

A Comparative Study on Child Welfare Policies in China, Britain and Japan

Bo Su *

Harbin University of Commerce, Songbei District, Harbin, Heilongjiang, China

Abstract: Child welfare is an indispensable part of every country's social security system. In the social undertakings of every country, child welfare policies are also extremely important. The quality of child welfare policies not only affects the growth of children, but also has a subtle impact on the future of a country. Most Western countries have conducted research and implementation on child welfare earlier than China, placing greater emphasis on child welfare. China has a large population base and a large number of newborns born each year, making child welfare policies crucial. This article compares and analyzes the child welfare policies of China, the United Kingdom, and Japan, and draws inspiration from the relevant experiences of the UK and Japan for the development of child welfare in China.

1. Introduction

In social welfare, child welfare has always been a key area of research for experts and scholars from various countries. Providing welfare for children during childhood is a foundation for their growth, protecting them from harm and making their growth healthier and smoother. Being able to adapt to social changes and improve children's survival ability¹.

The main body of the broad child welfare policy is still the relevant policies issued by the state or government to improve the quality of life for all children, benefit their physical and mental health, and promote their future development. Narrowly defined child welfare policies are institutional measures provided by civil affairs departments to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged children².

In China, child welfare policies are becoming increasingly important. Child welfare policies not only affect children themselves, but also affect China's fertility rate. Nowadays, child welfare policies are an important factor influencing fertility policies and a crucial part of social security. This article summarizes and analyzes the advantages of child welfare policies in the United States and Japan, and proposes suggestions for China's child welfare policies.

2. Analysis of China's Child Welfare Policy

China started its child welfare policy relatively late, mainly since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, research on the protection of children's

rights and interests has gradually become popular. From theoretical research to the introduction of relevant laws and then to practical implementation. Over the past 70 years of development, China's child welfare policies have continuously improved and formed a sound system. From a legislative perspective, we are learning from the relevant policies of other countries on the protection of children's rights and welfare, and establishing a rule of law system for child protection around our country's constitution, gradually making the protection of children's rights more legal and standardized³. The main laws include: Compulsory Education Law, Minors Protection Law, Adoption Law, etc. The State Council's "Outline for the Development of Children in China (2011-2020)" clearly states that a portion is related to child welfare. This has further expanded the scope of child welfare. Promoted the transformation of child welfare: from a filling type to an inclusive type. The country has also invested financial resources in child welfare: in 2012, the central government supported 57 million yuan to promote the development of children's public welfare undertakings; In 2013, the central government funded 2.43 billion yuan to ensure the basic livelihood of orphans; In 2023, the National Development and Reform Commission will support 261 livelihood support projects such as child welfare, with an investment of 3 billion yuan from the central budget.

3. Analysis of UK Child Welfare Policy

3.1 Overview of Child Welfare Policies in the UK Learning from the UK

As a typical welfare state in Europe, the UK has achieved high-quality economic growth and social development,

*author: 1641485252@qq.com

partly due to its welfare system, including child welfare policies. As early as the 17th century, there have been children's welfare homes in England, with the majority being the private sector. After the 20th century, Britain's child welfare policy entered a period of rapid development⁴. Since the 21st century, there have been over forty pieces of legislation on child welfare in the UK. As shown in Table 1. The scope of coverage includes education, underage protection, child adoption and upbringing, and mental health. So far, the UK has established a comprehensive system of child welfare policies, including Dominican welfare funds, child trust funds, guardianship allowances, child tax credits, and education maintenance allowances⁵. The welfare of children in the UK has the following characteristics: child welfare is based on legislation, with rich content and continuous improvement; Based on the principle of universal enjoyment, taking into account income related benefits; The welfare of children has a government led characteristic; Improve the child welfare service system, etc.

Table 1. Types of child welfare subsidies in the UK

Types of child subsidies	Subsidy age
Child welfare fund	Under 16 years old
Children's savings account	Parents take care of it before the age of 16, and children can use it after the age of 18
Child Tax Credit	
guardian's allowance	Under 16 years old
Welfare policies for children's education	Enjoy different policies at different ages
Early childhood education, childcare, and children's centers	3 to 5 years old

3.2 Overview of Child Welfare Policies in the UK

British welfare system ideology: The progress of thought is the foundation of everything. The UK has gone through a process of "treating children's rights as intangible", "recognizing the legitimacy of children's rights", and then "actively safeguarding children's rights". This also applies to the UK's child welfare legislation, development of welfare programs, and diversification of aid methods. Since modern times, society has not only recognized the importance of protecting the right to survival of impoverished children, but also valued the value of children to society. With the support of this concept, people generally value children's family and social values, and treat their rights and obligations differently or equally with adults. Without losing respect, the government's initial indifference, to actively assuming responsibility for child welfare and intervening in family relationships, all reflect the profound impact of ideological progress⁶.

The transformation of the nature of the child welfare system: In the pre industrial era, various aspects of the child welfare system that did not adapt to the development of the times were hindered. In the post industrial era, while reflecting on the development of

children's welfare, the government is also actively innovating concepts, creating systems, establishing systems, and improving mechanisms. Every child is important "is the principle of modern British child welfare work.

There are various types of charitable subjects in the UK: as the main bearers of children's welfare, charitable subjects are mainly composed of churches and individual philanthropists. However, with the advancement of ideas and the development of modern society, the subjects of charity have gradually diversified. In the UK, the government has become one of the most important charitable entities, protecting children's rights by formulating welfare laws and implementing welfare programs. At the same time, social groups, non-profit organizations, and commercial enterprises also participate in the cause of child welfare. This transformation of charitable entities not only provides more resources and support, but also brings more professional knowledge and experience to the implementation of child welfare. Government agencies can ensure the fairness and legality of child welfare through legislation and regulation, social groups and non-profit organizations can provide more targeted and innovative projects and services, and commercial enterprises can fulfill their responsibilities through social responsibility projects⁷.

4. Analysis of Japan's Child Welfare Policy

4.1 Overview of Japan's Child Welfare Policy

After World War II, Japan experienced economic depression, poverty, displacement of children, and social instability. A large number of children have to engage in illegal activities in order to survive. Due to the prolonged war, Japan's labor force was severely insufficient, resulting in a large number of child laborers being employed. The main contents are shown in Fig. 1.

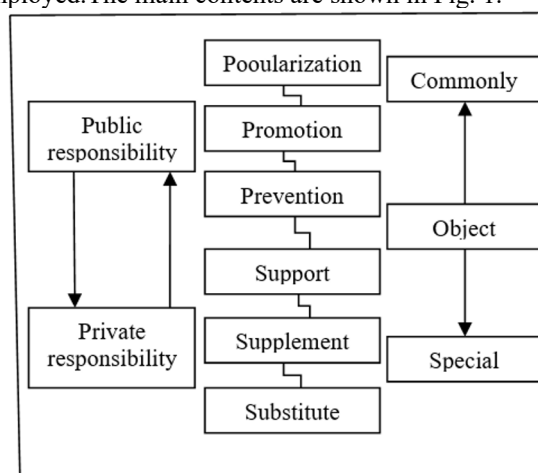


Fig. 1. Japan's Child Welfare Supply Model

The welfare and protection of children in Japan is a serious problem. In 1947, Japan introduced the "Child Welfare Law" to protect the basic rights of children, marking the beginning of child welfare policies. After the

Child Welfare Law, Japan successively introduced the Education Basic Law, School Education Law, Life Protection Law, Child Subsidy Law, and Child Abuse Prevention Law. So far, Japan's child welfare supply model has gradually improved, and child welfare is not only the responsibility of the government but also the responsibility of the private sector. The scope of care recipients is also broader, ranging from general to special⁸.

4.2 The main content of Japan's child welfare policy

Child welfare is reflected in family life in the form of allowances: Japanese companies will pay family allowances, medical insurance for their dependents, etc. after establishing a relationship with the employer. Mothers may have different medical subsidies and medical examinations in different regions during pregnancy. Children will also receive cash after birth. Taking 2013 as an example, a newborn will receive 420000 yen. During the process of children's growth, they will also receive government subsidies for children. Japan's child subsidies are roughly divided into: child type subsidies (national subsidies for children after the third child of the family); Child support subsidy (this subsidy applies to a single mother whose father has a serious physical disability or whose father's life or death is unknown); Special child support subsidies (for children with mental and mental developmental delays and physical disabilities); Welfare subsidies for disabled children (with severe mental or physical disabilities that affect daily life); Subsidy for special disabled individuals (who have a serious mental or physical disability and always need to take care of it)

The coverage of child welfare in Japan is broad: Japan's child welfare policies not only apply to all Japanese children, but also to children who are legally staying in Japan (regardless of nationality and race). Japan's child welfare policy involves aspects such as daily life, healthcare, and education.

Japan's child welfare policies are complementary to multiple entities: Japan's policies related to children are operated by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, mainly responsible for public services and handling public affairs, while managing child, women, and family welfare in local governments. And responsible for consulting on child welfare administration in the Metropolitan Government and designated municipal child welfare review committees⁹.

The policy on the basic direction of future childcare support proposed by various departments in December 1994, which regards the integration of mother and child as the common welfare object, is commonly known as the "Angel Plan". In December 1999, the government further supplemented the Angel Plan and proposed the "Meeting on Measures to Reduce Childhood": the "Specific Implementation Plan for Key Measures to Promote Childhood Reduction" from early 2000 to 2004, commonly known as the "New Angel Plan". Further expansion has been made to childcare services, such as

the expansion of childcare centers for young children (0-2 years old); Promotion of support for homestay parenting; Experience the enrichment of activity intelligence and opportunities; The implementation of children's education environment; Ensuring a safe living environment and gaming environment for childcare. The so-called "Angel Plan" and "New Angel Plan" supplement various aspects of the mother's parenting process, whether in employment or in the home. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of child welfare subsidies in Japan

Types of child subsidies	Subsidy age
Children's subsidies	6-15 years old
Child support subsidies	Under 15 years old
Special child support subsidy	Under 20 years old
Welfare subsidies for disabled children	Under 20 years old
Special disability allowance	Over 20 years old

5. The Enlightenment of Child Welfare Policies in the UK and Japan on China

5.1 Study the welfare system ideas in the UK

Study the welfare system ideas in the UK. In recent centuries, the welfare system in Britain has gradually developed, and child welfare has benefited first from the transformation of child welfare ideas in the 20th century. Children are the main force for the future development of the country. The equal welfare rights of children should be recognized by the entire society. The concept should also enable the Chinese government to learn in building a child welfare system. Studying the ideas of the British child welfare system to promote the reform and innovation of China's child welfare system. Actively participate in relevant work and promote the development of children's welfare¹⁰.

5.2 Learning from the UK to establish a multi-level child welfare project system

Transition from special welfare to general welfare. Expand the scope of child welfare to enable children to enjoy convenience in life. Make child welfare programs cover more areas such as safety protection, healthcare, education, mental health, and poverty. China can establish a multi-level system to provide comprehensive child welfare programs from multiple aspects. The goal of these projects is to ensure that every child has equal opportunities and care, and receives comprehensive support and protection during their growth process. Learn from the UK to establish a multi-level child welfare program system to ensure the comprehensive development and well-being of children. These measures aim to protect children from abuse, provide a healthy living environment, provide high-quality educational opportunities, and provide child welfare services¹¹.

5.3 Learning about Japan's welfare object of integrating mother and child

The approach of integrating mother and child as a common welfare object aims to value the relationship between mother and child, ensuring that they receive support and protection together. Incorporate welfare objects that integrate mothers and children, ensuring the common rights and interests of mothers and children. Japan's child welfare is not only aimed at assisting children, but also includes helping mothers of children. The working hours of mothers as workers can be appropriately shortened or flexible. This approach can help improve the well-being of mothers and provide a healthy, safe, and developmental environment for their children. For working mothers, adjustments have been made to their childcare leave and employment environment; Improvement of childcare facilities at work; Support for childcare, retirement, and re employment; Shortening of employment hours or promotion of flexible working hours; Implement diverse childcare services; The expansion of early childhood care, extended care, temporary care, and the adjustment of multifunctional care centers; Increase the implementation of childcare strategies for after-school children and regional maternal and child healthcare systems¹².

5.4 Learning from Japan to Establish an Administrative System for Child Welfare

Learn from Japan's effective and diverse management division of labor model with clear rights and responsibilities for establishing a child welfare administrative system, which complements the central, local, and civilian sectors. China should clarify its responsibilities in children's education, medical care, and other aspects, effectively manage the division of labor. Children's welfare should be managed from grain cultivation to local levels¹³. Continuously ensuring the safety of children's education and living environment, improving the quality of teaching, and effectively protecting children's rights with the assistance of the entire society. In addition, implementing diversified child welfare: through cooperation between government departments, participation of social and non-governmental organizations, professional support from child welfare workers and professionals, as well as the participation of families and communities, we jointly provide comprehensive welfare protection for children. The cooperation of multiple entities ensures the comprehensiveness and diversity of children's welfare, in order to meet the needs of different children and promote their comprehensive development and well-being¹⁴.

Logic, and Future Trends of China's Child Welfare Policy in the New Era: An Analysis Based on the "Outline of China's Child Development (2021-2030)". Research on Preschool Education, 05: 10-19.

3. Huang Guan, Qiao Dongping. (2023) Knowledge and Power: A Study on the Discourse System of Child Welfare and Child Protection in China. Hebei Academic Journal,02: 172-179.
4. Chang Jinfeng, Liu Chang. (2023) The Current Situation and Development of Research on Child Welfare in China in the Last 30 Years: A Bibliometric Visualization Analysis Based on CiteSpace. Journal of Taiyuan University, 01: 29-41.
5. Heidi M, E A F, D L M. (2023) Incorporating multiple data sources to assess changes in organizational capacity in child welfare systems . Evaluation and Program Planning,97.
6. Xiaoxi Xiaohe. (2021) Japan's Child Welfare System and Child Welfare Facilities. Social Governance, 09: 21-28.
7. Mayumi K, Daisuke N. (2021) Association between Work Related Trauma Exposure and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms among Child Welfare Workers in Japan: A Cross Sectional Study. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health,18 (7).
8. Wei Xiuchun. (2021) An Analysis of the Historical Characteristics of the Development of the Child Welfare System in the UK (1862-1948). Research on Modern World History, 00: 73-95+313.
9. Chen Yanfei. (2019) The Enlightenment of the UK Child Welfare System on China's Child Welfare System. Management Observation, 11: 87-88.
10. Foreclosure. (2015) Directionality study of a Korean child welfare policy through a change process analysis of a Japanese child allowance system. Journal of Japanese Culture, null (66).
11. Qin Baoyu, Yang Hong. (2014) The Child Welfare System in the UK and Its Implications. Human Resources Development, 22: 37-38.
12. Kenji N H K T Y. (2014) Child Welfare in Japan: Children's Care Homes and Mental Health. Adolescent Psychiatry,4 (4).
13. Yoshikawa T, Kaneko H, Nomura K. (2014) Child Welfare in Japan: Children's Care Homes and Mental Health. Adolescent Psychiatry, 4 (4).
14. Li Xiaoyun. (2013) Analysis of Child Welfare Policies in the UK and Its Enlightenment for China. World of Labor Security (Theoretical Edition), 09: 177-178.

References

1. LiWenxiang.(2023) From Diversified Participation to Public Consultation: Orientation Transformation and Mechanism Reconstruction of Child Welfare Construction. Social Science,07: 145-153.
2. HeFang. (2023) Basic Characteristics, Development