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Impact of pregnancy and childbirth over 40 in Japan: Challenges and solutions for administering effective care

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The purpose of this study was to identify the financial and psychological requirements involved in support systems for childbirth and childbearing and offer new ways of achieving worry-free childbirth and child-rearing. We interviewed health professionals to identify the problems associated with advanced maternal age in Japan. In the first phase of the study, we interviewed obstetricians, pediatricians, midwives and public health nurses. In the second phase, we exchanged ideas with researchers and policy makers. The primary aim of this study was to identify the problems of pregnancy and childbirth with advanced maternal age in Japan. We observed a clear increasing trend in pregnancy and childbirth among women over 40 years of age in recent decades in Japan. Later-in-life pregnancy and childbirth is linked to increasing diversification and complexity of family dynamics. A major problem associated with pregnancy and childbirth in this population is that mothers experience deconditioning after the delivery and feel anxious about raising their child, since they usually cannot receive family support due to the advanced age of their partner and parents. With weakening of community bonds, mothers find childbirth and childrearing to be a burden. These findings suggest that preparing an environment in Japan for worry-free childbirth and child-rearing in older mothers will require the expansion of facilities for postpartum care, encouragement of fertility literacy in academic curricula, and construction of a data platform for regional health professionals to share information of mother's childbirth and childrearing.

Biography

Yukari Ito has completed her PhD from Osaka School of International Public Policy. She works at the Center for International Education and Exchange, Osaka University in Japan, as an Associate Professor.

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