, culture and welfare state policy explanations

- The “cultural uniqueness” story can lead to laying the blame on women for moving away from marriage, seeking more education, and becoming more selfish and individualistic
- Focusing on family policies fits an optimistic discourse about government intervention that wrongly assumes that the basic direction taken in these policies is right and will ultimately work

The political economy of Japan's low fertility

- ❑ “Gendering the welfare state” and “varieties of capitalism”
- ❑ Welfare state spending doesn't correlate with fertility rates: many low spending welfare states have high TFRs because their fluid labor markets are working mother-friendly
- ❑ Japan's labor market is organized around firm-specific skills → disincentives to hire women who may not be as attached to the labor market
- ❑ Category of workers to buffer economic ups and downs = women
- ❑ Statistical discrimination against women is rational & supported by long-term political commitments to business supporters of the LDP

Crux of the argument

- If fertility as an indirect indicator of constraints on women deciding how to allocate effort and time between home and career, countries that have markets or government policies that make it relatively easy for women to leave and re-enter the labor force will have relatively high fertility rates, and those with markets that require women to make either-or trade offs between careers and children will have very low ones

Frances Rosenbluth, 2007, writes:

- ❑ Women need to feel that family and career are reconcilable goals. The situation [in Japan] is a classic Catch-22: as long as firms hire workers for life, an employer bears higher costs when hiring someone who is likely to interrupt her career for family work; but as long as women face employment discrimination, the cultural norms, educational investment choices, and household division of labor supporting the male breadwinner model are unlikely to be challenged. Women feel trapped in an unsought role and escape by being childless. More women are delaying marriage, with an unprecedented 27 percent [now 32%] of Japanese women aged thirty to thirty-four remaining unmarried, rather than marry a typical male who “expects the wife to cheerfully surrender her job, or juggle a career with keeping house and raising the kids.”

Policy proposals

- Guarantee those who take parental leave that they can resume their old job without fear of recrimination
- Eliminate the remaining dependent spouse benefits
- Limit workers to 40 hours a week and penalize use of long overtime
- Forbid discrimination against primary parents
- Insure that part time jobs are paid well and qualify workers for pension and health benefits