

主旨:

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In my opinion, there needs to be family friendly workplace practices along with subsidies on different areas in order to encourage families to give birth.

The main cause of low birth rate in Hong Kong is not necessarily only due to lack of economic abilities to give children daily necessities. This can be seen from the fact that families with higher educational level and income tends to be the families who have less incentive to give birth. However, it is because they want their children to get the best resources, so they spend more to get their children better education, and other resources. It would be quite hard for the government to subsidize a large amount of families to ensure that they get the high quality resources they want. Some subsidy, such as housing subsidy, may help grass root families and give them incentive to give birth, but for those with higher income, this may not be the case, so the effectiveness of the policy is limited.

The family-friendly workplace practice can give incentive for the families with higher income and educational level to give birth. Usually, these people have jobs that have a very long working hour. With average of more than 50 hours of work every week, these people do not have much time to take care of many children. Because of large amount of workload, these people are also very stressed, which is one of the reasons why Hong Kong is one of the regions with a low Happiness index. As a result, they do not want to take care of multiple children at the same time, as it will cause quite a large burden for them. Different family friendly workplace practices can help to improve that. Encouraging workplaces to allow home office is a very effective measure. The parents will be able to take care of their children more easily, as they can take care of their children while working at the same time. If the workplace is also encouraged to allow a more flexible working hour, it will allow the parents to allocate their time better to take care of the child, which will help them to take care of more children. There should also be a measure similar to standard working hour for families with children, in which workplaces will be charged if they have them work more than that hour. This will discourage them to give too much work for these people, reducing the stress for these families.