

Transition to second birth: a qualitative comparative study of Beijing and Taipei

Numerous studies have identified sub-replacement fertility preferences in both urban China and elsewhere in East Asia. In urban China in particular, many couples who are eligible to have a second child by virtue of their being only children (this group being extended in 2013) do not do so, mainly citing economic pressure. Qualitative studies of fertility preferences in East Asia, and China in particular, are very rare. In this paper we present the results of a unique exercise where women with one child in both Beijing and Taiwan were asked the same question set about their decisions concerning moving to have a second child.

Preliminary results indicate; the importance of economic pressure; the critical role of the reconciliation of work and family life, especially for women; the rather limited effect of policies to help childbearing (in Taiwan) and the role of traditional gender roles in shaping fertility outcomes