

Social Care Programs in Communities for the Elderly Living Alone: A Comparative Study between Taiwan and Japan

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Abstract

In 1993, the percentage of elderly people had reached 7.1% of the entire population of Taiwan. This demographic change meant that Taiwan is becoming an aging society. The ratio of aged population will continue to increase to 14.6% in 2018 and 20.1% in 2025 (National Development Council, 2014). Therefore, the Taiwanese society will become a super-aged society in prospective. On this stem, the elderly who are living alone become a focal point of social issue. In Taiwan, the community care for the elderly living alone, including senior helpline, meal delivery service, home visiting, housework service, accompany services, etc., are mainly provided by non-profit organizations. These programs deliver services to the elderly in communities to accommodate to the idealistic aging population, however, the concept of client-centred services are insufficient in these programs. They do not facilitate the social participation nor do they satisfy the miscellaneous needs of the elderly people living alone. In this research, I adopt a comparative research method to compare policies of the elderly living alone between Taiwan and Japan. Through an international comparison, we can depict the differences of policies regarding the elderly living alone between Taiwan and Japan. Finally, we can obtain crucial objectives from Japan's experiences to improve the home services for the elderly living alone in Taiwan.

Keywords: Elderly Living Alone, Home Services, Japan