

Women's Worlds 2005
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Panel on "Gender Gap within Household and the Labor Market:
Comparative Studies of Korea, China and Japan"

Who care for Kids, and What are the Consequences of Gender Wage Gap ?
Analysis on Child Care and Work Commitment in Seoul, Beijing and Japanese
Metropolitan Area

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Women's work participation, intermittent work behavior, work commitment and attitudes during child-rearing years will be compared between Seoul, Beijing and Japanese metropolitan area.

Work continuation may be one of the key factors that may serve to decrease gender wage gap. Though female tenure on average has increased to a large extent in Japan, work continuation of mothers with young children has stagnated or even slightly decreased in Japan in the past thirty years. This contrasts with many Western developed countries where more women with young children continue to participate in the labor market. Such differences in behavior may be one of the reasons why gender wage gap in Japan is still strikingly large. One of the newest survey conducted by Ministry of Labor, Health and Welfare showed that 70 percent of mothers of newly born babies were found to be full-time mothers in Japan, though work continuation increase with educational attainment. The firm work rules and promotion rules may be one of the factors that hinder women's employment. Cultural values for families may also be the cause. The theme of this paper is to examine the similarity and differences in East Asian nations on women's work continuation during child-bearing years.

Labor supply behavior of Japanese women will be compared with Ochanomizu University Panel Study on Gender and Work in Seoul and in Beijing. We already have first year survey result for Korea conducted in early 2004 and found much similarity with Japan. On the other hand, work behavior of mothers were much different in Beijing, although we only have preliminary survey result and still need to wait for the survey result to be obtained in October 2004.