

Addictive Behavior of Japanese Husbands and Wives*

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Abstract

In this paper, we estimate relationship between spousal correlation of addictive behavior. Among others, we focus on smoking and drinking using Keio Household Panel Survey (KHPS). Our findings are summarized as follows.

First, controlling various households' and individuals' characteristics, we find strong evidence for positive spousal correlation between addictive behavior. As for both smoking and drinking, error terms of couple have strong positive correlation. Above results does not depend on whether we use pooled sample or sub samples split by year and thus this finding has a certain level of robustness.

Second, there is large spousal difference between determinants of addictive behavior. Effect of equalized household income on smoking is most striking. While richer husbands smoke less than poorer husbands, as for wives, no significant impact of income on smoking is found. Effect of age, educational background, working also differ to some extent.

Third, determinants of smoking behavior and drinking behavior also considerably differ. While richer husbands drink more, they smoke less compared to poorer husbands. As for wives, income effect is significantly positive only in case of drinking. Effect of living in their own home, having school-age children and so on also differ.

Our results suggest while behavior of richer couple is, to sum it up, beneficial to health, behavior of poorer couple is not. In addition, especially as for smoking, secondhand smoke risk concentrates in children with poorer background. In terms of public health in Japan, health of poorer family, above all, children in poorer family is or will be damaged by addictive goods.

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