

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this master thesis “The Study of Fertility Policy in Taiwan” is to examine the relation between culture, society, economy and fertility based upon theories and to introduce the transition of fertility policy, the role of the Taiwan government in influencing and regulating childbearing and assess the demographic impacts of population. Based on the experience of France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States and Japan, fertility policies play an important role in demographic transition and may provide a window into Taiwan’s future development.

This study finds that low fertility is a widespread phenomenon in Taiwan and is expected to continue in the foreseeable future. Government policies, as in the cases of France and The United States, are effective in combating low fertility. France is a pioneer in providing financial rewards and services to families and children while minorities and immigration have contributed to increased fertility rates in United States. Without national subsidies and affordable childcare, Taiwan’s fertility policies have failed to maintain a replacement rate since 1983.

Judging from policies and practices in advanced countries, Taiwan’s governments should foster a supportive working environment for women and families when they are having or raising children. Specifically, whether Taiwan’s birth rate can be pushed up will depend on measures that offer flexible work schedules, better subsidies for maternity leave, and affordable, high-quality day-care services for career women. Meanwhile, the government should also modulate the education system and redistribute education resources, re-evaluate the relationship between population and sustainable development, better utilize the ageing labor force and strengthen lifelong-learning for older workers.