

Comments on Glaeser's presentation

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Review

The presentation provides many evidences in the Covid-19

- Many policy implications such as teleworking and urban structure (Core-periphery, business, communication, digitalization, urban growth).

A key is face-to-face communication or teleworking (no commuting costs) in urban area.

How do we justify a case of Japan?

What's happened in Japan?

Painful commute in Japan (Tokyo)

Long-run (well-known) problem in Japan is long-time/long-distance commuting by public transportation in urban area (Tokyo)

More than one-hour commuting and “rush hours”

- Huge disutility of working
- Deteriorating working performance
- Humper work-life balance
 - Less child care
 - Less urban amenities
 - Overworking



Telework Survey

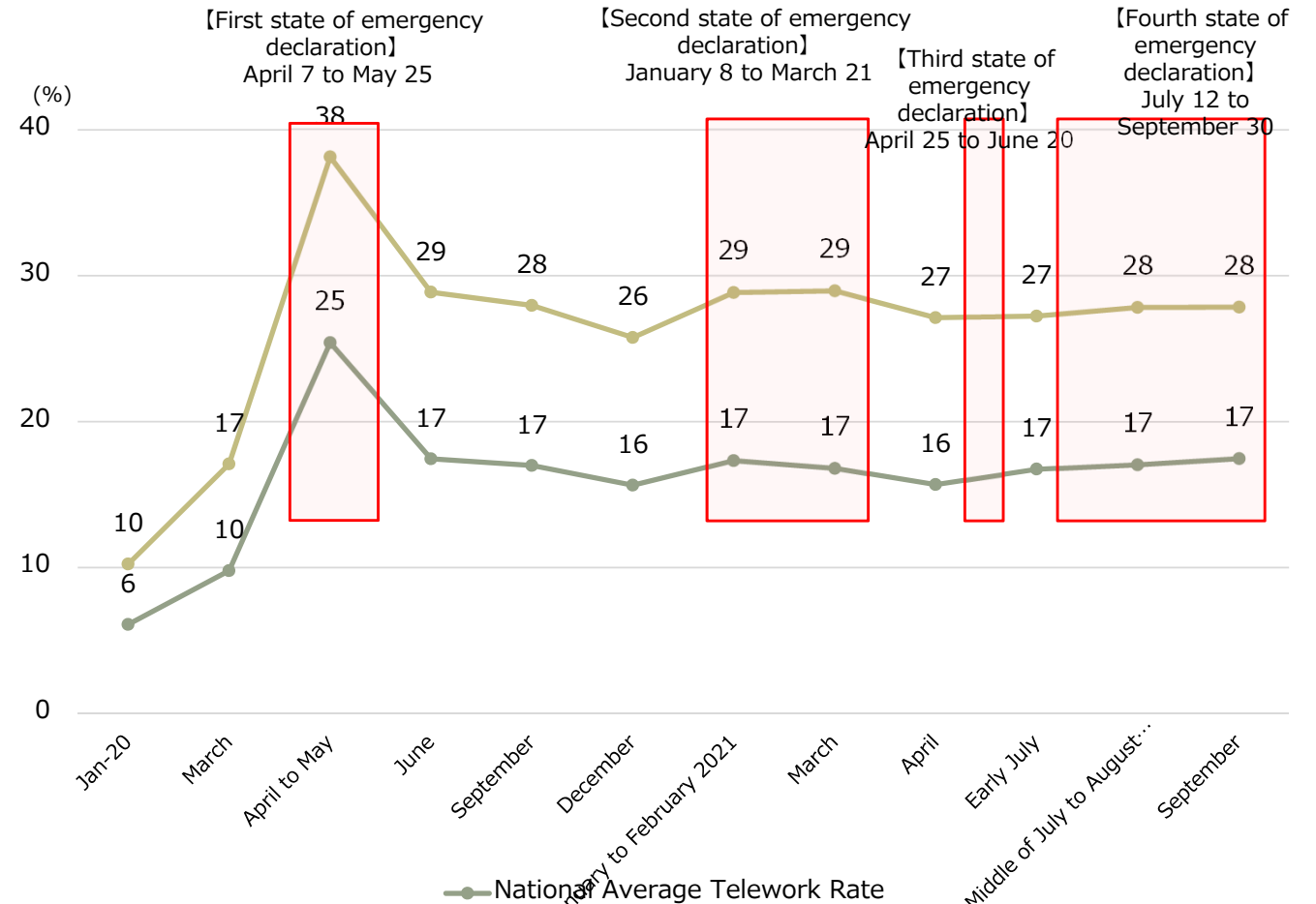
“Okubo-NIRA telework Survey”

7 waves since Early 2020

10,000 respondents in each wave (semi-panel survey)

Workers over Japan

- Teleworking, task, working environments, digitalization, etc.
- Basic characteristics (gender, age, income, education, job, tasks, mental condition, life satisfaction, job engagement, happiness, etc)

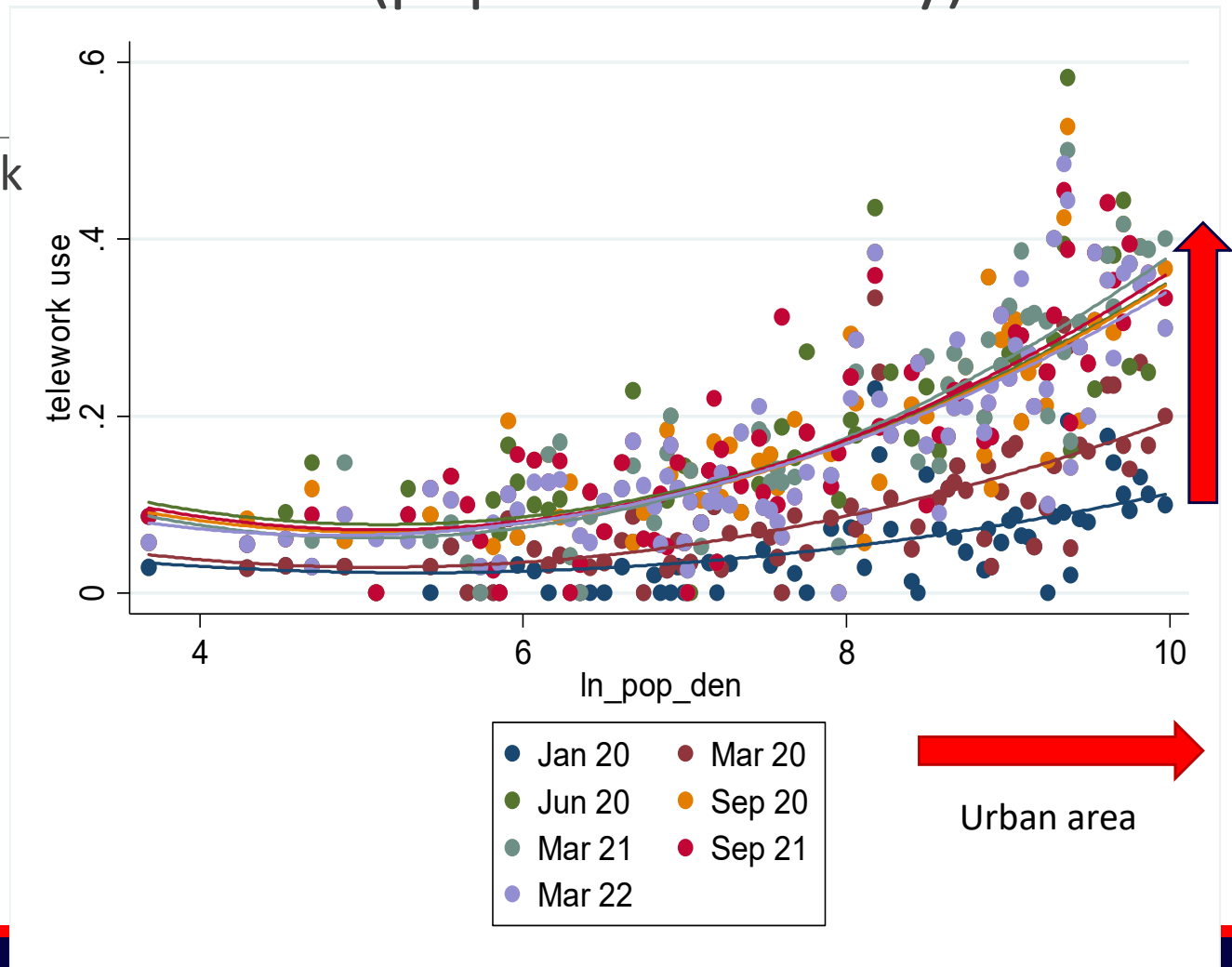


National (From January 2020 to March: n=10,516, From April to June: n=12,138, From September to December: n=10,523, From January 2021 to April: n=9,796, From Early July to September: n=10,644)
Greater Tokyo Metropolitan Area (From January 2020 to March: n=3,467, From April to June: n=4,049, From September to December: n=3,514, From January 2021 to

Telework use and urbanization (population density)

In the spread of Covid, telework use increased more in highly dense areas (urban)

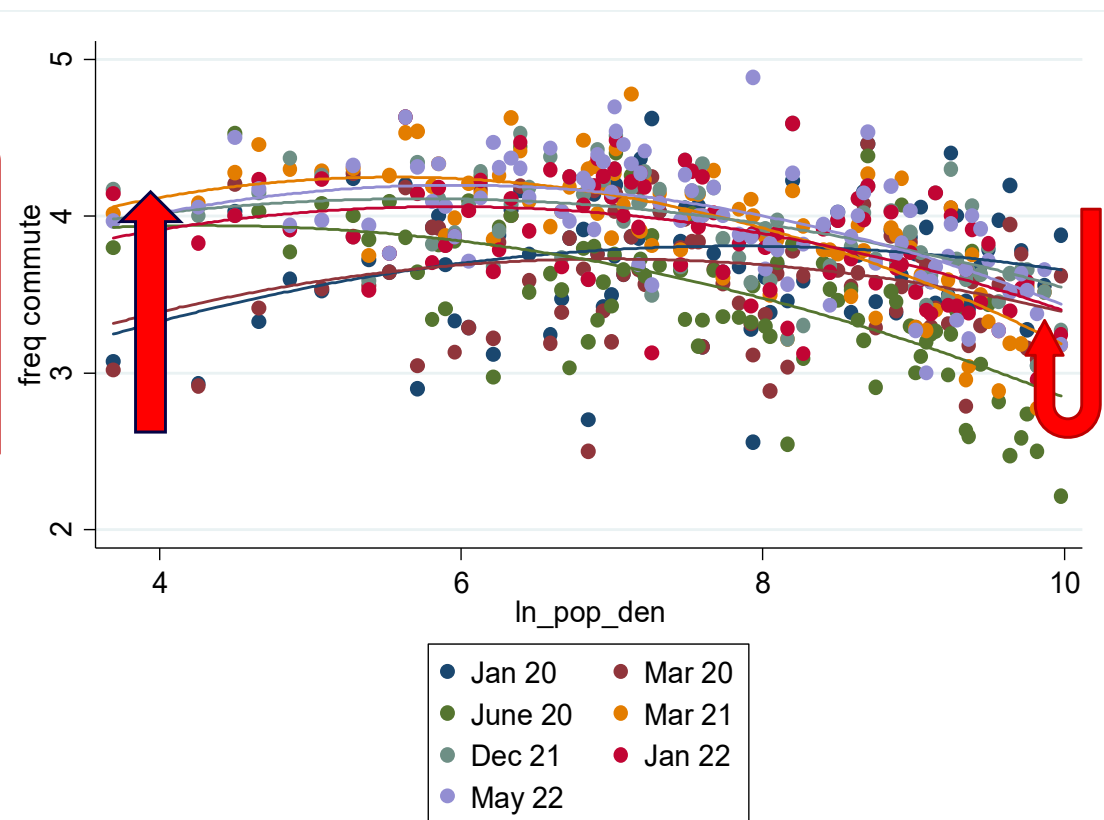
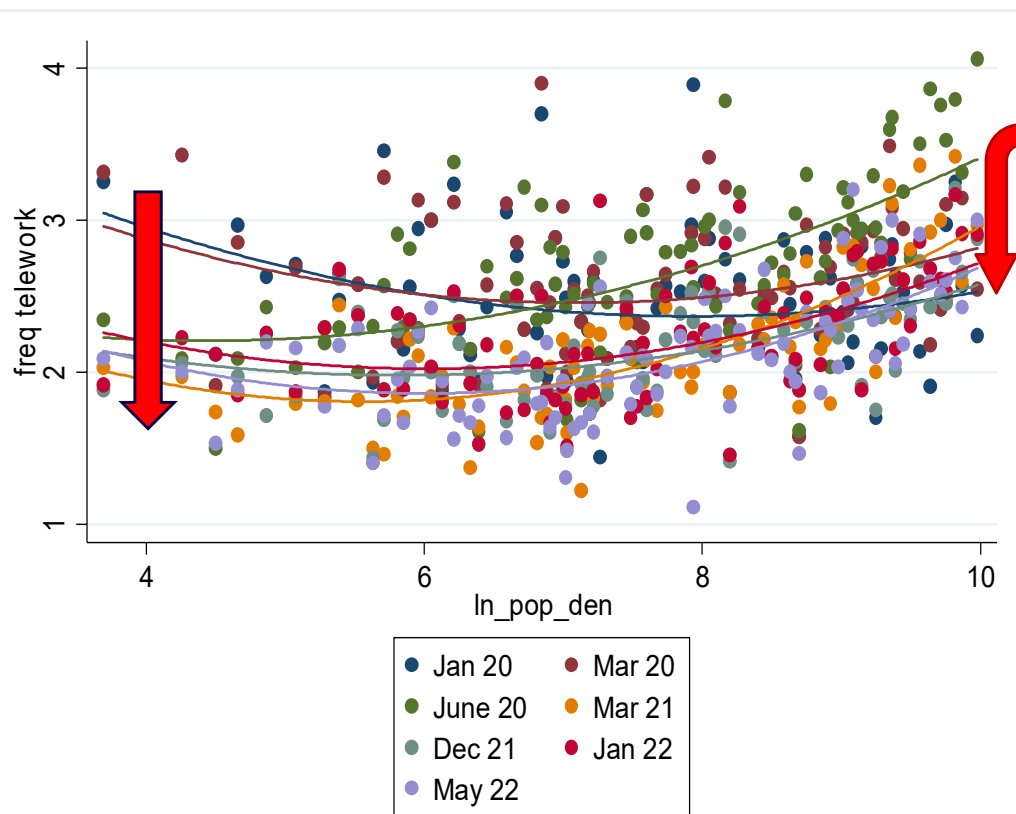
- Population density at municipality (1,100 cities, towns and villages)
- Bin scatter plot



Frequency of commuting/teleworking

Urban: more frequent telework less freq commuting

Suburb/Rural: less freq telework more freq commuting



Teleworker's Commuting under the first lock-down

“Soft-lockdown” in Apr-May 2020

Telework use in Tokyo: 38%

82% of teleworkers commuted at least once

Some tasks are required to commute

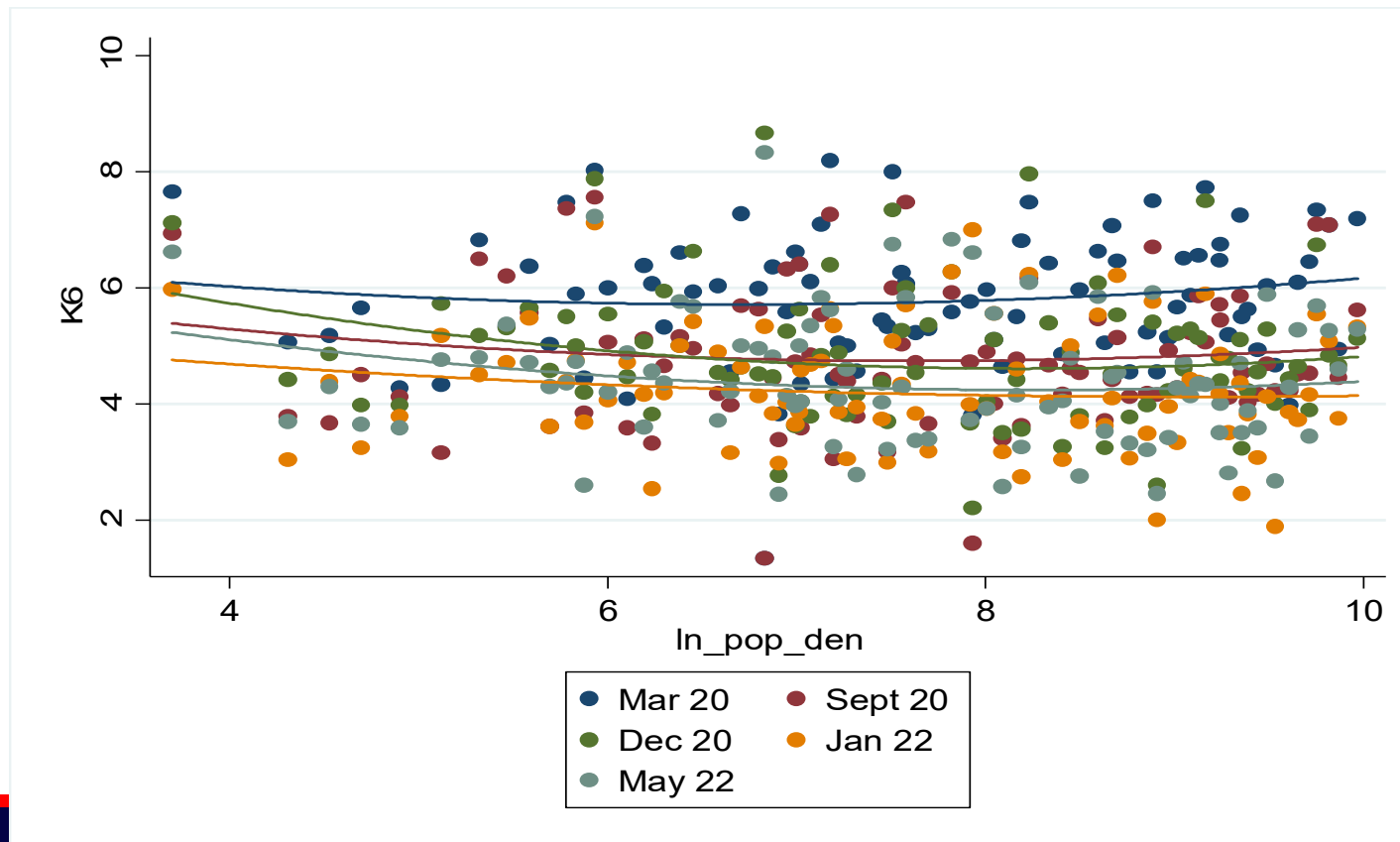
- Paper documents
- Meetings
- Care of customers

All teleworkers (choose multiple items)			Teleworkers with commuting	
item No.	tasks	num teleworkers	num office tasks	num commuters
item 1	face-to face	476	1	1,084
item 2	public administration	235	2	522
item 3	paper documents and clerical	801	3	304
item 4	contact with customers	799	4	139
item 5	meeting and conference	499	More than 5 tasks	139
item 6	human resource	270	Total	2,188
item 7	use of facilities and equipments	122		
item 8	data access	216		
item 9	maintenance	322		
item 10	research and experiments	597		
item 11	others	100		
No commuting		552		

Okubo, T. (2022). Telework in the spread of COVID-19. *Information Economics and Policy*, 60, 100987.

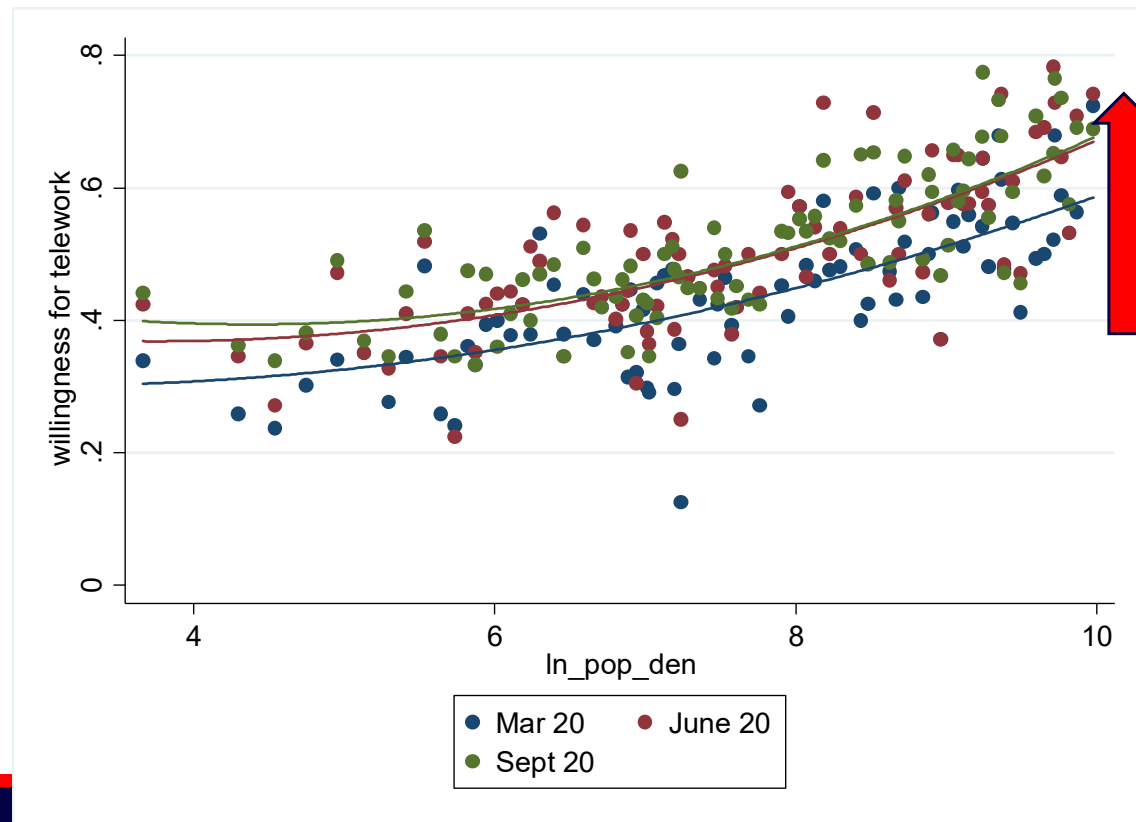
Mental health (K6)

Neutral to core-periphery



Sustainability for Telework

Q: Do you want to keep on teleworking in post-Covid?

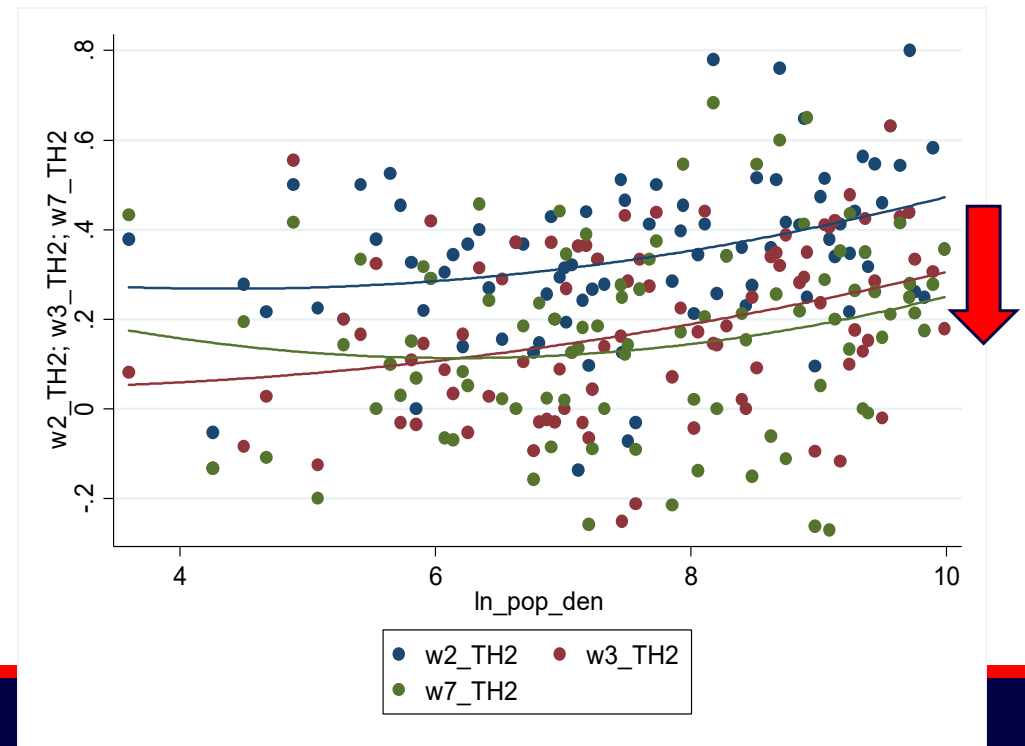
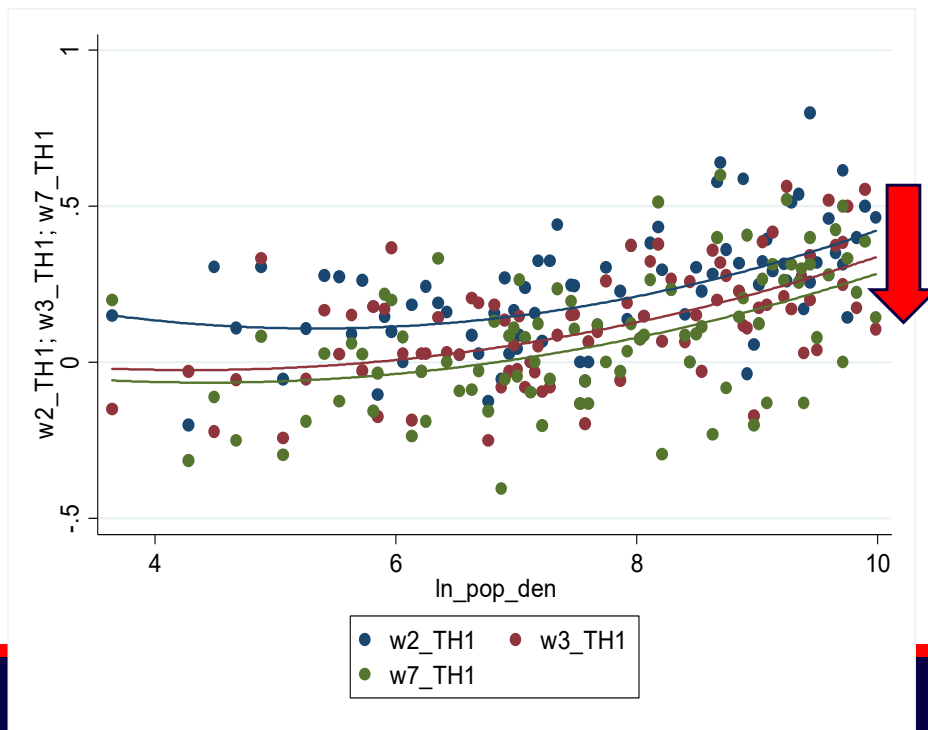


Future Expectation

Q1: Does telework enable us to reduce commuting and live far from workplace?

Q2: Does telework enable us to change working hours flexibly and improve daily life?

- More positive in urban
- become gradually skeptical



Future remote work in Japan

Japan saw low telework use (stagnant)

But workers tend to use telework more frequently

(commute) X (telework)

But there is regional discrepancy (urban/suburbs/rural)

- People in urban area tend to use more telework and want to keep in post covid. They can enjoy the benefit of teleworking.
- Urban people reduce commuting
- Urban people are more positive to teleworking and believe positive impact on work-life balance and can work without commuting

Thank you

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