

Welfare Conditionality and Citizenship: The Case of Japan

INT'L CONFERENCE ON WELFARE CONDITIONALITY
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INTRODUCTION

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- ▶ Traditional welfare regime in Japan
 - insufficient state welfare, strong dependence on families and corporations

→ **Dysfunctional under demographic change and post-industrialisation**



A series of welfare reforms are ongoing

How will the ongoing welfare reforms change the nature of citizenship in Japan?

PURPOSES

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- ▶ Brief introduction on characteristics of welfare reforms in 2010's
- ▶ Analysing impact of welfare reforms by focusing on welfare conditionality
- ▶ Discussions over future nature of citizenship in JAPAN

Viewpoint :

“ Welfare Conditionality (WC) ”

▶ Traditional form of WC in Japan:

- ▣ less universalistic benefits

- ▣ weak state responsibility for care services

→ Less supportive, highly conditional

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**Increase in those excluded
(both institutionally and socially)**

▶ How will this situation be changed by recent welfare reforms?

What is the content of ongoing welfare reforms?

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1) Act on Services and Supports for People in Need (2015)

- ▶ Establishing **“the secondary safety-net”**
 - ▣ covering low income households as well as those on public assistance
- ▶ Strengthening **personal support** for people in need
 - ▣ providing careful, detailed, and inclusive supports according to individual’s needs and circumstances
 - ▣ applying a **“staying-close-beside”** approach

What is the content of ongoing welfare reforms in Japan?

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2) Act for Strengthening Community-based Integrated Care Systems (2017)

▶ Structuring local community as a base of **comprehensive care system**

- providing integrated public supports against individual / family's multiple problems
- encouraging the people living in a community to cooperate with each other "on their own initiative"

▶ Realising **inclusive local community** as a result

ANALYSIS: Has the form of WC been changed?

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- ▶ **Supports improved** qualitatively and quantitatively
- ▶ Not-oppressive, **consensus-building approach** for continuous relationship
- ▶ Sanctions exists, but **rarely executed**

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Form of WC has been changed

- ▶ Positive impacts on recipients will be expected but....Are there any matters of concern?

DISCUSSION:

A Road to inclusive Society based on republican citizenship?

▶ Formation of republican citizenship from above?

→ Apparently not. It would be rather a system of **mutual-duty** among the citizen

▶ Concern over excess inclusiveness: “bulimia”
(Young 2007)

→ people could be **excluded more harshly once they can't** meet gov't's expectation / proposal

DISCUSSION: Agency, Autonomy, and Nudge

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▶ What enables such an excess inclusiveness?

→ WC as **“Nudge”** (Thaler and Sunstein 2008)

-- Expertise of behavioural economics applied to implementation of Social Policy

-- people mostly accepts government's proposal

□ In such circumstances, what does it mean by “agency”?

▶ **A conventional view on individual autonomy in social policy should be also reexamined**

CONCLUSION

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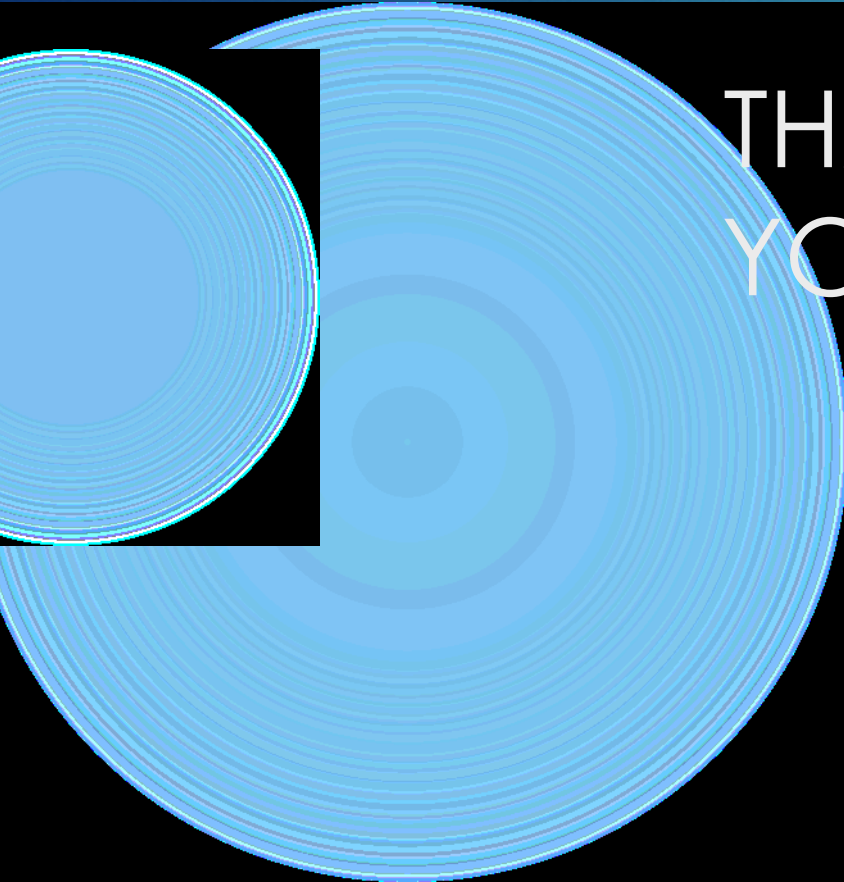
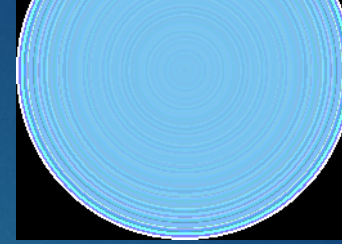
▶ Recent welfare reforms has been changing configuration of WC in Japan.

▶ New WC may promote social inclusion

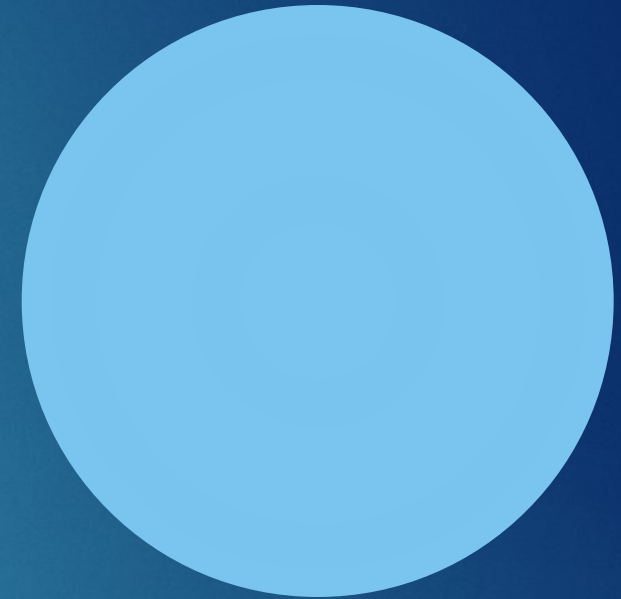
→ But... **lack of guarantee of citizens' rights** and **excess inclusiveness** should be concerned.

▶ WC as “Nudge” and its consequence

→ **Reexamination on “agency” and “autonomy”** might be a new question for social policy



THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION



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