Siblings as “Young Carers” : for People with Disabilities

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The 4th Joint Seminar on East Asian Social Seminar
Doshisha Univ. and Chung-Ang Univ.
24 / 11 / 2012
Do You Ever Think about “Siblings”? 

- Previous research focus = parents, esp. mother 
- Siblings = significant role
Who are “Young Carers”?

Children = YOUNG CARERS

CARE

family members with disabilities

Child

Father

Child

Mother

Sibling (Child)

Sibling (Child / Adult)
Definition of Young Carers

(1) under 18s supporting family member/s
(2) significant caring tasks
(3) adult-like responsibility

(Becker2000)
Today

**Siblings**
- Child siblings
- Adult siblings

**Young Carers**
- Child YCs
- Adult YCs

**My Focus:**
Adult siblings having experience of YCs
Research Purpose

examines the experiences of YC siblings of individuals with disabilities in Japan
Siblings Characteristics

• psychological problems - family

• social problems - caretakers

• disabled family members = stigma

(Grossman1972, Meyer and Vadasy1994, Bruke2010, etc.)
YC Characteristics

• psychosocial development

• school attendance

• peer networks

• YC Influences adulthood

(Becker2000, Chris and Becker2004, the CYPSP2011, etc.)
Life Story Interview

• 3 topics:

1. strength of connections during his life: family & social resources

2. actual care he gave during his life

3. feelings about caring
Background on Interviewee

Father (died = 60s)

Mother (died = 70s)

2nd son

3rd son

4th son (died = 50s)

Mr. A 1st son (60s)

3 brothers = intellectual & developmental disabilities
Experience as a Young Carer

• gave physical and psychological care

• not being able to behave like a child while at school
Reflections on the Care Role

• regards “sibling-carers” as those who don’t hold a significant care role but that “parents” do hold such a role

• isn’t at odds with being a carer

• feels guilty about refusing to care for his family
Relationships between Carer and Sibling with Disability

- saw himself as a sibling and therefore an equal, making his relationship more complex

⇒ is of similar age to his brothers
The Next Step

• Influence of Previous Experience as a YC

• Growing up Each Other:
  Relationships between Sibling and Sibling with Disability
Conclusion

• Through evaluating the experiences of a YC of siblings with disabilities in Japan, it seems that, similar to previous research on YCs, the participant in this research, gave physical and emotional care.
Conclusion

• It also showed that the participant experienced role-conflicts at school and, within the family, felt the care-role was complex, dynamic, and often changing.

• Consequently, it may be useful in the future to look at such changes, as well as the law and social resources.
Conclusion

• Additionally, it may be useful to research adult sibling-carers, who are new to the task, in order to identify the process of adopting a new care role.
Thanks

- Mr.A
- Professors & students for advice

This work was supported by Grant-in-Aid JSPS Fellows.
References


