

## **An occupational perspective of childhood poverty in Japan**

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**Introduction:** Poverty is a major problem worldwide (United Nations, 2015). Although Japan is a first world country, poverty remains an important issue. The relative percentage of Japanese children living in poverty is high, and there are concerns regarding the influence of poverty on child development.

**Objective:** The objective of this report is to interpret the occupational perspective of childhood poverty in Japan.

**Methods:** We interpreted based on the 2016 Living Survey Report, previously administered to 8000 households in Osaka, the second largest city in Japan. This sample of Living Survey consisted of fifth elementary and second middle school grade students and their parents. We extracted response items that differed in terms of their children's occupations between poor and non-poor children, and interpreted these responses relative to children's health status.

**Results:** Poor children had issues related to preventative or maintenance health occupation like going to a doctor, and exhibited discrepancies in self-care occupations, such as eating and sleeping, compared to non-poor children. Poor children also had fewer opportunities to travel or eat and learn with their families. Poor children were often alone after school, and had few opportunities to interact with adults besides their family members. Very few had personal computers and therefore demonstrated reduced access to information.

**Conclusion:** Poor children had difficulty satisfying essential food and safety-related needs. In addition, they also had limited opportunities to learn and interact with people outside their families necessary for optimal development. We need additional, in depth research on children's occupation and their health.