

The “Costs” of Informal Care: An Analysis of the Impact of Elderly Care on Caregivers' Subjective Well-being in Japan

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Paper Abstract: This paper examines the impact of providing informal care to elderly parents on caregivers' subjective well-being using unique data from the “Preference Parameters Study” of Osaka University, a nationally representative survey conducted in Japan. The estimation results indicate heterogeneous effects: while informal elderly care does not have a significant impact on the happiness level of married caregivers regardless of whether they take care of their own parents or parents-in-law and whether or not they reside with them, it has a negative and significant impact on the happiness level of unmarried caregivers. These findings call for more attention to be paid to unmarried caregivers, who presumably receive less support from family members and tend to be more vulnerable to negative income shocks than their married counterparts.