Technology in Japanese Elderly Care:

A Perspective on Governance and Cultural Values

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My Background

- Social Policy Research

  Comparative study in Elderly Care in Japan and Nordic
  Countries (Denmark)

- Research Topics:

  Care work, home care, housing for elderly … and Technology in Care

- Projects related to technology:
  - Telenoid in Denmark (2011)
  - "Nursing Home for the Future" in Denmark (2017)
  - Assistive Devices in Long-Term Care (2018)
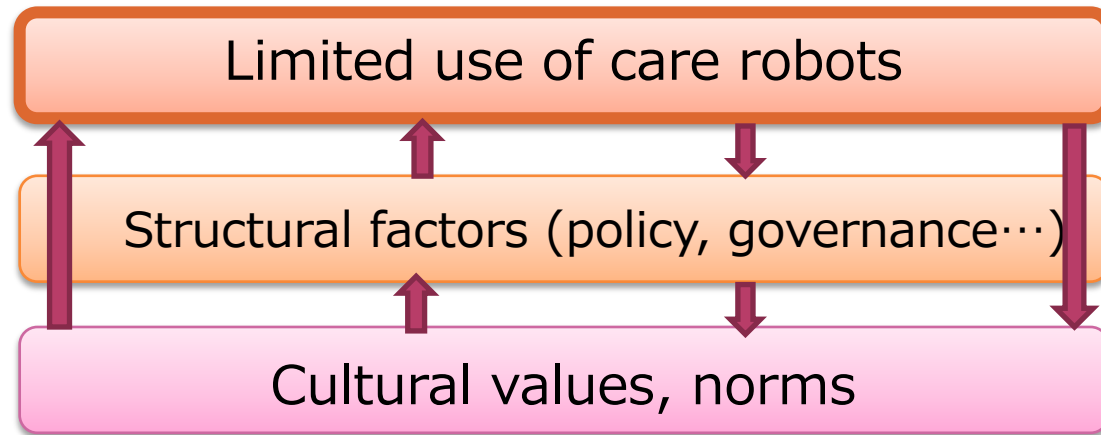 - CommU (2018)

歩行器　　　　車椅子　　　てすり

特殊寝台

1. Introduction

- How to apply technology to elderly care
- Ideas of <u>social investment</u> and <u>reablement</u>
- Sustainability of care infrastructure
  → Innovative solutions such as technology in care
- **Japan**:   not yet widespread (NCCU 2015)
  Denmark: widespread (TNS Callup 2012)
- Governance in elderly care (welfare technology) policies

Limited use of care robots

Structural factors (policy, governance⋯)

Cultural values, norms

■ Governance in elderly care (welfare technology) policies

■ Country-specific cultural values

2. Conceptual Framework: Governance
2.1. Background

- Governance
  - Interactive arrangements with which public as well as private actors participate aimed at solving societal problems etc. (Kooiman 2002)

- **Participation** is a core element in governance
  - It produces 'better result' due to the relevant knowledge (Heinelt 2002)

- Concept of 'participatory governance' can be useful
  – institutional arrangements that facilitate the participations of ordinary citizens in the public policy process (Anderson & van Laerhoven 2007)

- As participation is important for the social acceptability of innovation and its applicability (Heinelt 2002), this perspective is especially relevant in the area of welfare technology

- Two innovative models of democracy, based on qualitative participation (Perczynski 2001) are:
  - Associative democracy: *system* that provides the democratic structure

    * The main role is played by voluntary associations with a democratic structure.
  - Deliberative democracy: democratic *mechanism* without a prefixed system

    * Greater importance is given to opinion forming as the outcome of a debate.

- Perczynski (2001) argues for *associo-deliberative democracy* that combines the two models, aiming to facilitate high-quality participation.

QUESTION

How is participatory governance in Danish/Japanese elderly care (welfare technology*) policies organised in perspective of two democratic models?

Approach: **Document/policy analysis and interviews**

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*In Denmark, the term 'welfare technology' is used, while in Japan, the term 'care robot' is often used.

2.2. Results:
(1) State level

Denmark

- The national strategies e.g. 'the Common Strategy for e-Government', 'the Common Strategy for digital welfare', and 'the Denmark Growth Strategy'
    - Three administrative levels (state, region and municipality) are involved

Japan

- The national strategies e.g. 'the New Growth Strategy', 'the Japan Revitalisation Strategy' and 'the Future Investment Strategy'

    * The main approach: to support manufacturers in developing WT that matches the focus areas and to support the experiments carried out in care facilities so that developers and users collaborate on improving WT.

(2) Local level

Denmark

- Denmark has the national association of municipalities (Local Government Denmark, **KL**) representing the 98 municipalities
  - The state consult with KL on policies related to municipalities
  - Since care workers are mainly employed by municipalities, KL functions as <u>employers' organization</u>
- Every municipality in Denmark has a section dealing with WT, for municipalities are responsible for finance and provision of elderly care

Japan

- Association of municipalities is non-existent
- Apart from some pioneer municipalities, little involvement of municipalities in promoting WT, for municipalities are not responsible for provision of elderly care in LTCI scheme (only partly responsible for finance)

(3) Non-public stakeholders

Denmark

- **FOA**: largest labour union for care workers
  - Strong influence on policy-making in elderly care
  - Danish union rate is high (67.2% in 2016, compared to 17.3% in Japan), Strong voice in the society
  - Collaboration with KL

- **Dan Age**: largest organization for elderly people
  - Strong influence on policy-making in elderly care
  - Based on membership: 755,000 members
  - Comments/statements on the use of WT

Denmark

- **Senior citizen's council** in each municipality

  - By law, all municipalities in Denmark shall have a senior citizen's council (minimum 5 members)
  - Elected every four years on a democratic basis by the senior citizens over 60 years living in the municipality
  - Municipalities consult with councils about elderly care policies including WT at the local level as well as national level

Japan

- In general, close state-society partnership in social services - some intermediate associations participate both in policy-making and welfare service provisions (Estévez-Abe 2003)

- However, few initiatives are taken by those associations regarding WT policies

- Labor unions are not strong enough to be heard

- State mainly supports manufacturers in developing care robots ('technology first' approach), lacking 'need first' approach

2.3. Discussion

- In **Denmark**, WT policies have gone through deliberation/dialog <u>between</u> public and non-public stakeholders as well as deliberation <u>within</u> the sector.

- A model of associo-deliberative democracy, reflecting the long history of associative democracy in general with democratic association structures and practices, which the Danish welfare state is based upon (Kaspersen & Ottesen 2001)

- Since participation of users possessing relevant knowledge is crucial and can make innovation work (Heinelt 2002), the model might contribute to the effective implementation of WT.

- In **Japan**, developmental discourse is observed as a motivation to promote WT, focusing on supporting care robot developers.

- Few existing channels to hear users' voice (elderly people and care workers)

  → this is critical, as the development and adoption of new technologies should always be based on the needs and wishes of the users (Frennert & Östlund 2014; Smarr et al 2014)

3. Conceptual Framework:
Cultural Values
3.1. Background

■The nature of care work - universal?

    - Efficiency is not always welcomed in care

    - Emotional and relational aspects of care

    - "Cold care by technology" and "warm care by human hands"

■ Country-specific cultural values?

Case study (Japan)

QUESTION:

How do care workers perceive technology in care work?
(Transfer lift is used as an example of technology in care)

Approach: **Focus group interviews**

- April 2016
- 4 care workers × <u>3 groups</u> (residential homes)

- 2 groups: using transfer lift in the daily care work
- 1 group: <u>not</u> using transfer lift

Heavy transfer tasks – injury risks among workers

Manual lift by hands

Transfer lift

＊However, transfer lifts are <u>not</u> used much in Japanese care work

2.2. Results

Care workers <u>not</u> using transfer lift

- Strong belief that '<u>human hands</u>' should undertake care

- Using a lift is like *'lifting an <u>object</u> using a crane truck'*

- To be cared for by technology is a symbol of '<u>dependence</u>' and '<u>passivity</u>'

- <u>Paternalistic?</u>
    'Elderly prefer being lifted by warm human hands'.

Japanese cultural values

- Notions of 'self'
  - Japanese: interdependently / contextually construed
  - Western: independently / individually construed

  *Autonomy and self

  *Collectivism

- Communicate without expressing in words

Paternalistic approach to presume what older people wish

Care workers using transfer lift

- Before using transfer lift, they anticipated it feels "cold" but noticed afterwards that transfer lift can provide better care in some cases

> '*When we transferred them manually by hands, their faces were distorted with pain. But when we use a transfer lift, they smile and say, 'I'm okay."*

2.3. Discussion

● 'If you are in need of care, would you like a care worker to use a care robot?'

- Yes ...65.1%

● 'What is good about care robots?'

- Caretakers burdens are relieved ...63.9%

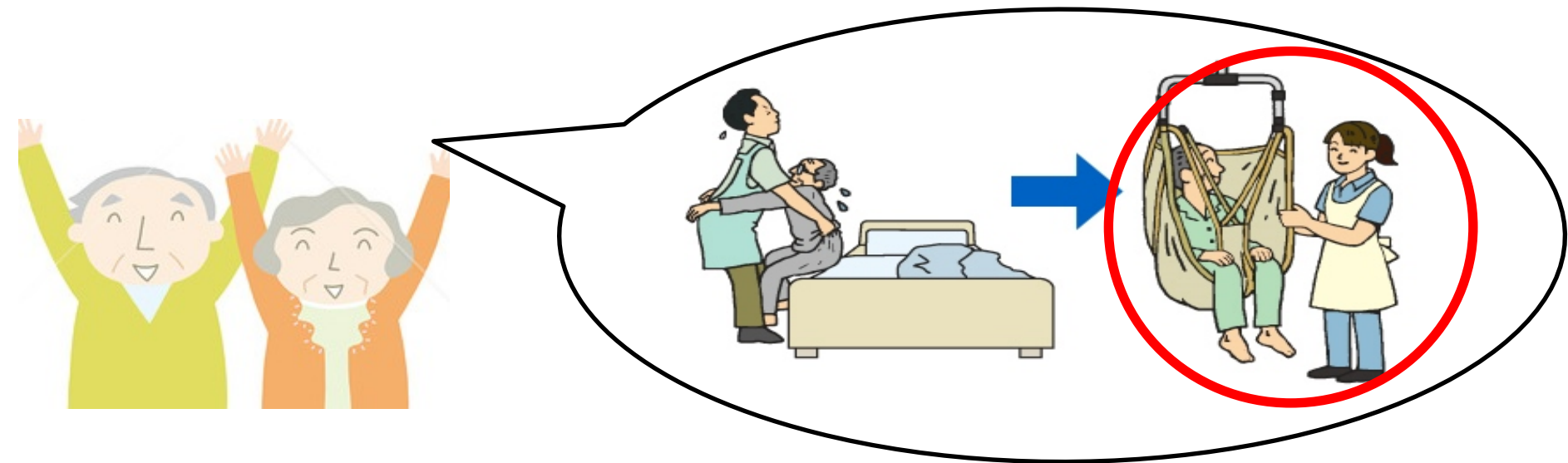- You do not need to '*ki wo tsukau*'※ ...41.5%

(Cabinet Office Survey 2013)

※To be careful and sensitive to someone
so as not to cause them trouble

(→ implies fear that one will be thought impertinent unless one holds back)

Alleviation of burdens by care robots
Appreciated both by care worker and elderly

4. Concluding remarks

-The general platform for dialog between relevant stakeholders is lacking in Japan – need to create the necessary conditions for discussions on all levels

-'Robot care' or 'human care' dichotomy makes little sense

-Technology's potential to contribute to attentive care

-Incorporating perspective of cultural values

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