

**Perceptions on Taiwan's Fertility Challenges: The Role of
Socioeconomic Factors, Government Interventions, and Family
Planning Decisions**

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Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, 2024

Abstract

Taiwan is currently facing the challenge of a low birth rate, which not only leads to a decrease in the working-age population but also affects economic development. This study aims to explore how Taiwanese people view this challenge, especially those aged 18 to 65, regarding fertility issues. We conduct a questionnaire survey among residents of various counties and cities in Taiwan to understand their views on the declining fertility rate. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these issues, we also conduct interviews and select some of the respondents who completed the questionnaire for in-depth conversations. Interviews help us dig out the reasons and details behind the questionnaire data and understand the respondents' true feelings and considerations when facing fertility decisions. Research questions include the effectiveness of government policies and people's attitudes regarding household decision-making. We hope this study provide insight into the importance modern people place on personal development and self-actualization, as well as how they view marriage and children. In modern society, many people may think that marriage and children are constraints and burdens, and therefore are unwilling to have children. In order to deal with this situation, the government need to expand subsidies for childbirth policies and strengthen the promotion of the concept of marriage and childbearing. We hope to provide advice to the government based on our findings. The recommendations focus on developing more effective policies to encourage higher fertility rates, stabilize the workforce and support long-term economic development.

Keywords: Fertility Challenges, Socioeconomic Factors, Government Interventions, and Family Planning Decisions

**對台灣生育率挑戰的看法：
社會經濟因素、政府干預因素及家庭計劃影響**

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摘要

台灣目前面臨低出生率的挑戰，不僅導致勞動年齡人口減少，也影響經濟發展。本研究旨在探討台灣民眾，尤其是 18 至 65 歲的民眾如何看待這項挑戰，以及生育問題。我們對台灣各縣市居民進行問卷調查，以了解他們對生育率下降的看法。為了更全面地了解這些問題，我們也進行訪談，並選擇部分完成問卷的受訪者進行深入對話。訪談有助於我們挖掘問卷資料背後的原因和細節，了解受訪者在面臨生育決策時的真實感受和考慮。研究問題包括政府政策的有效性和人們對家庭決策的態度。我們希望這項研究能深入了解現代人對個人發展和自我實現的重視，以及他們如何看待婚姻和孩子。現代社會，很多人可能認為婚姻和孩子是束縛和負擔，因此不願意生孩子。為了因應這種情況，政府需要擴大生育補貼政策，並加強婚育觀念的宣傳。我們希望根據調查結果可以向政府提供建議。這些建議著重於制定更有效的政策，以鼓勵更高的生育率、穩定勞動力並支持長期經濟發展。

關鍵字：生育挑戰、社會經濟因素、政府干預和家庭計畫決策

Preface

This research has been successfully completed, and we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to many individuals for their guidance and support. Here, we sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to this study.

First and foremost, we would like to thank our advisor, Professor YMC, for providing invaluable expertise, patience, and guidance throughout the research process. Professor YMC has been our source of motivation; his constructive feedback and encouragement have provided essential direction and depth to this study. We are immensely grateful for his unwavering support and mentorship, which not only deepened our research but also contributed significantly to our personal growth.

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Introduction

Background

Taiwan is an important country in East Asia facing two major demographic challenges: an aging society and a declining birth rate. These issues require a closer examination of socioeconomic factors, government policies, and family planning decisions. Taiwan's transformation from an agrarian economy to a high-tech powerhouse has brought about significant changes in societal attitudes toward marriage, career aspirations, and family structure, all of which have profoundly affected fertility and population dynamics.

Since 1998, Taiwan's fertility rate had been on a downward trend, falling below 1.5 and reaching as low as 0.895 in 2010. The statistics in 2023 indicated a rate of 1.05. This persistent problem of low fertility has existed for more than 20 years, despite various government policies aimed at reversing the trend.¹

Several interrelated factors contribute to Taiwan's declining birth rate and aging population. The high cost of living, limited housing, and career-oriented lifestyles often discourage young couples from starting or expanding families. In addition, traditional cultural values that prioritize career development and personal aspirations over family formation further influence reproductive choices.

In response, the Taiwanese government has implemented a variety of policies to promote family well-being and address declining fertility. These policies include childcare subsidies, parental leave, reproductive health services, fertility incentives, and tax breaks. Efforts to improve work-life balance and gender equality are also central to the government's strategy to reduce stress and encourage young couples to have children. However, the effectiveness of these policies remains controversial.

¹ Chang, M., & Wang, J. (2021). Policy recommendations for increasing fertility rates in Taiwan.

Understanding how these policies align with the needs and preferences of Taiwanese families is critical to developing effective interventions. Persistent structural barriers and cultural norms continue to impede family planning decisions. Comprehensive strategies to address Taiwan's fertility challenges require a deep understanding of the complex interactions among socioeconomic factors, government policies, and individual preferences.

Given these multifaceted challenges, it is critical to examine the dynamics of fertility in Taiwan. This study aims to identify the potential drivers of low fertility through an in-depth analysis of socioeconomic factors, government policies, and family planning decisions. By providing policymakers and community stakeholders with rigorous analytical and empirical research, this study seeks to develop targeted interventions and integrated strategies to address Taiwan's population decline. Ultimately, by deepening the understanding of fertility trends, the study aims to develop sustainable solutions to ensure Taiwan's future prosperity and well-being.

Motivation

Declining birth rates have become a common issue for many countries. According to the United Nations' anticipation for the period from 2020 to 2025, Taiwan ranks fourth from the bottom out of 201 countries in regard to fertility rate. This is to say, Taiwan is currently experiencing a baby bust situation. However, the causes of declining birth rates may include housing prices, workplace pressure, and the heavy cost of childcare. Due to the rise in housing prices, young people are unable to afford the cost of buying a house. Having children becomes a heavy burden. They fear they won't be able to provide a better life for their kids. It discourages them from having children. As a result, a vicious cycle is formed. With the advancement of

higher education, many women are delaying childbirth because they are concerned about balancing work and childcare responsibilities. Having children may affect their performance in the workplace. Additionally, during pregnancy and postpartum recovery, most women are unable to receive salaries, resulting in economic pressures on them. Parents spent a lot of money raising children. If parents lack stable job income or a secure place to live, most people are unwilling to have children.

In response to the issue of declining birth rates, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare have implemented some policies, including expanding affordable education and childcare services, further reducing school fees, continuously promoting family-friendly workplace initiatives, and so on. These measures aim to implement the "National Collaborative Child-Rearing Policy for Ages 0 to 6," and to enhance the willingness of the populace to have children.

Our country, Taiwan, is facing some issues. Such as a low birth rate leading to a decrease in the working-age population, which impacts economic development. Allocating resources to care for the increasing elderly population. In this research, we aimed to investigate how individuals perceived the challenges arising from the low birth rate in Taiwan. We also explored how Taiwanese people viewed these challenges. It assesses the effectiveness of government intervention measures and policies and examine attitudes towards family decision-making.

Research Purpose

This study aims to understand why Taiwan has a low fertility rate. Specifically, it investigates how socioeconomic factors, government policies, and family planning efforts influence this trend. By exploring these factors, the research aims to provide insights into addressing Taiwan's declining birth rates.

Socioeconomic factors: Assess the effectiveness of governmental policies, such as social welfare systems, healthcare provisions, job opportunities, and incentives for family formation, in addressing the challenges associated with low fertility rates. Especially, job opportunities and healthcare. Job opportunities and career prospects can impact fertility decisions. Individuals in stable, fulfilling careers with opportunities for advancement may be more inclined to delay childbearing to focus on their professional goals. In contrast, individuals facing precarious employment or limited career prospects may consider starting a family earlier or having fewer children due to concerns about financial stability. And health care, socioeconomic disparities in healthcare access and affordability can impact individuals' ability to access contraception, fertility treatments, prenatal care, and other reproductive health services, potentially influencing fertility outcomes. Housing and living conditions are quite important, too. Access to affordable and suitable housing can impact fertility decisions. Some couples may delay childbearing if they face challenges in finding affordable housing.

Government policies: Analyze the impact of policy initiatives such as parental leave provisions, childcare subsidies, and tax incentives on fertility rates and family formation. Employment conditions and policies related to work-life balance are intimately linked with fertility rates. The nature of one's employment can significantly influence the timing and decision to start a family. For instance, individuals in fast-paced career tracks may opt to delay childbirth to focus on professional growth. Additionally, policies such as flexible work arrangements and parental leave play a crucial role in shaping individuals' fertility decisions.

Family planning: Examine cultural and social factors that influence attitudes towards family planning among Taiwanese individuals and couples.

By uncovering the interplay between economic, policy, and sociocultural factors, the study aims to offer valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working to address the demographic challenges caused by declining birth rates. Ultimately, the findings of this research are intended to inform evidence-based strategies and interventions aimed at promoting sustainable fertility and ensuring the well-being of future generations in Taiwan.

Also, Taiwan's gender roles have historically dictated distinct expectations for men and women within both family and society. However, societal shifts, coupled with advancement in women's education and empowerment are challenging these traditional norms. Women start to think not to have babies earlier, they don't want to only stay in house and taking care of child. They don't want their life just likes to be trapped. They want to have the same treatment.

Research Questions

1. How have attitudes towards marriage and childbearing among people aged 25-34 in Taiwan changed in the last decade?
2. How does the government's promotion of female fertility in Taiwan affect women's workplace status?
3. How do government childcare policies influence fertility decisions among families in Taiwan?

Contribution

According to this research, First, low-income families must consider various aspects and face more challenges, balancing expenses and decisions regarding childbirth. Exploring their perspectives on declining birth rates can deepen our understanding of the impact of social inequality on fertility behaviors, while also fostering public discussion and awareness of this issue.

Second, the research on couples' perceptions in Taiwan regarding the effectiveness of government interventions, like childcare subsidies, in tackling fertility challenges offers significant contributions across several areas. It provides empirical insights into the impact of policies aimed at combating low fertility rates, crucial for many advanced economies, including Taiwan. This study helps in refining policies by identifying the gaps between policy intentions and public perceptions, thereby guiding more effective strategies to encourage higher fertility rates. Additionally, it enriches academic discussions on government roles in demographic trends, emphasizing the need for comprehensive approaches that address both financial and non-financial barriers to childbearing. Moreover, the research can serve as a comparative framework for other countries with similar challenges, aiding in the design or adjustment of their policies. This study underscores the complex relationship between government interventions and individual decisions on fertility, offering valuable insights for policymakers, scholars, and societies facing demographic shifts.

Third, it explores the factors that influence rural couples' choice of modern or traditional family planning methods in Taiwan. These factors include declining marriage rates, late marriage, changing attitudes toward childbearing, the burden of childcare, and increased female labor force participation. These factors reflect the

impact of socio-economic changes on family planning choices and reveal the importance that modern people place on personal development and self-fulfillment addition; this study contributes to our understanding of how family planning policies in Taiwan have affected changes in fertility. For example, Taiwan's rapid decline in fertility following the implementation of family planning in the 1960s has been hailed as an achievement of family planning. However, in the 21st century, Taiwan has become a low fertility country like European countries. The government has begun to worry that these very low birth rates lead to a rapidly ageing population with other negative socio-economic effects. Therefore, this study not only helps us to understand the factors affecting the choice of family planning methods, but also how to formulate effective family planning policies to cope with social problems such as population ageing. This has important practical implications for promoting socio-economic development in Taiwan. Finally, this study can also provide valuable experience and insights for other countries facing similar problems.

Fourth, the readers can better understand the attitudes of today's women aged 20-35 towards marriage or bearing children. The traditional societal expectation of men as primary earners and women as homemakers fostered a conservative atmosphere in the past. However, contemporary women increasingly prioritize financial independence through employment, signaling a shift from historical norms.

Limits

First, research on low-income families may encounter difficulties in data collection because these families may not be inclined to participate or provide sensitive information. In-depth interviews or surveys are needed to obtain their

genuine feelings and perspectives. Overcoming trust issues with interviewees may be necessary.

Second, availability and quality of data can pose a challenge in research on fertility rates. Some data may be outdated, incomplete, or report bias, which could affect the accuracy and reliability of the findings. For example, Taiwanese society's values and culture traditions may influence respondents' perceptions of fertility challenges.

Third, due to the focus of the study on specific population groups or regions in Taiwan, the generalizability of the research findings may be limited.

Delimits

Based on the above four research questions, we may encounter the following delimits. First, we are limited in the scope of the sample. The subjects of this research paper are Taiwanese aged 18-65. It is even necessary to conduct in-depth research and interviews with Taiwanese women aged 20-35. However, due to questionnaire distribution and interview restrictions, it is not evenly distributed throughout Taiwan, which means that the generalizability of the research results is limited.

Second, the questions of this research are limited by the time scope. Some research questions may only focus on changes in the past 10 years, without taking into account the limitations of the longer time range, resulting in a lack of understanding of the previous historical background and long-term future trends.

Third, this study is limited by data availability. Regarding the intervention measures and policies provided by the government to the people, we cannot actually control the specific effects, such as childcare subsidies, tax incentives, etc., and there may be a lack of long-term detailed data, which means that the data is even

incomplete. This is lead to less comprehensive and in-depth understanding of government policy measures.

Fourth, this research paper needs to be completed through research methods such as questionnaires and interviews, so this also means that it is limited by the survey method. These methods are relatively meant to be influenced by the subjective responses of respondents and may not fully capture the influence of all potential factors.

Finally, the influence of cultural and social background is also be limited. Due to the diversity of Taiwanese society, different ethnic groups, regions, social environments and family environments may have different insights into the views and behaviors of families, couples, unmarried couples and young women with different incomes. Therefore, the findings may not fully capture all differences in cultural and social contexts.

Literature Review

As societies around the world strive to address various demographic challenges, the issue of declining birth rates has become a top priority for many countries. Currently, many Northern and Western European countries have relatively stable fertility rates, while the fertility rates in developed Asian economies have fallen to the lowest in the world. A total fertility rate below approximately 1.5 is classified as "very low fertility," and below approximately 1.3 is classified as "lowest-low fertility." Japan falls into the very low fertility category, while South Korea and Singapore fall into the lowest-low fertility category.²

The issue of declining birth rates and reduced numbers of births, leading to a population crisis, has been a hotly debated topic in Taiwanese society for at least a decade. Taiwan currently holds the title of the country with the lowest birth rate in the world. In an era marked by low wages, high housing prices, and rising living costs, young people are increasingly avoiding marriage and home ownership. The pressure of having children exacerbates this situation, making it even harder for many to cope with daily life. Although the government has been providing various childbirth and education subsidies, including the "0-6 year old, national co care" program, the effectiveness of these measures is not significant.

Despite facing challenges in current measures, Taiwan is reassessing and improving policies to address the issue of low birth rates. First, we analyze how other countries deal with their respective low fertility problems and challenges. We have chosen two neighboring countries—Japan and South Korea—as references to gain insights into their issues and coping strategies.

² Shigeki Matsuda, ed. "Low Fertility in Japan, South Korea, and Singapore," January 2020. file:///C:/Users/ycuser/Desktop/Low%20Fertility%20in%20Japan,%20South%20Korea,%20and%20Singapore.pdf.

After understanding the global issue of declining birth rates, it is necessary to further explore how modern values influence women's choices between roles in family and workplace, thereby affecting changes in fertility rates.

Value Changes in Modern Society

Traditional views generally hold that female employment weakens their role within the family, thereby negatively impacting fertility rates. However, Esping-Andersen (1999) found that traditional beliefs generally suggest that women's employment weakens their roles within the family, thereby having a negative impact on fertility. However, his research shows that this viewpoint is not entirely correct. In fact, female employment may even have a positive influence on fertility.

Firstly, women's participation in the labor market can enhance their economic independence. Having their own income allows women more autonomy in reproductive decision-making, as they are better able to afford childcare and household expenses. This may encourage women to consider childbirth without facing as many economic constraints.

Secondly, with societal progress and shifting values, women increasingly prioritize their careers and personal development over traditional family roles. This means that women may be more willing to delay childbirth or choose not to have children in pursuit of their career goals. Therefore, female employment may lead to a decrease in fertility rates, but this is not necessarily a negative result; rather, it reflects women's pursuit of their own development.

Additionally, the lack of support from workplace culture for women returning to work after childbirth is also an important factor. Many women choose to postpone or abstain from childbirth due to workplace pressure. The lack of a flexible work

environment and effective parenting support makes workplace stress a crucial factor in women's decision-making.

FMEES (2006) shows that, including Taiwan, a general pattern across countries is that completed fertility is negatively associated with education level. If we consider the education level of women with spouses, as education levels increase, the number of children decreases. For example, women with spouses having junior high degrees or below have an average of 3.31 children, those with high school degrees have 2.09 children, and those who attended college or higher education institutes have 1.73 children. This indicates that with higher education, marriage rates fall, and at the same time, birth rates decline.³

The "Kurumin" certification system in Japan is a good example that demonstrates the relationship between female employment and fertility. This system aims to support the balance between work and family life by encouraging companies to provide more flexible work environments and childcare support. In this way, women receive more support in balancing their careers and family responsibilities, which helps to increase fertility rates. Similarly, Taiwan can learn from this by improving workplace environments and increasing childcare resources, allowing women to find a balance between career development and family life, thereby promoting fertility intentions.

Enhancing Fertility Rate

The government's first plan in Japan, "Angel Plan" in 1994⁴, aimed to address

³ Wan-I Lin , and Shin-Yi Yang. "From Successful Family Planning to the Lowest of Low Fertility Levels: Taiwan's Dilemma." ORIGINAL ARTICLE, May 28, 2009. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1753-1411.2009.00027.x>.

⁴ 日本經濟新聞中文版. "日本 30 年花了 66 萬億，仍未改變少子化," June 6, 2024. <https://zh.cn.nikkei.com/politicaeconomy/economic-policy/55810-2024-06-06-10-26-20.html>.

the low birth rate. The main goals of this plan were to increase and improve childcare facilities, provide childcare subsidies and financial support, reduce economic pressures on families, and promote flexible working hours and family-friendly policies to help working women balance work and family life. Although the plan faced challenges, it laid the foundation for more comprehensive and focused policies. The government continues to work on reducing economic pressures, improving support in the workplace, increasing childcare services, and changing societal views on marriage and having children. By undertaking these initiatives, the goal is to create a more conducive environment for raising children and ultimately improve the fertility rate.

In order to address the issues of low fertility rates and population aging, South Korea launched the Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society in 2006.⁵ First of all, economic support measures are a core component of this plan. The government provides various social welfare programs, such as childcare allowances, childcare service subsidies, and tax benefits for child-rearing to relieve the financial burden on families. Second, the government invests in establishing more childcare centers to emphasize childcare support. Additionally, it is committed to expanding and improving childcare facilities while ensuring their quality and affordability. In this way, working women can more confidently entrust their children to professional childcare institutions. It enables them to better balance work and family life. Even with early challenges and slow progress, South Korea keeps improving its policies to help families feel more supported.

⁵ 吳季柔. “韓國 9 兆大撒幣刺激生育無效 給台灣什麼教訓?.” 聯合新聞網, October 1, 2023. <https://udn.com/news/story/6812/7476372>.

The Taiwanese government's economic support and childcare policies aim to alleviate different family pressures and increase fertility intentions. Even though the government has made efforts, Taiwan's fertility rate remains low due to economic uncertainty, high housing prices, job market instability, and traditional cultural concepts.⁶ Therefore, the government first launched the "Fertility Increase Plan" in 2010, which included measures such as financial subsidies for childbirth and childcare and the expansion of childcare facilities.

Chang and Wang (2021) suggested that the government needs to take more comprehensive measures to address the problem of low fertility effectively.⁷ These include increasing financial subsidies, improving housing policies, extending parental leave, and providing flexible work arrangements. These measures can help alleviate the economic and social pressures that hinder childbearing.

Improving the quality and availability of childcare is vital. Hsieh (2019) and Liu (2020) emphasized that convenient, high-quality childcare services can encourage working women to return to work and balance career and family life.⁸ This approach is consistent with successful strategies in Japan, where the Kurumin certification system provides working parents with a flexible work environment and extensive childcare support (Yamamoto, 2018).⁹

⁶ National Development Council (2022). Taiwan's population projections and policy implications. Retrieved from <https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/>

Lin, J. (2020). Economic support and its limitations on fertility rates in Taiwan. *Economic Review*, 30(4), 67-82.

⁷ Chang, Y., & Wang, H. (2021). Comprehensive measures for addressing low fertility rates in Taiwan. *Journal of Population Studies*, 45(3), 123-138.

⁸ Hsieh, L. (2019). The impact of childcare services on fertility decisions in Taiwan. *Asian Social Science*, 15(2), 45-57.

Liu, M. (2020). Quality and availability of childcare and female labor force participation. *International Journal of Childcare and Education*, 22(1), 101-115.

⁹ Yamamoto, T. (2018). The Kurumin certification system and its impact on fertility in Japan. *Journal of Family and Work*, 12(3), 89-103.

In summary, although Taiwan's current policies provide a foundation for supporting families, more extensive and comprehensive measures are still needed. These include increasing financial subsidies and improving housing and childcare policies. By implementing these strategies, Taiwan can create a more supportive living environment for its families. This context highlights the importance of examining the situations in other countries.

It is obvious that South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan face similar challenges related to low fertility rates and aging populations. Each country has implemented policies to provide financial support, improve childcare services and promote work-life balance. However, they all still struggle with these issues. Even though they have faced initial challenges and varying degrees of success, the ongoing efforts in these countries show how important it is to have comprehensive and targeted policies that tackle the complex factors affecting fertility.

The Relation between High Housing Prices and Fertility Rates

High housing prices increase the cost of purchasing and living for families, becoming one of the main economic burdens of childbirth. A study suggests that the rise in housing prices leads to an increase in childbirth costs, making families more cautious when considering childbirth. For example, Narayan (2006) emphasized the impact of female labor force participation and income on fertility rates and pointed out that high housing prices may further increase women's opportunity costs, leading to a decrease in fertility rates.

Research indicates that homeownership significantly influences fertility decisions. Compared to renting households, homeowners are more likely to delay having children due to the financial burden and expenses associated with purchasing a

home. On the other hand, families living with parents or siblings tend to have children earlier than those who rent, likely due to reduced housing costs and greater family support. These dynamics highlight how housing arrangements play a critical role in shaping fertility choices and timelines.

Moreover, the impact of changes in housing prices on family fertility decisions is asymmetric. During periods of economic prosperity, high housing prices may have a stronger negative impact on fertility decisions, while during economic recessions, a decrease in housing prices may have a smaller impact. This asymmetry suggests that households react differently to changes in housing prices under different economic conditions.

The rise in the age at first birth and the relatively high age at which many women are having children coincide with new low levels of fertility, a result of the postponement of the rapid growth of childbearing. This change in fertility behavior is seen as a sign of the "second demographic transition" (Lesthaeghe and Neels, 2002). In short, the concept revolves around the possibility that women delay childbearing until the family has acquired enough assets to buy a first home.

One potential effect of the cost of the housing market is that families are forced to choose between investing in a house or investing in children. If a family wants to own a home in an expensive market, they have to wait longer, work longer, and possibly put off having children. Of course, families can choose to stay in the rental market and have children, but in modern Western societies, homeownership has become an advantage in itself and is often seen as a necessary prerequisite for childbearing.

In this concept, "homeownership" provides stability, security, and access to

services that are key components of raising a family. These factors may be the most important drivers of housing choice, as "ownership neighborhoods" are likely to offer a range of special factors considered important by families wishing to have children than are "rental neighborhoods." These factors range from access to quality schools to access to a variety of city amenities.

A study in South Korea shows that although demographic structures have changed, including a decline in population and family growth rates, an aging population, and an increase in single and dual-person households, the current housing policies in South Korea still follow the planning and supply models of the past. The study indicates that changes in family structures have a significant impact on housing prices, particularly the increase in the proportion of smaller households.¹⁰ The supply variables, such as the growth rate of new housing permits, also greatly affect housing prices. The government should carefully review and control the annual housing supply to avoid market distortions.

Studies have shown that housing costs have a significant impact on fertility. During economic booms, high housing prices may lead to a decline in fertility because increased homeownership expenditures reduce the resources available for childcare, while in recessions, unemployment and economic uncertainty may inhibit childbearing even when falling housing prices reduce the burden on families. Renting households tend to postpone childbearing due to instability and rising rents, while homebuying households may postpone childbearing due to the costs of homeownership and mortgage pressures.

Tax Concessions and Maternity Benefits

¹⁰ JungMan Moon. "A Study on the Impact of Demographic Change on Housing Price in South Korea." University of Kentucky, 2017. https://uknowledge.uky.edu/mpampp_etds/296/.

We conduct a comparative analysis of tax incentives and maternity benefits from three countries (Taiwan, South Korea and Japan). Taiwan, South Korea and Japan have all implemented policies to address low fertility rates and support families through tax incentives and maternity benefits. While there are similarities in the approaches across the three countries, the main differences reflect the unique socioeconomic context of each country.

Similar to tax incentives, Taiwan provides a number of preferential policies for homeowners. For example, if an individual purchases a house and meets the conditions for self-occupation, he or she can apply for a reduction in the housing tax and land tax rates. These incentives aim to reduce the financial burden on homeowners and promote the stability of home ownership¹¹. Similarly, South Korea provides housing subsidies and preferential loans to families with children, focusing on improving living conditions and reducing housing¹². Japan has implemented policies to support family housing, including tax incentives and subsidies for home buyers to reduce the financial impact of homeownership.¹³

Similar to maternity benefits, the Taiwanese government has implemented a number of maternity subsidy policies to encourage childbirth. For example, the Ministry of Health and Welfare provides childcare subsidies for infants and children aged 0-3 or 0-5, whether they receive childcare at home or in a public childcare institution. Relevant subsidies are paid on a monthly basis to support families in managing childcare costs¹⁴. South Korea's Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging

¹¹ Taiwan Ministry of Finance. (2023). Tax incentives for homeownership in Taiwan. Retrieved from <https://www.mof.gov.tw/>

¹² Choi, J. (2019). Housing policy effects on fertility rates in South Korea. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences*

¹³ Ito, N. (2021). Housing support policies in Japan and their impact on family stability. *Japanese Economic Review*

¹⁴ Taiwan Ministry of Health and Welfare. (2022). Childcare subsidy policies in Taiwan. Retrieved

Society also provides various childcare subsidies, service subsidies and tax incentives to reduce the financial burden on families. These policies aim to support working women in balancing work and family life.¹⁵ Japan's Angel Program was launched in 1994 and focuses on increasing and improving childcare facilities, providing subsidies, and promoting flexible working hours. There are ongoing efforts to strengthen financial support and childcare services.¹⁶

Regarding the disparity between policy implementation and effectiveness, despite substantial economic support and subsidies, Taiwan's effectiveness in addressing low fertility is limited by continued economic uncertainty, high housing prices, and job market instability.¹⁷ South Korea continues to face challenges in reversing the trend of low fertility rates, and the slow progress shows the need for more comprehensive and effective measures¹⁸. Japan's comprehensive approach through Project Angel has evolved and been gradually improved over the years. Although cultural attitudes toward work and family life remain a barrier, the Kurumin certification system provides support for working parents.¹⁹

Despite great efforts to address Taiwan's current situation, Taiwan's fertility rate is still one of the lowest in the world. Economic uncertainty, high housing prices and job market instability are significant obstacles to increasing fertility rates. Government policies, including tax incentives for homeowners and various childcare subsidies, provide a solid foundation but need to be further strengthened and integrated. Comprehensive measures such as increasing financial subsidies, improving

from <https://www.mohw.gov.tw/>

¹⁵ Kim, H. (2017). South Korea's Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society: An analysis.

¹⁶ Suzuki, M. (2020). Evaluating the Angel Plan's long-term impact on Japan's fertility rate.

¹⁷ Lin, Y. (2020). Economic uncertainties and fertility behavior in Taiwan. NDC (National Development Council). (2022).

¹⁸ Lee, S. (2022). The ongoing challenge of low fertility in South Korea.

¹⁹ Yamamoto, T. (2018). The role of Kurumin certification in supporting working parents in Japan.

housing policies, extending parental leave, and providing flexible work arrangements are crucial to creating a supportive childbearing environment.²⁰

In summary, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan all face similar challenges related to low fertility rates and aging populations. Each country has implemented policies to provide financial support, improve childcare services and promote work-life balance, but all continue to grapple with the problem. Continuously improving and strengthening these policies is critical to creating a more supportive environment for families.

Although tax incentives and maternity benefits are crucial in alleviating the financial burdens of child-rearing, they are only part of the government's strategy to address the issue of low fertility rates. To effectively tackle this challenge, it is necessary to examine government intervention from a broader perspective.

The Definition of Government Intervention

Government intervention in Taiwan's declining birth rate involves many strategies focus on addressing low fertility. These efforts focus on shaping social attitudes about family planning, helping people make informed decisions about having children, and creating a more supportive environment for raising families.

In Taiwan, the government has implemented many measures to solve the issue of low fertility rates and to encourage childbirth and support families. For example, the Expansion of Public Access to Early Childhood Education and Care is a plan promoted by the Executive Yuan to improve the public access to early childhood

²⁰ Chang, M., & Wang, J. (2021). Policy recommendations for increasing fertility rates in Taiwan. Hsieh, Y. (2019). The impact of childcare services on fertility rates in Taiwan. Liu, W. (2020). Childcare accessibility and workforce participation among Taiwanese women.

education and care.²¹ It focuses on increasing the willingness of Taiwanese people to have children while also reducing the burden of childcare on families by increasing early childhood education and care resources. The plan includes expanding public nurseries and kindergartens as well as providing more public childcare services so that parents can send their children to childcare institutions with confidence.

The second is that in order to reduce the financial pressure on families raising children, the Taiwanese government provides many financial subsidies. For example, childcare subsidies for low-income families are designed to help these families cope with the challenges of childcare costs.²² Additionally, the government also provides tax incentives to encourage families to have more children to cope with the aging population and labor shortage.

The Kurumin we mentioned earlier, in order to ensure women's right to work, the Legislative Yuan pushed for legislation to ensure that women are not fired due to pregnancy or maternity leave.²³ These laws require employers to provide necessary job protections for pregnant and postpartum women, such as flexible working hours and restrictions on travel to remote locations, so that women can better balance work and family life.

To ensure that women receive adequate medical care during pregnancy and childbirth, the government continues to build a diversified reproductive health care service network to provide comprehensive maternal health care services. These services include prenatal examinations, genetic disease screening, and maternal and child health education.

²¹ Executive Yuan. “擴大幼兒教保公共化規劃情形,” October 20, 2016.

<https://www.ey.gov.tw/Page/448DE008087A1971/430bf617-c849-42fc-8bbc-dc028520a10a>.

²² Ministry of Health and Welfare. “《未滿 2 歲幼兒照顧政策：育兒津貼、托育補助，不排富，全照顧》新制專區,” January 5, 2024. <https://www.mohw.gov.tw/cp-5130-58003-1.html>.

²³ Legislative Yuan, Republic of China(Taiwan). “就業保險法第 14 條懷孕女性勞工申請失業給付之研析,” August 1, 2017. <https://www.ly.gov.tw/Pages/Detail.aspx?nodeid=6590&pid=146915>.

The last step is to strengthen family planning policies. Historically, starting in the 1950s, the Taiwanese government has implemented family planning policies to control population growth. But by 1984, Taiwan's total fertility rate had dropped below the population replacement level. Since then, Taiwan's fertility rate has continued to decline. As the problem of low birthrate intensifies, the government begins to re-evaluate and strengthen fertility policies. It also promotes childcare support policies to balance the population structure and promote sustainable development of the population.

And then, the government may introduce policies to improve work-life balance, such as extended maternity and paternity leave, flexible working arrangements and support for childcare services. These measures are designed to alleviate the challenges faced by working parents and encourage individuals to effectively balance their professional and family responsibilities.

Additionally, government intervention may against the social welfare system to provide comprehensive support to families, including affordable housing choices, educational opportunities, and social assistance programs. By addressing socioeconomic factors that influence fertility decisions, such as economic stability, housing affordability and educational opportunities, the government focus on creating a more enabling environment for individuals considering starting or expanding a family.

Overall, the government's intervention in Taiwan's declining birth rate is multifaceted, combining policy measures, medical services, financial incentives, and social welfare initiatives to address the underlying factors leading to low fertility and promote a sustainable demographic future for the country.

After reviewing several studies, we identified the following gaps. First, Long-term Studies on Policy Effectiveness. Currently, many studies explore the short-term impacts of policies, but there is a lack of long-term follow-up research on the effectiveness of these policies. Historically, policies addressing low fertility rates often achieve short-term success but fail to provide lasting solutions to the fundamental issues. Our research focuses on the current "National Care for Children Aged 0-6" policy.²⁴ The key points include expanding affordable childcare, increasing childcare subsidies, further reducing tuition fees, and doubling parental allowances. We employ both qualitative and quantitative methods, conducting in-depth interviews and surveys to evaluate the long-term effects of the policy.

Second, Research on Male Roles and Participation. Most existing studies focus on women's roles in child-rearing, with few delving into men's attitudes and perspectives on parenting or the impact of low fertility rates on men. Although our research does not primarily focus on men's involvement in childcare and family decision-making or how this affects policy effectiveness, during interviews, if the respondents are men, we gather their attitudes and views on parenting, family roles, and the effectiveness of the policy.

Third, detailed research on the relationship between housing policies and fertility rates. Although some studies have pointed out the negative impact of high housing prices on fertility rates, there is insufficient research how different types of housing policies, such as rental subsidies, first-time homebuyer grants. Specifically affect fertility rates. Some studies suggest that high housing prices are not the primary

²⁴ 國家發委員會. “少子女化,” n.d.

https://www.ndc.gov.tw/Content_List.aspx?n=F1A11260E1728490#:~:text=%E7%8F%BE%E9%9A%8E%E6%AE%B5%E6%94%BF%E7%AD%96%E9%87%8D%E9%BB%9E%E5%8C%85,%E5%8D%87%E5%9C%8B%E4%BA%BA%E7%94%9F%E8%82%B2%E6%84%8F%E9%A1%98%E3%80%82.

cause of low fertility rates, as people generally do not immediately associate low fertility issues with high housing prices.²⁵ Our research does not explore the specific effects of various housing policies on birth rates to avoid blurring the focus on Taiwan's low birth rate challenge. However, during interviews, we can ask respondents about their views on the relationship between high housing prices and birth rates.

²⁵ 蔡惠芳. “高房價=低生育？專家提數據打臉 少子化別推給高房價.” 工商時報, February 21, 2024. <https://www.ctee.com.tw/news/20240221700716-430601>.

Methodology

Research Design

This article aims to investigate the birth rate decline in Taiwan, focusing on three aspects: socioeconomic factors, government intervention, and family planning policy. Socioeconomic factors include employment status, education, and social welfare systems. Government intervention includes reproductive policies, health services and fiscal measures. Family planning decisions often include an examination of cultural and social factors that influence attitudes toward family planning. Our goals are to investigate how people perceive the challenges posed by declining fertility in Taiwan, to assess public opinion on the effectiveness of government interventions and policies aimed at addressing fertility issues, and to examine attitudes and behaviors toward family decision-making, particularly deferral or postponement the motivation behind it.

Sources of Data

We are expanding our data sources to enhance the depth and reliability of our research. Our primary indicators include socioeconomic factors, government intervention, and family planning policies. To support our analysis, we utilize Major Article Content from Academic Websites. This guides us on how to properly structure and write our article by providing insights from expert analyses and methodologies.

Access Literature References from Electronic Libraries: These libraries offer convenience, legal access, and a variety of methods to obtain the necessary information, ensuring a comprehensive literature review.

Refer to Publicly Available Government Data: For example, data from the Ministry of Interior will provide accurate statistics that are crucial for our analysis.

Government open data platforms offer a wealth of information that can be leveraged for research.

Conduct Questionnaires and Interviews: To gather detailed information for statistical analysis, we conduct surveys ensuring respondent anonymity to protect their privacy. We use participant codes or fake names to maintain confidentiality

Implement Robust Data Management Practices: Establishing a data-management process and developing a data-collection plan help in preserving participants' confidentiality and ensuring data integrity.

Data Collection

We receive our data through three methods. First of all, we searched academic websites and Google Scholar for information related to Taiwan's low fertility rate, using keywords such as "Fertility Rate," "Economic Challenges," "Government Policies," and "Family Influences" to find relevant literature. From this, we identified and selected the necessary content to reference for writing our research project.

Second, we utilize Google Forms to collect data and distribute questionnaire forms across major social platforms such as Dcard, Facebook and Instagram. The research targets Taiwanese individuals aged 18-65. Because our group consists of four members, we plan to distribute 500 questionnaires. This number is based on our expected response rate and the need to ensure that the results are sufficiently representative and reliable. This approach enables us to collect a large amount of data and enhance the accuracy of our data analysis.

The different variables of the questionnaire are divided into three parts. The first section covers demographic variables, primarily to gather background information from the respondents. The second part contains questions formulated

based on indicators, “the Role of Socioeconomic Factors, Government Interventions, and Family Planning Decisions.” These questions aim to explore various factors that contribute to Taiwan's low birth rate. We try to focus on how socio-economic conditions, government policies, and individual family planning choices affect fertility behavior. The third part involves the factors that may affect the marriage and childbirth issues of young people, and their views on whether young people can better cope with the problem of delaying marriage and childbirth. We mainly want to know the influence of social atmosphere or policies on young people's marriage and childbearing behavior. To sum up, the questionnaire adopts the Likert five-point scale design, consisting of the options "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neutral," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." Respondents are required to select one option that best represents their viewpoint, allowing for efficient data collection without excessive time or effort.

To ensure the appropriateness of the topics for subsequent individual interviews, we first conduct interviews in a focus group format. In this environment of group participation, respondents can feel more relaxed, similar to discussing topics with friends. This approach helps us gain deeper insights into their perspectives on the issues.

We initially plan to recruit two focus groups from our acquaintances, each consisting of 5-8 participants. All participants have completed the questionnaire in advance and have a general understanding of the interview topics. We aim to recruit one group of students and another group of working professionals to ensure a diverse range of genders and perspectives within each group, thereby capturing a broad spectrum of viewpoints. Additionally, we plan to conduct semi-structured interviews with 20 participants who are willing to share their perspectives and provide detailed

information. These interviewees are Taiwanese citizens who have completed the questionnaire and expressed willingness to participate in further interviews.

The selection criteria for participants include a balanced representation of different age groups, genders, and socioeconomic statuses. We also prioritize participants who have shown a strong interest in the topic and provided detailed personal contact information in the questionnaire. The chosen sample size is based on our expectation of obtaining in-depth responses from the participants while maintaining research quality.

By combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, we aim to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research questions, enriching our data analysis and discussion to present more nuanced research findings.

When conducting interviews, we record the responses of the interviewees and take notes to record the key points. All interview content is obtained with consent, and a consent form is prepared for the interviewees to sign. They are also be informed that all content is used solely for the purpose of the research paper.

Tools for Data Analysis

Based on existing literature and research, we realize that the discussion and perception of low fertility in Taiwan involves the following important indicators: fertility rate, economic challenges, government policies, and family impacts.

Therefore, we utilize these indicators to explore the context of low fertility and further subdivide them into more categories under these indicators to help make the research analysis more comprehensive. To collect research data, we use the following methods to complete the research.

(1) Exploratory factor analysis

Our purpose in using exploratory factor analysis is to identify hidden relationships between different items in the data, grouping many related items into a few main categories to make the data easier to understand.

(2) Frequency analysis

We utilize frequency analysis to understand the overall trends in questionnaire responses, allowing us to grasp the basic demographic information of respondents and their perspectives on various issues. Through this analysis, we can gain deeper insights into the distribution of the sample, the background characteristics of the respondents, and their reactions to different questions in the survey. This process helps us identify potential trends and patterns, providing a foundation for further data analysis.

(3) One-way ANOVA

In this study, we use one-way ANOVA to examine whether there are significant differences in attitudes or behaviors based on various demographic factors. For example, we can analyze how age, income, or education level influences views on marriage willingness, family planning, or support for government childcare policies. By employing this method, we aim to identify which variables show significant differences across different groups, helping us better understand how social and demographic factors influence respondents' perceptions and decisions.

(4) Qualitative analysis- Narrative Analysis

We focused on participants' personal stories and life experiences, analyzing the structure and content of their narratives to explore the challenges or major events encountered in their life journeys. For example, some participants shared stories about experiencing gender discrimination at work or facing the pressures of parenting.

These stories provided valuable insights into how such experiences shaped their views on policies and family planning decisions.

(5) Qualitative analysis- Content Analysis

We systematically analyzed the interview texts, calculating and examining the frequency of certain keywords or concepts to identify potential patterns or trends in the data. For instance, terms related to "quality of life" and "workplace gender equality" frequently appeared, indicating that these were common concerns among participants. Content analysis allowed us to quantify the qualitative data, enabling us to identify the most frequently mentioned issues for further exploration.

(6) Qualitative analysis- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

We used IPA to delve into participants' subjective meanings of specific experiences. This analytical approach was particularly suitable for understanding how participants perceive the effects of childbirth, workplace pressure, or policies on their lives. Through detailed interview analysis, we examined how participants balance work and family in their daily lives and cope with related psychological pressures and social expectations. For example, some participants mentioned that due to limited family support, they had to make sacrifices or adjust their work arrangements.

To sum up, we use various analytical methods to study the factors influencing low fertility rates in Taiwan. First, frequency analysis helps us understand respondents' demographic characteristics and perspectives. We then use crosstabulation to explore the relationship between age and attitudes toward marriage and childbearing. Independent samples t-tests compare attitudes toward family planning among different gender or occupational groups. One-way ANOVA assesses how age, income, and education level affect views on marriage and government childcare policies.

Additionally, simple linear regression analyzes the relationship between government childcare subsidies and fertility rates. Qualitative analyses, including narrative and content analysis, provide insights into participants' experiences with issues like gender discrimination and parenting pressures. Through these methods, we aim for a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing fertility decisions.

Data Analysis

We chose to use a mixed-methods approach for collecting and analyzing data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Taiwan's declining birth rate. The quantitative survey helps us capture the overall trends and patterns, while qualitative interviews provide deeper insights into individual experiences and underlying reasons. This approach enhances the reliability and persuasiveness of our findings by cross-referencing data from multiple sources.

For the quantitative portion, we used the statistical software SPSS to organize and analyze the results collected from the questionnaires. For the qualitative portion, we conducted semi-structured interviews. The advantage of this approach is that it allows for a deeper understanding of participants' personal experiences and perspectives. While it follows a basic question framework, it also offers flexibility to ask follow-up questions based on participants' responses.

The research plan integrates the findings from semi-structured interviews with the quantitative data from questionnaires. Through this integration, participants' stories and thoughts provide a richer context for understanding the data. The qualitative insights supplement and explain the statistical trends, enabling a more thorough analysis of the factors contributing to Taiwan's declining birth rate.

Quantitative Research

From August 1 to September 30, 2024, we collected 404 questionnaire responses, of which 403 were valid. Based on statistical tables generated by SPSS, we conducted a more detailed analysis of the data, delving deeper into the survey results to identify factors, key trends, and insights that affect Taiwan's fertility rate, with a particular focus on the influence of socio-economic factors and government policies

on fertility decisions. In the process of generating statistical charts, we employed three analytical methods: exploratory factor analysis, frequency analysis, one-way ANOVA.

First, we performed exploratory factor analysis to examine the underlying structure of the data. The analysis revealed four main factors, which are summarized in Table 1. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.813, indicating that the data is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that there are sufficient correlations between variables to proceed with factor analysis.

Second, we conducted a frequency analysis to gain a preliminary understanding of respondents' demographic information and the distribution of age-related perspectives on family planning and childbearing.

Third, we employed one-way ANOVA to address three research questions: 1. How have attitudes towards marriage and childbearing among people aged 25-34 in Taiwan changed in the last decade? 2. How does the government's promotion of female fertility in Taiwan affect women's workplace status? 3. How do government childcare policies influence fertility decisions among families in Taiwan?

Table 1. Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for Perceptions on Taiwan's Fertility Challenges: The Role of Socioeconomic Factors, Government Interventions, and Family Planning Decisions.

| Factors | Code | Questions | Factor loadings |
|---|--|---|-----------------|
| <i>1. Factors Influencing Willingness to Have Children</i> | <i>Age Pressure</i> | SGF5 How much do you think the pressure of aging affects your decision to have children? | .744 |
| | <i>Policy Impact on Career</i> | SGF3 How much impact do government policies promoting female fertility (such as maternity leave and parental leave) have on your career development and job security? | .703 |
| | <i>Subsidy Impact on Birth Intention 2024</i> | SGF2 How significant is the impact of the government's increase in childcare subsidies in 2024 on your willingness to have children? You may refer to Figures (I) and (II) below. | .640 |
| | <i>Health Status</i> | SGF4 How much do you think the health status of individuals or couples affects your decision to have children? | .614 |
| | <i>Social Expectations on Parenting Role</i> | SGF6 How much do you think societal expectations of parental roles influence your decision to have children? | .581 |
| | <i>Income Influence Birth Intention</i> | SGF1 To what extent do you think having a higher income influences your willingness to have children? | .490 |
| <i>2. Assessment of Factors Influencing Fertility Decisions</i> | <i>Age Pressure</i> | SGF5 How much do you think the pressure of aging affects your decision to have children? | -.428 |
| | <i>Policy Impact on Career</i> | SGF3 How much impact do government policies promoting female fertility (such as maternity leave and parental leave) have on your career development and job security? | .403 |
| | <i>Subsidy Impact on Birth Intention 2024</i> | SGF2 How significant is the impact of the government's increase in childcare subsidies in 2024 on your willingness to have children? You may refer to Figures (I) and (II) below. | .567 |
| | <i>Health Status</i> | SGF4 How much do you think the health status of individuals or couples affects your decision to have children? | -.578 |
| <i>3. External Support and Childbearing Intention</i> | <i>Improved Childcare Services</i> | TBR7 Do you agree that improving childcare services would increase the willingness to have children? | .813 |
| | <i>Education Costs</i> | TBR5 Do you agree that if the cost of education is reduced, the desire to have children will increase? | .808 |
| | <i>Housing Costs</i> | TBR4 Do you agree that if the cost of housing decreases, it will increase the desire to have children? | .737 |
| | <i>Healthcare Costs</i> | TBR6 Do you agree that reducing healthcare costs would increase the willingness to have children? | .731 |
| | <i>Improving Women's Workplace Status</i> | TBR2 Do you agree that if the government can improve women's status in the workplace, it will help improve their "problems affecting marriage" and "reproduction"? | .702 |
| | <i>Social Change on Marriage and Birth Intention</i> | TBR3 Do you agree that changing societal expectations around marriage and childbirth would help enhance the willingness to marry and make decisions about having children? | .666 |
| | <i>Childcare Support Impact</i> | TBR1 Do you agree that if the government can provide families with more childcare support, it will help improve "problems affecting marriage" and "childbirth"? | .628 |
| <i>4. Impact of Social and Institutional Support on Marriage and Childbearing</i> | <i>Improving Women's Workplace Status</i> | TBR2 Do you agree that if the government can improve women's status in the workplace, it will help improve their "problems affecting marriage" and "reproduction"? | .509 |
| | <i>Social Change on Marriage and Birth Intention</i> | TBR3 Do you agree that changing societal expectations around marriage and childbirth would help enhance the willingness to marry and make decisions about having children? | .442 |
| | <i>Childcare Support Impact</i> | TBR1 Do you agree that if the government can provide families with more childcare support, it will help improve "problems affecting marriage" and "childbirth"? | .463 |

Source: From the researcher

The following content was generated by ChatGPT and has been adjusted and modified accordingly.

Based on a survey of 403 respondents in Taiwan, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis that revealed four major challenges related to childbirth in Taiwan: "Factors Influencing Childbirth Willingness," "Evaluation of Childbirth Decision Factors," "External Support and Childbirth Willingness," and "Impact of Social and Institutional Support on Marriage and Childbirth."

The first factor, "Factors Influencing Childbirth Willingness," focuses on age pressure, health conditions, income levels, and policy support. Items like "Age Pressure" (factor loading = 0.744) and "Impact of the 2024 Childcare Subsidy" (factor loading = 0.640) indicate that many respondents are concerned about how increasing age might reduce their chances of having children, and whether government subsidies can alleviate the financial burden of raising a child. This is particularly significant for respondents of childbearing age who have not yet had children, as their health conditions and income stability become crucial considerations. The data show that in addition to age pressure, Taiwan's younger generation is also concerned about whether their living costs and health conditions are sufficient to support raising children.

The second factor, "Evaluation of Childbirth Decision Factors," emphasizes the balance respondents make between government policy support and health conditions. Items such as "Impact of the 2024 Childcare Subsidy" (factor loading = 0.567) and "Health Conditions" (factor loading = -0.578) demonstrate the concerns of Taiwan's younger generation regarding childbirth. Despite increased subsidies and policy support from the government, health conditions remain a key factor affecting childbirth willingness. It is clear that childbirth decisions not only depend on

economic support but also on personal health conditions, which play a significant role in influencing childbirth willingness.

The third factor, "External Support and Childbirth Willingness," primarily focuses on the impact of housing, education, and medical costs on childbirth willingness. High-loading items such as "Improving Childcare Services" (factor loading = 0.813), "Reducing Education Costs" (factor loading = 0.808), and "Housing Costs" (factor loading = 0.737) indicate that Taiwan's younger generation is generally facing economic pressures, leading to hesitation in their childbirth decisions. Reducing housing and education costs seems to be key to increasing childbirth willingness.

The fourth factor, "Impact of Social and Institutional Support on Marriage and Childbirth," reflects the expectations of Taiwanese society regarding marriage and parenting roles, and explores the impact of government policies aimed at improving women's workplace status and childcare support. Items like "Government Improving Women's Workplace Status" (factor loading = 0.509) and "Changing Social Expectations for Marriage and Childbirth" (factor loading = 0.442) reveal that Taiwan's younger generation expects modern family structures to be more inclusive and hopes for a more accepting view of marriage and parenting roles in society, thereby further promoting childbirth willingness.

All in all, the childbirth willingness of Taiwan's younger generation is influenced by multiple factors such as economic pressures, health conditions, policy support, and social perceptions. This indicates that single economic subsidies or policies cannot fully resolve the issue of low birth rates. Policymakers need to comprehensively consider these factors and address them from multiple perspectives, including economic support, health security, and changes in social attitudes, to create

a more child-friendly environment. These findings provide important insights for policy adjustments and can help design more concrete and effective measures.

Frequencies and Percentages of the Age of Respondents

Based on the data analysis, significant differences in age distribution are evident among respondents, with those aged 35 to 49 occupying the largest proportion, totaling 141 individuals or 35% of the sample. This age group has generally reached a stable phase in their careers, is more likely to have established families, and may be actively considering issues related to childbirth and family planning. Typically, respondents in this age range possess stable income and employment, which grants them greater financial security and confidence. Consequently, they may have more interest in issues like family planning and childbearing. According to the data, 35.7% of respondents have chosen to have two children, aligning with Taiwan's traditional cultural ideal of a "one boy, one girl" family model, which provides companionship for the children while also balancing economic considerations.

Respondents aged 50 to 65 constitute the second largest group, with 122 people or 30.3% of the total. This age group has largely completed their childbearing years and is in a mature stage of family life. They may have specific perspectives on family policy and social support. While their likelihood of having more children is low, they are likely more concerned with issues relating to the upbringing of their children or grandchildren and may advocate for policy support to alleviate financial pressures on future generations.

The 18 to 24 age group accounts for 26.1% of respondents, totaling 105 individuals. These young respondents are at an exploratory career stage, with most not

yet settled into stable employment or family life. Although their immediate interest in having children is low, their responses provide insight into emerging attitudes toward future childbearing. Modern youth are inclined to delay marriage and parenthood, prioritizing personal development and quality of life.

In contrast, the 25 to 34 age group includes only 35 respondents, representing just 8.7% of the total, making it the smallest demographic group. The low representation among this age group may reflect a generally lower interest in childbearing. Many in this stage are in the early phases of their careers, focusing more on personal growth, career progression, and lifestyle quality rather than family-building or childbearing. Consequently, their interest in marriage and parenting may be low, aligning with shifting societal values that favor self-fulfillment and stable career development before family responsibilities.

Overall, these statistics highlight the varying levels of interest in childbearing across age groups. Older respondents, particularly those aged 35 to 49, are more likely to be in an optimal stage for family formation and child-rearing, with real needs for family planning and support. Meanwhile, younger respondents appear to be more influenced by contemporary values, often choosing to delay childbearing to prioritize personal and career achievements. This phenomenon reflects a shift in social values, illustrating evolving childbearing behaviors across age groups in contemporary society

Changes in Taiwanese Attitudes towards Marriage and Childbirth

The following content was generated by ChatGPT and has been adjusted and modified accordingly.

For Research Question 1, "how have attitudes towards marriage and childbearing among people aged 25-34 in Taiwan changed in the last decade?", the analysis shows that there are some differences in young Taiwanese adults' views on social and government support. TBR_fac1 and TBR_fac2 respectively measure respondents' agreement on whether improvements in social and economic support would increase their willingness to marry and have children.

In TBR_fac1 (relating to childcare support, such as affordable childcare services and reduced educational expenses), the statistical analysis reveals no significant differences in perceptions across age groups regarding the adequacy of such support, with $F(3, 399) = 0.882, p = 0.451$. This indicates that attitudes toward childcare support are largely similar across age groups. Nevertheless, descriptive data suggest that younger adults aged 25-34 tend to perceive the support as more adequate, possibly reflecting higher expectations for future family support among this age group.

In TBR_fac2 (focusing on broader social support, such as promoting women's status in the workplace and shifting marriage expectations), the results also show no significant differences, with $F(3, 399) = 1.289, p = 0.278$, indicating that views on the impact of social support on marriage and childbearing decisions are similarly consistent across age groups. Overall, young adults in Taiwan aged 25-34 exhibit attitudes towards marriage and childbearing that vary with their perceptions of social and government support. When young adults in Taiwan feel higher levels of family and societal support, their attitudes towards marriage and childbearing become more positive. This suggests that with improvements in childcare, educational funding, and social equity, younger people may be more likely to hold favorable views on marriage and starting a family.

The Impact of Government Promotion of Female Fertility on Workplace Status

The following content was generated by ChatGPT and has been adjusted and modified accordingly.

Based on the results of the one-way ANOVA, we can address Research Question 2: How does the government's promotion of female fertility in Taiwan affect women's workplace status?

In the ANOVA analysis focusing on TBR_fac1 (the primary factor concerning the impact of government policy on fertility willingness), the between-group sum of squares was 128.603, with 4 degrees of freedom, an F-value of 109.892, and a significance p-value of 0.000. This indicates a significant difference in fertility willingness among different groups. The estimated effect size (Eta-squared) was 0.525, meaning approximately 52.5% of the variance can be explained by differences between groups, highlighting the substantial impact of the policy.

Further post-hoc tests (Tukey HSD) revealed specific differences among the groups. For instance, the average difference in fertility willingness between the "strongly agree" and "agree" groups was significant (mean difference of -1.31109, $p < 0.001$), indicating that groups with stronger support exhibited a greater willingness to have children.

In TBR_fac2 (which involves the influence of social expectations on fertility decisions), the between-group sum of squares was 276.211, with 4 degrees of freedom, an F-value of 331.379, and a significance p-value of 0.000. This indicates that changes in social expectations also significantly influence fertility willingness. The effect size (Eta-squared) reached 0.769, demonstrating a strong impact of social factors on fertility willingness.

To sum up, if the government can further enhance women's status in the workplace, it positively influences their views on marriage and childbirth. Effective policies can not only provide economic support but also foster social and cultural recognition of women's roles, ultimately leading to an increase in fertility rates. These research findings underscore the potential impact of government initiatives on boosting fertility rates and the importance of women's workplace status. Future policies should focus more on enhancing support systems for women in the workplace and encouraging businesses to create more accommodating work environments to promote increased willingness to marry and have children.

The Impact of Childcare Policies on Fertility Decisions in Taiwan

The following content was generated by ChatGPT and has been adjusted and modified accordingly.

Based on the results of the one-way ANOVA, we can address Research Question 3: How do government childcare policies influence fertility decisions among families in Taiwan?

Government childcare policies significantly influence fertility decisions among families in Taiwan, playing a crucial role in addressing the country's low birth rate. According to variance analysis, the degree of policy support is closely related to families' fertility intentions. The data on fertility intention (SGF_fac1) reveals significant differences across groups with varying levels of perceived policy assistance ($F = 15.453, p = 0.000$). Further analysis showed that higher levels of policy support corresponded to stronger fertility intentions; for example, the group that found the policy "extremely helpful" had a higher average score (4.3961) compared to the group that found it "not helpful at all" (3.1816).

In terms of fertility decision-making (SGF_fac2), the results also indicate a significant effect ($F = 6.184, p = 0.000$). Families receiving “considerable” or “extreme” policy support are more likely to consider having children. This is further supported by multiple comparison tests, showing that the average score of the “extremely helpful” group (2.9441) is higher than that of the “not helpful at all” group (2.4177).

Effect size analysis through ANOVA reinforces these findings. For fertility intentions, the Eta-squared value of 0.134 indicates that policy support explains 13.4% of the variance, which is considered a moderate effect in social science research. Although the effect on fertility decisions is smaller (Eta-squared = 0.059), it still demonstrates a meaningful impact. This suggests that while policies alone may not fully reverse the trend of low fertility, they do positively influence family choices to have children.

Overall, the findings indicate that enhancing government childcare policies—especially by increasing the level of assistance—can effectively boost fertility intentions and behavior. However, policymakers must also consider differences in how families perceive and respond to these policies. Ensuring flexibility and accessibility in policy implementation are essential to maximizing their effectiveness.

Summary of Major Findings

This section highlights key insights on young Taiwanese attitudes toward marriage, childbearing, and the impact of government policies.

1. The findings reveal a notable shift in young Taiwanese attitudes toward marriage and childbearing, with an increasing proportion choosing to delay or forgo these commitments due to shifting social values and growing economic pressures.

2. Young people's attitudes toward marriage and childbearing are influenced by social support and government policies, such as affordable childcare services and enhanced workplace rights for women, which in turn boost their willingness to marry and have children.

3. The research indicates that government policies promoting female fertility have positively impacted women's dual roles in work and family by providing economic support and social recognition, helping women achieve better work-family balance.

4. Findings show that stronger childcare policies are closely associated with higher fertility intentions, suggesting that offering more supportive childcare options can encourage young people to consider having children.

5. The study emphasizes that policies should align with young people's evolving family and career priorities, adopting multifaceted approaches to enhance support systems, promote gender equality, and improve family welfare policies. Such strategies are essential to address the economic and social factors affecting marriage and fertility attitudes, fostering a more favorable environment for family-building in Taiwan.

Qualitative Research

In the qualitative analysis section, we utilized "individual interviews" and "focus group" discussions to complement the quantitative findings. Unlike the closed-ended questions in the survey, the open-ended questions in the interviews allowed participants to share their insights in greater depth. The interview questions focused on three areas: "socio-economic factors", "government intervention", and "family planning decisions". Our interviewees came from various professional backgrounds,

including students, factory workers, office employees, and police officers, covering different socio-economic levels. This diversity helped reflect the views of different groups on government childcare and maternity leave policies, as well as the challenges in balancing family and career responsibilities.

In our qualitative analysis, we used three methods: narrative analysis, content analysis, and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). These methods helped us explore participants' experiences and perspectives in depth. By looking at narratives, patterns in the content, and the personal meanings behind experiences, we gained a well-rounded understanding of how different social groups view marriage, fertility, and workplace policies. This approach also revealed the reasons behind these views.

The Process of Interviews

Before the formal interviews, we designed a set of interview questions mainly focused on socioeconomic factors, government intervention measures, and the impact of family planning. Most respondents preferred face-to-face interviews over online interviews. Once the interview time and location were agreed upon, we began the interviews. Individual interviews lasted approximately 15 to 20 minutes, while group interviews lasted around 30 to 45 minutes. At the beginning of each interview, we informed the respondents in advance that we would be using a mobile phone to record the interview to ensure a complete record of the content, and that all recordings would only be used for research purposes.

During the interview, we referred to the interview questions while carefully listening to the respondents' answers. If their responses were too brief, we would guide them and ask follow-up questions to delve deeper into their perspectives.

Table 2. Lists of the Interviewees

| Interviewees | Age | Gender | Position | Job Description | Date / Time |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|----------------|---|---------------------------|
| A | 27 | Female | Factory worker | Factory packer | 2024/09/23 20:00-20:20 |
| B | 31 | Female | Operator | Factory operator | 2024/09/22 21:00-21:30 |
| C | 29 | Female | Technician | Public institution technician | 2024/09/21 22:00-22:30 |
| D | 30 | Male | Police officer | General administrative police | 2024/9/20 12:10-12:20 |
| E | 25 | Male | Police officer | General administrative police | 2024/9/20 12:25-12:35 |
| F | 29 | Female | Police officer | General administrative police | 2024/9/20 12:40-12:45 |
| G | 35 | Male | Police officer | General administrative police | 2024/9/20 12:50-13:00 |
| H | 21 | Female | Student | senior | 2024/8/18 21:15-21:26 |
| I | 22 | Male | Student | senior / administrative intern | 2024/9/20 16:27-16:41 |
| J | 22 | Male | Student | senior | 2024/8/22 19:21-19:56 |
| K | 21 | Male | Student | senior/ administrative intern | 2024/9/19 16:41-17:02 |
| Group 1 (Student) | 20 | Female | Student | senior/ intern in bank | 2024/9/17 20:30-21:15 |
| | 22 | Female | Student | senior/ intern in hospital | |
| | 21 | Male | Student | senior/ intern in Fitness and Recreation Center | |
| | 21 | Female | Student | senior/ intern in construction company | |
| | 21 | Female | Student | senior/ intern in technology company | |
| Group 2 (employee) | 23 | Female | senior staff | chain beverage store clerk | 2024/9/11 23:25-24:00 |
| | 25 | Female | junior manager | Taiwan chain hot pot restaurant | |
| | 21 | Female | assistant | Kaohsiung talking bar | |
| | 22 | Male | senior staff | Well-known chain of mass merchandisers | |
| | 21 | Female | assistant | Kaohsiung talking bar | |

Source: From the researcher

Individual Interview

In addition to the questionnaire survey mentioned above, we also used interviews to supplement the quantitative analysis. Regarding the interview process, a total of 21 participants were interviewed, with 11 taking part in individual interviews, while the remaining 10 were divided into two groups for focus group interviews. Specifically, we use the semi-structured interview, combining a set of guiding questions with the flexibility to explore further based on participants' responses.

The following is the data collected through individual interviews. We categorized the interviewees into three occupational groups. The first group is normal workers, the second is public sector employees, and the third is students.

One of the key themes from the interviews was financial pressures. According to feedback from the majority of participants, socioeconomic factors (such as income, education, and employment situation) play a crucial role in their decision-making about having children. The costs associated with having children include baby essentials (such as formula and diapers), educational expenses (tuition and extracurricular activities), loans (mortgages and car payments), and general living expenses (travel, food, clothing), all of which are seen as a heavy burden. Many respondents believe that a monthly household income of NT\$40,000 to NT\$60,000 is barely enough to cover these daily expenses.

One respondent, a father with children who is also a police officer, specifically mentioned that beyond the basic expenses of raising a child, he is concerned about the quality of education. With the declining birth rate, some schools may lower their admission standards to maintain enrollment rates, allowing children from troubled families to attend. This father worries that his children could be negatively influenced by these peers, which might impact the quality of their education.

Another key social factor is employment. Many respondents indicated that they would not consider having children if their jobs were unstable. Some respondents are still students and have yet to plan their careers, which also lowers their willingness to have children. Others mentioned that their career advancement opportunities are limited, and their salaries are difficult to increase, making long-term family planning challenging. Even respondents with relatively stable jobs, such as civil servants, face challenges in balancing work and family time.

Under government intervention, we interviewed participants about whether government subsidies and policies influence birth rates. Regarding subsidies, some respondents mentioned that although the government provides monthly child-rearing allowances, they felt that the amount was not significantly helpful. Additionally, some respondents who have not yet had children were not familiar with the details of these subsidies, so they had no personal experience or knowledge about them. As for policies, such as workplace gender equality and parental leave, most respondents indicated that these policies did not have a significant impact on their current situation. Therefore, they did not have strong opinions on how these policies affect birth-related issues.

Early family planning policies were indeed effective in controlling Taiwan's population growth, helping to alleviate population pressure at that time. However, with the changing demographic structure, modern family planning policies have shifted to focus on encouraging childbirth to address the economic and social pressures brought about by population aging and low birth rates.

Today's policies, particularly those addressing the issue of declining birth rates, emphasize providing childcare subsidies, childcare services, and support measures for balancing work and family to ease the financial burden on young

parents. Despite adjustments in modern policies, they still struggle to fully address current economic challenges, especially the rising cost of living and workplace competition, which make younger generations more cautious about having children.

In interviews, many respondents mentioned that although financial assistance has increased, it remains insufficient compared to the actual costs of raising a child. As a result, many families choose to delay or abandon their plans to have children due to economic pressures. Respondents also pointed out that modern economic pressures have become more complex and severe compared to the past. While past economic pressures mainly centered on basic needs such as food and housing, modern pressures involve a wider range of factors, including high housing prices and education costs. Many young people noted that rising prices and housing costs make it difficult for them to bear the financial burden of raising children. In the past, a single income could support a family, but today, most families need two incomes to barely maintain their standard of living. This has made the younger generation more cautious about having children, even leading to the postponement or abandonment of childbirth plans to avoid falling into economic hardship.

In summary, according to the interview results, the key factors influencing Taiwanese families' decisions to have children can be categorized into three areas: socioeconomic factors, government intervention, and family planning, with socioeconomic factors being the most significant. The cost of raising children is substantial, and many respondents believe that a monthly personal income of NT\$40,000 to NT\$60,000 is barely sufficient. The impact of government-provided childcare subsidies and related policies on fertility decisions is limited, as financial support is inadequate, and awareness of these policies is low. Additionally, job stability affects fertility intentions. Even those with stable public sector jobs often

struggle to balance work and family life. High living costs, rising housing prices, and workplace pressure lead young families to be more cautious about having children, with many delaying or abandoning plans to start a family.

Focus Group Interview

Here are the interview results from two focus groups. The first group consisted of university students from Kaohsiung, who generally expressed a negative attitude towards having children. They recognized the issue of declining birth rates and the growing challenges of an aging society. The participants believed that a minimum monthly income of NT\$50,000 to NT\$60,000 is needed to cover basic childcare expenses. Although they were aware of government childcare subsidies, they felt these policies had little impact on their willingness to have children. Subsidies only help ease the initial financial burden, while long-term expenses such as education and housing remain significant challenges.

In addition to financial concerns, other factors such as the fear of childbirth and gender identity also influenced their decisions about having children. For example, one female respondent mentioned that although she loves children, she is afraid of the childbirth process and thus prefers not to have kids. A homosexual respondent said that if surrogacy were legal in Taiwan, he would consider having a child through a surrogate mother.

Regarding whether government subsidies could stimulate childbirth, the respondents believed that while subsidies might help, their impact would be limited. Young people today generally prioritize personal development and quality of life, with a focus on financial independence and a refined lifestyle, which outweighs the desire for children. Compared to the older generation, the younger generation values

personal freedom and financial stability more, reflecting a shift in social attitudes.

This indicates that financial incentives alone may not address the deeper societal and cultural factors influencing low fertility rates.

The respondents were also generally aware of the societal impact of Taiwan's low birth rate, particularly in the education system and labor market. The younger generation is expected to bear more responsibility for elderly care as the population ages, and as the workforce shrinks, the social burden grows. The economic pressures and personal goals faced by young people are key factors influencing their decision on whether or not to have children.

The second group consisted of five working professionals from Kaohsiung, all of whom currently had no desire to have children. They understood the issue of declining birth rates as being driven by the fact that raising children is both time-consuming and expensive. The respondents estimated that raising a child would require at least NT\$60,000 per month, which would cover basic living expenses, education costs, insurance, mortgage, or rent—putting a significant strain on most families.

Despite the government's provision of childcare subsidies and services, the respondents felt that these policies did little to affect their willingness to have children. They believed that government assistance could not alleviate the immense effort and financial burden that comes with raising a child. Even if some subsidies could ease financial stress, respondents feared that their quality of life would suffer, leading many to choose not to have children. Regarding challenges in the workplace, some female respondents mentioned that pregnancy could affect their career advancement, and women were often expected to take on more administrative or supportive roles, while men were assigned more challenging and promotable tasks.

As for generational differences in views on marriage and childbirth, the respondents felt that compared to their parents' generation, modern young people are more focused on personal development and quality of life, with less pressure to marry and have children. The societal impact of low birth rates is becoming increasingly evident, with more foreign workers entering the workforce while the number of Taiwanese employees declines, reflecting shifts in Taiwan's labor supply.

The main factors influencing the respondents' attitudes toward marriage and childbirth included financial pressures and family responsibilities. In addition, some respondents mentioned that a love for children and the desire to start a family were reasons for wanting children, while financial stress and concerns about quality of life were major reasons for choosing not to have children.

From the two focus groups, it is evident that both university students and working professionals share similar attitudes toward low willingness to have children. Both groups generally believe that the financial burden of raising children is too heavy, estimating that at least NT\$50,000 to NT\$60,000 per month is required for childcare expenses. They also feel that government subsidies have limited impact on increasing their willingness to have children. Additionally, they prioritize personal development and quality of life, considering financial stability and lifestyle freedom more important than childbearing. This attitude reflects the impact of Taiwan's low birth rate on society, especially in the labor market and the increasing burden of elderly care.

However, there are differences in the reasons for childbearing between the two groups. University students mentioned that gender identity and fear of childbirth also influence their decisions about having children. For instance, one homosexual respondent noted that if surrogacy were legal in Taiwan, he would consider having a

child. On the other hand, working professionals are more concerned with workplace challenges, particularly female respondents who pointed out that pregnancy could affect career advancement and that gender role inequality still exists in job assignments.

In conclusion, both groups of respondents believe that economic pressure and the pursuit of quality of life are the main reasons for their reluctance to have children, and they agree that government subsidies are insufficient to effectively stimulate childbirth. However, working professionals are more focused on practical challenges in the workplace, especially the balance between women's reproductive rights and career development, while university students are more influenced by personal fears and gender identity issues. Therefore, policies aimed at increasing the birth rate should not only address economic concerns but also consider social, cultural, and workplace-related challenges.

Mixed Methods Integration and Analysis

Economic Issues: Survey data shows that economic pressure is a major reason why young people in Taiwan are delaying or choosing not to have children. Interviews provide more details, highlighting specific financial burdens, like costs for childcare, education, and housing loans. Respondents also shared the minimum income they believe they would need to handle these expenses, which reveals the financial limits that affect their family planning decisions.

Gaps Between Policy and Public Awareness: Although survey data shows that policies such as childcare subsidies positively impact fertility intentions, interview results indicate that many respondents lack detailed knowledge of these policies and generally feel that current subsidies are insufficient to significantly ease the financial

burden of child-rearing. This points to a gap between policy design and public understanding, which in turn affects policy effectiveness.

Career and Employment Factors: Quantitative results indicate that government policies supporting women's dual roles in the workplace and family can help facilitate family planning. However, interviews further reveal specific workplace challenges, such as potential limits on women's career advancement and workplace role expectations. Even those with stable employment often struggle to balance work and family responsibilities.

Impact of Job Instability and Gender Roles on Family Planning: Students with uncertain career paths and professionals concerned about gender inequalities in the workplace illustrate specific barriers that might not be visible in survey data alone. These insights can be used to support a recommendation that policies not only focus on economic aid but also include initiatives that improve job security and address gender equality.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study aims to explore the root causes of Taiwan's current low fertility rate, with a particular focus on the impact of socio-economic factors, government policies, and family planning on individuals' fertility decisions. In recent years, many countries around the world have faced declining fertility rates, especially in developed Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The fertility rates in these countries have dropped to some of the lowest levels globally, affecting the balance of population structures. Taiwan, as one of the countries with the lowest fertility rates, is facing serious challenges related to population decline.

To fully understand this issue, we adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods for data collection and analysis. In terms of data collection, we designed a questionnaire to gather respondents' views and feelings on fertility intentions, family planning, and government policies. A total of 403 valid questionnaires were collected. Additionally, we conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions. We interviewed 11 individuals and held two focus group discussions with a total of 10 participants.

The study found that, whether through questionnaires or interviews, respondents generally placed more emphasis on socio-economic factors, particularly income. Modern individuals are more focused on self-care and quality of life, believing that they would only consider having children when their personal conditions are favorable. As for government policies, respondents typically only paid attention to the benefits provided by the government when they needed family subsidies. Otherwise, most people did not actively seek or care about these policies.

In light of the global trend of declining birth rates, where many developed countries now have fertility rates below replacement level, it is crucial to recognize

that this issue extends beyond Taiwan. Countries experiencing low birth rates face similar challenges, such as aging populations leading to labor shortages and economic stagnation. While immigration may offer a potential solution, it often encounters political resistance.²⁶

Therefore, we suggest adopting more diverse strategies for promoting government policies. Respondents generally expressed concerns about insufficient subsidies and gender challenges in the workplace, suggesting a multi-faceted approach to address these issues. Specifically, they recommended combining economic support with legal reforms to promote gender equality and provide young people with more accessible and diverse career options. Specifically, using social media platforms frequently visited by young people for promotion, along with offline promotional activities. Additionally, broadcasting advertisements related to subsidies on television could help inform middle-aged groups who often watch TV for news, ensuring that they understand the government's fertility support policies. By doing so, the policies can be more widely communicated to different target groups, enhancing the promotion of fertility-related policies. This would help more people become aware of the benefits offered by the government, especially child-rearing allowances and childcare services.

To effectively address Taiwan's low fertility rate, we recommend drawing on Japan's Kurumin certification system. Firstly, this system helps reduce workplace pressure on women after childbirth, allowing them to better balance work and family responsibilities while minimizing the risk of career interruptions. Additionally, supportive childcare policies can enhance women's job satisfaction, encouraging them

²⁶ MOTOKO, RICH. "Can the Government Get People to Have More Babies?" The New York Times, October 17, 2024. <https://cn.nytimes.com/world/20241017/birth-rate-fertility-policy-japan/zh-hant/dual/>.

to actively participate in their careers, which in turn influences their willingness to have children.

Implementing these measures also promotes gender equality. When men are encouraged to take part in childcare and enjoy similar leave entitlements, it helps break traditional gender role expectations. Despite the limited effectiveness of current policies in raising birth rates, implementing high-quality childcare services and flexible work arrangements can enhance women's job satisfaction and influence their willingness to have children. Establishing childcare facilities and other supportive measures within companies can make it easier for women to manage their childcare needs and reduce the likelihood of resigning due to lack of support.

Furthermore, adopting measures similar to the Kurumin certification system can not only effectively alleviate the pressure on families related to childcare but also improve women's experiences and status in the workplace, ultimately helping to increase Taiwan's fertility rate.

In summary, addressing the issue of low fertility rates in Taiwan requires multifaceted efforts. This involves not only tackling socioeconomic challenges but also actively promoting more inclusive and accessible government policies. By implementing measures like the family support welfare certification system and raising awareness about these benefits, Taiwan can create an environment where people feel more supported in balancing work and family life.

In the end, strengthening gender equality in both the workplace and at home can drive social change and encourage more families to consider having children. While significant improvements in low fertility rates may not be achieved in the short term, there is hope that through collective efforts, we can alleviate the problem of population decline.

Appendix A

Questionnaire

對台灣生育率挑戰的看法：

社會經濟因素、政府干預因素及家庭計劃決策因素的影響

親愛的參與者

大家好，我們是文藻外語大學-國際事務系的學生。本研究旨在了解台灣生育率偏低的原因。具體而言，本研究將探討人們的經濟狀況、政府政策及家庭計畫工作等因素如何影響此現象。本問卷的目標年齡範圍為 18 至 65 歲。本問卷約需 10-15 分鐘即可完成。我們承諾尊重您的隱私權。您提供的所有資訊都會保密，並僅用於研究目的。您的個人身分將受到嚴格保護，不會在任何報告中公開。請確保您在填寫問卷時保持專注，以確保答覆的準確性。如果您有任何問題或需要進一步說明，請在問卷調查結束前提供您的意見或聯絡資訊，我們將樂意為您提供協助。

感謝您的參與！

文藻外語大學國際事務系

指導教授：焦源鳴 教授

學生：何國禎、鄭黎方、黃雅群、莊博崑

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一、基本資料

1. 請問您的生理性別？生理男 生理女
2. 請問您的年齡？18 - 24 歲 25 - 34 歲 35 - 49 歲 50 - 65 歲
3. 請問您的教育程度？高中以下 高中畢業 大學畢業 碩士及以上
4. 請問您的職業類別？學生 全職工作者 兼職工作者 待業 退休
5. 請問您的個人月收入？低於 \$30,000 新台幣 \$30,001 ~ \$40,000 新台幣 \$40,001 ~ \$50,000 新台幣 \$50,001 ~ \$60,000 新台幣 \$60,001 ~ \$70,000 新台幣 \$70,001 ~ \$80,000 新台幣 高於 \$80,000 新台幣
6. 請問您的婚姻狀況？已婚 未婚 離婚 同居 分居
7. 請問您有幾位孩子？0 位 1 位 2 位 3 位含以上
8. 請目前居住範圍問您的目前居住範圍？市區 鄉鎮

二、基本資料社會經濟因素/政府干預/家庭計劃決定問題

1. 擁有較高的收入在多大程度上會影響您生育的意願？12345
2. 您認為在家庭裡,一個人月薪需要多少才能生小孩？27,000 ~ 39,999
40,000 ~ 54,999 55,000 ~ 69,999 70,000 ~ 84,999 85,000 ~ 99,999 100,000 (含)以上
3. 2024 年政府增加托育補助，對於生育意願有多大影響？可參考以下圖

(一)、(二) 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□



Figure 1 : 2024 Birth Subsidies by County and City



2024生育補助總整理

Figure 2 : 2024 Summary of Birth Subsidies

4. 促進女性生育的政府政策(例如產假、育嬰假)在您的職涯發展與工作保障有

多大影響？ 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

5. 您認為目前政府的育兒政策對於解決低出生率問題的成效多大？

1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

6. 您認為個人或夫婦的健康狀況在您生育的決定上影響多大？

1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

7. 您認為年齡增長的壓力在您生育的決定上影響多大？ 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

8. 您認為社會對父母角色的期望在您生育的決定上影響多大？

1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

9. 您認為這三個面向之中哪一項最影響您的生育決策？

社會經濟因素 (收入、教育水平、就業情況) 政府干預(生育、托嬰政策)
家庭計劃(生育計畫、預算規劃、家庭角色分配)

三、台灣生育率挑戰 問題

1. 您認為現今政府對「育兒津貼」的支持是否足以減輕父母的經濟負擔？

1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

2. 您是否同意，如果政府能為家庭提供更多托兒支援，將有助於改善「影響結婚」和「生育的問題」？

極度不同意 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□ 極度同意

3. 您是否同意，如果政府能夠提高婦女在職場中的地位，將有助於改善他們「影響結婚」和「生育的問題」？

極度不同意 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□ 極度同意

4. 您是否同意，如果社會改變對結婚和生育的期望，將有助於提升「結婚意願」、「生育決策」？

極度不同意 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□ 極度同意

5. 您是否同意，如果住房成本降低，會提升生育子女的意願？

極度不同意 1 2 3 4 5 極度同意

6. 您是否同意，如果教育費用降低，會提升生育子女的意願？

極度不同意 1 2 3 4 5 極度同意

7. 您是否同意，如果醫療保健費用降低，會提升生育子女的意願？

極度不同意 1 2 3 4 5 極度同意

8. 您是否同意，如果托兒服務得到改善，會提升生育子女的意願？

1 2 3 4 5 極度同意

四、訪談意願

1. 您是否願意參加進一步的訪談，以幫助我們更好地瞭解您的生育決定和相關經驗？(訪談時間約 20-30 分鐘)。是 否

五、訪談資訊

1. 您傾向於哪一種訪談方式？ 面對面訪談 線上視訊或電話訪談

2. 請提供您的聯絡資訊 (如電子郵件、電話號碼或 LINE ID)，以便我們安排訪談。

Appendix B

Interview Questions

一、基本資料

1. 請問您居住在哪？（縣市）
2. 請問您的職業是？
3. （未生）請問現階段的您是否有生育的意願？（是/否）

二、認知和理解

1. 請問您有聽過少子化嗎？那你對少子化的理解是什麼呢？
2. 您認為一個人一個月至少要賺多少錢才能養得起小孩？為什麼？
3. 您對政府的育兒政策（如育兒補貼、托育服務等）有什麼看法？
4. 你認為政府補助真的能刺激生育嗎？
5. 您認為這些政策是否充分解決了女性在平衡職業理想與計劃生育方面面臨的挑戰？

6. 您覺得現在 25-35 歲的族群對結婚和生育的看法與您父母那一代有什麼不同？

7. 您對於台灣低生育率的議題有什麼感受或想法？

三、個人影響和決定

1. 您是否曾經因為性別而在職場中面臨歧視或不公平對待？如果有，請分享您的經驗。

2. 您覺得哪些因素影響了您對婚姻和生育的態度？

3. 您認為現今人們會想生或不想生的原因各是甚麼

Appendix C

Interviewers Responses

一、基本資料

1. 請問您居住在哪？（縣市）

南投

2. 請問您的職業是？

工廠包裝人員

3. （未生）請問現階段的您是否有生育的意願？（是/否）

結婚：對於結婚持「順其自然」的態度。

生育：目前因經濟能力不足，不考慮生育。

二、認知和理解

1. 請問您有聽過少子化嗎？那你對少子化的理解是什麼呢？

受訪者認為，少子化的主要原因是經濟發展導致家庭結構變小，過去大家庭能互相幫忙養育孩子，但現在的小家庭缺乏這樣的支持系統，且經濟壓力較大。

2. 您認為一個人一個月至少要賺多少錢才能養得起小孩？為什麼？

認為養育一個孩子每月至少需要 4-5 萬新台幣的收入。

主要花費包括奶粉錢、尿布錢以及上學的費用。受訪者會先進行經濟規劃，確定能負擔這些支出後再考慮生育。

3. 您對政府的育兒政策（如育兒補貼、托育服務等）有什麼看法？

受訪者不確定政府補助金的實際效用，但認為目前的補助偏少，無法真正解決

奶粉、尿布等日常開支的壓力。

4. 你認為政府補助真的能刺激生育嗎？

認為現行的補助政策對刺激生育作用不大，生育決策更多取決於個人經濟規劃，而非補助政策。

5. 您認為這些政策是否充分解決了女性在平衡職業理想與計劃生育方面面臨的挑戰？

受訪者認為現有的政府政策無法有效解決女性在平衡職業理想與生育規劃中的挑戰。大多數人仍然選擇生育 1-2 個孩子，因為育兒成本較高，且缺乏足夠的支持系統。

6. 您覺得現在 25-35 歲的族群對結婚和生育的看法與您父母那一代有什麼不同？

父母輩認為年齡到了就應該結婚，但年輕一代更注重賺錢和經濟自由，不願被孩子「綁住」。

現代年輕人對婚姻和生育的態度較為開放與靈活，不再遵循傳統觀念。

7. 您對於台灣低生育率的議題有什麼感受或想法？

受訪者在日常生活中未感受到太大影響，但注意到許多大學因少子化而關閉，台灣已進入高齡化社會，扶養比增加。

認為年輕人的經濟負擔會逐漸加重，未來撫養長輩的壓力會更大。

三、個人影響和決定

1. 您是否曾經因為性別而在職場中面臨歧視或不公平對待？如果有，請分享您的經驗。

受訪者表示自己未在職場中遇到性別歧視。

身邊的孕婦在職場中相對比較吃虧，因為懷孕導致公司需要安排替代人手，增加了麻煩。

2. 您覺得哪些因素影響了您對婚姻和生育的態度？

受身邊婚姻失敗例子的影響，對生育持較為保守的態度，特別是在看到有些家庭中，父親不參與育兒，母親承擔大部分責任後，對生育更為謹慎。

3. 您認為現今人們會想生或不想生的原因各是甚麼

不想生育的原因：

- 主要原因是經濟壓力，包括物價上漲、通貨膨脹和購房困難。
- 認為想生但無法生（受限於經濟條件）與本身不想生的群體各占一半。

一、基本資料

1. 請問您居住在哪？（縣市）

高雄市

2. 請問您的職業是？

警察

3. （已生）請問當初是如何決策生育意願的呢？

已婚，有一個小孩，規劃未來可能會再生更多。

受訪者從一開始的工作規劃就已經將生育納入未來的計畫，表明他們可能早就

有清楚的家庭和生育願望。受訪者提到自己本身非常喜歡小孩，這可能是決策

生育的重要原因之一。

一、認知和理解

1. 請問您有聽過少子化嗎？那你對少子化的理解是什麼呢？

年輕人生育意願降低，老年人口比例增加，導致國家人口結構不平衡。

2. 您認為一個人一個月至少要賺多少錢才能養得起小孩？為什麼？

一個家庭平均每人需月薪約 5-6 萬，整個家庭的總收入應達到 12 萬元左右。

包含房貸（兩三萬/月）、生活費、保險費、育兒費（學費、才藝費用）及交通

費用等。

3. 您對政府的育兒政策（如育兒補貼、托育服務等）有什麼看法？

受訪者已使用育兒政策，認為現有政策比以往好，補助確實減輕了一些育兒負

擔，尤其是在托嬰中心學費方面，但補助仍無法完全覆蓋家庭的全部開支。

4. 你認為政府補助真的能刺激生育嗎？

政府補助對刺激生育的作用有限，決定是否生育主要取決於家庭的經濟狀況和個人規劃，而不是依賴補助。

5. 您認為這些政策是否充分解決了女性在平衡職業理想與計劃生育方面面臨的挑戰？

受訪者強調，經濟能力和職業穩定是生育決策的主要因素，政策補助只是附加的輔助，不能解決女性長期職業規劃與家庭生育之間的平衡問題。

受訪者認為，增加工時的彈性和育兒相關的福利，能更有效地鼓勵生育，而不僅僅是提供經濟補助。

6. 您覺得現在 25-35 歲的族群對結婚和生育的看法與您父母那一代有什麼不同？

- 父母那一代強調傳宗接代，認為結婚生子是人生的必然步驟。
- 現代年輕人則更考慮經濟因素以及小孩對未來生活質量的影響，因此不會僅僅為了傳宗接代而生育。

7. 您對於台灣低生育率的議題有什麼感受或想法？

社會影響：高齡化社會中，需要照顧老年人口的需求增大，然而年輕人口逐漸減少，未來社會負擔將更加沉重。

照顧問題：年輕人要兼顧工作和照顧父母，無法兼顧，可能需要依賴外部長照

產業。

二、個人影響和決定

1. 您是否曾經因為性別而在職場中面臨歧視或不公平對待？如果有，請分享您的經驗。

個人並未遭遇性別歧視，也未聽過同事遇到相關問題。

2. 您覺得哪些因素影響了您對婚姻和生育的態度？

主要因素：社會環境與經濟狀況是主要影響因素。

社會擔憂：受訪者擔心經濟條件差的人口生育率較高，這可能會影響到孩子的教育和成長環境，進而對整體社會有長期的負面影響。

3. 您認為現今人們會想生或不想生的原因各是甚麼

- 想生育的原因：為了未來不孤單，想有個孩子陪伴。
- 不想生育的原因：經濟壓力和房價高企是主要阻礙；有些人不想因生育而影響生活質量或自由。

一、基本資料

1. 請問您居住在哪？（縣市）

台東

2. 請問您的職業是？

學生

3. （未生）請問現階段的您是否有生育的意願？（是/否）

否，人生規畫還沒到

二、認知和理解

1. 請問您有聽過少子化嗎？那你對少子化的理解是什麼呢？

有，出生率下降，沒有人要生小孩。

2. 您認為一個人一個月至少要賺多少錢才能養得起小孩？為什麼？

6 萬，自己本身的開銷，還要照顧小孩(補習班,娛樂,生活費用)，除了自身所

需，還要再加 1-2 萬，才養得起小孩。

如果以 20-30 歲的人來看，比較少人願意預估 6 萬，可能要 30 歲以後的人才

有機會把預算提高。

3. 您對政府的育兒政策（如育兒補貼、托育服務等）有什麼看法？

我是比較少運用育兒補貼的人，以之前上過的課來說,政府給的補助不無小補，

但對於影響生育率沒有辦法有很大的作用，畢竟才給一點錢，養小孩是長期的

花費，如果只是出生的時候給，是不夠的。

4. 你認為政府補助真的能刺激生育嗎？

應該沒辦法，但有些人可能會想領補助所以生小孩，但我認為是小部分，如果是整個大環境刺激生育率，我覺得沒辦法。

5. 您認為這些政策是否充分解決了女性在平衡職業理想與計劃生育方面面臨的挑戰？

我覺得沒辦法，但有在改善(育嬰假的部分)，會比之前再好一些，但沒辦法解決最根本的問題。

6. 您覺得現在 25-35 歲的族群對結婚和生育的看法與您父母那一代有什麼不同？

以前的年代，大部分家庭都會生小孩，但我覺得現在的年輕人的態度是，沒生小孩也沒關係，還有結婚的人也很少，更何況是生小孩，之前比較受社會框架的感覺，現在就還好了。現在的人比較喜歡養寵物。

7. 您對於台灣低生育率的議題有什麼感受或想法？

可能是因為我是教育系的關係，若提到之後想當老師，身邊的人可能會說現在少子化，之後學生會越來越少，這是未來會面臨的問題，像是我們這代(2002-2003)，班上同學有二三十位，我目前在台東帶的班級，可能也因為偏鄉的關係，班上頂多十幾位，甚至還有個位數的，這是少子化帶來的影響，導致很多學校需要併校。

三、個人影響和決定

1. 您是否曾經因為性別而在職場中面臨歧視或不公平對待？如果有，請分享您的經驗。

還沒遇到。

2. 您覺得哪些因素影響了您對婚姻和生育的態度？

個人的成長經驗或大環境下的條件。有些人家裡比較嚴格，長大以後會不會也這樣對小孩，影響到小孩的心靈發展。大環境下的條件是說現在物價高，之後有小孩了物價只會越來越高，擔心是否能夠存活下去。

3. 您認為現今人們會想生不想生的原因各是甚麼

想生:達成人生目標，夢想成家。

不想生: 房價物價高，薪水還不足以負擔小孩。

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