

# An Obligation of Family Care and its Determinants in Japan

Tomoo NAKATA (Hokusei Gakuen University, Japan)

Masami NAKATA (Sapporo Gakuin University, Japan)



## 1 . The aims of this study

To examine how much responsibility for the care of the parents the respondents feel and what its determinants are. And to consider the current family relationships in Japan from the results.

## 2 . Results

- 1) The respondents **who are women, are the oldest children, and possess traditional familism highly**, feel the high responsibility of the parent of the care highly.  
⇒ These show that the **traditional** family care has been still inherited among Japanese people.
- 2) On the other hand, the respondents **who are young, take much time to go to parents' house, and hope that their parents should receive care in a nursing home**, feel that their responsibility is small.  
⇒ These indicate the existence of a children with a new **rational** way of thinking for parents care.

## 3 . Background

Some young people tend to move to Sapporo, prefectural capital of Hokkaido, for work and education and their parents leave in the rural areas. However, social services for the older have not developed in Japan. Therefore, the children living in the city need to care for their parents who are left behind in the rural towns and villages.

And it is often said that a mother-daughter relationship is strong, therefore parents care is delivered based on the relationship.

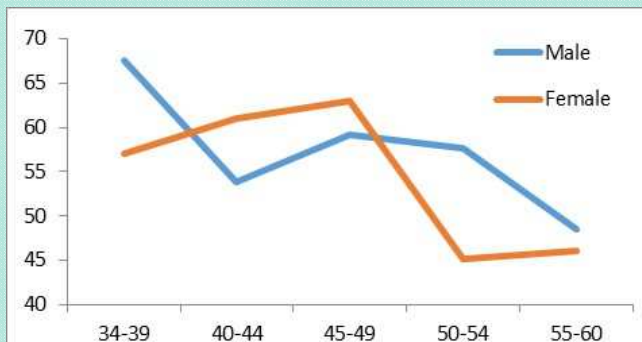


Figure 1. Average Values of Responsibility by Age and gender

## 4 . Data and variables

This study employed the data collected in Sapporo, Japan in Jan. 2015. And respondent were men and women from 35 to 60 years old whose parents still survived (n=510), A combination of each respondent and their father or mother was made and assumed it as a unit of analysis.

A dependent variable was the answer to the question: Taking everything into the consideration, what percentage of responsibility for the care of your parents do you feel?

The independent variables consisted of basic attributes of the respondents, ADL and living arrangements of their parents, the number of siblings and the respondents' consciousness concerning family.

The average values of the responsibility of parents' care by gender and age stratification of the respondents are shown in Figure 1. While significant deference is not recognized between males and females, significant differences appear among age stratification. The responsibility seems to decrease by age, care of the parents might be no longer necessary through the loss of the parents.

Table 1. Multiple Regression Model for the Responsibility for Parents' Care

Respondent	Gender	-3.458+
	Age	.428+
	Education	.403
	N of older siblings	-8.537**
	Financial affluence	.324
	Familism attd.	1.538*
	N of parents	2.174
Parent	Age	-.286
	ADL	3.494*
	Mother or Father	2.220
	Years of residence	-.025
	Living alone	-23.623**
	Living with spouse	-25.246**
	Living with respondents	-22.499**
	Living with sibling	-42.543**
	Living in facilities	-28.925**
	Time to parents house	-2.080**
	Intercept	92.017**
	N	693
	Adj-R2	.217

\*\* : P<0.01; \* : P<0.05; + : P<0.10

## 5 . Discussion

The results of the analysis contain somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, the fact that respondents' age, gender and orders among siblings affect responsibility of the parents' care may mean that traditional familism still rooted in Japanese people.

On the other hand, it was revealed that the other factors, that is whether the parents need care or not, who is living with the parents and how far the parents house, also have impact on the responsibility. This indicates respondents are also thinking their parents' care rationally. And children's reasonable ideas that they leave parents care to both the public and the community are also glimpses.

Socialization of care have been developed in Japan, but not yet complete. This means that Japanese type of the social services, that is, middling benefits for middling burden, have been continuing, although aging is progressing rapidly. Therefore, the care for the parent from children also necessary. It may drive children into a corner economically and mentally.

Authors : **Tomoo NAKATA**, Associate Professor, Hokusei Gakuen University, Japan, [tnakata@hokusei.ac.jp](mailto:tnakata@hokusei.ac.jp)  
: **Masami NAKATA**, Associate Professor, Sapporo Gakuin University, Japan, [mnakata@sgu.ac.jp](mailto:mnakata@sgu.ac.jp)