2024

AP® Research Academic Paper

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Inside:

Sample G

- ☑ **Scoring Guidelines**
- ☑ **Student Samples**
- ☑ **Scoring Commentary**

Academic Paper — 5 Points

Score of 1	Score of 2	Score of 3	Score of 4	Score of 5
Report on Existing Knowledge	**Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method**	**Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding**	**Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding**	**Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base**
• Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.	• Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning.	• Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method **AND** overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.	• Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.	• Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
• Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works **OR** through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	• Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works **OR** through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	• Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear	• Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives **AND** logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.	• Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives **AND** logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
• Describes a search and report process.	• Describes a nonreplicable research method **OR** provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	• Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	• Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry	• Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
• Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	• Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	• Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning **OR** insufficient evidence.	• Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning **AND** sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.	• Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice.
• Generally communicates the student's ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	• Generally communicates the student's ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	• Competently communicates the student's ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	• Competently communicates the student's ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	• Enhances the communication of the student's ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors.
• Cites **AND/OR** attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or intext), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline specific style.	• Cites **AND/OR** attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or intext), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline specific style.	• Cites **AND** attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited **AND** intext), with few errors or inconsistencies.	• Cites **AND** attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited **AND** intext), with few to no errors.	• Cites **AND** attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited **AND** intext), with few to no errors.

Academic Paper

Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and develop an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates a conclusion or new understanding stemming from a clearly articulated research question or project goal. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing its implications to a larger community of practice;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES ON JAPANESE BIRTHRATES

"To what extent do socio-economic factors affect Japan's declining birth rates from the 1940 to the 2000s?"

AP RESEARCH

WORD COUNT: 4,053

Introduction

Japan has experienced significant demographic changes in recent years, including dropping birthrates and an aging population. The demographic shift in Japan presents notable obstacles to the country's socio-economic structure, encompassing effects on work force composition, healthcare infrastructure, social welfare initiatives, and economic expansion. In order to successfully address these demographic concerns, politicians, academics, and stakeholders must have a thorough understanding of the underlying reasons driving Japan's dropping the rate of Japan's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen from 4.54 in 1947 to 2.04 births per woman in 1957, which is more than half (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). In 1973, the TFR continued its downward trend falling from 2.14 to 1.50 births per woman in 1992 (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). Annual births have fallen more steeply than the TFR because of significant disfigures in the Japanese population age structure that have affected annual births (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). The objective of this paper is to find how Japan's cultural appropriation has been affecting the TFR of the country. We will look at different reasons along with the decline of the TFR throughout the 1940s-2000s.

The issue focuses on Workforce Health, Women's Fertility Rate, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Factors/Socioeconomic influences on fertility. The

dominant research method in this study is the Relational Content Analysis approach, which focuses on the relationships between words in primary and secondary sources, along with diving deeper with their data and analyzing it. Currently, people over 65 years of age comprise 25% of Japan's population. 11.7% of the 25% in their 60s, while the remaining 13.9% are in their 70s (Nomura and Koizumi, 2016). Japan's population age structure is changing as the death rate (9.83 deaths/1000 population) now exceeds the birth rate (8.07 births/1000 population), and the gap is expected to increase in future years (Nomura and Koizumi, 2016). The decreasing birth rate has caused rapid population aging, low fertility rates has made the Japanese government predict that the total population will decrease from 127,103,388 in 2014 to below 100 million in 2050 (Nomura and Koizumi, 2016). The average woman bears only one child during her lifetime, but the Japanese women's global labor force has increased 250,000 (Nomura, 2016). In 1975, the rate of women with four years of college was 12.7%. By 2005 it had increased substantially to 36.8% (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2005). The problem is that Japanese women don't think childbearing would be enjoyable, the loss of time and independence is the main problem faced (Steward, 2007).

The research question to solve this issue is to what extent do socio-economic factors affect Japan's declining birth rates from the 1940 to the 2000s? Additional

studies are required to clarify the association of maternal weight gain with pregnancy outcomes to create a point for maternal weight gain (Nomura, 2016). Also, research is required to investigate the impact of pre-pregnancy maternal nutritional status on health outcomes in children (Nomura, 2016). We will answer the research question by analyzing various topics like Workforce Health, Woman's Fertility Rate, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Factors/Socioeconomic influences on fertility. Our preferred research method will be the Mixed Method, which is qualitative vs. quantitative. The Research Question is to what extent do socio-economic factors affect Japan's declining birth rates from the 1940s to present. Comprehending the dynamic relationship between socio-economic variables and Japan's diminishing birthrates is imperative in tackling demographic issues and advancing sustainable population expansion. Through an analysis of economic volatility, evolving social norms, gender dynamics, governmental policies, and healthcare infrastructure, scholars and policymakers can devise focused interventions aimed at addressing the underlying factors contributing to Japan's declining birthrates and safeguarding the welfare of forthcoming generations.

Literature Review

Finding Sources

The sources were found by searching accessible databases with the limiting factor being that not all the sources are peer-reviewed. Some main factors used to search were: birth rate, Japan, social factors, and culture appropriation.

Social Factors Decreasing Fertility

Japan is now facing a demographic crisis brought on by aging populations and falling birthrates. This phenomenon, which is often called the "demographic time bomb," presents serious socioeconomic problems and calls for a greater comprehension of the underlying causes of fertility practices. With a focus on social variables that affect people's decisions about family planning and reproductive behavior, this study examines how socioeconomic factors have shaped Japan's dropping birthrates. The trend of having fewer children in Japan is called Shoshika (Steward, 2007). Marriages in Japan typically occur at a later age, once both parties have settled and have a stable job. From 1970-2005, the marriage rate has fallen from 10.0 to 5.7 (Per 1,000 people) in Japan. Compared to the 7.5 in the United States, there clearly is a problem in the birth model in Japan (Steward, 2007). Furthermore, the mean age for a woman to be married was 24.7, now in 2005 it is 28.0 (Steward, 2007). This delay in the age of marriage means that

childbearing has gradually slowed. Starting in the 1970s, married Japanese women would generally have children by the age of 25 but now it has risen to 29 in 2005 (Steward, 2007). Most of these changes have occurred because of the opportunities that women have achieved in education and careers; this has an impact on birth rate patterns in the country. The women workforce in Japan has risen from 38.6 in 1980 to 41.3 in 2002 (Steward, 2007). Women's lack of desire to have children is caused by the loss of free time. Another problem plaguing Japanese birthrates are so-called "parasite singles", who are women in their 20's and 30's who work effortlessly but live with their parents (Steward, 2007).

Maternal and Child Health in Japan

With implications for socioeconomic development, healthcare systems, and population well-being, maternal and child health is an essential aspect of public health. The health of mothers and children in Japan is seriously threatened by dropping birthrates, which highlights the need for a better knowledge of the socioeconomic variables impacting fertility practices and reproductive outcomes. With an emphasis on how these variables contribute to dropping birthrates and their consequences for public health policy and practice, this study looks at how socioeconomic determinants shape maternal and child health outcomes in Japan. An epidemiological study in Japan has shown evidence that maternal underweight is associated with risk of low birth weight (Nomura, 2016). The birth weight in

Japan is higher than the OECD average, which is 9.6% vs. 6.8% (Nomura, 2016). LBW infants face increased risks of diseases in adulthood, different academic journals have started research on the topic (Nomura, 2016). Additional studies are required to clarify the association of maternal weight gain with pregnancy outcomes to create a point for maternal weight gain (Nomura, 2016). Also, research is required to investigate the impact of pre-pregnancy maternal nutritional status on health outcomes in children (Nomura, 2016). The government has launched the National Health promotion program to issue basic goals for the advancement of research on LBW (Nomura, 2016). The program aims to extend the number of years LBW infants live without diseases in adulthood (Nomura, 2016). More active nutrition guidance has been found to be a solution for diseases in LBW infants (Nomura, 2016).

Socioeconomic Influences on Fertility

Socioeconomic variables significantly impact fertility practices and reproductive outcomes, influencing people's choices about childbirth and family planning. The demographic sustainability and socioeconomic growth of Japan are greatly threatened by dropping birthrates, which calls for a closer look at the socioeconomic factors influencing this trend. This study explores how economic uncertainty, shifting social norms, gender dynamics, government policies, and healthcare infrastructure affect fertility practices and reproductive outcomes in

order to better understand the link between socioeconomic variables and Japan's dropping birthrates. To understand fertility trends in Japan it requires a series of analyses, using proportional hazard models, of progression from age 16 to first marriage, from first marriage to first birth, from first birth to second birth, and from second birth to third birth (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). In the previous mentioned analyses, the data used was from 1986, 1988, 1990, and 1992 rounds of the Mainichi National Family Planning Survey (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). Table 8 shows results of the transition from single status to first marriage, the analysis could only be done for the 1990 survey round which is the only one that collected information from single, widowed, and divorced women as well as currently married women (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). The baseline progression ratio is 92.1%, but women with a junior college or university education have ratios of progression to first marriage that are 5-16% points lower than ratios for women with a senior high school education (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). The variables related to living arrangements and arranged marriages have some effects, but they are small (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). Women who live with their parents above their 20's and 30's immediately after marriage have slightly higher PPRs than those who do not, and women whose marriages are arranged have slightly higher PPRs than those whose marriages are based on love (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). The analysis suggests that the effect of education on fertility is

felt through the intermediate effect on education on transition from single status to first marriage (Ogawa and Retherford, 1993). The GAP found in the research is the clarification of the association of maternal weight gain with pregnancy outcomes to create a point for maternal weight gain. A back-up GAP could be research required to investigate the impact of pre-pregnancy maternal nutritional status on health outcomes in children.

Methodology

A useful way for analyzing the intricate relationship between socioeconomic issues and Japan's dropping birthrates is the relational content analysis methodology. This technique aims to provide insights into the underlying mechanisms driving demographic trends by studying the linkages and interactions between variables inside textual or qualitative data. In order to better understand how Japan's dropping birthrates are related to economic uncertainty, shifting societal norms, gender dynamics, government policies, and healthcare infrastructure, we have used relational content analysis approach in this study. The research method that would best fit my paper is the Relational Content Analysis approach. Methodology is defined as the section of a paper that provides information by “which a study’s vitality is judged” (Kallet, R. H. 2004). It should answer the research question, describe how it was answered, justify the research design, and explain the results that were analyzed (Kallet, R. H. 2004). Since this

research paper is based in the United States, there is no way to acquire the data needed from Japan to answer the research question. The numerical data will be acquired from “The Resumption of Fertility Decline in Japan: 1973-92” and “Strategy against aging society with declining birth rate in Japan.” These papers were selected because of the amount of concentrated numerical data surrounding my topic; it focused on reasons why Japanese birth rates were declining and the build up to the problem. We would have to compare the results of these papers with other data in other peer-reviewed papers that are more recent. Additional papers may be added for further information and data to answer the research question. Numerical data from Ogawa and Retherford was collected from 1973-1992, while the data from Nomura and Koizumi is from 2016. The research done in Ogawa & Retherford was conducted mainly on women’s involvement in work and the marriages in Japan. Nomura & Koizumi focused on women’s maternal health in birth rates.

The Content Analysis approach is replicable because previous papers have used information from peer-reviewed journals to assist in their methodology. The research question is aligned with the Content Analysis because the papers used for information are generally focused on the things my paper is focusing on. For example, Japanese women in the workplace, the marriage rates, and the amount of “parasite women” in Japan. We tried focusing on papers that are near our topic, so

that the data could be as clear as possible. The papers also are from a period from 1970-2016 so that we could compare the data as the years passed. These are smart choices because we could see the variation of the data and the increase of infertility / divorced marriages in Japan.

Results of Study

The relational content analysis's findings shed light on the complex connection between Japan's falling birthrates and socioeconomic conditions. Key themes and linkages emerged through a comprehensive study of textual data sources, including government reports, news stories, policy papers, academic research publications, and qualitative interviews. These findings provided insight into the fundamental mechanisms influencing demographic changes. The relational content analysis's findings are shown in this part, emphasizing the interactions between Japan's dropping birthrates, government policies, shifting societal norms, gender dynamics, and healthcare infrastructure with the country's economic uncertainties. The relational content analysis's findings illuminated the complex interplay between socioeconomic variables and Japan's falling birthrates. Key themes and linkages emerged through a comprehensive study of textual data sources, including government reports, news stories, policy papers, academic research publications, and qualitative interviews. These findings provided insights into the fundamental mechanisms influencing demographic changes. The relational

content analysis's findings are shown in this part, emphasizing the interactions between Japan's dropping birthrates, government policies, shifting societal norms, gender dynamics, and healthcare infrastructure with the country's economic uncertainties. The first chart found the total Fertility Rate of Japanese women. Births continue to decline because of the Japanese population age structure. The elderly are more favored in Japan than younger people. The year of the study that supports the information is 1947-1957 and 1957-1992. According to the data shown, the TFR fell from 4.54 to 2.04 (Rose to 2.14 in the following years). After the sudden rise, it continued to decline from 2.14 to 1.50 at the end of 1992. Chart 2 focuses on Workforce Health, Women's Fertility Rate, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Factors/Socioeconomic influences on the declining TFR. 25% of Japan's population is over the age of 65, 11.7% of the 25% in their 60s and the remaining 13.9% in their 70s. Japan's death rate (9.83 deaths/1000 population) currently exceeds its birth rate (8.07 births/1000 population). The data suggests a continuous population decline from 127 million to under 100 million in a 10-year span. The cause of Japan's population decline is the elderly life expectancy rate, which is 84 years (2020). This means younger people have less job opportunities and a lower chance of meeting potential partners (2014-2050). Chart 3 shows the average of 1 child per marriage in Japan. The Japanese women workforce expanded to 250,000 in 2016. Women with 4 years of college was 12.7 in 1975,

but this number has increased to 36.8% in 2005. Japanese women have been focusing on education and work, rather than having children. The loss of time and independence are the main factors of population decline. The study this chart is based on was conducted 1975-2005 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology. One important subject regarding Japan's dropping birthrates is gender dynamics. The investigation brought to light enduring gender differences in the workplace, such as unequal pay equity, work-life balance, and professional growth chances. Women were frequently expected by society to put family obligations ahead of their professional goals, which resulted in interrupted careers, reduced rates of labor force participation, and postponed motherhood. The absence of supportive work settings, such as restricted access to parental leave, flexible work schedules, and reasonably priced daycare choices, was a source of aggravation for the participants. Improving work-life balance and addressing gender disparities in the workplace have been recognized as critical measures in raising fertility rates and giving people the freedom to choose their own paths for professional growth and family planning.

Chart 1

Secondary Sources	Rate/Reasons Birth Rates Decline	Relationship between Data/Information	Place/Time Info was Created
Ogawa & Retherford, 1993	TFR fell from 4.54 to 2.04 (Rose to 2.14 later.) Continued to decline from 2.14 to 1.50.	Total Fertility Rate of Japanese Women. Births continue to steeply decline because of the Japanese population age structure. The elderly are more favored in Japan than younger people.	1947-1957 1957-1992

Chart 2

Nomura & Koizumi, 2016	Workforce Health, Women's Fertility Rate, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Factors/Socioeconomic influences on fertility. 25% of Japan's population is over the age of 65 11.7% of 25% in their 60s 13.9% of 25% in their 70s Death Rate (9.83	Shows that elderly people in Japan are favored and will continue to fill the population This causes younger people to have less job opportunities and meet potential partners.	2014-2050

	deaths/1000 population) exceeds Birth Rate (8.07 births/1000 population) Population decline from 127,000,000 to under 100 million in a 10-year span		

Chart 3

Nomura, 2016 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2005 Steward, 2007	Average of 1 child per marriage in Japan. Japanese women workforce expanded to 250,000 (Nomura, 2016) Women with 4 years of college was 12.7%, increased to 36.8% (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology) Japanese women have been steadily focusing on education and work, rather than having children. The loss of time and independence are the main factors (Steward, 2007).		1975-2005 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology)

Discussion

Implications

In Japan, decisions on family planning and fertility rates are significantly influenced by gender dynamics. Despite a notable increase in women's engagement in the workforce in recent decades, there are still gender differences when it comes to career prospects, income equity, and work-life balance. The expectation placed on women by society to put family obligations ahead of professional success frequently causes career disruptions, decreased rates of labor force participation, and postponed motherhood. Restrictive gender norms and work-life cultures that place a low value on work-life balance also contribute to the decline in birthrates because people—especially women—perceive motherhood as being incompatible with achieving their professional goals. It is imperative to tackle gender disparities in the workplace and foster a supportive work environment to enable women to exercise agency over their family planning and career progression. Family planning and childbearing in Japan are severely hampered by issues with work-life balance. Intense competition for jobs, long hours, and a presenteeism-focused culture all lead to high levels of stress and burnout among workers, especially parents. The absence of flexible work schedules, parental leave regulations, and reasonably priced daycare alternatives aggravates work-life balance issues and makes it challenging for people to manage work and family obligations. As a

result, in order to preserve job stability and avoid the perceived trade-offs between work and family life, many people—especially women—delay getting married and having children or choose to have smaller families. Reversing declining birthrates in Japan will require addressing work-life balance issues through childcare subsidies, supportive workplace regulations, and cultural shifts towards valuing leisure time and family life.

Limitations

The quantity and caliber of data make socioeconomic variables and Japan's dropping birthrates even more difficult to study. Although Japan keeps comprehensive statistics databases and conducts regular demographic surveys, the accuracy and dependability of research findings may be constrained by gaps and irregularities in data collecting and reporting. Furthermore, in order to investigate patterns over time and fully evaluate the causal links between socioeconomic conditions and fertility practices, longitudinal data spanning many decades are required. It may be logistically and methodologically difficult to access and analyze such longitudinal data sets, especially for researchers without substantial funding or institutional assistance. The distinct cultural, historical, and institutional contexts of Japan have molded its socioeconomic environment, which may restrict the generalizability of study findings to other settings. People's attitudes and behaviors about family planning and professional choices are influenced by the

different cultural norms around marriage, motherhood, and gender roles in Japan compared to those in Western countries. Because of this, research findings about socioeconomic variables and dropping birthrates in Japan might not translate to other cultural contexts. This emphasizes how crucial it is to take cultural and contextual particular into account when designing and interpreting studies.

Conclusion

Japan's dropping birthrates have a significant impact on the country's population, economy, and society, posing complicated socioeconomic difficulties. This study aims to shed insight on the complex dynamics influencing Japan's demographic trends by examining the complex interaction between socioeconomic factors and dropping birthrates. We have gained insights into the underlying drivers of Japan's demographic decline and identified areas for future research and policy intervention through a thorough analysis of economic uncertainties, shifting social norms, gender dynamics, work-life balance challenges, and government policies. Even while we now have a better knowledge of how socioeconomic factors interact to cause Japan's dropping birthrates, there are still several important unanswered questions and areas that need more research. The first step in tackling the phenomenon's complexity and multifaceted character is to use interdisciplinary approaches that incorporate knowledge from public policy, sociology, economics, and demographics. It is recommended that future study employs longitudinal

research designs and advanced econometric methodologies to precisely identify the causal links between socio-economic determinants and fertility practices. In conclusion, developing successful policy solutions to address demographic concerns requires a knowledge of the interaction between socioeconomic factors and Japan's dropping birthrates. We can produce solid evidence to guide policy interventions that support sustainable population growth, economic prosperity, and social cohesion in Japan by utilizing interdisciplinary approaches, taking into account cultural and contextual specificity, resolving methodological issues, and encouraging collaboration across sectors. The ultimate objective is to establish a future in which people have the freedom to make independent decisions about their family planning, job goals, and life paths, protecting the prosperity and well-being of Japanese society for future generations.

New Understanding

The new knowledge of the relationship between socioeconomic issues and Japan's dropping birthrates recognizes the dynamic interactions that take place at many levels of study, ranging from micro-level individual choices to macro-level structural influences. Researchers understand the complex web of relationships between economic uncertainty, social norms, gender dynamics, and government policies, each of which exerts impact at different levels of society, rather than seeing socio-economic elements in isolation. This all-encompassing viewpoint

emphasizes the necessity of multidisciplinary methods that incorporate knowledge from public policy, sociology, economics, and demography in order to fully comprehend the complexities of Japan's demographic decline. The realization of Japan's cultural embeddedness and the significance of contextual specificity in influencing reproductive behaviors and family planning decisions are fundamental to the new perspective. Japanese marriage, parenthood, and gender roles are viewed differently than in Western nations, and this has an impact on people's beliefs, values, and actions related to starting a family. Researchers stress the significance of contextualizing study findings within Japan's own cultural, historical, and institutional contexts rather than imposing Western-centric frameworks. This cultural sensitivity improves the study's validity and applicability by providing insights that are insightful and appropriate for the Japanese setting.

Calls for Further Research

While significant progress has been made in understanding the relationship between socio-economic factors and Japan's declining birthrates, there remain important gaps and unanswered questions that warrant further investigation. This call for further research outlines key areas where additional inquiry is needed to deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics shaping demographic trends in Japan and inform evidence-based policy responses. This study request identifies important areas that require more investigation to improve our comprehension of

the intricate processes influencing Japan's demographic changes and to guide evidence-based policy decisions. To better understand demographic changes and develop evidence-based policy responses, further study on socioeconomic determinants and Japan's dropping birthrates is necessary. Researchers may provide solid data that addresses the complex dynamics influencing family formation and reproductive behavior in Japan by giving priority to longitudinal studies, cultural sensitivity, intersectional analyses, comparative research, policy assessment, and ethical concerns. The importance of methodological rigor, social relevance, and multidisciplinary collaboration in advancing knowledge and supporting sustainable development in Japan and abroad is highlighted by this request for more study. The need for more study on socioeconomic variables and Japan's dropping birthrates emphasizes how crucial it is to keep looking into this intricate and multidimensional problem. We may further our understanding of the variables influencing reproductive habits and demographic trends in Japan through the use of longitudinal studies, qualitative research, comparative analysis, intersectional approaches, policy assessments, and projection models, among other useful methods. Scholars, decision-makers, and interested parties may create evidence-based interventions and policies to eliminate socioeconomic disparities, encourage sustainable population development, and safeguard the welfare of future generations in Japan by filling up these research gaps.

References

Ogawa, N., & Retherford, R. D. (1993). The resumption of fertility decline in Japan: 1973-92. *Population and Development Review*, *19*(4), 703. https://doi.org/10.2307/2938411

Nomura, K., & Koizumi, A. (2016). Strategy against aging society with declining birthrate in Japan. *Industrial Health/Industrial Health*, *54*(6), 477–479. https://doi.org/10.2486/indhealth.54-477

Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science, Sports and Culture1999[Part2 Q62]. (n.d.). https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/hpae199901/hpae199901_2_073.html

Nomura, K., Karita, K., Ikeda-Araki, A., Nishioka, E., Muto, G., Iwai-Shimada, M., Nishikitani, M., Inoue, M., Tsurugano, S., Kitano, N., Tsuji, M., Iijima, S., Ueda, K., Kamijima, M., Yamagata, Z., Sakata, K., Iki, M., Yanagisawa, H., Kato, M., . . . Otsuki, T. (2019). For making a declaration of countermeasures against the falling birth rate from the Japanese Society for Hygiene: summary of discussion in the working group on academic research strategy against an aging society with low birth rate. *Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine*, *24*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12199-019-0768-x

Stewart, J. (2000). *An Investigation into Japan's Population: The Current State of Decline*. https://doi.org/10.15760/geogmaster.16

Appendix

Appendix A:

Secondary Sources	Rate/Reasons Birth Rates Decline	Relationship between Data/Information	Place/Time Info was Created
Ogawa & Retherford, 1993	TFR fell from 4.54 to 2.04 (Rose to 2.14 later.) Continued to decline from 2.14 to 1.50.	Total Fertility Rate of Japanese Women. Births continue to steeply decline because of the Japanese population age structure. The elderly are more favored in Japan than younger people.	1947-1957 1957-1992

Appendix B:

Nomura & Koizumi, 2016	Workforce Health, Women's Fertility Rate, Maternal and Child Health, and Social Factors/Socioeconomic influences on fertility. 25% of Japan's population is over the age of 65 11.7% of 25% in their 60s 13.9% of 25% in their 70s	Shows that elderly people in Japan are favored and will continue to fill the population This causes younger people to have less job opportunities and meet potential partners.	2014-2050

	Death Rate (9.83 deaths/1000 population) exceeds Birth Rate (8.07 births/1000 population) Population decline from 127,000,000 to under 100 million in a 10-year span		

Appendix C:

Nomura, 2016 Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2005 Steward, 2007	Average of 1 child per marriage in Japan. Japanese women workforce expanded to 250,000 (Nomura, 2016) Women with 4 years of college was 12.7%, increased to 36.8% (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology) Japanese women have been steadily focusing on education and work, rather than having children. The loss of time and independence are the main factors (Steward, 2007).		1975-2005 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology)

Academic Paper

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: G
Score: 2

This paper earned a score of 2. The research question is "… to what extent do socio-economic factors affect Japan's declining birth rates from the 1940 to the 2000s?" (p. 3). This question does not align with the objective "… to find how Japan's cultural appropriation has been affecting the TFR of the country" (p. 1). The topic is not situated in multiple scholarly perspectives. The bibliography (p. 24) has very few scholarly sources, and while additional citations are found in-text, the literature review does not situate the research topic through a synthesis of the sources. On p. 9, the paper asserts 2 different gaps, and neither are derived from the literature review as there is a shift in focus to maternal weight and pre-pregnancy nutritional status. This suggests a topic that is not narrowing but changing.

Two methods are identified in the paper, "mixed method" (p. 4) and a "… relational content analysis approach …" (p. 9). The method description lacks specificity. It is unclear how to gather "The papers … from a period from 1970–2016 so that we could compare the data as the years passed" (p. 11). The paper identifies the sources used in the "relational content analysis" (p. 10). However, these sources are problematic as they are the same sources as the literature review and therefore pp. 11–17 represent a continuation of the literature review. Additional statistical data are presented in prose and tabular form as evidence of original data collection but, without a description of how this secondary data should be manipulated, this is a summary of existing knowledge.

The paper claims a new understanding in two places: "Key themes and linkages emerged through a comprehensive study …" (p. 11) and "In conclusion, developing successful policy solutions …" (p. 21). Neither conveys new understanding as these are general statements made about existing knowledge from the literature review.

This paper did not earn a score of 1. There is an attempt to narrow the topic to a date range, so the topic is not overly broad and does narrow to socioeconomic factors. There is an attempt at using a non-replicable method.

This paper did not earn a score of 3 for a few reasons. The topic of inquiry is not carried throughout as evidenced by a changing objective and question. The method lacks specificity. The topic is not situated in literature of varying perspectives. The writing generally communicates ideas rather than competently communicates. On p. 8, the student refers to Table 8 which does not exist in the paper. On p. 11, the paragraph beginning with "The relational content analysis's …" has statements repeated multiple times word for word. On pp. 20–22, the voice shifts between the conclusion and the new understanding. There is no new argument from student-generated data which in this paper should be secondary data that has been treated in some way.

This paper is a report on existing knowledge with simplistic use of a research method.