

## The Intimate in and beyond Pandemic Times: Family, Personal Relationships and Singlehood

### Abstracts/概要

#### ***Singles and Intimate Practices in COVID Times: Perspectives from an Original Survey***

コロナ禍におけるシングルと親密さの実践 (practice of intimacy) : オリジナル調査の視点から  
Laura Dales, The University of Western Australia & Nora Kottmann, DIJ

In Japan, the governmental response to the COVID-19 pandemic was to exhort avoidance of “the 3 Cs”: closed spaces, crowds and close-contact situations. For those who are single, social restrictions have had dual effect: on one hand, COVID has exacerbated experiences of isolation, despondency and social alienation, evidenced by an increase in suicides (especially among women) and widespread concerns about loneliness. However, the pandemic has also brought an apparent increase in acceptance of ‘solo-activities’ (*soro-katsu*), and an opportunity to re-frame the social practices and experiences of singles, previously stigmatized or obscured.

This paper introduces an original, large-scale survey (n=4000) conducted in January 2021 on COVID-19 and its effects on the intimate practices of unmarried individuals between the age of 25 and 49 in Japan. The paper will address the methodology of the survey, including limitations and implications, and present an overview of the 41 questions, and introduce general data trends. This paper sets ground for the following two papers who will discuss specific findings/data in more detail.

#### ***Increased Desire for Marriage under the Pandemic: Associated Factors and Gender Differences***

パンデミックの結婚願望への影響とその男女差

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Although the recent survey by the 人口問題研究所 (NIPSSR) suggests more singles intend not to marry, in our original survey taken in January 2021, approximately one-third of unpartnered singles – more males than females – claimed they increased the desire for marriage due to the pandemic. Using the data from this original survey, this paper examines factors associated with the increased desire. Logistic regression analysis indicates that importance of social connections and loneliness felt under the pandemic increase the odds of intensified desire, while other factors – some triggered by the pandemic – also affect desire but differently by gender. This presentation invites discussions on what marriage and intimacy might mean to unpartnered singles in Japan, and how meanings of, and views toward, intimacy are shaped by the intersection of gender, sexuality, age, class, and unique circumstances under the COVID-19 pandemic.

***Single Life, (Solo-)Sociality and the Impacts of the Pandemic***

シングルライフ、(ソロ)社会性とパンデミックの影響

Laura Dales, UWA & Nora Kottmann, DIJ

Drawing on qualitative and quantitative data this paper examines changes in the notion of ‘doing things alone’ (*sorokatsu*), as well as perceptions of being single, since the turn of the century and, in particular, in the context of the ongoing pandemic in Japan.

Based on findings from our large-scale survey, we explore the gendered ways that the pandemic has affected Japanese individuals’ social practices and perceptions of being unmarried (divorced, widowed or never-married) as well as their socio-spatial implications. We contextualize these findings using data from long-term ethnographic fieldwork and gathered from media and popular literature before and during COVID-time, to demonstrate the ways that COVID has modified, amplified and challenged pre-existing ideas about being single and doing things alone in a familialist “hyper-solo-society” (Arakawa 2017).

***Survey on Teleworking during the first COVID-19 State of Emergency: Focusing on the Effects on Families and Gender***

COVID-19 緊急事態宣言下における在宅勤務の実態調査—家族およびジェンダーへの効果を中心に

Nanami SUZUKI, Ochanomizu University

2020年4月の緊急事態宣言下にて在宅勤務を経験した方々を対象に、ウェブ調査を実施した。在宅勤務が特にどのように家族関係に影響をもたらしたのか、またそのジェンダー差に着目して分析した。回答者の1/3は、「子どもが休校中・休園中」であり、在宅勤務と、休校・休園の双方の事情が影響し合い、家族関係が良くなった場合と、悪くなった場合とがあった。

***Survey on COVID-19 Related ‘Stay at Home’-Policies: Findings of an Online Survey Among 1065 People***

コロナ禍における「自宅療養」の実態調査—1065人のオンラインアンケートから分かるもの

Zixuan WANG, Kyoto University

新型コロナウイルスの流行に伴い、日本にいれば誰もが経験する可能性のある「自宅療養」の実態とそれがもたらす問題点を明らかにするため、1065人の自宅療養者を対象としたウェブ調査を実施した。自宅という密室内に起こる療養とケアをめぐる、性別と職業による格差が浮彫りになった。自宅療養は、コロナ禍の中で社会をまわすための重要な一環だが、当事者に偏った負担を押し付けているようだ。発表では、ウィズコロナの時代に向け、本調査から得られる示唆を示す。

***Changing Personal Spaces in Japanese Cities Since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic***

コロナ禍による日本の都市の〈ひとり空間〉の変容

Yoshikazu NANGO, Meiji University

日本の都市には、ワンルームマンション、カプセルホテル、半個室型ラーメン店、ひとりカラオケ店など、多種多様な〈ひとり空間〉が集積している。〈ひとり空間〉は、物理空間のみならず、スマートフォンやソーシャルメディアなどの情報空間とも重層的な関係を持っている。本発表では、コロナ禍が日本の都市の〈ひとり空間〉をめぐる状況にどのような変化をもたらしたのかについて考察を試みる。

***Methodological Study to Quantitatively Capture Intimate Relationships and Singlehood beyond Cisgender Heterosexual Individuals: Findings from Cognitive Interviews with Older Adults***

シスジェンダー異性愛を超えた親密関係・独身性を計量的に捉えるための方法論的研究——高年齢層への認知インタビューの分析結果から

Daiki HIRAMORI, Hosei University

In recent years, there has been growing interest in sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQ people), both in Japan and abroad. In the area of family studies, research has been conducted to quantitatively capture same-sex couples. However, in order to understand single sexual/gender minorities, it is important to measure individuals' sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), in addition to partnership status. While methodological studies on the quantitative measurement of SOGI are beginning to be conducted in Japan, older adults have not been examined, despite the fact that the aging of sexual and gender minorities has received attention in Japan, an aging society. In this study, we conducted cognitive interviews with 18 adults aged 60s or above to examine how older adults understand SOGI questions on population-based surveys. Findings indicated that although respondents often did not correctly understand SOGI-related terms, they were less likely to make errors in their responses because of this issue. As an issue specific to older adults, we observed cases in which respondents who do not currently experience romantic feelings to anyone felt that they might select asexual as their sexual orientation identity.

***Do Same-gender Couples Share Housework More Equally than Different-gender Couples in Japan? Preliminary Analysis of Quantitative Data***

同性カップルの家事分担は平等か—量的データの予備分析より

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The few qualitative empirical studies on relationships of cohabiting same-gender couples in Japan have found them to be more equal than what has been found in research about heterosexual couples (see Kamano 2007 and Kamiya 2017). However, no quantitative study has yet been conducted on the relationships of cohabiting same-gender couples. In order to

fill the research gap in the field, we administered an online survey through an internet survey company with the largest number of survey monitors in Japan. A total of 3092 responses that consist of approximately 500 men and women each in three types of relationships were collected: legally married heterosexual relationships, cohabiting heterosexual relationships, and cohabiting same-gender relationships. Preliminary analyses on housework division show that first, the division is most skewed among individuals in heterosexual marriages and least skewed among individuals in same-gender cohabitation. Second, no difference in the pattern of housework division was observed between men and women in same-gender relationships. Third, when income differences within couples are taken into account, the person with the lower income was found to prepare dinner more frequently in all three types of relationships.