

# Reducing poverty of single-mother households in MEDCs through mothers' work -its ideal shape and its actualization

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## Abstract

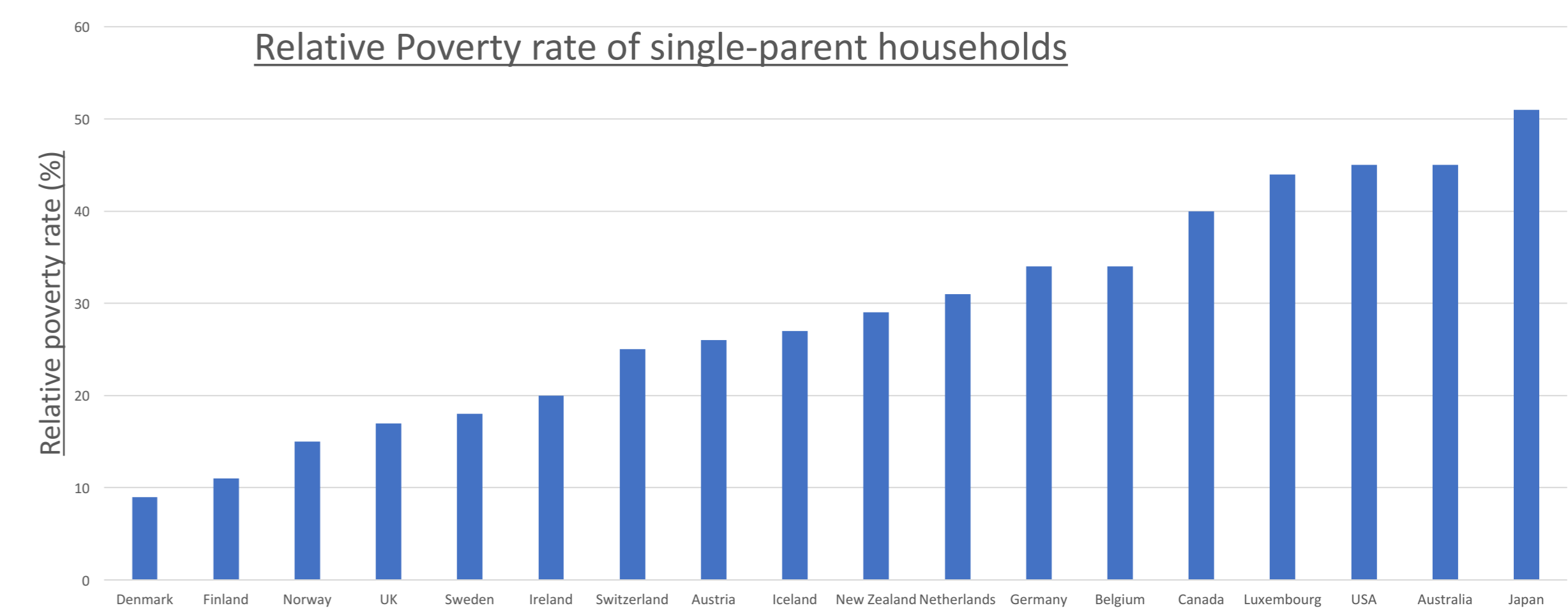
The purpose of this research is to determine the ideal shape of mother's work for decreasing poverty of single-mother households in MEDCs (more economically developed countries), and to determine how to achieve that.

Through analysis of mothers' work and childcare in 18 MEDCs, it was found that the ideal shape of mothers' work is continuous work during and after childbirth. This can be achieved by increasing accessibility of childcare services. The research suggests that services such as 'Kodomoshokudo' have an unintended benefit of stimulating mothers' continuous work.

## Background

The relative poverty rate of single-mother households is high in many MEDCs. (Figure 1.)

Figure 1. Graphed using data from "OECD Family Database." OECD Family Database - OECD. www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm.



Tomuro(2017) shows that in Japan, single mothers are the 'working poor' mostly working part-time, due to:

- Shu(2011)- mothers' high age
- Nakamura et al.(2015)- employers' reluctance to employ women

This research analyzes 18 MEDCs (Figure 1) that have larger GDP per capita than Japan.

## Analysis

Hypothesis: Continuity of work is the ideal shape of mothers' work for reducing poverty in single-mother households.

Correlation between poverty rate of single-parent households and continuity of mothers' work:

### Group A) Scandinavia, Japan, USA, Oceania

**-0.93** → Increasing continuity of mothers' work decreases poverty in single-mother households

To increase continuity of mothers' work  
→ Better accessibility to childcare services

Figure 2.

	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Iceland	Japan	USA	New Zealand	Australia
A) Childcare enrollment % of 0-2 year olds	63	45	52	56	28	41	38	32
B) Childcare enrollment % of 3-5 year olds	94	93	96	96	90	67	94	80
C) Average hours spent in 0-2 childcare	35.5	31	33	37	NA	30	20	NA
D) Average hours spent in 6-11 childcare	11.3	13.3	11.2	12.9	NA	13	6	NA
E) Participation % of 6-11 year olds	67.6	58.7	34.7	34.3	17	7.3	NA	15
F) % of GDP spent on childcare	1.35	1.62	1.23	1.81	0.4	0.39	1	0.7
G) Fee of childcare (% of net family income)	8.9	4.7	5	10.8	16.9	23.3	18.6	14.5
Continuity of mothers' work	5	5.5	4.5	5	-2.5	0.5	2.5	-5.5

Created using data from "OECD Family Database." OECD Family Database - OECD. www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm.

Correlation between continuity of mothers' work and:

A) : **0.82** → Increasing 0-2 and 6-11 year-olds' participation in childcare increases work continuity

E) : **0.75**  
B) : **0.57** → No correlation with participation of 3-5 year-olds

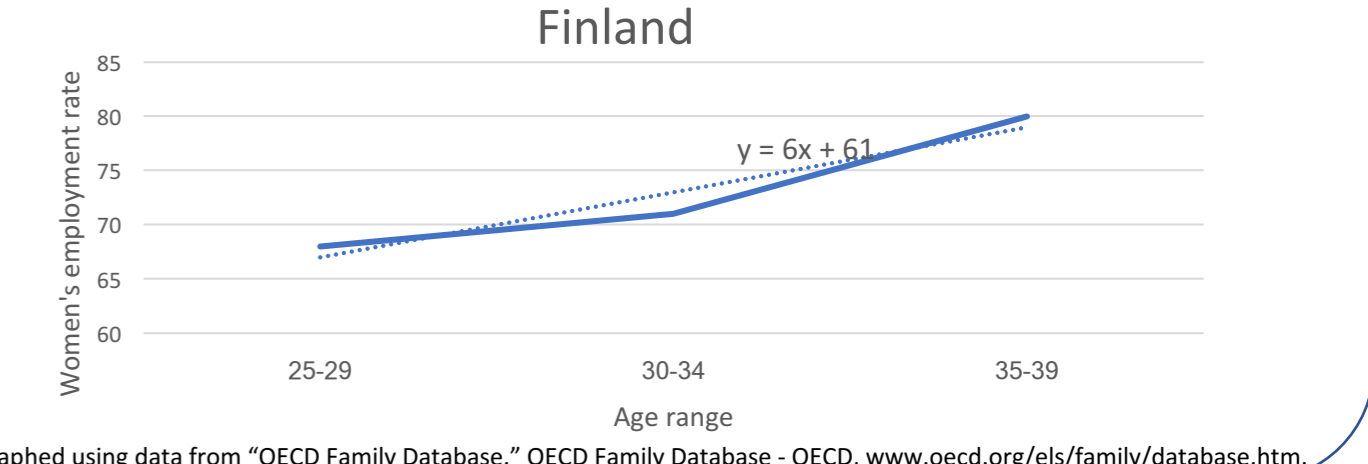
C) : **0.54**  
D) : **0.25** → No correlation with hours spent in childcare

To increase 0-2 and 6-11 year-old childcare participation → Correlation between public spending on childcare and:

A) : **0.75**  
E) : **0.76** → Increasing public spending on childcare increases participation

Why does increasing public spending on childcare increase participation? → Correlation between:  
G) and F) : **-0.77** → Increasing public spending on childcare decreases childcare fees

Gradient of graph showing women's employment rates between 24 and 39 years old. In case below, 6. Finland



Graphed using data from "OECD Family Database." OECD Family Database - OECD. www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm.

### Group B) Europe

**-0.51** No correlation

Poverty is caused by something other than continuity of mothers' work

Does participation in childcare affect poverty in single-mother households?

Correlation between:

**-0.04**  
**0.31**  
**-0.16** → No correlation

Participation in childcare services does not affect poverty in single-mother households

## Conclusion

In Scandinavia, USA, Japan, and Oceania, the ideal shape of mothers' work is **continuous work**.

To increase work continuity, accessibility of childcare services for 0-2 year-olds and 6-11 year-olds must be increased, by **increasing public spending on childcare to decrease childcare fees**. European countries are exceptions to this- conduct further research on Europe and how it differs from other MEDCs.

These suggest that other than supporting children's wellbeing, free services such as 'kodomoshokudo' may

also stimulate continuity of mothers' work. The number of these services must increase and be accessible to all children, not only those in poverty.

### 'Study Café'

I created the 'Study Café', a place where local children can study with high school volunteers. As well as supporting the children's academics, it also serves as a form of free 'childcare'.



## Reference

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