

Marriage, Childbirth and Labor Participation: Contrasting Patterns in East Asia

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The paper will revisit Ochanomizu University conducted F-GENS Panel Survey to compare work and family in Beijing, Seoul and Japan. The purpose of this study is to contrast work and family in Beijing and Seoul to Japan. I also intend to make follow up to recent years using publicly available data.

In 2003, Ochanomizu University's "Frontiers of Gender Studies(F-GENS)" was selected by the Ministry of Education and Science of Japan to receive a large scale grant establishing it as a COE (Center of Excellence). Among different projects extending to different disciplines concerning studies of gender, the project selected Beijing and Seoul, two East Asian economies to compare with Japan, concerning family, work, household budgeting, consumption and time use.

In Beijing, 128 residential committee were selected from the central eight districts (which is now the central six districts), and males and females age 25 to 54, 2550 respondents were surveyed, and followed up for four years from June to August. Even though there are publicly available panel survey in China today, in 2004 our panel data must have been the very first to be conducted in Beijing. The survey was conducted by Renmin University Applied Statistics Center. The principal investigator was Prof. Nobuko Nagase. The follow up rate was over 90 percent each year. The survey was conducted a few years before Beijing Olympics. I visited Beijing every year, and the change and the growth of the city was clear. The increase in the income level was also clear and evident in our survey.

For Seoul, 25 to 44 males and females were surveyed with 1709 respondents for the first year. The Survey was conducted by Hankok Research. The principal investigator was Prof. Michiko Mifune.

Nagase (2012) compared the two cities with Tokyo using National Fertility Survey of 2002. Seoul showed striking similarity with Tokyo, that around 80 percent of women in each generation surveyed were found to be out of labor market at the first childbirth, and that income gap between males and females were huge. Wives not working were well recognized pattern of living in both countries. On the other hand, in Beijing, the older women respondents replied that they had worked through out their life, including the time after their childbirth, but the younger generation, especially the less educated ones was found to be out of labor force after having the first child. In Beijing, child care was becoming more privatized. However, even once out of labor force, return to labor market was much quicker in Beijing compared with Tokyo or Seoul.

Recently we see different trend emerging in Japan. Nagase (2014) using *Longitudinal Survey of Adults of 21st Century* of Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare found that more new mothers started to combine work and childbirth after 2009. Nagase (2017a, b) found even greater growth of new mothers to work continue after 2013 using *Labor Force Survey*.

For Japan, Longitudinal Survey of Adults of 21st Century of Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare will be used, and the change will be compared with Beijing and Seoul.

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