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Are we getting closer to consensus? An analysis of changes in socially perceived necessities over time in Japan

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Consensual Approach (Mack & Lansley 1985)

- To identify "correct" items to construct a valid deprivation scale, 4 tests ("Suitability", "validity", "reliability" & "additivity") were proposed (Guio, Gordon & Marlier, 2012).

- 3 approaches to conduct the "Suitability" test:
    - (1) objective;
    - (2) consumption-based;
    - (3) consensual approach

    → Relying on the public's views on what items are NECESSARY.
    "Democratic" way to decide poverty

- How do we ask the public what item are necessary here are several methods of the Consensual Approach that are typically employed:
    - Focus groups, Separate survey, Two-stage questionnaire

General population:

Selected prior studies identifying socially perceived necessities by the consensual approach

Country	Research	Method
UK	Mack & Lansley, 1985	Separate survey (MORI survey 1983 – adults 16+)
	Gordon & Pantazis, 1997	Separate survey (ONS Omnibus survey)
	Pantazis, Townsend, & Gordon, 2006	Separate survey (ONS Omnibus survey)
	Dermott, 2018	Separate survey (The Necessities of Life Survey 2012)
Ireland	Callan, Nolan & Whelan, 1993	Two-stage questionnaire
Sweden	Halleröd, 1995	Two-stage questionnaire
Belgium	Van Den Bosch, 2001	Two-stage questionnaire
Russia	Kortchagina, et al., 2005	Separate survey
EU	Guio, Gordon, & Marlier, 2012	Separate survey (Eurobarometer Survey 2007)
	Guio et al., 2016	Data driven
Japan	Abe, 2006	Separate survey
Bangladesh	Ahmed, 2007	Separate survey
Vietnam	Pro Poor Centre, 2007	Two-stage questionnaire
Hong Kong	Saunders, Wong & Wo, 2014	Two-stage questionnaire
Taiwan	Chen, Leu & Wange, 2019	Two-stage questionnaire
Australia	Saunders, Naidoo & Griffths 2008, Saunders & Naidoo, 2018	Two-stage questionnaire Two-stage questionnaire
Fiji	Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2021	Two-stage questionnaire
Tonga	'Otunuku & Finau, 2019	Focus groups
Mexico	Fernández, 2017	Separate survey
Argentina	Dirección General de Estadística Y Censos, 2021	Focus groups + two-stage questionnaire
Brazil	De Oliveira et al., 2021	Focus groups +Two-stage questionnaire
Benin	Nandy & Pomati, 2015	Separate survey

However, for **children** it is more complicated

Who do we ask the Necessity Question?

General public?
Parents?
Children?

By What Method?

Selected prior studies identifying socially perceived necessities by the consensual approach for children

Country	Research	Necessity survey details	
		Methods	Survey target
EU	Guio, Gordon & Marlier, 2012	Separate survey (Eurobarometer Survey 2007)	General population
	Guio, et al., 2018	Data driven	Parents
England	Main & Pople, 2011	Focus groups Separate survey	Children aged 8 to15 Child-parent pairs
UK	Gordon et al., 2000	Separate survey	Parents
	Main & Bradshaw, 2012	Focus groups Separate survey	Children aged 8-14 Child–parent pairs
	Main & Bradshaw, 2014	Separate survey (omnibus survey)	General public
Canada	Smith, Martin, Paled & Poon, 2023	Focus groups Pilot survey	Children aged 12-19
Israel	Gros Manos, 2015	Focus groups	Children aged 10-12
Japan	Abe, 2018	Focus groups	Parents
China	Wang, Wong & Xu 2014	Two-stage questionnaire	Parents
Hong Kong	Lau, Gordon, Zhang & Bradshaw, 2019	Separate survey	Children adults
Taiwan	Leu, Chen & Chen, 2016	Two-stage questionnaire	Children
Korea	Kim & Nandy, 2018	Taken from UNICEF RC10	n/a
Australia	Saunders, Brown, Bedford & Naidoo, 2019	Focus groups Two-stage questionnaire	Children aged 11-17 Children aged 11-17
Fiji	Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2021	Two-stage questionnaire	General public
Tonga	'Otunuku & Finau, 2019	Focus groups	Youth and adults
South Africa	Barnes & Wright, 2012	Separate survey	General public
Uganda	UNICEF, 2019	Focus groups	Children 15-19 & Adults 18-30, 31+

How "stable" is the list of deprivation items over (long) time?

- Possible reasons that items lose/gain its support (from the public) as socially perceived necessities
  - Technological change – e.g. smart phone, fax machine
  - Societal preference change – e.g. new year celebration, car in Japan.

  - Change in age composition of the population
  - Change in socio-economic status (SES) composition
  - Change in people's perception of necessity – or poverty

Policy, media, etc.

Possible repercussion in terms of "majority" rule?

If so, who changed the perception?? Is the consensus weakening??

Prior Studies Investigating Change over time of SPNs

- PSE : There are both items that lost "support" and gained "support". (Gordon et al. 2000, Gordon and Pantazis 1997)

- Viet Nam: From 1997/8 to 2006, a large increase (Pro Poor Cenre 2007)

- Van Den Bosch (2001) : Belgian data from 1985 to 1988. Even in short period of time, "considerable change". However, aggregate level of support changed only slightly.

- Pantazis, Gordon & Townsend (2006) compared people's perceptions in 1983, 1990 and 1999. The young generation's trend different from the trend of the population as a whole.

- Main and Bradshaw (2014) : Omnibus surveys for the 2000 and 2012 Poverty and Social Exclusion (PSE) . *The differences are very small and the direction and meaning of the changes are not always clear, perhaps suggesting "noise" in the data rather than meaningful change over time"* (M & B 2014;197)

- Overall: 1) Aggregate level of the support remains fairly stable.
             2) However, except for P,G & T (2006), they did not look into the changes in the
                consensus among the sub-groups.

Research Questions

- RQ1: Has the rate of support for items such as "socially perceived necessities" changed over time, and if so, has it changed even after controlling for demographic and economic changes?

- RQ2: Has the change in support been in the same direction across different segments of society?

- RQ3: Are we moving towards a consensus?

Data

Year	Method	N	N Res-ponse	N child items
2003	Mail	2000	1350	14
2008	Internet	1800	1800	26
2011	Mail	3000	1518	13
2015	Internet	3000	3000	45
2022	Internet	2000	2000	47

- ***Child Necessity Surveys***
  - 2003、2008、2011、2015、2022
  - Surveyed general population aged over 20
- ***Questionnaire***
  - (2011, 2015, 2022) "This question is about living standard of children in modern Japan. Do you think the item in the list below is a necessity for a child and every child, if he/she wants to, should be able to have it?"
  - (2008) "In modern Japan, what are items that should be provided for every child?"
  - (2003) "In modern Japan, what are minimally needed items that a family need in order to live normally ?" (child items)
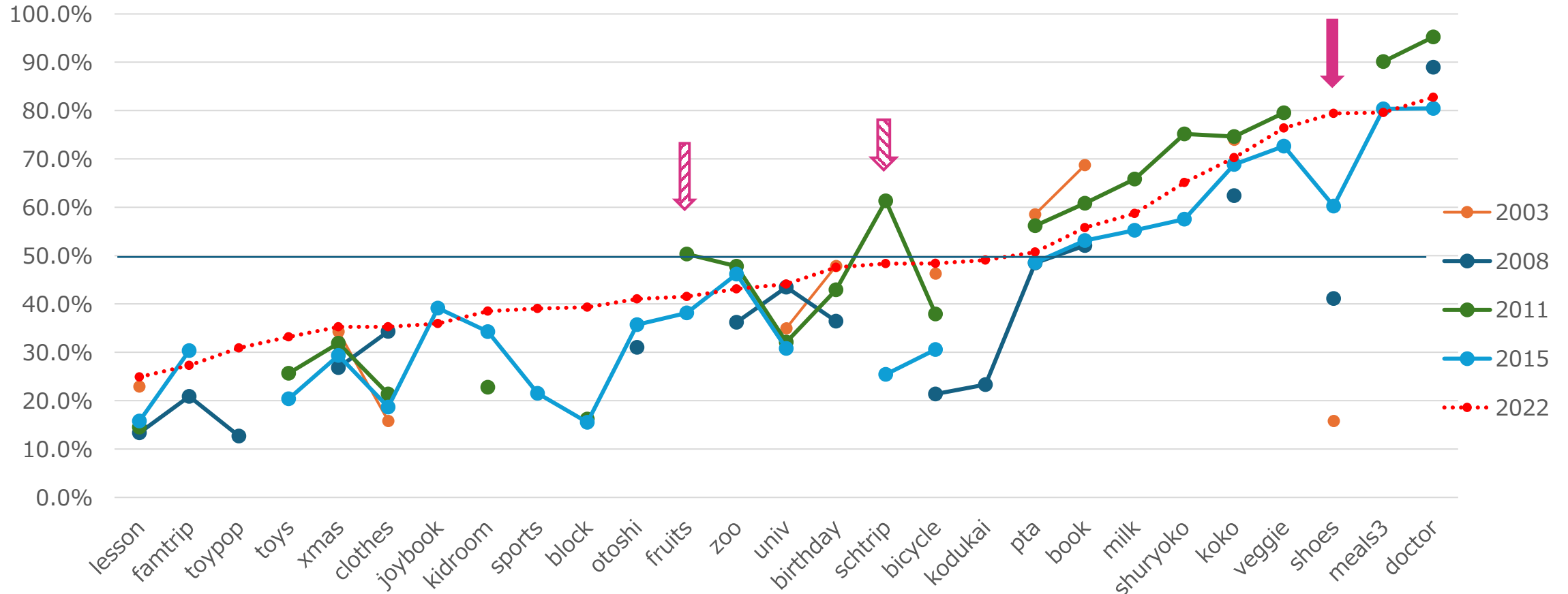- ***Data used for multivariate analysis***
  - Exclusion criteria :
    - respondents over 80 and less than 20 year old
    - Items that are not in the 2022 survey
    - Items that appear only in one survey year

  - Final data includes 27 items(2022), 24 items(2015), 20 items (2011), 16 items (2008), 10 items(2003)

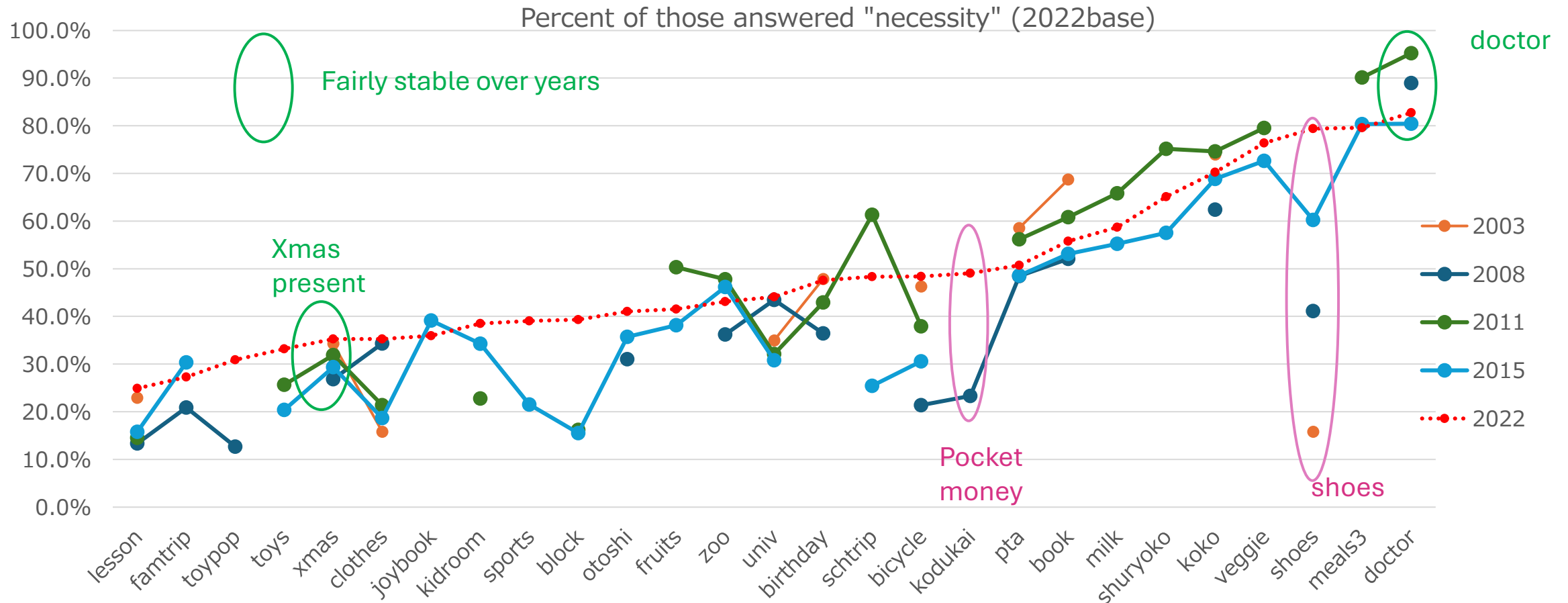# Descriptive Result: Changes from 2003 to 2022

Percent of respondents who answered the item is a "necessity" (2022base)

Legend: 2003, 2008, 2011, 2015, 2022

X-axis categories: lesson, famtrip, toypop, toys, xmas, clothes, joybook, kidroom, sports, block, otoshi, fruits, zoo, univ, birthday, schtrip, bicycle, kodukai, pta, book, milk, shuryoko, koko, veggie, shoes, meals3, doctor

Lesson: Sports or hobby lessons, **Famtrip:** Family trip, **Toypop:**Toys that most of children at the same age have,**Toys:**toys such as sports equip and dolls, **Xmas:** Xmas present, **Clothes:** Clothes that fits in with others, **Joybook:** books for enjoyment, **sports**: outdoor play equip., **block:** baby toys such as blocks, **ownmoney:** Pocket money,, **newyear :** New Year money gift, **famouting:** family outing (zoo, etc.), **b'day:** birthday present, shoes: at least 2 pairs of shoes, **univ:** university education, **Sclevents:** For parents to attend school events, **book:** books suitable for age, **highschl:** High school education, **Doctor :** To go to a doctor if necessary

Items that are fairly stable, and items that gained/lost support

Percent of those answered "necessity" (2022base)

Fairly stable over years

Xmas present

Pocket money

shoes

doctor

2003
2008
2011
2015
2022

Lesson: Sports or hobby lessons, **Famtrip:** Family trip, **Toypop:**Toys that most of children at the same age have,**Toys:**toys such as sports equip and dolls, **Xmas:** Xmas present, **Clothes:** Clothes that fits in with others, **Joybook:** books for enjoyment, **sports**: outdoor play equip., **block:** baby toys such as blocks, **ownmoney:** Pocket money,, **newyear :** New Year money gift, **famouting:** family outing (zoo, etc.), **b'day:** birthday present, shoes: at least 2 pairs of shoes, **univ:** university education, **Sclevents:** For parents to attend school events, **book:** books suitable for age, **highschl:** High school education, **Doctor :** To go to a doctor if necessary

RQ1: Has the rate of support for items such as "socially perceived necessities" changed over time, and if so, has it changed even after controlling for demographic and economic changes?

Logistic regression was performed for each item. The dependent variable was a dummy variable indicating the perception of the necessity of each item, and the independent variables were the dummy variables for each year of the survey (base = 2022). To control for respondent characteristics over the years, respondents' age, gender, and household income quintile as well as whether the respondents had children were included

8 Items which showed statistically significant *increase*

Toys, Clothes, Kidsroom, Sports, Blocks, New year money, shoes

8 which items showed statistically significant *decrease*

Fruits, School day trip, School events, books, milk, school long trip, 3 meals a day, Doctor

RQ2: Has the change in support been in the same direction across different segments of society?
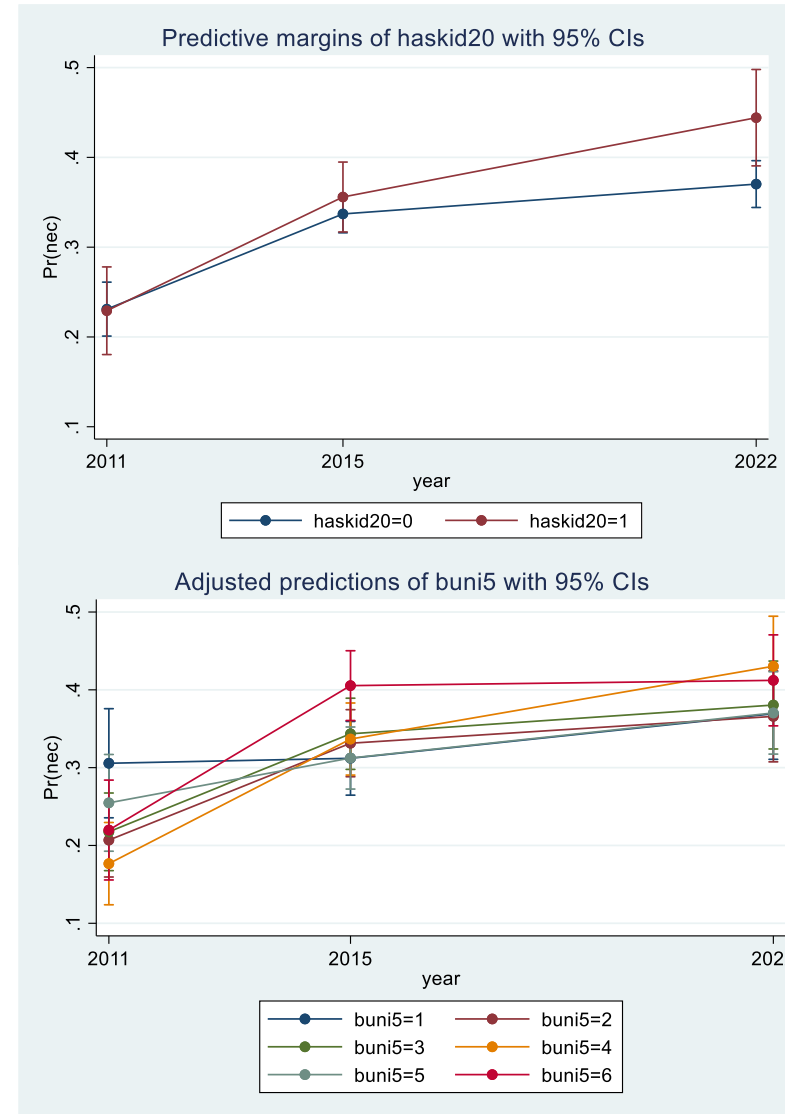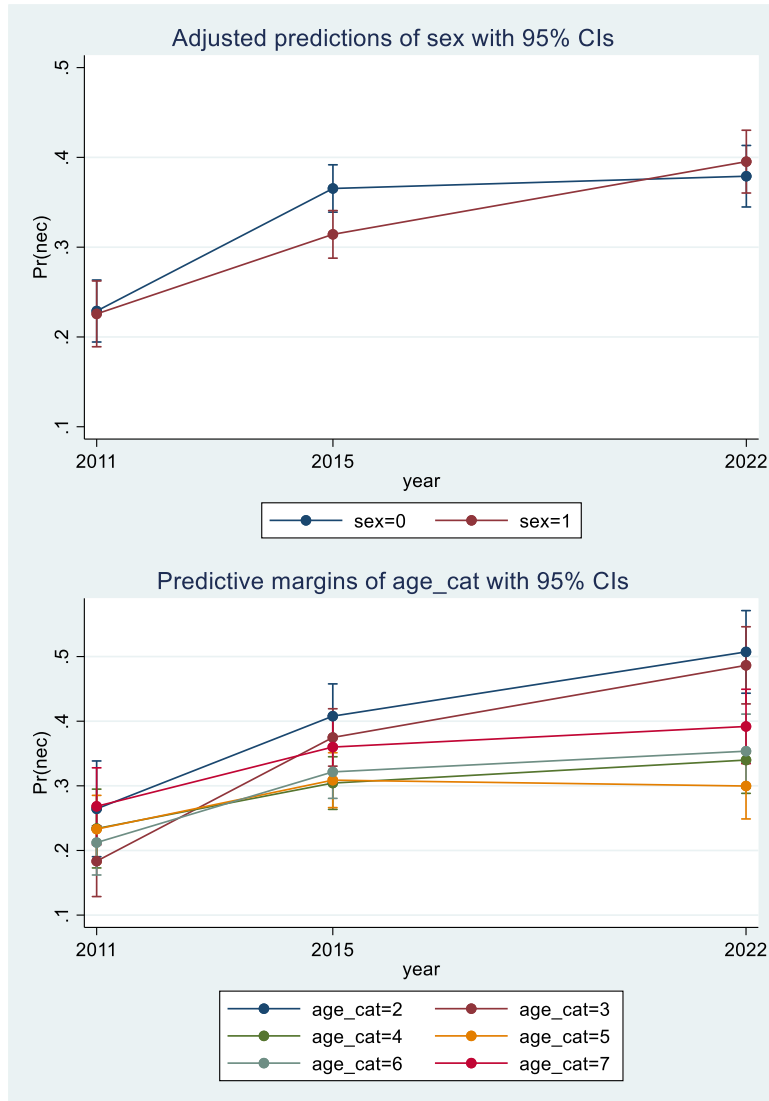RQ3: Are we moving towards a consensus

Analytical strategy

Cross-terms of year dummies with the characteristic variables were introduced into the regression to examine the yearly trend for each segment of respondent characteristics.
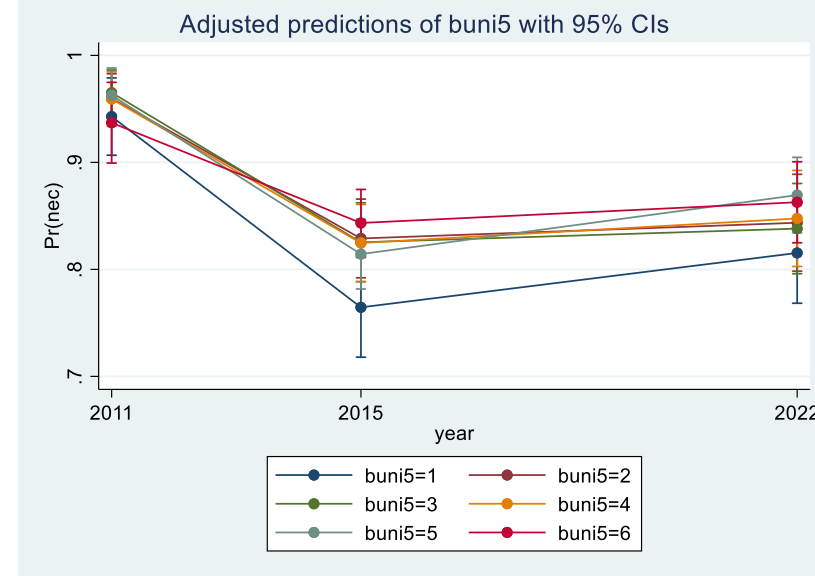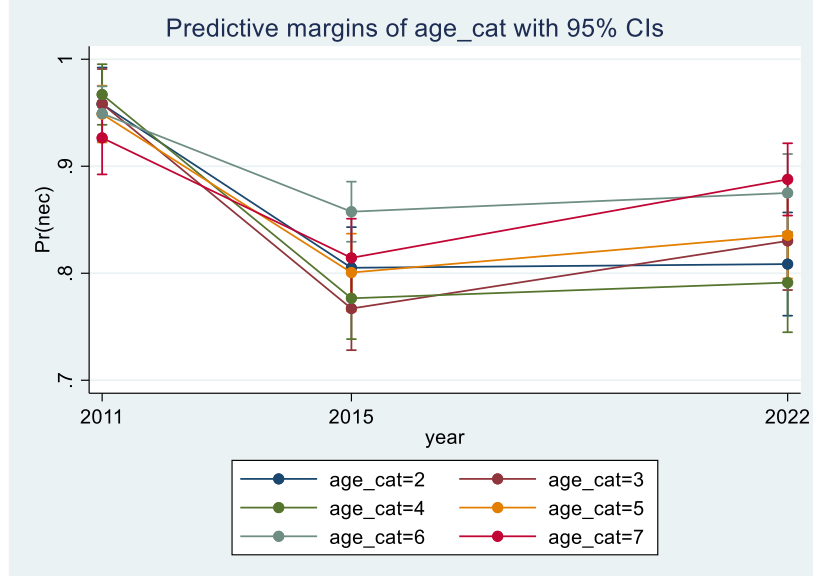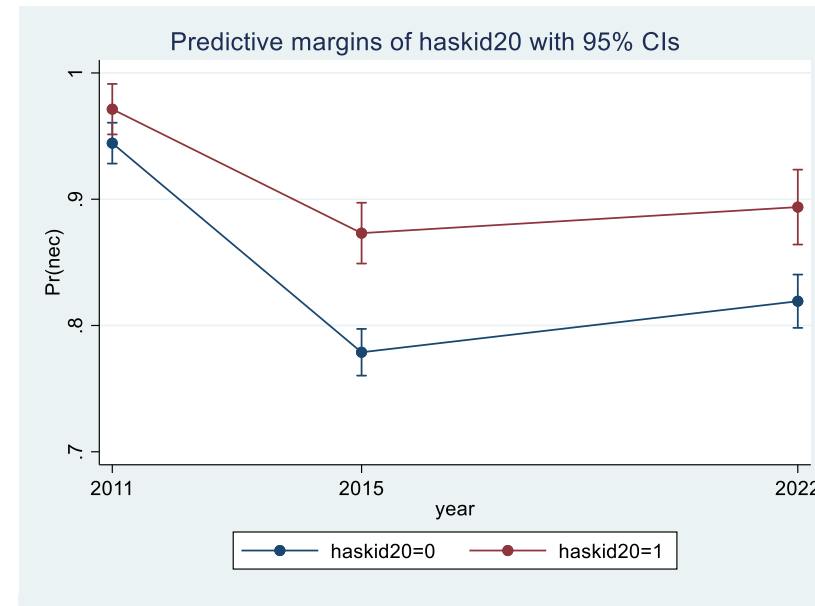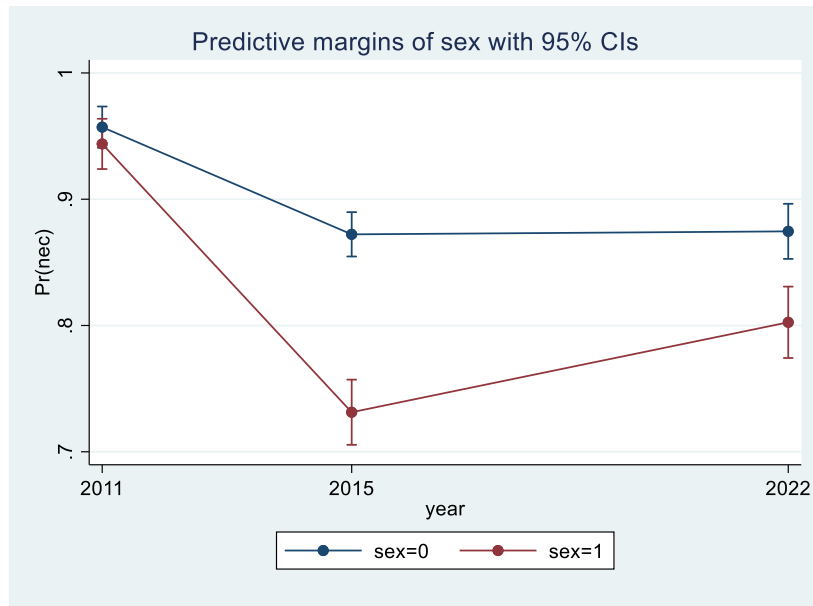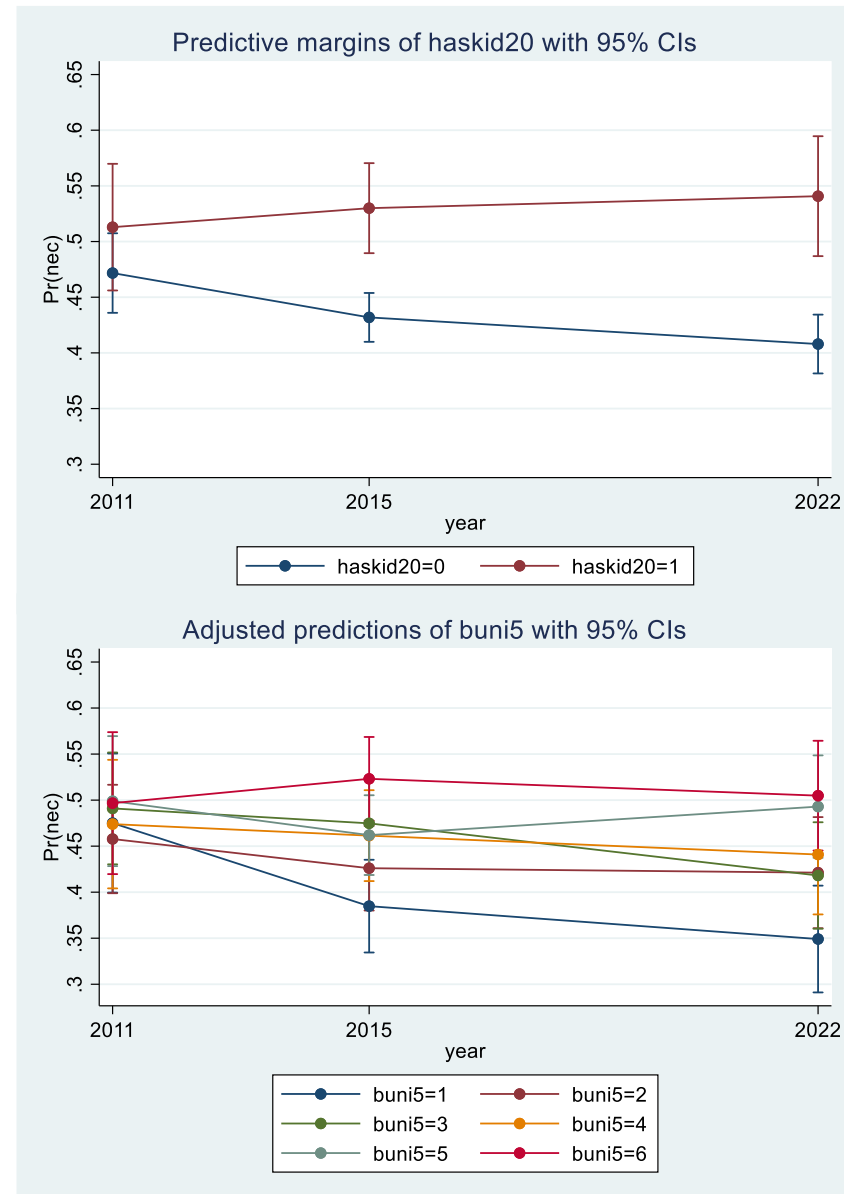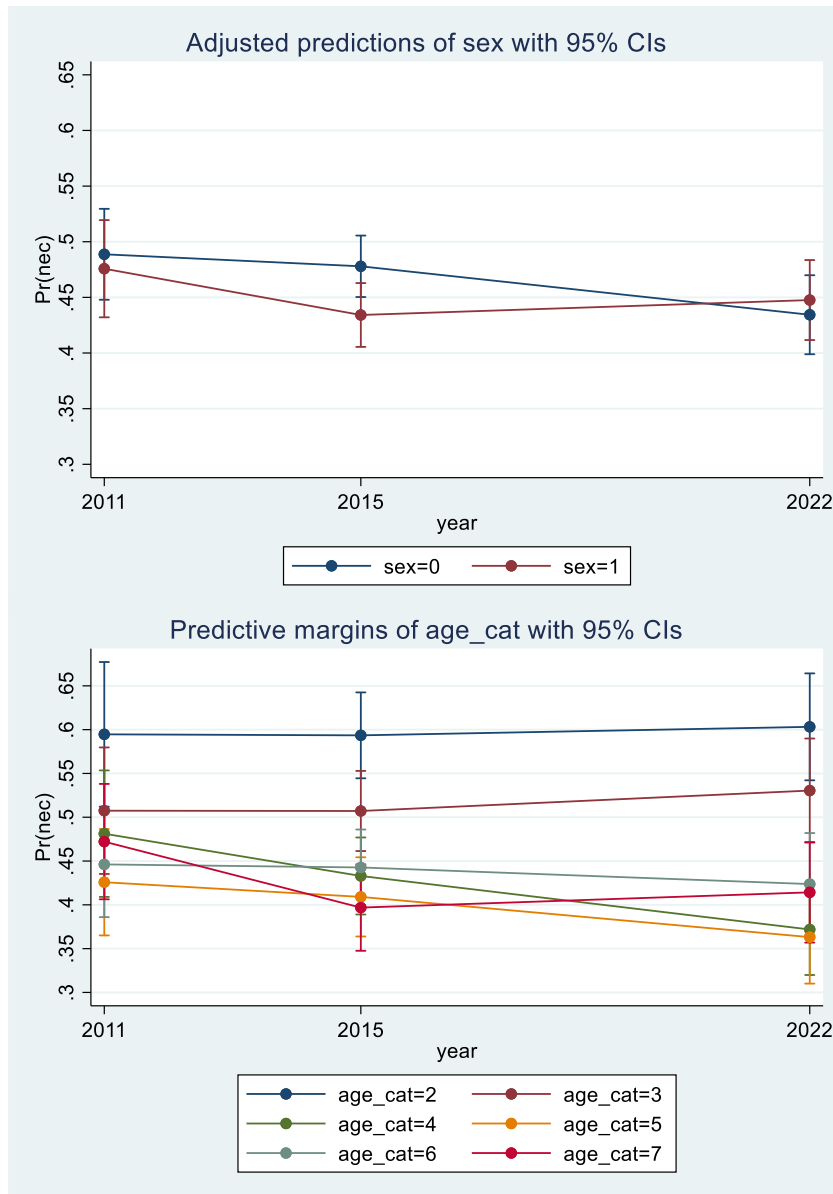
Predicted Values for "2 Pairs of Shoes that fit"
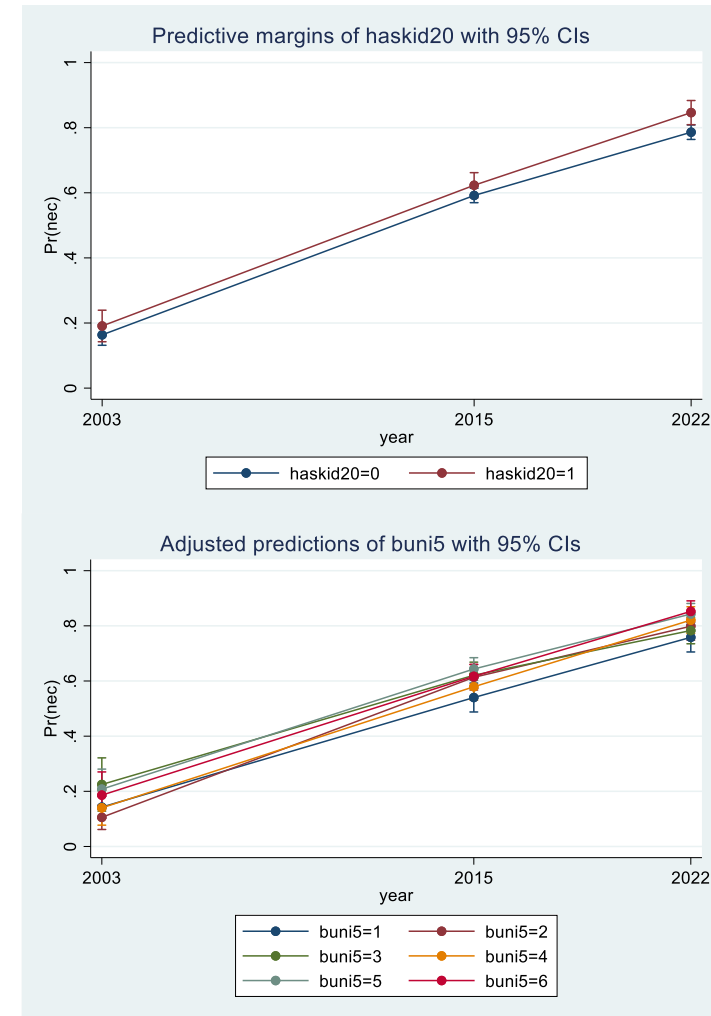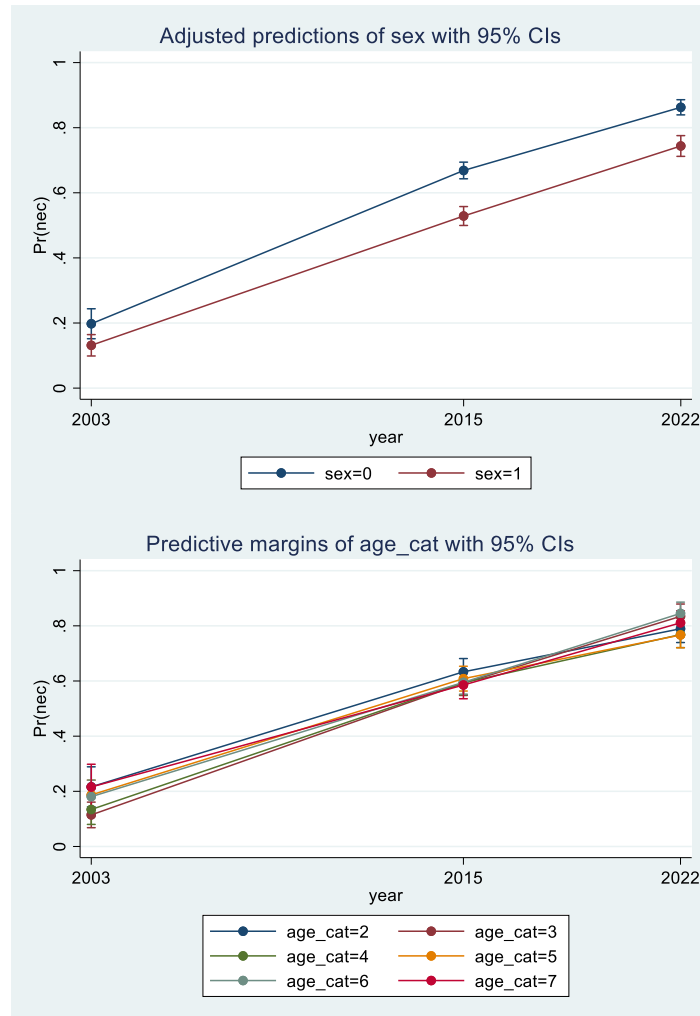
Predicted Values for "separate bedrooms for boys and girls above age 10"

Predicted Values for "visiting a doctor when needed"

Predicted Values for "family outings (zoos, beaches, etc.)"

Compiled Results (25 items)

	Direction		Closer?		
	Same	Diff	Closer	Stable	Wider
Sex	20	5	5	17	3
Age	16	9	0	10	15
HasChild	21	4	1	12	12
Income	13	12	7	13	5

RQ2

For most of the items, the support rate moved in the same direction except for Income quintile.

RQ3

Consensus between sexes is getting closer, but consensus between age gps and HasChild is getting wider.

		Same direction (RQ2)				Getting closer(RQ3)			
		Sex	Age	Haschild	Income	Sex	Age	Haschild	Income
1	Lesson	N	N	N	N	C	W	W	C
2	Family trip	N	N	N	N	W	S	S	S
-3	Toys	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	S	S
4	Xmas presents	Y	N	Y	N	S	S	W	C
-5	Clothes	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	S	C
6	Books for joy	N	N	Y	N	C	W	S	S
-7	Kidsroom	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	W	C
-8	Sports	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	S	S
-9	Block	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	W	W
-10	New yr money	Y	Y	Y	N	S	W	S	S
-11	Fruits	Y	N	Y	Y	S	S	S	W
12	Zoo	Y	N	N	N	S	W	W	W
-13	Univ	Y	N	Y	N	C	W	W	C
14	Birthday	N	Y	N	N	C	W	W	S
-15	School day trip	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	W	C
16	Bicycle	Y	Y	Y	N	S	W	S	C
-17	Events	Y	Y	Y	N	S	S	W	W
-18	Book	Y	Y	Y	Y	C	W	S	S
-19	Milk	Y	N	Y	N	S	S	S	S
-20	School long trip	Y	Y	Y	Y	W	S	W	S
21	High school	N	N	Y	Y	C	S	C	C
22	Veggie	Y	Y	Y	N	S	S	S	S
-23	Shoes	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
-24	3 meals a day	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	W	W	S
-25	Doctor	Y	Y	Y	Y	W	W	W	W

Discussions

1. If we apply the 50% rule, the SPN were fairly stable. (same as prior studies)
   → Validity of deprivation scale using consensual approach is strengthened.

2. The support rates for items in Japan did not increase much despite the development of child poverty policies and public awareness.

3. Having said that, there are changes in the support rate for items for many items even after controlling for demographic and economic compositional changes. And this change was not uniform, and widened consensus between age groups and those who have children and those who do not.
   → *Whose consensus should we base our decision on SPN ??* "General population" is not possible anymore?

Limitations of the study

Comparing 5 surveys with different modes of data collection. Even though the comparison is made after controlling for demographics, there might be un-controlled bias remaining.