Gender and the Division of Filial Responsibility between Lone Sisters and Their Brothers

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Abstract

Descriptions of and rationales for the division of responsibility for elderly parents by 50 sister-brother dyads in sibling groups that included only one
sister were analyzed qualitatively to explore why provision of services is a
gendered activity or at the very least appears to be. Three interrelated
factors were identified: (a) Family members adopted cultural assumptions
about what constituted gender-appropriate behavior; (b) the lone sister
typically was “in charge” of service provision; (c) brothers' actual
contributions tended to be considered unimportant by both sisters and
brothers. The gender composition of the sibling group is suggested to be an
important context within which the meanings of gender and parent care are
negotiated.

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  relationship - sibling

  gender

  elderly

  rationale

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