The Study of Taiwan Maternity Leave Demand Statistical Survey and Decision Analysis

Jun-yuan KUO¹, Cheng-ju LEE²,* and Chien-yun DAI²

¹No. 1, Kainan Rd., Luzhu Dist., Taoyuan City 33857, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
²No. 104, Ln. 101, Sec. 4, Xinhai Rd., Wenshan Dist., Taipei City 11693, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Maternity leave system, Maternity protection, Pregnancy discrimination, Statistical survey, Decision-making analysis.

Abstract. The global problem of low birth rate is worsening day by day. It is an important current policy to encourage female workers to give birth to the next generation. In order to protect women’s rights and interests in physical recovery after giving birth and infant health protection, the maternity leave system has been extended from 8 weeks to 14 weeks in line with the international standard. The decision-making process depends on the publicity of maternity leave salary by government departments and the decision-making analysis of corporate employers’ responsibilities. This study will collect and analyze the international community's literature on the development of maternity leave, explore the causal relationship and importance between government departments and enterprises in evaluation factors in decision-making, and assist with research methods such as questionnaire statistical surveys of quantitative research and provide specific suggestions as references for relevant policies. This paper discusses Taiwan's assessment of the feasibility of establishing a publicity mechanism for the maternity leave system. The results of the study show that, according to the fund sources recommended by the International Labour Organization (ILO) such as state responsibility (social insurance), employer responsibility, mixed responsibility (joint responsibility of employer responsibility and state responsibility), and the research methods such as questionnaire survey and statistical analysis, the following specific suggestions on decision-making analysis for government departments are proposed: Actively promote the consolidation of laws on protection for maternity leave rights and interests. Construct the salary publicity system for maternity leave. Rights and interests protection system to eliminate discrimination against pregnant women.

Introduction

Given that the natality rate is declining globally, the policy that encourages female workers to have babies is important. To protect women’s rights and interests after physical reproduction and their employment security, the maternity leave was extended to least 12 weeks in 1952 according to the ILO Maternity Protection Convention. In 2000, the leave was prolonged to 14 weeks. However, compared with the latest international standard, the eight-week maternity leave stipulated by the 1929 Factory Law remains in Taiwan, indicating that the maternity leave protection system in Taiwan is still affected by the old laws and regulations without keeping pace with the times by Lee and Kuo[1].

In order to promote Taiwan’s maternity leave protection system to be in line with the international standard and to implement maternity protection policies, this study provides specific suggestions for relevant policies through ILO's relevant conventions on relevant norms of maternity leave system, supplemented by research methods such as quantitative questionnaire survey, statistical analysis and decision analysis, data analysis, etc.
An Analysis of the Current Situation of International “Maternity Leave”

In 1919, the ILO, convened by the U.S. government, held a general meeting in Washington on October 29, 1919. The resolution passed No. 3 "Maternity Protection Convention". In addition to declaring the strengthening of women’s position in the workplace, one of the important provisions is that women should not take any jobs within 6 weeks after giving birth (Article 3, Paragraph 1). In 1952, ILO further adopted its No. 103 "Amendment to Maternity Protection Convention" to strengthen various protection measures, including the statutory maternity leave of at least 12 weeks (Article 3, Paragraph 2) by Lee & Huang[2].

According to the data, the maternity leave longer than 8 weeks is prevalent in over 90% of the ILO member states, 53% of which (98 countries) adopt the 14-week maternity leave that is stipulated by the No. 183 Maternal Protection Convention. In terms of maternity leave payroll, 83% is publicized through public methods like insurance to share the payroll with employers. In contrast, Taiwan has been adopting the eight-week maternity leave for which employers should be fully responsible, which genuinely needs adjustment to implement maternal protection and enhance employment security by Lee, Dai & Chang[3].

Current Situation and Practice of Maternity Leave System in Taiwan

Since 1951, Taiwan’s births have been declining year by year from about 700,000 births per year, and this number even fell below 200,000 to 193,844 in 2015, which was lower than the replacement level (2.1) of maintaining a stable population structure. This will not only lead to negative growth of the total population in the future, but also lead to an aging population structure by Lin, & Lou[4], affecting the overall national strength development and national security issues.

Questionnaire survey and analysis

In order to reach 1,000 valid questionnaires, this study distributed three types of questionnaires for workers, employers, and organizations. The actual number of valid questionnaires was: 625 for maternity leave workers, 447 for employers, and 115 for organizations. In addition to planning for the demand side, the design of the questionnaire in this study takes into account the services provided by the government. Finally, the statistics software SPSS is used to analyze the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The number of questionnaires for maternity leave workers was 36, for employers 48, and organizations 27, and the total number of questionnaires was 111. In terms of the number of pre-test samples, three times the number of sub-scales with the largest number of items in this study were used as the pre-test samples for this study by Wu & Tu[5].

Questionnaire Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis (Cronbach's α value) of the questionnaire is 0.709, and the result is greater than 0.7, which is within the acceptable range. The analysis results show that the questionnaire has good representativeness. As shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s α Coefficient of Questionnaire</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Reliability Analysis of Maternity Leave Worker Questionnaire (Pre-test).

Validity Analysis

The KMO value of validity analysis is 0.649, and the result is greater than 0.5, which indicates that this questionnaire has good representativeness, as shown in Table 2.
Table 2. Validity Analysis of Maternity Leave Worker Questionnaire (Pre-test).

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Source: [1]

Maternity Leave Workers

The total number of maternity leave worker questionnaires is 625. We have reached the following conclusions: 80.75% of the respondents have applied for relevant maternity leave. When difficulties were encountered in applying for maternity leave, 51.03% of the respondents think that they can get assistance through the company's internal complaint channels. 92.06% of the respondents think that maternity leave should be less than 16 weeks, and the waiting period for giving birth should not exceed 5 weeks. 33.95% of the respondents believed that they can restore physical strength in about 8 weeks after giving birth.

Employers

As for workers’ demands for current maternity leave, 54.63% think that the number of weeks of maternity leave should be 10-14 weeks, while 27.71% think that the number of weeks of maternity leave should be 8 weeks. On the other hand, 61.52% of employers (the ratio is more than half) think that only 8 weeks should be given for maternity leave, while 36.92% think that 10-14 weeks should be given, and 1.56% think that 16 weeks or more should be granted. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Proportion of Weeks Required for Maternity Leave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks Demanded for Maternity Leave by Workers</th>
<th>8 weeks</th>
<th>10 - 14 weeks</th>
<th>16 weeks or above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>27.71%</td>
<td>54.63%</td>
<td>17.66%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>61.52%</td>
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</table>

Source: [1]

Conclusion and Suggestion

Taiwan failed to participate in the ILO, but still advocates human rights and the promotion of labor rights as an important policy. However, Taiwan's maternity leave still maintains 8 weeks at present and is the employer's responsibility. The maternity leave must be extended to 14 weeks. The study summarizes the suggestions as follows:

Actively Promote the Consolidation of Laws on the Protection of Maternity Leave Rights and Interests

The issue is to extend maternity leave period in the labor law. At present, according to Taiwan's Labor Standard Law and other labor laws and regulations, women workers are legally entitled to a maternity leave of 8 weeks before and after childbirth. However, due to the declining birth rate in Taiwan in recent years, it has become a major concern in future population policies. The most direct relevant laws and regulations on population birth are bound to attach importance to the provisions of maternity leave and make necessary amendments.

Construct Maternity Leave Salary Publicity System

In order to implement the maternity protection policy, the employer’s responsibility and salary during the maternity leave period should not be entirely borne by the employer. Through thematic deduction, logical thinking diffusion and comparative analysis, this paper aims at promoting the extension of the maternity leave period and maternity leave salary publicity policy.
Protection System of Rights and Interests to Eliminate Pregnancy Discrimination

In the future, the law will be amended to reduce pregnant discrimination by publicizing maternity leave salaries, diversifying employer’s salary costs, and taking into account the wages and employment rights of maternity leave workers.

Acknowledgement

This study is part of A Study on Protection of Maternity Leave in Taiwan, Institute of Labor, Occupational Security and Health, MOL, 2019.

References


