

*Brief comments on*

*Dr. Yip et. al's paper on Hong Kong*

---

Kobe University

Takashi Oshio

# Key points

---

- Introducing *WTMFR* as a comprehensive measure to grasp fertility among married females.
  
- Identifying three driving forces to reduce TFR:
  - 1) a declined portion of married females;
  - 2) delayed marriage; and
  - 3) reduced childbearing within marriage.

# Comment #1

- Comparing Hong Kong and Japan based on Table 2

Decomposition of the change in TFR (Table 2)

Age group	Hong Kong (1976-2001) TFR 2.480 to 0.932			Japan (1980-2004) TFR 1.747 to 1.289		
	pro. of mar.	AMFR	Total	pro. of mar.	AMFR	Total
15~19	5	-1	4	1	-4	-3
20~24	18	7	25	42	-3	39
25~29	20	22	43	82	12	95
30~34	9	9	18	26	-35	-8
35~39	3	3	6	5	-25	-20
40~44	*	3	3	*	-3	-3
45~49	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	56	44	100	158	-58	100

(cont.)

□ Comparing Hong Kong and Japan based on Table 3

Decomposition of the change in WTMFR (Table 3)

Age group	Hong Kong (1976-2001) WTMFR 3.65 to 1.58			Japan (1980-2004) WTMFR 2.62 to 2.31		
	<i>w</i>	TMFR	Total	<i>w</i>	TMFR	Total
15~19	28	3	31	1	-34	-33
20~24	46	27	73	332	-48	285
25~29	-14	16	1	-55	-41	-96
30~34	-7	2	-5	-33	-19	-52
35~39	-1	0	0	-2	-2	-4
40~44	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	52	48	100	243	-143	100

(cont.)

---

- Japan: lowered marital fertility is not a problem; a reduction in total fertility is entirely due to trend away from marriage and delayed marriage.
- Hong Kong: a reduction in marital fertility is more serious. Any socio-economic forces behind that?

## Comment #2

---

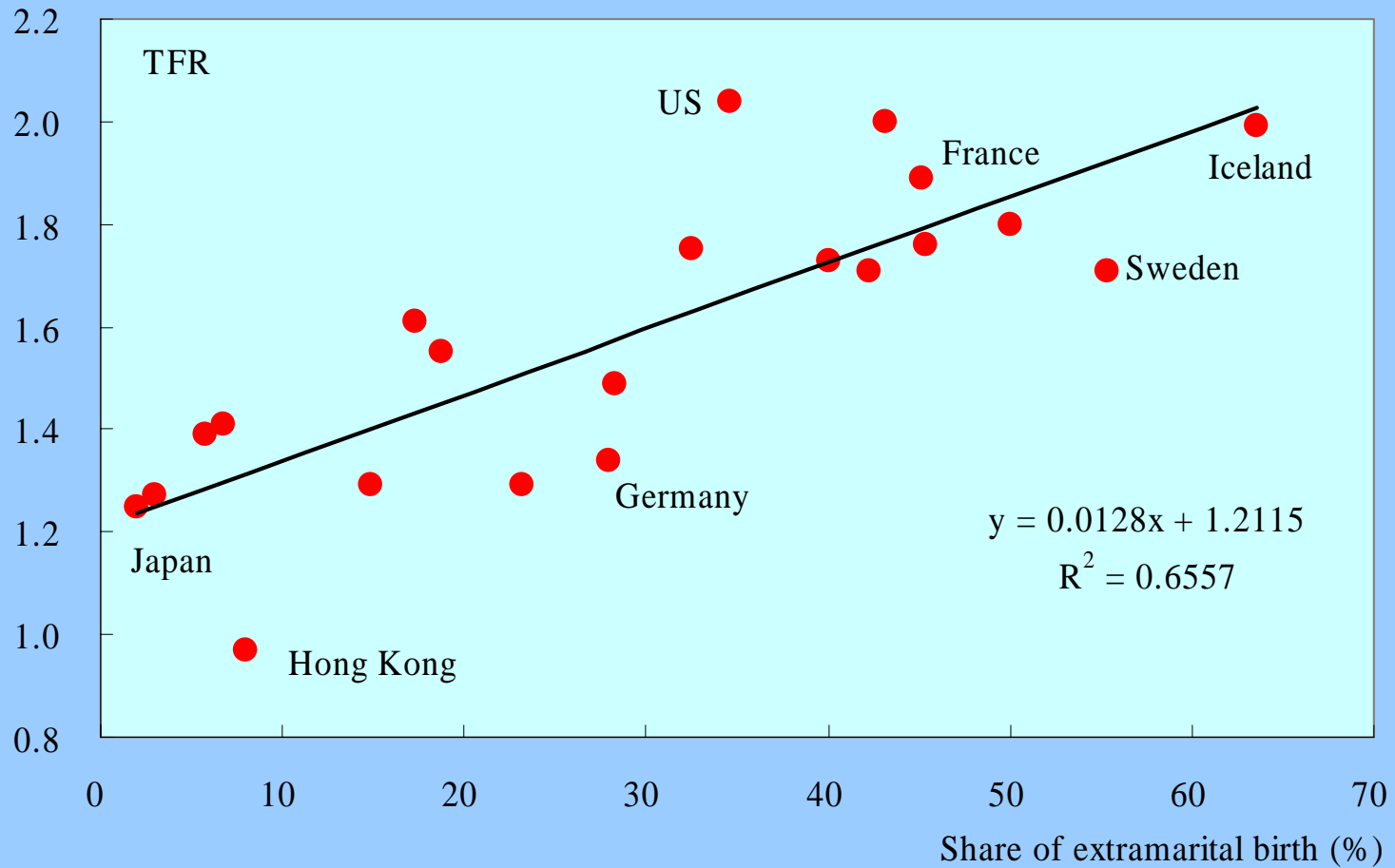
- ❑ Can decomposition of TFR and decomposition of WTMFR be combined with each other?  
Both of them are very interesting but analyzed separately.
- ❑ Also, information about relative importance of three driving forces, if available, would be useful.

## Comment #3

---

- Relevance of distinction between pre- and post-marital factors depends on the proportion of extra-marital birth.
- The distinction seems to make sense in Hong Kong (8%) , Japan (2%) , and probably other countries in East Asia, but how about European countries?

## Extramarital birth and TFR





(cont.)

---

- The authors mention: “more women are financially independent and getting marriage is not really high on the priority list.”
- This is really true and common among most nations, but why is TFR lower in East Asia?
- Importance of social norm: stickiness to reproduction via marriage makes trend away from marriage or delayed marriage directly lead to low TFR.

## Comment #4

---

- The authors are skeptical about any change in the tendency for late marriage and low aspiration to have children.
- Sounds quite reasonable, but Hong Kong will inevitably face rapid population shrinking and aging. Are there any serious debates regarding childcare support or immigration policy?

Thank you.