

COMPLETION REPORT

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Subject of Research Project: **Governing Migration and Care Work in Japan and Taiwan**

This article has examined policy responses to rising migrant care workers in Taiwan and Japan from the viewpoint of governance, applying them as an alternative tool to the perspectives of globalisation and caring. Globalisation usually prompts a denial to give those migrant care workers full citizenship. They are always “guest workers” who are under a limited period of stay, no freedom of movement, no permission of entrance for other family members, a restriction to live-in domestic care work, and partial labor protection. Alarcon, Kaplan, and Moallem (1999) called this phenomenon as “contradictory regulatory practices,” in which master states constrain the integration of migrants.

In this study, we collect historical data and current policies for migrant caregivers in both countries, and interview the related key persons for decision-making and the host families in Taiwan to see how they manage their governance in daylily life. Finally, the research would like to discuss to what extent the migrant care policy changes the original welfare regimes in both countries.

Many countries followed the mode of guest workers employed by Germany in the 1890s (Tseng, 2005). In the case of Taiwan, the government has no motivation to improve the skill level of migrant care workers and no intention to issue them permanent residence. The responsibility of governance is completely left to the employers, with the state’s role remaining passive. At the early stage of opening the labour market to migrant workers, NGOs have spoken loudly to protect the rights of local attendants in Taiwan. Some NGOs, nowadays, become the new bodies of governance over part-time migrant care dispatch workers. They hope to keep the salary growth rate of care workers low, because they themselves are now also employers. There were originally many political stakeholders with different viewpoints, but now they seem to agree with using reasonable ways to utilize migrant care workers. In Taiwan’s case, from the governance perspective, we found the withdrawal of the public-private dichotomy. The stakeholders were actively involved in the policy-making of migrant care workers; thus the policies on migrant workers changed accordingly.

To cope with the purpose of free trade with Southeast Asian countries, Japan has undertaken an “inclusive policy” for migrant care workers. Controlled by the Japanese government, migrant care workers are well trained in terms of language ability and caring skills. They are regarded as potential citizens and granted permanent residence once they pass the national qualification exam of care workers. The main governance bodies are the government and the host organisations, which have earned the trust of Japanese society for refusing to open up the market to private agencies. As this state-sponsored migrant policy is extremely costly versus hiring local care workers, its value is doubtful. In Japan’s case, from a governance perspective, the Japanese government is almost fully responsible for the governance of migrant care workers, by switching care responsibility from the family to the state. The public-private dichotomy remains unchanged.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

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