

When Does the Stork Bring the Baby? –Shotgun Babies vs. Non-Shotgun Babies– *

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May 15, 2007

Abstract

In this paper, we examine whether institutional factors affect the timing of births using Japanese micro data. We focus on the difference in birth patterns between shotgun babies and non-shotgun babies because only non-shotgun couples can consider institutional factors, for example, the tax deduction for dependents for December and the child allowance for April at children’s birth, whereas shotgun couples cannot. We find non-shotgun couples who have babies in December rather than in January do so to take advantage of the tax deduction for dependents, whereas non-shotgun couples who have babies in April rather than in March are not influenced by child allowance benefits but are influenced by other institutional factors. Thus, our results suggest that there exist clear patterns in the timing of births and that they can be explained by institutional factors.

JEL Classification Numbers: J12, J13, H31

Keywords: Timing of Births; Fertility; Shotgun Marriage

*We are greatly indebted to Charles Yuji Horioka for his kind advice, comments, and discussion throughout the process of writing this paper. We would also like to thank Mari Kan, Shigeki Kano, Daiji Kawaguchi, Miki Kohara, Fumio Ohtake, Kei Sakata, Shizuka Sekita, Keiko Tamada, Junmin Wan, Keiko Yoshida, and seminar participants at Kansai Labor Economics Seminar for their helpful comments and discussions. We would like to thank National Family Research of Japan and the Information Center for Social Science Research on Japan, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo (SSJ Data Archive) for allowing us to use the data 1998 and 2003 “National Survey on Families (in Japanese, *Kazoku ni tsuiteno Zenkoku Chousa*) (SSJDA0191 and SSJDA0517)” and thank Michiko Nishino and Naoko Shimazaki for all their help. Midori Wakabayashi is indebted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology of the Japanese Government for Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research number 18330068, which supported this research.

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