

Research Summary

Based on the East Asian Social Survey data conducted in 2006 both in China and Japan, this project examines the impact of family elderly care on women's labor supply under different policy settings comparing Japan and China.

We set up different econometric models to estimate the impact of elderly care, both the care giving to women's own parents and parents-in-law, on women's employment outcomes, including employment decision, employment status, work hours and wages both in Japan and China.

After controlling for the endogeneity using IV strategies, we got several main interesting findings. Firstly, there exist systematic differences of employment status between China and Japan, in that Chinese females' labor force participation (86.5%) is far higher than that in Japan (44.3%), while Chinese married women provide more care to both parents and parents-in-law than that in Japan: 85.2% of women in China provide daily care to at least one parent, which is higher than Japanese women by 16%. And compared to Japan, this dual burden of family eldercare and work especially in China could be attributed much to the contradiction between the traditional gender role expectation and the lack of social support to family eldercare in China.

Secondly, with IV regressions controlling for work related factors such as age, education, spouse's occupation, family members, etc., we find both in Japan and China, there exists striking difference in the impact on women's employment situations between caring for parents and caring for parents-in-law: caring for own parents does not affect married women's work hours and earnings, while for parents-in-law has a significant negative influence on women's hours of work and wages.

Thirdly, for the women in different labor market settings regarding Japan and China, women will take different strategies to adapt to the elderly care demand. In China, women tend to be self-employed while more Japanese women choose part-time jobs to be more flexible for family care needs. And the empirical results shows that in China, compared to those who do not need to provide daily care to their parents and/or parents-in-law, women show significant tendency to make tradeoff to undertake self-employed jobs with lower income and less work hours; while in Japan, there is no significant difference in part-time jobs between those who provide care work and those who do not.

Based on comparison with Japan, we conclude that in China, the welfare system in which the government does not play enough in elderly care provision are incompatible with the goal of promoting gender equal labor market outcomes. To deal with the impending elder care crisis, changes must be made to the existing labor market and elder care policies. Such changes would include greater recognition of unpaid care work within social security systems, setting up long-term social insurance of elderly care; and making decent eldercare facilities more accessible to low-income families, such as that in Japan.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

July 5th, 2010, Elderly care and Occupational Achievement of Women in China, Annual Conference of Population Studies, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China, presented by Yueping SONG

June 24th, 2011, The Impact of Parental Care on Married Women's Labor Supply: China and Japan as Comparison, The 8th International Workshop of Chinese Women Economists, Hangzhou, China, presented by Yueping SONG

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)