

Long-Term Care Policy in South Korea and Japan: From a gender perspective

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Abstract

Ageing has been one of the most important social issues in South Korea and Japan. This paper seeks to examine the two countries' Long-Term Care (LTC) policy from a gender perspective, which focuses on different impact of LTC policy to both genders.

In the care-receiver's side, women are expected to be the main beneficiaries of LTC, because the portion of women in the elderly is much bigger than that of men. However, women are more likely to fall outside LTC insurance, partly because social insurance system itself has been based on economic contribution of the insured and partly because the gendered labor market structure has marginalized women's status in employment. As women's economic conditions have been restricted by their care-giving roles within families and irregular economic careers which can affect their old-age pension, women's access to the public LTC service are likely to be limited.

In the care-giver's side, women's care has not been appreciated fully whether it is paid or not because of the gendered nature of care. Until recently women's responsibility of care-giving within households has been taken for granted; nevertheless, different conditions which both gender has faced have not been considered as significantly in Korea and Japan. Therefore, the investigation on the different gender impact of LTC will be meaningful to South Korea and Japan.

This study will be focusing on how to break the relationships between care and women's poverty, how to reduce the discrepancy between care-needs and beneficiaries of social insurance, and how to continue the economic career of women.

Key Words: Long-Term Care (LTC), South Korea, Japan, Gender

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