

Abstracts

Society and Social Sciences that Embrace Life and Care: Proposals from Sociology of the Intimate and Public Spheres

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This paper attempts to internalize human reproduction into social theory by employing historical, demographic, and Asian perspectives. The system that combined the popularized modern family, Fordism, and the Keynesian welfare state, which is named “the 20th-century social reproduction regime”, emerged in the period between the first and second demographic transitions. In this regime, care was familialized and became invisible in the public sphere. After the end of the 20th-century regime, societies began tackling the challenge of defamilialization of care in their own way. Defamilialization of care through the market is dominant in the U.S. while defamilialization of care by the state is maintained in many European countries. Among Asian countries, Singapore is closer to the U.S. while Japan, Korea, and Taiwan try to follow the European path. Socialist countries like China have taken another path of transitional socialism. Japan’s familialist reform in the 1980s based on self-orientalist ideology made transformation of society difficult. It is necessary to defamilialize the work and responsibility of care and share them with different sectors of society.

The Impact of Defamilisation Policies on Care Responsibility: An Analysis of the Double Carers Survey Data

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The demographic pressures of ageing and declining fertility have led East Asian governments to implement care policy reforms in recent years aimed at taking some responsibility from the family in childcare and older adult care. However, in contrast to these policy trends, East Asian societies, particularly Japan, have maintained social institutions based on a gendered division of labour that reinforces the family household as the locus of care. In such policy and social contexts, focusing on the emerging phenomena of ‘double care’, we examine the influence of the recent care policy reforms on the family’s and women’s responsibility of care in the four East Asian societies of Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. We adopt a defamilisation approach to consider relationships between family, women’s care responsibilities, and social policy. After critically examining the approach, this paper discusses the effects of defamilisation policies by analysing the sense of burden among double carers based on comparative survey data conducted in the four East Asian societies and the latest data from Japan. The analysis reveals that the defamilisation policies in South Korea and Japan, which maintain the family and women as the main providers of care work, have reduced some family care responsibilities, but have only a limited effect in reducing women’s sense of burden. In addition, the analysis of the latest data on double care in Japan suggests the importance of understanding the effects of defamilialisation on the coordination of different care policy fields and increasing responsibility of managing childcare and older adult care.

What Position Should Labor Law Take on Care Work? Focusing on Care Work and Domestic Work

Tadashi Negishi (University of Kochi)

Traditionally, the family has played a prominent role in nursing care. The Long-Term Care Insurance Act was enacted in 1997 and came into effect in 2000, with the expectation that this traditional system of nursing care would not work well in the future due to the declining birthrate and aging population. Now, 25 years after the enactment of this Act, the declining birthrate and aging population in Japan has accelerated, and the family structure is undergoing major changes, such as an increase in the number of single-person households. Public systems for long-term care, such as caregiver leave and long-term care insurance, are still designed on the premise of the family. In reality, however, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the family to cope with the situation on its own. Not only care

workers but also domestic workers meet the demand for care by providing care services as well as cooking and laundry. This paper focuses on how care workers should be protected from a legal perspective. First, we examine the current situation of care workers based on a survey conducted by the Care Work Foundation, then look into laws and notifications designed to protect these workers, additional compensation added to care worker compensation, and care worker training programs. We then review the current situation for domestic workers through a survey conducted by the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT), exploring a legal case and guidelines created by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare inspired by this case.

Trends in the Gender Gap in Time Allocation among Japanese Couples

Shohei Yoda (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)

Gender inequality in public spheres, such as education, economy, and politics, is relatively straightforward to measure with standardized indices. In contrast, assessing gender inequality in private spheres (e.g., family) poses greater challenges due to the absence of standardized measures. However, time-diary data provide a viable method for evaluating gender inequality within the family through the analysis of time allocation patterns. This study utilizes anonymized data from the Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (1991-2016) to elucidate trends in gender disparities in paid and unpaid work among married couples, along with the educational differences therein. The findings indicate that the traditional gendered division of labor, characterized by longer paid work hours for husbands and longer unpaid work hours for wives, has remained persistently entrenched over the quarter-century observation period. Nonetheless, there has been a modest increase in the time husbands devote to unpaid work. Furthermore, the advancement toward gender equality in unpaid work has not been uniform across different educational levels, with the shift being more pronounced among highly educated couples than their less educated counterparts.

Children and Maternal Employment: Evolving Trends over the Past 40 Years Using Census Data

Taiyo Fukai (Gakushuin University)

This paper focuses on the issue of balancing childcare and work, which is closely related to declining birth rates and the gender wage gap. Using data from Japan's national census over the past 40 years, I describe the working patterns of married women with children. Given the impact of children on maternal employment, known as the child penalty, and tax policy issues such as income thresholds on married women's employment, I highlight changes in parental employment after childbirth. This analysis reveals a significant increase in employment rates among women aged 20 to 40 from 1980 to 2020, driven by higher employment rates of married women with children. Despite low employment rates immediately after childbirth, the spread of parental leave policies may have contributed to the increase in continuous employment. Women who continue to work after childbirth are often in medical and welfare professions, with many returning to part-time work as their children grow. In contrast, there has been little change in employment among men with children over the past 40 years.

How Annual Income Barriers Were Created and Maintained

Miki Toyofuku (Ochanomizu University)

This paper explores how the spousal deduction system for income tax and the category 3 insured persons system for pension, which create annual income barriers, were introduced and maintained, with a focus on political parties. To examine whether the interpretation that the factor of the LDP being in power rather than the leftist or centrist parties led to the introduction and maintenance of these systems is valid, five cases from the 1960s to the 2020s were analyzed. The results show that this interpretation has certain validity with respect to the category 3 insured persons system, but not with respect to the spousal deduction system. Throughout a long period of change in Japan, during which the number of households in which the husband is a salaried worker and the wife is a homemaker increased, followed by an increase in the number of households in which the wife works

part-time, the spousal deduction system was introduced and maintained because the stance of supporting such households was shared across parties. The parties have often tried to continue to support households while pursuing policies that support the individual. They have not provided enough options as to what kind of state and society they want to achieve beyond the abolition of these systems.

The Formalization of Family Workers in Small Businesses: Social Security, Taxation, and the Pursuit of Gender Equality

Saori Miyashita (Nagoya City University)

This paper examines the incorporation of the work of family employees in small family enterprises into the welfare state system, focusing on the institutional aspects of law, taxation, and social security. It therefore examines the similarities and differences between Japan and Europe in how the drive for gender equality has been reflected in the law and social security for the self-employed. In both regions, as the pursuit of gender equality intensifies, women family workers have organized into trade associations and campaigned for revisions to legislation and social security. This movement has been gaining momentum since the 1970s. These efforts have been successful in including self-employed women in gender equality policies, a status that continues to this day. Japan has not been a slow starter in developing this initiative, but there has been a lack of progress in revising tax legislation to recognize the remuneration of family members for their work. This is due to the fact that tax collection and social security systems are path-dependent, with different points at which social consensus is likely to be reached. Future research should examine the Japanese view of the family and the self-employed, as well as the tax collection system.

Examining the Effect of Internships on Getting a Job Offer: Focusing on Both Average Causal Effects and Effect Modification

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Hirokazu Miyata (Shizuoka Sangyo University)

This paper aims to verify whether participation in internships increases the likelihood of receiving job offers among university students. Despite a resurgence of interest in work-oriented internships in Japan, the efficacy of internships in getting job offers has remained inadequately examined. Failing to account for the heterogeneous effects of internships on job offers could complicate the evaluation of initiatives. If a conclusion of no effect is reached, it is important to determine whether it has no effect on everyone or has varying effects on different subgroups that average to no effect. These scenarios imply different things. This study explores two aspects: (1) whether internship participation increases the probability of job offers acquired by university students and (2) whether the heterogeneity of effects is observed across different groups. Our analysis reveals that (1) there was no average causal effect of internships on receiving job offers, and (2) when effect modification was assessed, it was found that effects were present only in groups characterized as “male,” “humanities majors,” and “with a hensachi (The score is standardized with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10) of 50 above.” Sensitivity analysis confirms the relatively robust results, particularly for groups identified as “humanities majors” and “with a hensachi of 50 above.”