

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CARE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE: JAPAN AND SLOVAKIA

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Abstract: Every ageing society has its own problems regarding the nursing-care of the elderly. Both Japan and Slovakia have to deal with this problem. A comparison of the characteristics of the care- service users between Japan and Slovakia will lead us to some findings. We found five similarities and two differences between Japanese service users and Slovak users.

Key words: ageing, nursing-care, users of nursing-care, family type of users, nursing-care insurance for the elderly

1. AGEING AND THE CARE PROBLEM OF THE ELDERLY PEOPLE

One of the most serious problems in aged/ageing societies is „the care of elderly people“.

The ratio of the aged population in Japan and Slovakia in 2000 was 17.3% and 11.5%, respectively. An elderly person is a person who is 65 years old and over. Therefore, both countries should share some common care problems. What characteristics do they have in common? On the other hand, what different situations do they have when they are faced with the problem? In this paper I would like to compare the care situation in two villages: one in Japan and the other in Slovakia.

We conducted fieldwork in the Former Kawai-Mura, and in Háj in October 2004 in collaboration with Slovak colleagues.

2. FORMER KAWAI-MURA AND HÁJ

The Former Kawai-Mura is a mountainous village located in the northern region of Gifu Prefecture, central Japan. The Former Kawai-Mura and neighboring villages

merged to make a new city, Hida-shi, on 1st Feb. 2004. Its area is 184 km². It had a population of 1466 in 2000, 1315 in 2004. Population density per km² was 7.9 in 2000. The ratio of the elderly people in the total population was 28.8% in 2000, 31.6% in 2004. (Here we call those who are 65 years old and over elderly people.) The Former Kawai-Mura is ageing faster than the rest of Gifu Prefecture or Japan. The ratio of the elderly people in Gifu prefecture and Japan in 2000 was 18.2% and 17.3% respectively.

Table 1 Population: Japan, Gifu Prefecture, Former Kawai-Mura in 2000

	Japan (%)	Gifu pref. (%)	Former Kawai-Mura (%)
All ages	1,466 (100.0)	2,107,700 (100.0)	1,466 (100.0)
Under 15	180 (12.3)	322,769 (15.3)	180 (12.3)
15 – 64	864 (58.9)	1,401,064 (66.5)	864 (58.9)
65 and over	422 (28.8)	383,168 (18.2)	422 (28.8)
Recount	65 – 74	225,947 (10.7)	240 (16.4)
	75+	8,998,637 (7.1)	157,220 (7.5)

Source: Census 2000

Háj is a village with a population of 485 in 2001. It is located in the southern region of Turčianske Teplice hollow basin, Slovakia. The district of Turčianske Teplice comprises one town and 24 villages, one of which is Háj. Háj is 2 km from Turčianske Teplice, the central town of the district. The ratio of the elderly population (65 +, male and female) was 15.1% in 2001.

Table 2 Population: Slovakia and Háj

	Slovakia (%)	Háj (%)
All ages	5,402,547 (100.0)	485 (100.0)
Under 15	1,036,425 (19.2)	95 (19.6)
15 – 64	3,746,538 (69.3)	316 (65.2)
65 and over	619,584 (11.5)	73 (15.1)
Recount	65 – 74	378,125 (7.0)
	75+	241,459 (4.5)
Not specified	–	1 (0)

Source: Statistical office of the Slovak Republic 2001

3. THE RATIO OF NURSING-CARE-SERVICE USERS IN THE ELDERLY POPULATION

There are differences in the population size and the ratio of the elderly between the Former Kawai-Mura and Háj. The Former Kawai-Mura has 2.7 times of the total population and 2.1 times of the ratio of elderly people. However, the ratio of the elderly who use nursing-care services is similar. The ratio was 11.3% in the Former Kawai-Mura and 11.0% in Háj.

Table 3 The ratio of nursing-care service users in the elderly population

	Former Kawai-Mura (2004)	Háj (2001)
Total population (a)	1315	485
Population 65+ (b)	415	73
Ratio of the elderly (b/a)	31.6%	15.1%
Users of care service (d)	47	8 (2004)
Ratio of users in the elderly (d/b)	11.3%	11.0%

Source: Local government of Hida-shi, Japan 2004, Statistical office of the Slovak Republic 2001, Local government of Háj 2004, Our fieldwork in 2004

4. WOMEN USE NURSING-CARE SERVICES MORE THAN MEN

Table 4 and Figure 1, Figure 2 clearly illustrates that the ratio of care service users is higher in females than in males. For the Former Kawai-Mura, 70.2% of service users were female elderly. Háj shows a striking figure: all users were female.

Table 4 Elderly population and nursing-care-services users by sex

Sex	Former Kawai-Mura	Háj
65+ male population	196 (46.4)	25 (34.2)
65+ female population	226 (53.6)	48 (65.8)
Population both sexes	422 (100.0)	73 (100.0)
65+ male users	14 (29.8)	0 (0)
65+ female users	33 (70.2)	8 (100.0)
Users, both sexes	47 (100.0)	8 (100.0)

Source: Local government of Hida-shi 2004 Local government of Háj 2004

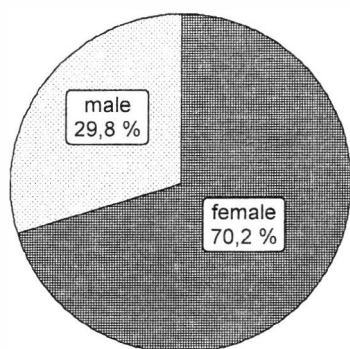


Figure 1 Users by sex in Former Kawai-Mura

Source: Local government of Hida-shi, 2004

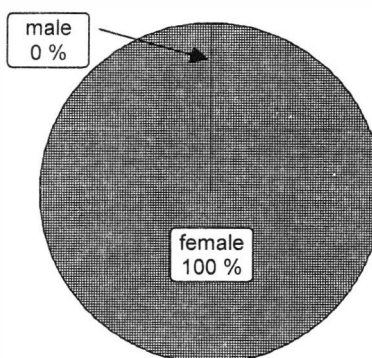


Figure 2 Users by sex in Háj,

Source: Local government of Háj, 2004

5. AVERAGE AGE OF SERVICE USERS IS 85.8 YEARS OLD IN FORMER KAWAI-MURA AND, 85.6 IN HÁJ

The average age of users in both villages is relatively high, and is very similar. The difference of the average age of service users between them is small, 0.3 years. The difference of average age between male users and female users is 0.2 years in the Former Kawai-Mura. In Háj, there were no male users in Oct. 2000.

Table 5 Average age of users by sex as of Oct. 2004

Sex	Former Kawai-Mura	Háj
Male	85.2	
Female	86	85.6
Both sexes	85.8	85.6

Source: Local government of Former Kawai-Mura 2004, Local government of Háj 2004

6. THE ELDERLY OVER 80 YEARS OLD ARE MAIN USERS

Table 6, Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the distribution of service users by age group and sex. The Former Kawai-Mura and Háj have two common features and one difference. (1) Users' age groups are concentrated in 80 – 89 and 90 – 99 ranges. In Háj, all users belong to the 80 – 89 or 90 – 99 age groups. There are no users in the 70 – 79 nor 65 – 69 age groups. In the Former Kawai-Mura, the situation is almost the same. Dominant part of users (83%) belong to the 80 – 89, 90 – 99 and 100 + age groups. (2) There are more female service users than male service users, as I have already mentioned. (3) There are 14 male service users (29.8%) in the Former Kawai-Mura. Their age groups are concentrated in the 80 – 89 (19.1%) and 90 – 99 (5.1%) age groups, which is different from female users. Female users' age groups are distributed more equally than males. In other words, women begin to use services earlier and keep using them later than men. Elderly women need public care services in all age ranges. To sum up, in the present condition, women need public care services more than men in both villages.

Table 6 Service users by age and sex as of Oct. 2004

Age group	Former Kawai-Mura			Háj		
	Both sexes (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Both sexes (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
65 – 69	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
70 – 79	8 (17.0)	1 (2.1)	7 (14.9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
80 – 89	22 (46.8)	9 (19.1)	13 (27.7)	6 (75.0)	0 (0)	6 (75.0)
90 – 99	16 (34.0)	4 (5.1)	12 (25.5)	2 (25.0)	0 (0)	2 (25.0)
100+	1 (2.1)	0 (0)	1 (2.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	47 (100.0)	14 (29.8)	33 (70.2)	8 (100.0)	0 (0)	8 (100.0)

Source: Local government of Hida-shi (Former Kawai-Mura) (2004), Local government of Háj (2004)

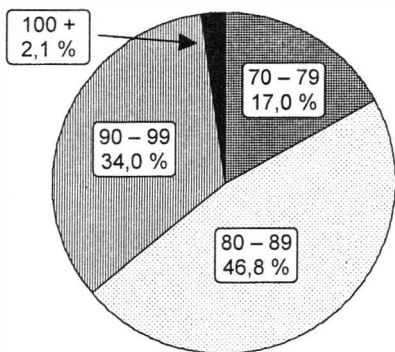


Figure 3 Users by age group in Former Kawai-Mura

Source: Local government of Hida-shi, 2004

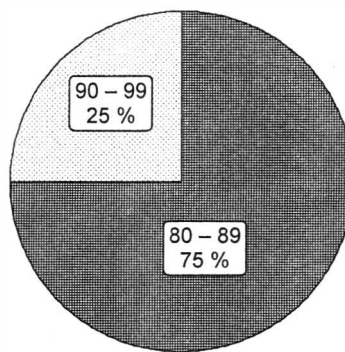


Figure 4 Users by age group in Háj

Source: Local government of Háj, 2004

7. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN THE FAMILY TYPES BETWEEN JAPANESE USERS AND SLOVAK USERS

There is a sharp contrast of users' family type between the two villages. The majority of users in the Former Kawai-Mura live with their married son/daughter and his/her spouse (72.3%). Aged single person households (4.3%) or aged couples only households (4.3%) occupy very small percentages. On the contrary, half of the users in Háj live alone (50.0%). There are no users who live with their married son/daughter and his/her spouse. In other words, the elderly in the Former Kawai-Mura have more possibilities to rely upon their married son/daughter for their care than those in Háj. A majority of users in the Former Kawai-Mura are supported by public care services in addition to family care provided by their son/daughter.

Table 7 Users by family type as of Oct. 2004

Family type		Former Kawai-Mura (%)	Háj (%)
I	Aged-single person	2 (4.3)	4 (50.0)
II	Aged couple person	2 (4.3)	0 (0)
III	Aged person/couple + married son/daughter with him/her spouse	34 (72.3)	0 (0)
IV	Aged person/couple + unmarried/divorced son/daughter	5 (10.6)	2 (25.0)
V	Aged person/couple + son's wife	2 (4.3)	1 (12.5)
VI	Aged person/couple + other relatives	2 (4.3)	1 (12.5)
VII	Total	47 (100.0)	8 (100.0)

Source: Local government of Former Kawai-Mura 2004, Local government of Háj 2004

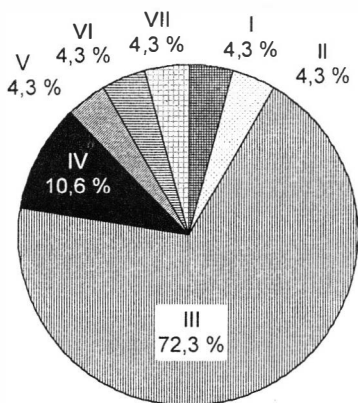


Figure 5 Users of family type in Former Kawai-Mura as of Oct. 2004,

Source: Local government of Former Kawai-Mura

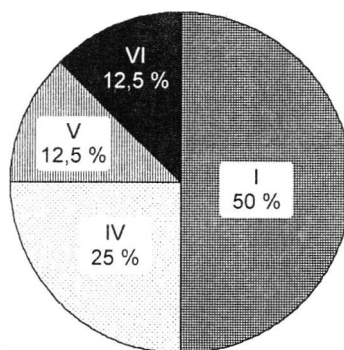


Figure 6 Users by farming type in Háj as of Oct. 2004,

Source: Local government of Háj

8. IN ALL AGE GROUPS MEN HAVE A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF MARRIED STATUS THAN WOMEN

Table 8, Table 9, Figure 7 and Figure 8 show the marital status of the elderly population in the two villages. In both villages, there is a difference in the ratio of married/widowed persons between men and women.

Table 8 Elderly population by marital status: Former Kawai-Mura 2000

Age group	Marital status		Never married	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Total
	Male	Female					
65 – 69	Male		1 (1.4)	66 (94.3)	1 (1.4)	2 (2.9)	70 (100.0)
	Female		0 (0)	59 (83.1)	0 (0)	12 (16.9)	71 (100.0)
70 – 74	Male		2 (3.8)	43 (82.7)	0 (0)	7 (13.5)	52 (100.0)
	Female		1 (2.1)	33 (70.2)	0 (0)	13 (27.7)	47 (100.0)
75 – 79	Male		0 (0)	33 (84.6)	1 (2.6)	5 (12.8)	39 (100.0)
	Female		1 (2.6)	20 (51.3)	1 (2.6)	17 (43.6)	39 (100.0)
80 – 84	Male		1 (3.8)	21 (80.8)	0 (0)	4 (15.4)	26 (100.0)
	Female		0 (0)	12 (36.4)	0 (0)	21 (63.6)	33 (100.0)
85 +	Male		0 (0)	6 (66.7)	0 (0)	3 (33.3)	9 (100.0)
	Female		1 (2.8)	5 (13.9)	0 (0)	30 (83.3)	36 (100.0)
All ages	Male		4 (2.0)	169 (86.2)	2 (1.0)	21 (10.7)	196 (100.0)
	Female		3 (1.3)	129 (57.1)	1 (0.4)	93 (41.2)	226 (100.0)

Source: Result of Census 2000, Gifu pref. 2001

Table 9 Elderly population by marital status: Háj 2001

Marital status		Never married	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Total
Age group						
65 – 69	Male	0 (0)	11 (100.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (100.0)
	Female	2 (14.3)	8 (57.1)	0 (0)	4 (28.6)	14 (100.0)
70 – 74	Male	0 (0)	6 (85.6)	0 (0)	1 (14.3)	7 (100.0)
	Female	0 (0)	2 (33.3)	0 (0)	4 (66.7)	6 (100.0)
75 – 79	Male	0 (0)	3 (100.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (100.0)
	Female	2 (14.3)	2 (14.3)	0 (0)	10 (71.4)	14 (100.0)
80 – 84	Male	0 (0)	1 (100.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (100.0)
	Female	0 (0)	1 (16.7)	0 (0)	5 (83.3)	6 (100.0)
85+	Male	0 (0)	2 (66.7)	0 (0)	1 (33.3)	3 (100.0)
	Female	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (100.0)	8 (100.0)
All ages	Male	0 (0)	23 (92.0)	0 (0)	2 (8.0)	25 (100.0)
	Female	4 (8.3)	13 (27.1)	0 (0)	31 (64.6)	48 (100.0)

Source: Local government of Háj 2004

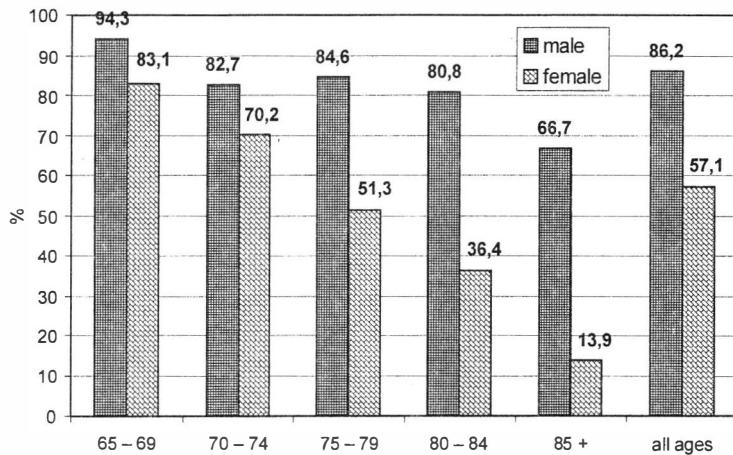


Figure 7 Ratio of married elderly person by sex: Former Kawai-Mura 2000.

Source: Result of Census 2000, Gifu pref. 2001

1. In all age groups, men have a higher percentage of married status than women. Women have a lower percentage of married status than men in all age groups.
2. The difference of the ratio of married status between men and women is larger in Háj than in the Former Kawai-Mura.
3. In the 80 – 84 and in elder age groups, where the ratio of the service users becomes suddenly high, a majority of men have their wives. In the Former Kawai-Mura the ratio of married men is 80.8% for the 80 – 84 age group, 66.7% for the 85 + age group. Elderly husbands are supposed to have more opportunities to be cared for by their wives. On the other hand, women have less opportunities to be cared for by their husbands. The ratio of married women in the Former Kawai-Mura is 36.5% for 80 – 84 age group and 13.9% for 85 + age group. In Háj, the ratio is 16.7% and 0%, respectively. This appears to be a close relationship with the fact that women occupy the majority of the service users: 73% in the Former Kawai-Mura, 100% in Háj.

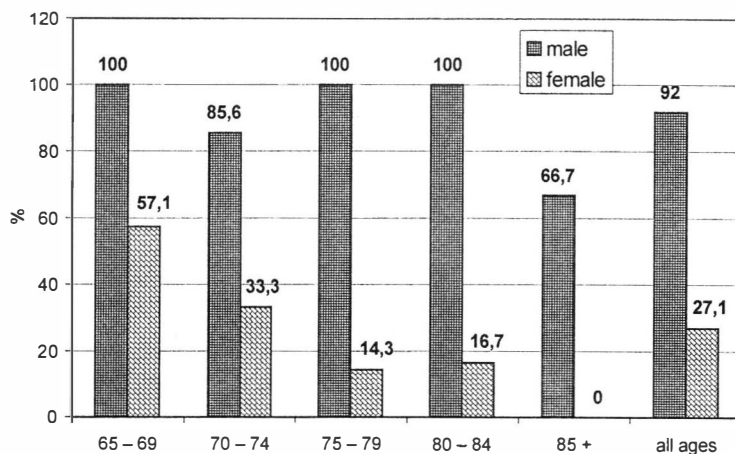


Figure 8 Ratio of married elderly person by sex: Háj 2001.

Source: Local government of Háj 2001

9. EXPENSES AND PAYMENTS FOR CARE SERVICES – – DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JAPAN AND SLOVAKIA

Tab. 9 shows hours spent for care services per week, expenses for the services per month, payment from users, and payment from the government (from taxes).

Table 9 Expenses and persons for care services in Háj per month in 2004

User	Hours of service per week	Expense for care services per month [A] (skr)	Payment from user per month [B] (skr)	Payment from government per month [C] (skr)	B/A x 100 (%)	C/A x 100 (%)
①	20	C	C	C	C	B
②	6	A	A	A	A	C
③	6	A	A	A	A	C
④	20	C	B	C	B	C
⑤	30	D	B	C	B	C
⑥	7	C	A	C	A	C
⑦	Not calc. *	B	A	B	B	C
⑧	Not calc. *	B	A	B	B	C
Total	89+	31.156	2.346	28.810	–	C
Average	14.8	3.895	293	3.601	7.5	92.5
* They are not cared for by public „service sisters“ but relatives.		A: 1~1999 B: 2000~3999 C: 4000~5999 D: 6000~	A: 0~299 B: 300~599 C: 600~999	A: 1~1999 B: 2000~3999 C: 4000~5999	A: 0~4 B: 5~9 C: 10~20	A: 1~79 B: 80~89 C: 90~100

Source: Local government Háj 2004

1. There is a difference in hours spent for care services per week among users (6 hours/week – 30 hours/week). Average expenses per person per month is 3,895 skr.
2. Also, there is a difference in the expenses for care services among the eight users. It varies from 1,320 to 6,480 skr.
3. Payment from users themselves is varied. It varies from 0 skr to 821 skr. Average amount of personal payment per month is 293 skr.
4. Average ratio of payment from users in the total expenses for care services is 7.5%. The ratio for each user varies from 0% to 15.8%.
5. Conversely, the average ratio of payment for the service from the government is 92.5%. The ratio for each user varies from 84.2% to 100%.

In 2003, the local government of Háj spent 234,028 skr for care service for elderly users, which occupied 93.1% of total expenses. The rest (6.9%) were paid by the users themselves. The ratio of the total payment from users themselves in all expenses for care services varies among villages or towns. It varies from village to village. The highest ratio is 11.9% in H. Stubna, and the lowest is 3.9% in Dubove. The average ratio would be around 8 percent. (Tab.10)

There may be other villages or towns which have such a care system as these villages/towns had in 2004. However, I could not find data other than the 10 villages/towns shown in Table 10.

Table 10 Ratio of payment from users by village/town per year in 2003

	Town/village with services	Ratio of the payment from users in the total expenses (%)
1	Rudno	10.57
2	Turček	10.44
3	Sklené	8.38
4	Dubové	3.93
5	Háj	6.93
6	Homá Štubňa	11.87
7	Bodorová	11.13
8	Jazemica	8.56
9	Mošovce	7.96
10	Turčianske Teplice	6.44

Source: Local government of Háj 2004

In the Former Kawai-Mura, and in Japan generally, every nursing-care service user has to pay 10% of all expenses he/she uses. In our nursing-care-insurance for the elderly, every user has the duty to pay 10% of the expenses he/she actually uses. Of course, there are some cases where the duty is exempted. The maximum expenses are decided according to the level of need for nursing-care (Tab. 11). The remaining 90% of expenses are payed to the service providers (companies, legal persons, NPOs etc) as a nursing-care allowance.

In the Former Kawai-Mura, there were 47 elderly people. They use nursing-care service from needing nursing-care level 1 to level 5. These 47 users have to pay 10% of expenses for the services they actually use.

Nursing-care insurance for the elderly: The following sentences will explain our nursing-care insurance system for the elderly.

Table 11 Nursing-care level and expenses in nursing-care insurance for the elderly, Japan

Level of needing nursing-care	Level of nursing-care	Maximum expenses payed by nursing-care insurance (yen)	Payment from users (yen)
Needing help	Needing social help	61.500	6.150
Needing nursing-care level 1	Needing partial nursing-care	165.800	16.580
Needing nursing-care level 2	Needing light level of nursing-care	194.800	19.480
Needing nursing-care level 3	Needing middle level of nursing-care	267.500	26.750
Needing nursing-care level 4	Needing heavy nursing-care	306,000	30.600
Needing nursing-care level 5	Needing the heaviest nursing-care	356,000	35.600

Source: <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/> (1 Sk = 3.3 yen)

Table 12 Users by needing nursing-care level in the Former Kawai-Mura

Needing nursing-care	Number of users (%)
Level 1	23 (48.9)
Level 2	10 (21.3)
Level 3	3 (6.4)
Level 4	5 (10.6)
Level 5	6 (12.8)
Total	47 (100.0)

Source: Local government of Hida-shi 2004

Table 13 Persons recognized as needing nursing-care/help Japan as of Sep. 2004

Total [thousand] [%]	Needing help	Needing nursing-care level 1 (light)	Needing nursing-care level 2	Needing nursing-care level 3	Needing nursing-care level 4	Needing nursing-care level 5 (heavy)
4,054 (100.0)	658 (16.2)	1,321 (40.0)	604 (14.9)	510 (12.6)	491 (12.1)	470 (11.6)

Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Wealth 2004

Nursing-care insurance for the elderly started in April 2000 as a new system to support the nursing-care for the elderly by all the people of country by consolidating the old nursing-care systems, which had been separated into medical care and welfare care. The insurer is the municipalities (shi, machi, and mura, including the special wards of Tokyo), and the insured persons consist of the first category who are 65 years old and over, and the second category who are the participants of the medical insurance and in the age bracket of 40 or more but less than 65 years of age.

Persons who need nursing-care: Persons are judged, due to physical or mental disabilities, to be in need of countries nursing-care for six months or longer concerning the basic activities of daily life.

Persons who need support: those who are in risk of developing a condition that requires to receive nursing-care (Statistics Bureau 2004, Japan Statistical Yearbook 2004 p. 637).

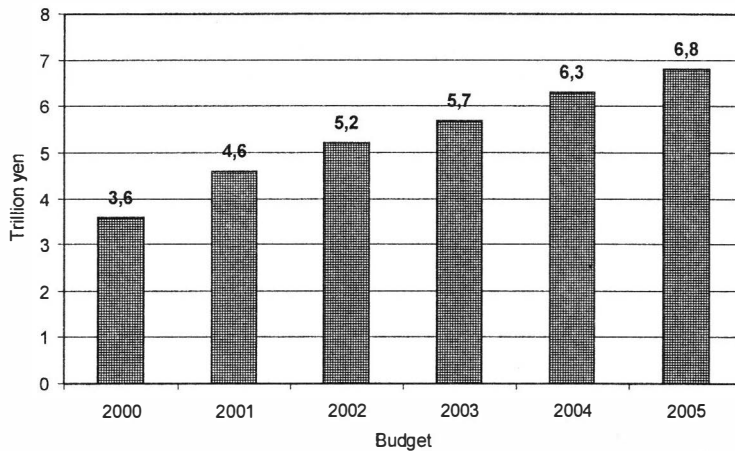


Figure 9 Total cost nursing-care services by „Nursing-care insurance for the elderly“ Japan

Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Wealth of Japan (2004)

10. CONCLUSION

1. Both the Former Kawai-Mura, Japan and Háj, Slovakia are aged societies. The ratio of the elderly people in the total population in the Former Kawai-Mura 2000 was 28.8% and in Háj 2001, 15.1%. They are following the same road of „ageing.“ The problem of care of the elderly is one of the most serious problems in an ageing /aged society.
2. A comparative study of the nursing-care service users between Former Kawai-Mura and Háj lead to the following findings:
 - a) The ratio of the elderly who use nursing-care service is similar, about 11 – 12% in both villages. The ratio will grow to 14 – 15%.
 - b) Women use nursing-care services more than men. Women occupy over 70% of all users in the Former Kawai-Mura, and 100% in Háj.
 - c) Average age of users is high: 85.5 years in the Former Kawai-Mura, and 85.6 years in Háj.
 - d) The dominant part of users belong to the age groups 80 – 89 and over. Users in these age groups constitute 83% of all age groups 65 + in the Former Kawai-Mura, and 100% in Háj.
 - e) Users' family type differs between the Former Kawai-Mura and Háj. Over 70% of all users in the Former Kawai-Mura live with their married son/daughter + his/her spouse. Half of users in Háj live alone.
 - f) In all age groups, men have a higher percentage of married status than women. It is more prominent in Háj than in the Former Kawai-Mura.
 - g) Expenses and payment for care services are different between the Former Kawai-Mura and Háj.

The ratio of personal payment in the total expenses for the service is 10% in Japan. Every user has to pay it. In Háj, it varies from 0% to 15.8%.

3. As the percentage of aged people grows, the number of service users will increase both in Japan and Slovakia. It will reach to at least 6 million in Japan in 2014. How can we support them?
4. The household type of elderly people is changing. In Japan in 2000, elderly single households occupied 27.2%, and elderly couple households 34.6%. In 2025, they will change to 36.9% and 33.1%, respectively. The elderly in these type of households are supposed to need more service than those in households living together with a married son/daughter.
5. Needs for the social system of nursing-care service will grow. There is a limit of personal care. There should be various supporting networks along with public care service. Nursing-care insurance for the elderly in Japan started in 2000, and is expected to play one of the important functions to deal with problems of the care for the elderly. What will be the Slovak version for supporting the elderly people who will need nursing-care?

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Komparatívna štúdia starostlivosti o starších ľuď: Japonsko a Slovensko

Resume

Starnutie populácie je v súčasnosti rozšírený svetový trend. Japonsko a Slovensko sa mu nevyhli. Medzi najväčšie problémy starnutia patrí starostlivosť o starších ľudí. Dá sa riešiť rôznymi opatreniami a spôsobmi. V príspevku porovnávame starostlivosť o starších ľudí v Japonsku a na Slovensku na príklade spotrebiteľov opatrovateľských služieb vo vidieckych obciach Kawai-Mura (Japonsko) a Háj (Slovensko). V roku 2001 bolo v obci Kawai Mura 1315 obyvateľov. Celkový podiel starších (65 a viac ročných) ľudí činil 31,6% (v r. 2000). Háj mal 485 obyvateľov a podiel starších ľudí 15,1% (v roku 2001). Pri porovnaní charakteristík spotrebiteľov opatrovateľských služieb v oboch dedinách bolo zaznamenaných päť podobností a dve odlišnosti. Podobnými boli:

1. pohlavie spotrebiteľov,
2. ich priemerný vek,
3. podiel spotrebiteľov služieb v staršej populácii,
4. hlavné vekové skupiny spotrebiteľov,
5. podiel osobných výdavkov na opatrovateľské služby.

Prejavili sa dve odlišnosti, a to:

1. v type rodiny spotrebiteľov a
2. v sociálnom systéme starostlivosti o starších ľudí vyžadujúcich opatrovateľské služby. Japonsko ako aj Slovensko potrebujú ďalšie zlepšenie systému starostlivosti o staršie obyvateľstvo.

高齢者介護の比較研究：日本とスロバキア

小林 月子

今日、ほとんどの国々が高齢化の道のを辿りつつあり、日本もスロバキアも例外ではない。高齢化に伴い様々な問題が出現するが、その一つが介護問題である。国により、地域により、介護問題は多様な様相を呈しているし、その対応も多様である。

本論文では、日本とスロバキアの介護状況を比較研究することにした。すなわち、本論文では、日本の旧河合村(岐阜県)とスロバキアのハイという二つの農村において、介護サービスを利用している高齢者(65歳以上)の特徴を比較した。旧河合村は、2004年で人口1,315人、高齢化率は31.6%、ハイは2001年で人口485人、高齢化率15.1%である。本論文では、それぞれの村での介護サービスの利用者の属性や特徴を比較することによって、両者の共通点と相違点を明らかにした。二つの村の共通点は五つある。①性、②年齢、③利用者の出現率、④主たる年齢層、⑤サービス利用の個人負担率、また両者の相違点は次の二つである。①家族構成、②社会的支援制度。今後両国とも社会的支援制度を充実させていくことが必要であろう。