

In this investigation, we utilized individual data sourced from the Economic and Social Research Institute, Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, provided to the Social Science Japan Data Archive, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo. We performed an empirical analysis focusing on four factors - individual, family, workplace, and human capital - affecting the use and duration of male parental leave. Specifically, we employed the Hurdle Model to examine the factors influencing the acquisition and duration of male childcare leave. After identifying these influencing factors, we proceeded to use the Probit Model to assess the impact of male childcare leave acquisition and its duration on women's continued employment, constituting Analysis 2.

As a result of Analysis 1, it was discovered that family and workplace factors primarily determine whether male employees take childcare leave or not. This outcome is consistent with the findings of a prior study by Naganuma et al. (2017), which revealed that having a flexible working hour system and workplace support for employees' work-life balance can raise the rate of male childcare leave taken. In addition, men were more likely to take childcare leave when they bore more responsibilities for housework and childcare on weekdays before their child's birth. However, we found that personal circumstances (age, education, etc.) and the relative human capital differential factors between spouses mainly determined the length of male parental leave taken. Specifically, when the annual income and years of education between husbands and wives varied significantly, husbands tended to take shorter periods of parental leave.

Analysis 2 indicates that men taking childcare leave and taking longer periods of childcare leave can increase the rate of women's continued employment. Women tended to resume work one year after childbirth if men were actively involved in housework and childcare on weekdays when the child turned one year old, if women's annual income had increased since childbirth, and if they worked for a large company. Moreover, the greater the income difference between married couples, the less incentive there was for women to continue working.

These results imply that male parental leave can boost the likelihood of women's continued employment, and that the adoption of flexible work systems and better understanding of parental leave within the workplace can be effective in increasing the rate of male parental leave. Additionally, bridging the gender gap in the future can encourage the use of male childcare leave and longer periods of childcare leave, as well as raise the rate of women's continued employment.

The organization of this study comprises four chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the research question and hypotheses after a summary of the problem awareness and current situation analysis. Chapter 2 summarizes previous studies, while Chapter 3 provides an in-depth discussion of the data, statistical methods, basic statistics, and estimation results employed in this study. Finally, Chapter 4 offers policy recommendations, limitations of this study, and a discussion of our findings.