

# Active Aging in the Community for Japanese Elderly: Impact of Pre-Retirement Occupational Skills on Elderly People's Community Involvement

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the relations between elderly people's community involvement and their vocational capabilities developed prior to retirement, from the perspective of the life course. Data analysis of retired people in Japan (aged 65 or over) shows a strong relationship between elderly people's active community involvement in post-retirement life and their vocational capabilities developed prior to retirement. It was also found that elderly persons who have developed higher vocational capabilities prior to retirement tend to obtain more capability to provide more informal support for friends, neighbors or kin. From this study, some findings were obtained and discussed concerning active aging in the community within Japanese society.

**Keywords:** *elderly, community involvement, occupational experiences and skills, life course perspective*

## 1. Introduction

Japan has recently seen a rapid decline in the traditional family system of supporting aged parents and thereby a weakening of community ties. If we go back to the 1990s, the issue of the social isolation of elderly people was not seen in Japan. Although the trend toward nuclear families was increasing, the function of supporting a modified extended family seemed to be working until then. In the early 1990s, when I carried out case studies in and around the traditional working-class areas of Tokyo, elderly people were actively interacting with their children's families who were living separately and their friends living far away, thereby maintaining a social network (Maeda, 2008). However, in the latter half of the 1990s, after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, isolation and lonely deaths of the elderly were seen as a serious problem in Japan. In the field of sociology, "isolation" and "relationship poverty" of the elderly have been discussed especially since 2000 (Matsumiya, 2012).

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With about 20 years having passed since then, it is necessary to perform further analysis to see how elderly people's social networking has undergone changes.

What conditions are necessary to create a community where elderly people can lead an active life? I have analyzed communities within this aging society from the perspective of "active aging"<sup>1</sup> (Maeda, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014), which is predicated on the idea that people can play the role of "providers" of welfare even later in life, rather than the traditional idea that elderly people are merely "recipients" of welfare. This paper attempts to explore the actual state of elderly people's community involvement and major factors behind the trends identified, from the perspective of active aging, using data from a recent large-scale survey I and other researchers jointly conducted. This paper also suggests ways to revitalize local communities in the coming super-graying society. This analysis and consideration will lead to future international comparative research.

Now, let me briefly review prior studies related to this study topic. Studies concerning the roles of local community or social networks in an aging society have been made so far to a certain extent in Japan<sup>2</sup>. However, sufficient research has not been done in some areas.

Firstly, little research has been conducted from the viewpoint of elderly persons who "provide support," rather than those "receiving support." A lot of research has focused on what kinds of support should be provided to older people in rapidly aging local communities, and most of this research has categorized elderly people virtually as being vulnerable. Very little empirical research has been carried out thus far from the perspective of how elderly people can play a role as endogenous activators in local communities, through their active involvement in community activities and volunteer work (Brown, et al., 2003). It is noteworthy that previous studies of active aging, which includes altruistic support acts by the elderly, is still in an exploratory stage (Aspalter, Walker, 2014). In particular, in Asian countries where aging is in progress, it is said that we need further research to develop the concepts of active aging and productive aging in order to consider policies to promote the social participation of the elderly (Kay and Nodzenski, 2019).

In fact, people aged 65 or over are not homogenized enough to be generally lumped together as "the elderly." They are diverse in terms of age, health and lifestyle (Maeda, 2008; Van Groenou and Deeg, 2010). Especially in the present day, when the postwar baby-boom generation has reached their old age, many people are actively engaging in various activities after reaching retirement, including remaining in the workforce, starting a business, and participating in community activities. Since many studies have been carried out so far concerning the relations between elderly people and the local community by looking at the elderly as recipients of support, the future challenge is to conduct research on active aging, approached from the perspective of elderly people who serve as providers of support. (Maeda, 2008; Principi, et al, 2012, 2014)

Secondly, there are few gender comparison-based studies on this issue. Although an approach to this issue has been made from a gender perspective, as shown in Maeda (2008), little research has been accumulated on middle-aged and older women's social involvement since the 1990s, when it became common for women in Japan to work outside the home.

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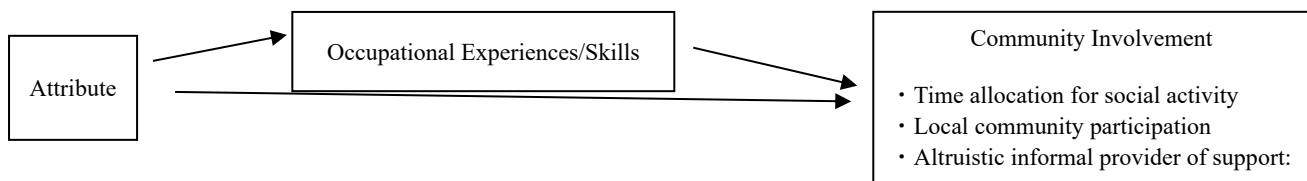
<sup>1</sup> For the latest research findings on active aging, Principi, et al. (2014), Walker (2008), and Foster and Walker (2014) were used as reference. For active aging in Asia, Aspalter and Walker (2014) was referred to.

<sup>2</sup> In this respect, Togashi (2013) was used as reference.

Lastly, not many analyses have been made from the perspective of life course<sup>3</sup>. (Clausen, 1986; Katagiri, 2013; Van Bogaard, et al, 2014a, 2014b) Conventionally, analysis has been performed of elderly people's social relationships and their influence on the local community or a social network, with gender, age, family makeup, economic conditions, and living environment as explanatory variables. In Japan, however, little research has been conducted with a focus on aged individuals' life course and daily habits of action. Although there are some studies that collaterally refer to the influence of occupational experiences on volunteer activity (Van Groenow, 2010; Principi, 2013), the relations between people's "competencies" acquired through their work experiences and their volunteer activity have been analyzed in only a limited way. In particular, few studies have focused on the impact of elderly people's work experiences in young and middle adult life as a key factor in community involvement among the elderly<sup>4</sup>. It is therefore necessary to reveal how the occupational experiences of each individual - a life course variable in pre-retirement age - can affect his/her lifestyle and community involvement after retirement.

With these aspects in mind, this paper attempts to analyze how the occupational experiences and skills acquired through working careers affect community involvement after retirement. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Analysis Model



Analysis Model Based on Life Course Variable: Occupational Experiences/Skills

Figure 1 shows an analysis model used in this study, in which community involvement among the elderly is regarded as the "provision of support," or "altruism." An individual's attributes are used as independent variables, and a new variable of "occupational experiences and skills" is added as an intervening variable. "Occupational experiences and skills (skills=competencies)" here represents a variable that describes what kinds of work experiences and skills are gained in early and middle adult life (prior to retirement). The use of this variable enables life course-based analysis: how the skills acquired through career experiences affect post-retirement community involvement.

## 2. Data and Variables

### 1) Data

This paper uses data from a research project on elderly people's lifestyle conducted in 2008. The research project, in which I participated as a research member, was carried out using basic information from the Research Institute for Policies on Pension & Aging (2009). The research was conducted

<sup>3</sup> For the concept of life course, Clausen (1986) was referred to. For the utility of life course analysis of volunteer activity, Oesterle, Kirkpatrick and Mortimer (2004) was used as a reference.

<sup>4</sup> For the impact of competencies or skills on social outcomes, such as working career and civic activity, Bynner and Feinstein (2003), Campbell (2006), Feinstein and Hammond (2004), Field (2009), and Jenkins (2013) were referred to.

between October and November in 2008 in regional cities and towns, not major cities such as Tokyo and Osaka. A survey sheet was sent via Pension Recipients Association agents to 5,000 male and female welfare pension recipients aged 50 or over, and a total of 1,900 responses were received, with a valid response rate of 38.0%. The respondents to the survey, who were all recipients of employees' pension, had been employed workers - most of whom were full-fledged employees - until their retirement.

In the next section, analysis is performed of 1,682 male and female retirees aged 65 or over, with a breakdown of 1,361 men (80.9%) and 321 women (19.1%). The average age of the sample is 72.9 years old (with a standard deviation of 5.5): 29.9% are those aged 65 to 69, 37.7% aged 70 to 74, and 32.6% aged 75 or over. Of them, 19.2% remain in the workforce, and more than 80% have no job.

## 2) Variables

Community involvement, which is a dependent variable, is examined using three variables: (1) how many hours of daily life after retirement are devoted to social activities (time allocation), (2) the frequency of participating in formal community activities or volunteer work after retirement, and (3) the frequency of altruistic behavior after retirement.

For "occupational experiences and skills," one of the major independent variables, there were five question items. In the questionnaire, participating elderly people were asked to look back on their working career up to retirement and select the appropriate answers to these five questions. The questions were: (1) whether they made efforts to develop specialized knowledge and skills; (2) whether they made efforts to enhance their capability to mentor and develop their subordinates; (3) whether they made preparations so that if an opportunity arose they could make a career retention or create their own business; (4) whether they developed a broad network of connections at their own companies or client companies; and (5) whether they tried to be involved in volunteer or community activities in leisure time.

Scores for each question range from 1 to 4: 4 = definitely yes, 3 = probably yes, 2 = probably no, and 1 = definitely no. The total of scores for the five questions was used for a measure of occupational experiences and skills. It means that the higher the total score is, the more occupational experiences and skills they have. According to Stebbins (2010), serious leisure activities such as participation in volunteer organizations can lead to the acquisition and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience. The "occupational experience" is used in this paper as a sort of serious leisure activity. However, the variable "the occupational experience/skills" used here is one of the life course variables which will be provisionally defined in a broader sense as "career experience /skills acquired in occupational life". In this sense, the definition of this measure is tentative as exploratory in order to further improve the accuracy in the future.

Table 1 shows that there is a significant difference in occupational experiences and skills between men and women. Of special note is that the scores of men are much higher than those of women with regard to the questions about "whether they made efforts to enhance their capability to mentor and develop their subordinates" and "whether they developed a broad network of connections at their own companies or client companies." Given that this questionnaire survey was conducted among men and women who had been working as employees before the mandatory retirement age, it suggests that there is a significant gender gap in career development in the workplace and that women, compared to men, are less likely to hold management positions.

Table 1. Distribution of Occupational Experiences and Skills<sup>1)</sup>

	Total	Male	Female	Significance level <sup>3)</sup>
Made efforts to develop specialized knowledge and skills (N=1345)	86.8	88.1	80.3	**
Made efforts to enhance the capability to mentor and develop subordinates (N=1214)	75.6	80.6	47.6	***
Made preparations in order to make a career retention or create a personal business if such an opportunity arose (N=1098)	18.8	20.3	10.4	**
Developed a broad network of connections in the workplace and at client companies (N=1152)	58.3	61.7	38.9	***
Tried to be involved in volunteer or community activities during leisure time (N=1182)	46.6	46.4	45.8	N.S.
Score for occupational experiences and skills <sup>2)</sup> (N=1052)	12.63	12.94	10.91	*** (F value =68.73)

<sup>1)</sup> The figures show the percentage (%) of “definitely yes” and “probably yes” of the total. The figures in parentheses indicate actual numbers.

<sup>2)</sup> Scores range from 1 to 4: 4 = definitely yes, 3 = probably yes, 2 = probably no, and 1 = definitely no. The total of scores was used as a measure of occupational experiences and skills.

<sup>3)</sup> The significance level indicates a gap between men and women. To calculate the score for occupational experiences and skills, an analysis of variance was performed. For the score for each question, a chi-square test was used.

Significance level: \*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

### 3) Scope and limitation

This paper attempted to perform several analyses concerning volunteer activity after retirement. However, the findings and observations obtained from this study are no better than supposition. Since the survey items concerning occupational experiences and skills in particular are based on a retrospective method, it is difficult to generalize the survey findings beyond the selected sample. In the future, it is necessary to perform an analysis from a life course perspective, using larger-scale longitudinal data. Also it is necessary to consider cohort effects. In short, the sample used in this paper is elderly people aged 65 or over as of 2008, a generation in which relatively few people have a college degree or higher level of education. It is necessary to carry out a study of the baby-boom generation (born in 1948 or later), in which there was an increase in the number of people with a college or higher degree, using new data. In this sense this study might be placed in exploratory data analysis to formulate hypotheses that could lead to nationwide data collection using standard sampling methods.

## 4. Results

### 1) Time Allocation After Retirement

Table 2 shows elderly people’s allocation of time in everyday life. The subjects were asked the question: How many hours a week on average do you spend on each of the four categories of leisure time (non-working time) activity? The four categories are (1) personal time (time spent watching TV

or engaging in a hobby), (2) time spent with spouse and other family members, (3) time spent with friends or other non-family members, and (4) time devoted to participating in social activities (local community/volunteer activities). Table 2 shows, by gender, the ratio of the time spent on the activity of each category to the time for life activities (100%). At the top of the list is personal time (time spent watching TV or engaging a hobby) representing more than 40% of the time for life activities, followed by the time spent with friends. The time devoted to social activities accounted for 11 to 15%. By gender, women tend to spend more time with friends than men, and men spend more time on social activities.

Table 2. Time Allocation of the Elderly by Gender

	Male (%)		Female (%)	
Personal time	41.5		43.6	N.S
Time spent with spouse/family	20.0		19.0	N.S
Time spent with friends	23.0	<	26.0	**
Time devoted to social activities	15.7	>	11.7	***
N	1197		244	

Significance level: \*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

Is there any relation between the time allocation of elderly people after retirement and their Occupational Experiences and Skills? Table 3 shows the levels of occupational experiences and skills developed in working life and time allocation in post-retirement life. It is found that elderly people with higher career skills tend to spend more time on social activities, including non-working community activities and volunteer activities. Moreover, those with higher career skills tend to devote less time to themselves, such as watching TV and engaging in a hobby.

Table 3. Occupational Experiences/Skills in Working Life and Time Allocation in Post-Retirement Life (%)

	Levels of Occupational Experiences and Skills					
	Low	Mid-I	Mid-II	High	Total	
Personal time	49.6	44.2	41.3	37.1	42.6	***
Time spent with spouse/family	17.9	19.6	21.3	20.0	19.8	+
Time spent with friends	22.9	22.7	23.3	23.9	23.2	N.S
Time devoted to social activities	10.1	13.9	14.5	19.8	14.8	***
N	209	221	274	263	967	

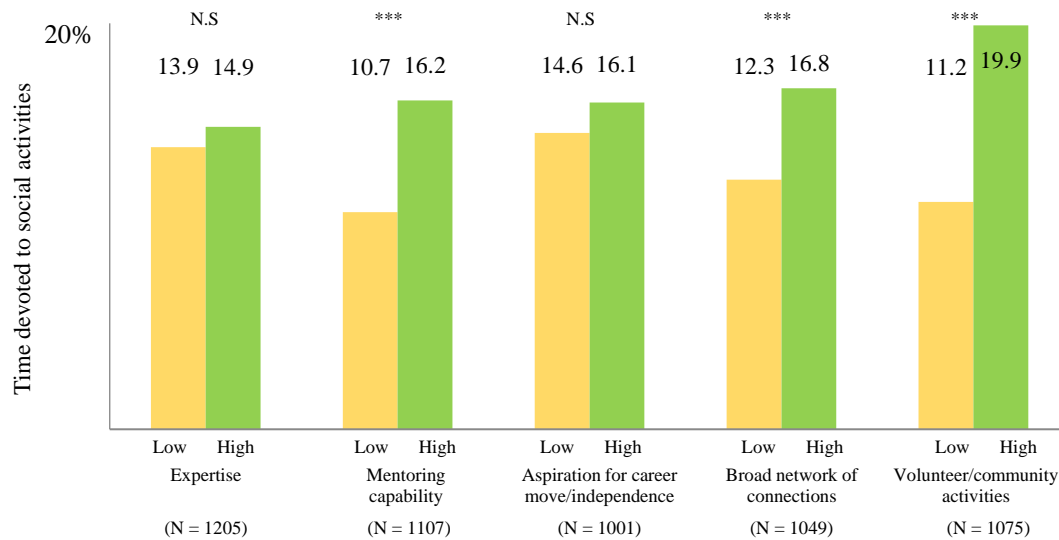
Note: The level of significance was determined using an F test in analysis of variance.

\*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

Figure 2 shows the relation between occupational experiences and skills acquired before retirement and the time spent on social activities after retirement. A glance at the figure, in which occupational capabilities are divided into five categories, indicates that the persons with more experience in mentoring and developing subordinates in their working life have a high tendency to spend more time on social activities after retirement. Those who had developed a broad network of connections before retirement tend to more actively engage in social activities after retirement. Those

with experiences in volunteer or community activities before retirement are also more willing to participate in community activities after retirement.

Figure 2. Relations between Occupational Experiences/Skills in Working Life and the Time Devoted to Social Activities after Retirement



Note: The level of significance was determined using an F test in analysis of variance.

\*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

## 2) Community Involvement After Retirement

Next, the frequency of participation in community activities is used as a measure of community involvement. The subjects were asked about whether they are participating in community/volunteer activities or any other activities that contribute to society and answered the question by choosing the most appropriate options provided: “participate regularly,” “participate sometimes,” and “NOT participate.” This means a formal community involvement, referring to community involvement through volunteer activities and organized activities in the local community. As shown in Table 4, about 40% of the respondents said that they participate in community activities on a regular basis. By gender, men (42%) are more active than women (33.1%). Overall, men, rather than women, are more likely to actively participate in formal community activities.

Table 5 shows the relation between occupational experiences/skills and post-retirement involvement in community and volunteer activities. The persons with more experience in mentoring and developing subordinates tend to more actively participate in community activities after retirement. Those who had developed a broad network of connections are also active in community involvement in the post-retirement period. Moreover, those who had been engaged in volunteer and community activities before retirement have a high tendency to actively take part in community activities. These findings indicate that the accumulation of experiences and expertise in a working career is an element in promoting community involvement after retirement.

Table 4. Frequency of Participation in Community/Volunteer Activities by Gender

	Participation in community/volunteer activities: % (Actual numbers)			
	Participate regularly	Participate sometimes	NOT participate	Total
Male	42.0	25.9	32.1	100.0 (1270)
Female	33.1	22.7	44.1	100.0 (299)
Total	40.3	25.3	34.4	100.0 (1569)

Chi-square value: 15.833, Degree of freedom: 2, Significance level P = .000

Note: “NOT participate” includes those who have experiences with community activities in the past, but not now.

Table 5. Occupational Experiences/Skills Developed in Working Life and Participation in Community/Volunteer Activities after Retirement

Occupational Experiences and Skills		Participation in NPO/community activities			N	Significance level
		NOT participate	Participate sometimes	Participate regularly		
Expertise	Low	43.9%	22.8%	33.3%	171	*
	High	32.6%	25.8%	41.6%	1112	
Mentoring capability	Low	44.6%	26.6%	28.7%	289	***
	High	29.9%	24.1%	46.0%	876	
Aspiration for career move/independence developed in working life	Low	35.0%	23.9%	41.1%	857	N.S.
	High	27.7%	29.2%	43.1%	195	
Broad network of connections	Low	41.1%	24.5%	34.4%	465	***
	High	29.2%	24.5%	46.3%	640	
Volunteer/community activities	Low	43.5%	25.6%	30.9%	618	***
	High	19.0%	22.5%	58.5%	511	

Note: The level of significance was determined by a chi-square test.

Significance level: \*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

### 3) Altruistic Behavior after Retirement

Concerning altruistic behavior, the subjects were asked the question: How often in the past year did you perform the following acts for your family, relatives, friends or neighbors? Four specific question items were presented: “Did you help other families with housework or shopping?” “Did you take care of other families’ children?” “Did you serve as an advisor or talking companion for others?” and “Did you take care of your grandchildren?” To these questions, respondents chose the most appropriate answers from the given options: “twice or more a week,” “about once a week,” “about once a month,” “several times a year,” “about once a year,” and “never.” These questions represent altruistic behavior displayed to the community – including neighbors and relatives – in an informal way.

Table 6 shows the distribution of altruistic behavior by gender. With regard to neighborhood support activities, a low proportion of respondents said they helped other families with housework or they took care of other families’ children. In contrast, more than 80% said that they offered advice to others at a frequency of once or more a year. By gender, women are more likely to perform informal



altruistic behavior than men. The percentage of women answering that they helped other families with housework or that they provided advice to others is significantly higher than that of men. For the altruistic behavior of providing support to relatives in particular, women are more active than men. Specifically, about 45% of female respondents say that they take care of or play with their grandchildren once or more a week. These findings indicate that women are more likely to engage in informal altruistic behavior than men, showing a gender difference.

Table 6. Frequency of Informal Altruistic Behavior by Gender

Helping other families with housework/shopping: % (Actual numbers)							
	Twice or more/week	About once a week	About once a month	Several times/year	About once a year	Never	Total
Male	5.1	6.4	8.5	22.5	7.8	49.8	100.0 (848)
Female	10.7	12.0	13.3	20.0	8.7	35.3	100.0 (150)
Total	5.9	7.2	9.2	22.1	7.9	47.6	100.0 (998)
Chi-square value: 21.507, Degree of freedom: 5, Significance level: P = .001							
Taking care of/playing with other families' children: % (Actual numbers)							
	Twice or more/week	About once a week	About once a month	Several times/year	About once a year	Never	Total
Male	5.5	6.3	8.0	20.6	10.4	49.2	100.0 (829)
Female	6.9	6.9	11.0	20.7	11.7	42.8	100.0 (145)
Total	5.7	6.4	8.4	20.6	10.6	48.3	100.0 (974)
Chi-square value: 3.129, Degree of freedom: 5, Significance level: N.S.							
Serving as an advisor or talking companion for others: % (Actual numbers)							
	Twice or more/week	About once a week	About once a month	Several times/year	About once a year	Never	Total
Male	6.2	9.8	24.3	36.0	9.5	14.3	100.0 (1005)
Female	19.7	23.2	24.9	20.6	4.7	6.9	100.0 (233)
Total	8.7	12.3	24.4	37.1	8.6	12.9	100.0 (1238)
Chi-square value: 94.412, Degree of freedom: 5, Significance level: P= .000							
Taking care of/playing with one's own grandchildren: % (Actual numbers)							
	Twice or more/week	About once a week	About once a month	Several times/year	About once a year	Never	Total
Male	19.5	15.1	18.7	23.9	4.0	18.7	100.0 (1004)
Female	30.7	13.5	13.5	17.2	3.6	21.4	100.0 (192)
Total	21.3	14.9	17.9	22.8	3.9	19.1	100.0 (1196)
Chi-square value: 16.006, Degree of freedom: 5, Significance level: P= .007							

Note: When there is no grandchild, the case is regarded as "Never."

A correlation coefficient analysis, which is not shown in the table, has indicated that elderly people who had acquired more occupational experiences and skills in their working life engaged in informal altruistic behavior with a higher frequency after retirement. It also has been found that men with higher occupational capabilities tended to engage in informal altruistic behavior more often after retirement ( $r = .351$ ). The same result was obtained for women ( $r = .439$ ).

#### 4) Impact of Pre-Retirement Occupational Experiences and Skills

Lastly, this paper examines the relative effects of occupational experiences and skills on volunteerism. As shown in Tables 7 and 8, a multiple regression analysis was performed of elderly people's community involvement, with age, health conditions, gender, family structure, academic background, current employment status, and occupational experiences/skills as independent variables.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis of Elderly People's Allocation of Time after Retirement<sup>1,2)</sup>

	Personal time	Time spent with family	Time spent with friends	Time spent for social activity
Age (high)	-.037	-.053	.005	.105**
Health (good)	-.146***	-.032	.120***	.128***
Female (vs. Male)	-.012	-.018	.032	-.003
Academic background (high)	.023	.045	-.126***	.054+
Employment status (none)	-.040	-.047	.073*	.026
Living alone	.073*	-.245***	.136***	-.017
Occupational Experiences and Skills (high)	-.192***	.021	.073*	.197***
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.066	.067	.050	.069
F value	9.865***	9.966***	7.548***	10.249***
N	878	878	878	878

<sup>1)</sup> Figures in the table show standardized partial regression coefficients ( $\beta$ )

<sup>2)</sup> \*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

Table 7 shows the results of a multiple regression analysis of elderly people's allocation of time in daily life. People with more occupational experiences and skills in their working life tend to spend more time in social activities (social involvement through community and volunteer activities, etc.) after retirement. In contrast, those with more occupational experiences and skills in their working life have a tendency to have less "personal time" after retirement, such as watching TV and engaging in a hobby.

Table 8 indicates that people who developed higher occupational capabilities in their working life tend to be more active in doing formal community and volunteer activities after retirement. It is also found that those with more occupational experiences and skills have a tendency to more actively display informal altruistic behavior later in life. With regard to informal altruistic behavior, women are more active than men. Persons with less education tend to engage in informal altruistic behavior more often.

These findings reveal that the capabilities developed through the working career exert an influence on volunteerism after retirement. Given this perspective, it can be said in Japanese society that capability development within companies and learning experiences in working life play a significant part in people's life course.

Table 8. Multiple Regression Analysis of Social Involvement after Retirement<sup>1-3)</sup>

	Formal community/ volunteer activities	Informal altruistic behavior
Age (high)	-.017	-.093*
Health (good)	.155***	.078*
Female (vs. Male)	-.014	.207***
Academic background (high)	.046	-.095**
Employment status (none)	.089**	-.038
Living alone	-.059+	-.031
Occupational Experiences and Skills (high)	.252***	.353***
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.115	.171
F value	17.859***	22.450***
N	906	727

1) Informal altruistic behavior, which is a dependent variable, represents the total score of “helping other families with household,” “taking care of other families’ children,” “serving as an advisor/talking companion for others,” and “taking care of one’s own grandchildren.”

2) Figures in the table show standardized partial regression coefficients ( $\beta$ )

3) \*\*\* < 0.001, \*\* < 0.01, \* < 0.05, + < 0.10

## 5. Conclusion

This paper attempted to examine how the occupational experiences and skills acquired through a working career affect community involvement after retirement in Japan. Based on the findings obtained in this study, I would like to present some arguments.

First, this study revealed a close correlation between occupational experiences/skills and social involvement after retirement. This suggests that in Japanese society, the capabilities that employees accumulate through their working career have influences on their community involvement after retirement. In other words, this means that elderly people’s life course variables, such as their educational backgrounds and the types of occupational skills obtained in their working life, make a strong contribution to their community involvement after retirement.

Second, Occupational Experiences and Skills development within companies plays an important role in the accumulation of intellectual capital in the course of life, and the capabilities developed in working life affect post-retirement community involvement. At first glance, it appears there is no association between occupational capabilities at companies and the creation of community involvement. In reality, however, these are closely related to each other. Where the accumulation of human capital and intellectual capital is concerned, it is often said that Japanese-style employment requires employees to be loyal to the company and lead a company-oriented life. However, the data analysis results of this study indicate that the occupational capabilities employees acquire through their working careers are not only useful at their companies. The occupational experiences and skills developed in working life are also utilized in community involvement and altruistic behavior after retirement, though such activities do not bring any financial benefit. From this viewpoint, it can be

argued that occupational capabilities developed within enterprises can be turned into an ability to create “community involvement.”

Lastly, it is important to look at elderly people’s community involvement from a gender perspective. In the future, the percentage of working women is expected to increase, and thereby a growing number of women could acquire occupational capabilities. I wonder how such women will utilize their capabilities acquired through their working careers in their post-retirement life. Will they lead a post-retirement life taking care of their grandchildren, if they have any? Or will they spend a lot of time on traveling or hobbies? Although there were not many female samples, this study’s analysis shows that women with more occupational experiences and skills also tend to be more active in volunteer work and altruistic behavior after retirement. Can a similar tendency be observed in other countries in Asia, Europe or the US? In Japan, there is an increase in the number of highly educated working women in the post-Equal Employment Opportunity Act generation cohort. This will bring about a significant change to the state of retired women’s community involvement. In light of the above discussion, the following hypothesis may again be derived that in the next generation of Japanese society women working outside the home will contribute to the good of society after retirement, through community activities and volunteer work.

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