

## Abstract of Master's Dissertation

No.1

Course	International Health Development Course	Name	Junko Ota
Thesis Title	“Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Support for Mothers in Japan: Mixed Methods Approach”		
<p><b>Abstract of Master's Dissertation</b></p> <p>Objective :</p> <p>General objective was to assess the magnitude of the impact of the COVID-19 on mothers' social support in Japan. Three specific objectives are: 1) to estimate differences in mothers' social support and related factors between mothers born and raised infants before the pandemic (Group Bfr) and those during the pandemic (Group Drg); 2) to construct path models of communication to social support in Group Bfr and Group Drg; and 3) to characterize experiences of social support among mothers and relevant professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic period.</p> <p>Method :</p> <p>Mixed method sequential exploratory study was applied. In qualitative part, individual interviews via Zoom among eligible mothers and relevant professionals and paper- or web-based questionnaires among eligible relevant professionals were conducted. Participants were recruited through online child-raising support organization and facilities until reaching data saturation. Study documents were sent via e-mail or post mail. Qualitative integration method was applied to analyze. In quantitative part, DIY online survey among eligible mothers was conducted. The survey was outsourced to a service providing company and participants were recruited up to 500 for each in Group Bfr and Group Drg. A pre-test for the survey was conducted. Descriptive statistics, comparison of mean values between two groups by PSM, bivariate and multivariable analysis in each group were applied to analyze.</p>			

\* The abstract, containing the objective, method, result and conclusion should not exceed 300-500 words and printed double sided on A4 paper)

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<p>Result :</p> <p>There were both consistent and inconsistent findings based on the results from quantitative and qualitative data analysis. In quantitative part, there was statistical significance in the differences between Group Bfr and Group Drg in face-to-face communication, events attended, service utilized and mom friends made. There was no statistical significance in social support categories, non-face-to-face communication, and one-way communication. In the path model, one-way communication contributed as the largest for informational and emotional social support, secondarily by face-to-face communication for Group Bfr and Group Drg. In qualitative part, face-to-face communication was affected by the pandemic substantially with further exacerbated by less opportunities to attend events and utilize services. Mothers have mobilized to one-way communication and non-face-to-face communication with its satisfaction and also concerns of SNS use.</p> <p>Conclusion :</p> <p>Under the pandemic, mothers faced a decrease in the frequency of face-to-face communication, the number of events attended, the number of services utilized, and the number of mom friends made. For one-way communication and non-face-to-face communication, there were some inconsistencies in findings. However, particularly under the pandemic, these communication categories could advance further to supplement face-to-face communication and reach to social support needed while being aware of negative impacts of SNS use and those with less access to internet.</p>			

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