

Demographic Profiles of Brazilians and Their Children in Japan

Yoshimi Chitose

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to grasp the demographic profiles of Brazilians in Japan, with a special focus on their children. Where possible, I compare Brazilians with other nationals (Korean, Chinese, Filipino, and Peruvian) to curve out their special features. My results indicate that the one of the most unique demographic features of Latin American *Nikkei* immigrants in Japan is their high share of children. In particular, while the share of children for other foreign nationals shows a decreasing trend between 1984 and 2004, that for Brazilians and Peruvians shows an upward trend. My result also implies that in some areas of Japan, the settlement of Brazilians and Peruvians is slowly taking place. The data as well as research on these children's circumstances as they begin their journey in a new country is immediately needed, for they may become important members of Japanese society in the near future.

Key Words: *Nikkei* Brazilians, age distribution, sex ratio

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a marked increase in studies on international migration and immigrants in Japan. In particular, research targeted at Brazilians residing in Japan based on fieldwork and micro-level surveys burgeoned in the 1990s. The increase in scholarly attention to Brazilians is stimulated partly by the growing Brazilian population after the amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in June 1990. With this reform, Brazilians of Japanese ancestry (*Nikkei*) are allowed to enter Japan and to work without restrictions on type of work, a privilege given exclusively to *Nikkei* immigrants.

Thanks to numerous studies based on micro-level surveys and fieldwork in Brazilian communities formed in Japan (for example, see Ikegami 2001; Watanabe 1995a, 1995b; Roth 2002; Tsuda 2003), the social and economic circumstances of Brazilian residents have been quite well documented in the 1990s. We have come to know various aspects of Brazilians living in Japan including their working conditions (Roth 2002; Ninomiya 1994), the relationship between *Nikkei* Brazilians and local residents (Tsuzuki 2000), the response of local governments to the rapid increase in Brazilian residents (Ishikawa 1995; Komai 2004), and the schooling of their children (Onai 2003; Yuki 2003). In contrast,

surprisingly little has been studied from macro perspectives, such as their fundamental demographic characteristics at the national level.

My aim in this paper is to grasp the demographic profiles of Brazilians in Japan, with a special focus on their children. Where possible, I compare Brazilians with other nationals to curve out their special features. Hirano, Castles and Brownlee (2000) argue that the key question concerning immigration in Japan today is whether or not settlements of foreign nationals, especially those called "new comers," are actually taking place. Although the answer to this question is still ambiguous and it may be too early to answer, the demographic profiles of the foreign nationals in Japan at the macro-level, such as age distribution and sex ratios may provide us with some important implications for their lengths of residence in Japan. In particular, the population of children and their demographic characteristics may be valuable indicators to judge whether the settlement of foreign nationals will take place. This is because when a family includes children, the chances of the family returning to their home country appear to become slim (Castles and Miller 2003). More importantly, these children may become a part of the Japanese population as well as labor force in the near future. Thus, it is quite important to focus our attention on children of foreign nationals assuming that they may grow up to work, marry, and live in Japan.

It is well known that the age profiles of migrants show certain regularities (Castro and Rogers 1983). For example, past research on age composition of migrants shows that migration propensities are high among small children who tend to move with their parents. Migration increases sharply, reaching another peak around ages 20-22, after which it declines steadily until possibly interrupted by a retirement peak at the older ages. With respect to international migration, age profiles of immigrants vary considerably depending on the immigration policies of both receiving and sending countries, as well as by the length of residence in receiving countries (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). Empirically, it is well known that the age profiles of immigrants converge to that of the native population as the length of residence in the receiving country increases (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). It is expected that the age profiles of foreign nationals in Japan are relatively young, except for Korean and Chinese, since their entry into Japan in large numbers is quite a recent phenomenon.

It is also empirically well known that sex ratios of migrants are heavily weighted toward one sex at the outset of migration, usually higher numbers of males over females. As the length of stay in the receiving country increases, sex ratios of migrants tend to equalize as migrants bring their family members from their home countries or form their own families in the host countries. International migration begins among those with selective

demographic and socioeconomic features, but as risks and costs of migration decrease with accumulated experience and expanded networks, the characteristics of migrants become more inclusive (Massey et al. 1994).

Using national data from the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* issued by the Ministry of Justice, I seek to grasp the demographic characteristics of Brazilians and their children in Japan and their changes over time. For a comparison, I chose four nationalities to flesh out the characteristics of Brazilians in Japan. These are Korean, Chinese, Filipino, and Peruvian. These four nationalities are the largest in terms of size in Japan today. First, I explain the sources of data on the foreign population in Japan. Then I discuss the 1990 reform of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, since this law has significantly stimulated the immigration of so-called “new comers” including *Nikkei* Brazilians. Third, I explore the changes in the foreign population in Japan from 1984 to 2004, and then I analyze their age distribution patterns. Fifth, I look at the age distribution of foreign nationals at the prefecture level, with a special focus on children. In the last section, I examine the sex ratios of foreign nationals. Finally, I summarize the findings concerning demographic profiles of Brazilians and their children in Japan today.

1. Statistics on Foreign Population in Japan

Statistics on the foreign population in Japan are available from five sources (Hayase 2000). These are: (1) the *Annual Report on Statistics on Legal Migrants*, (2) the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*, (3) the Census, (4) vital statistics, and (5) the *Report on the Employment Conditions of Foreigners*. In this paper, I use *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* issued by the Ministry of Justice for the following reasons. First, the statistics list the number of foreign nationals who are registered. According to the Immigration Law, foreign nationals who intend to stay for more than 90 days in Japan are obliged to register their status at the municipal office. When the registration is complete, foreign nationals are authorized to stay and work in Japan. As such, figures from the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* are considered as stocks of immigrants rather than flows. This means that the data provides us with an overall picture of the foreign residents who intend to stay for relatively long-term in Japan. In other words, the pictures that emerge from this study are those of would-be residents as well as established residents in Japan, rather than tourists or short-term visitors.

Other than the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*, there is no source that lists demographic information on foreign-born children in Japan. Data from the *Annual Report on Statistics on Legal Migrants* also issued by the Ministry of Justice focuses on the number of entries and

departures which are more likely to be tourists and short-term visitors, rather than residents. The Census data issued by the Statistics Bureau is another valuable source of information about the foreign population in Japan. The Census reports show some interesting tabulations with respect to the foreign population, such as family type, work status, and migration. However, published Census information on children of foreign nationals is rather limited. It is possible to make original tabulations of foreign-born residents living in Japan, but in order to get the individual level data, it takes tremendous paperwork and time. The *Report on the Employment Conditions of Foreigners* issued by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare indicates the employment situation of foreigners by work place. Although the statistics provide important information on the working conditions of foreign nationals in Japan, needless to say, the information on foreign children is quite limited in these statistics.

Since I focus on demographic profiles of children of foreign residents as well, I choose the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* for this analysis. However, the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* is not without flaws. It is often pointed out that those registered at the municipal office do not actually establish residence at the registered address, since immigrants are highly mobile, and they do not re-register at the new municipal office. Consequently, both administrators and

scholars are realizing the need to grasp internal as well as international movements of immigrants (Toyota Declaration 2004). Thus, if registered immigrants are already back in their home countries, the use of the statistics may overestimate my results.

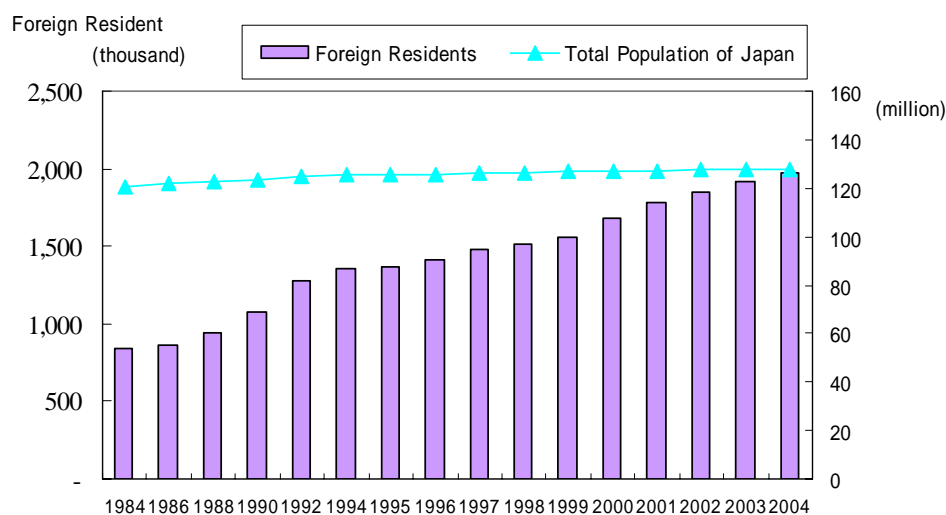
2. The 1990 Reform of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act

Brazilians are one of the largest groups among the new immigrants¹ in Japan. The population of Brazilians has increased dramatically around the time of the amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990. The basic stance of the Japanese government toward immigration is to allow only those with certain skills to enter and work in Japan for a limited amount of time. In other words, the Japanese government does not allow unskilled foreign nationals to enter and work in Japan. Officially the Japanese government also does not allow foreigners to enter the country under a permanent immigrant status. All foreigners intending to work in Japan have to obtain a visa that specifies the employment activities that he/she is going to perform. During the latter half of the 1980s, Japan experienced a severe labor shortage, particularly in unskilled labor in the manufacturing sector. Past Japanese immigrants (first generation Japanese) to Brazil have started to respond to the labor shortage by returning to Japan to seek income earning opportunities, pushed by

extreme inflation in Brazil during this same period (Higuchi 2005). They have no difficulties entering Japan since they are first generation Japanese, and naturally, their nationality is Japanese. However, the number of past Japanese immigrants was not large enough to fulfill the demand. Soon the second generation, or children of the past Japanese immigrants to Brazil followed in the footsteps of their parents.

Since Japanese descendents or the second generation Japanese immigrants to Brazil did not have Japanese nationality, they generally entered Japan with tourist visas, switching to work visas after their tourist visas expired (Ninomiya 1994). Consequently, many were forced to become unauthorized migrants when they forgot to switch their visas.

Graph 1 : Total Population and Foreign Resident Population in Japan 1984-2004



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan

In 1990, the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was amended to allow those with Japanese ancestry (*Nikkei*) to enter Japan without restrictions on their employment activities. This included descendents of Japanese nationals as well as spouses and children of Japanese nationals. With this reform, *Nikkei* Brazilians have come to enjoy a special status among foreign nationals in Japan which permits

them to engage in any kind of work as authorized immigrants.

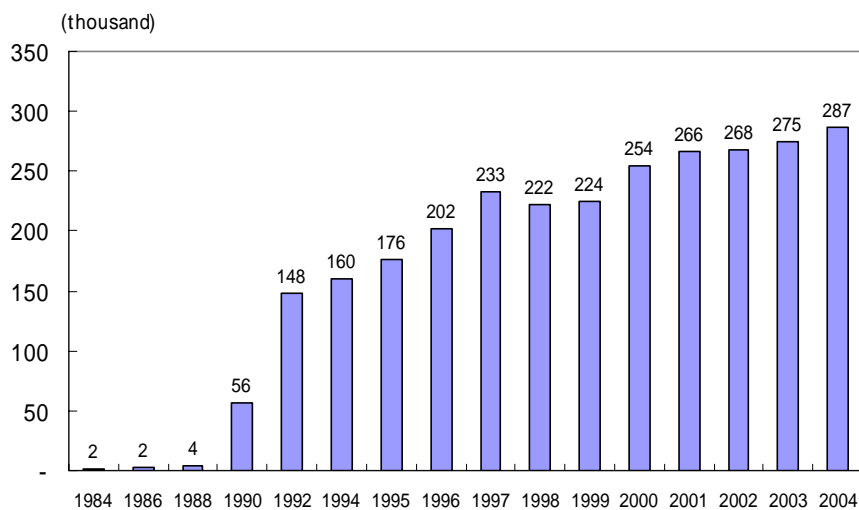
3. Population of Foreign Nationals in Japan: 1984-2004

As of the end of year 2004², there were about 1.97 million foreign nationals in Japan, accounting for 1.55 % of the total population in Japan (Ministry of Justice 2005). While the rate of increase in total population in

Japan is negligible, that of foreign nationals is significant. As shown in Graph 1, the

population of foreign nationals in 2004 is 2.3 times greater than the 1984 population.

Graph 2 : Trends of Brazilian Residents in Japan 1984-2004



Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*

There were 286,557 Brazilian nationals in Japan as of the end of year 2004, accounting for about 14.5 % of foreign residents. Today, the population of Brazilians is the third largest among foreign nationals following Koreans and Chinese. As shown in Graph 2, the number of Brazilian nationals started to increase in the latter half of the 1980s and skyrocketed between 1990 and 1992. During this time, the rate of increase of Brazilians surpasses that of foreign nationals as a whole. The population of Brazilian nationals in 2004 is 1.8 times greater than the 1994 population, and 147 times greater than the 1984 population. For the first time since 1984, the number of Brazilian residents decreased by 4.7 % between 1997 and 1998. After 1998, the number of Brazilian residents has

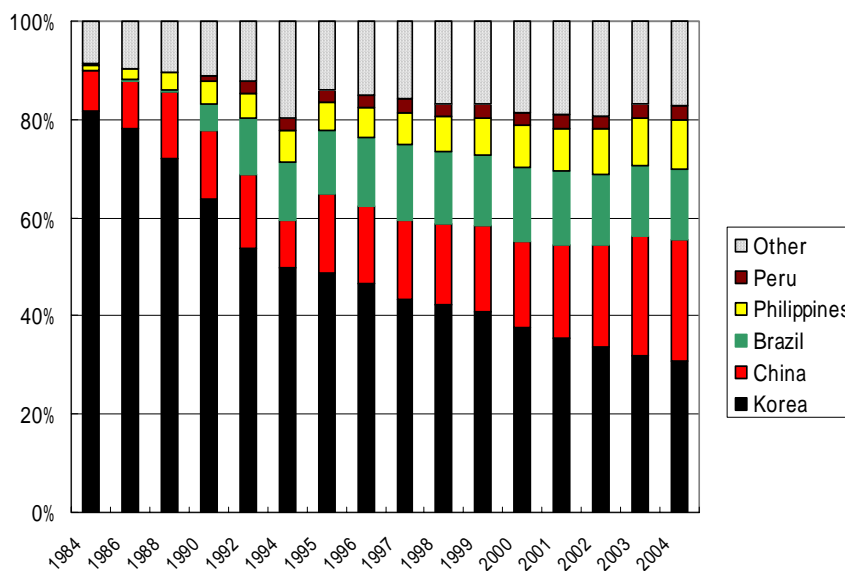
been increasing but the rate of increase has become slower relative to past years, as well as relative to that of foreign nationals as a whole.

Graph 3 shows the composition of foreign residents by nationality. The graph indicates that as of the end of 2004, nearly 31 % of residents were Korean and 25 % were Chinese nationals. Together, they consist little more than half of the foreign nationals in Japan. Apart from the geographical closeness of these countries to Japan, there is a historical reason behind their numerical supremacy.³ Although Korea and China currently account for more than half of the foreign nationals in Japan, only two decades ago, the majority of foreign nationals consisted of Koreans. However, with the increase in the number of so-called “new

comers” entering Japan, the share of Koreans is decreasing rapidly in recent years. On the other hand, the percentage of Chinese is increasing particularly after 2000. The share of Brazilians out of the total foreign residents peaked at 15.7 % in 1997. Thereafter, their share remains relatively stable at the 14 % level. The share of Filipinos is gradually increasing from 2 % in 1984 to 6 % in 1996, and finally to 10 % in

2004. Peruvians were virtually non-existent in the mid-1980s. Their population dramatically increased between 1988 and 1990 by 11.9 times. Their population kept on rising boosted by the 1990 reform of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. The majority of Peruvians registered are *Nikkei* Peruvians.

Graph 3 : Composition of Foreign Residents by Nationality:1984-2004



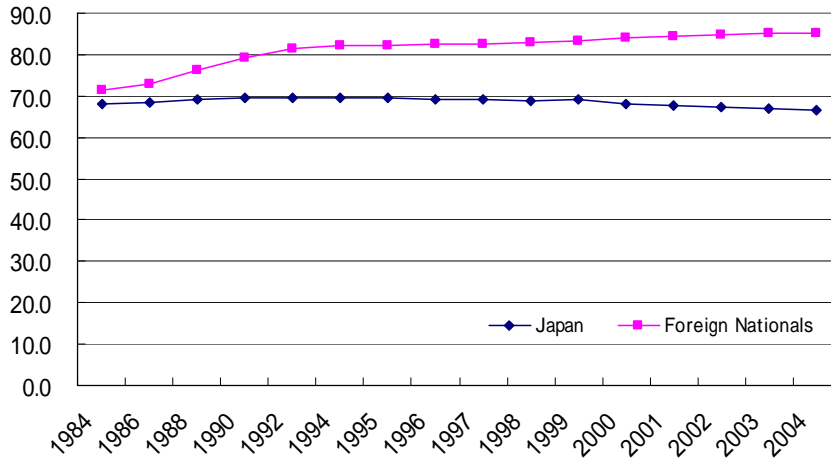
4. Age Distribution of Foreign Residents

There are important differences in the age distribution of foreign nationals and the total population of Japan. For convenience, I name the age group 0-14 as “children”, the age group 15-64 as “working age”, and the age group 65 and over as “the elderly”. In general, a large share of foreign nationals is in the working age, irrespective of the

country of origin. This is understandable given Japan’s immigration policy that emphasizes labor migration. As Graph 4-1 clearly shows, the difference between the share of working age population for foreign residents and that of Japanese is widening in recent years. For example, the proportion of foreign residents in working age was 85.2 % compared to 66.5 % for the total Japanese

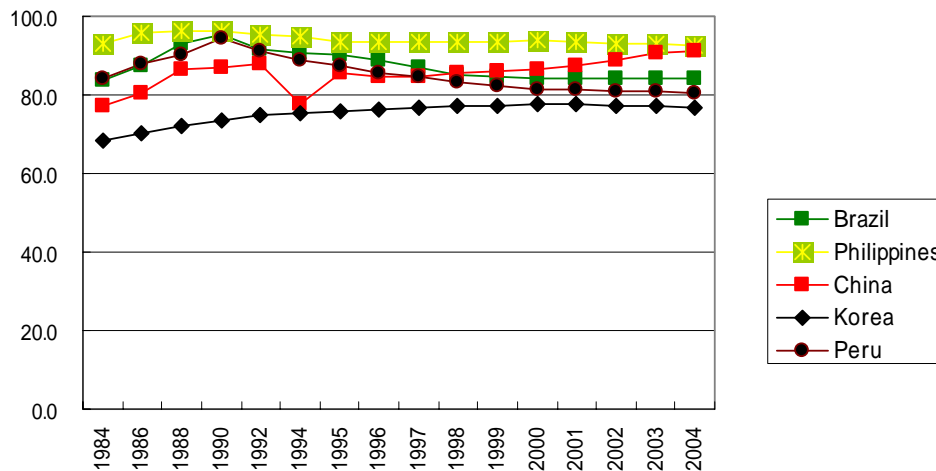
population in 2004. A closer look at the age distribution of foreign nationals reveals that more than half of them consist of those in their 20s and 30s (the data not shown here).

Graph 4-1: Share of Working Age (15-64) 1984-2004



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan

Graph 4-2: Share of Working Age (15-64) by Nationality 1984-2004



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan

The percentage of working age population is particularly high for Filipinos, who account for more than 90 % throughout the observation period (Graph 4-2). Their extremely high percentage of working age group reflects the fact that the majority of immigrants from the Philippines are young

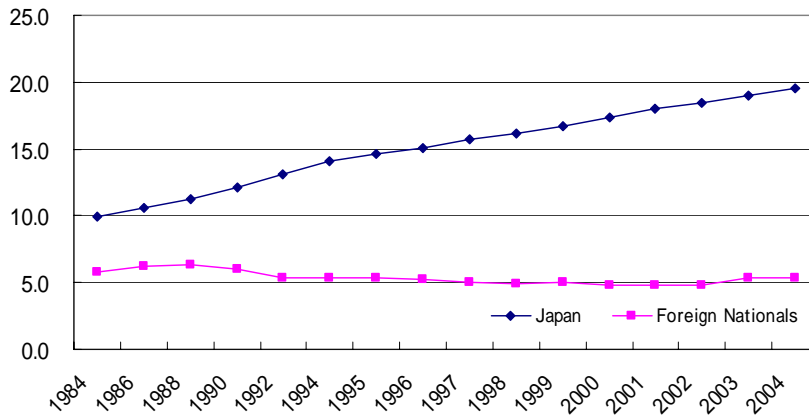
women entering Japan to work in the entertainment industry. The share of working age group among Chinese is increasing in recent years, while that of Brazilians and Peruvians is decreasing.

In 2003 and 2004, the percentage of working age population of Chinese finally

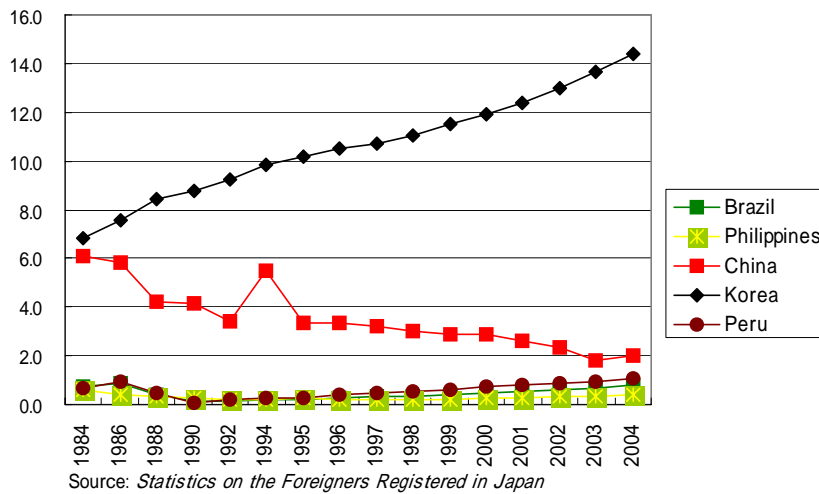
exceeded the 90 % level. In contrast, the share of working age population of Brazilians and Peruvians decreased, reaching the 80 %

level after the latter half of the 1990s. The share is lowest for Koreans, which reflects their longer duration of residence in Japan.

Graph 5-1: Share of the Elderly (Age 65+) 1984-2004



Graph 5-2: Share of the Elderly (Age 65+) by Nationality 1984-2004



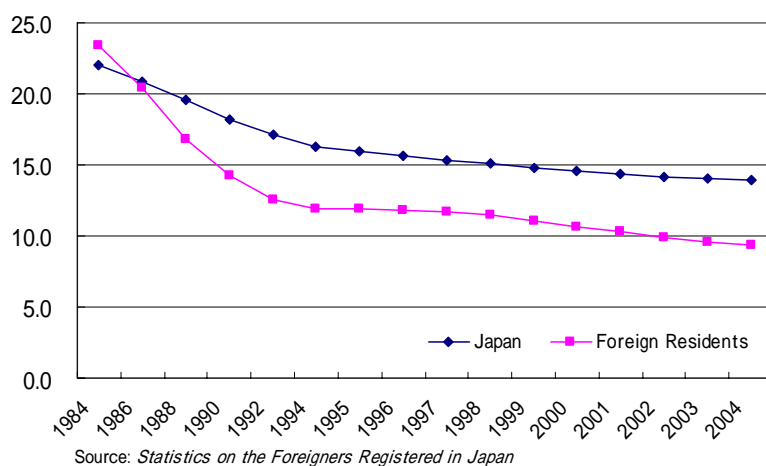
Because of the high concentration of foreign residents in the working age, the share of the elderly is much lower for foreign nationals than that of the Japanese population. Merely 5.4 % of foreign nationals are age 65 or over, while the corresponding figure for

the total Japanese population exceeds 19 % (Graph 5-1). Because of the low fertility and aging population in Japanese society, the difference between the share of the elderly among foreign nationals and that among Japanese is rapidly widening. The only

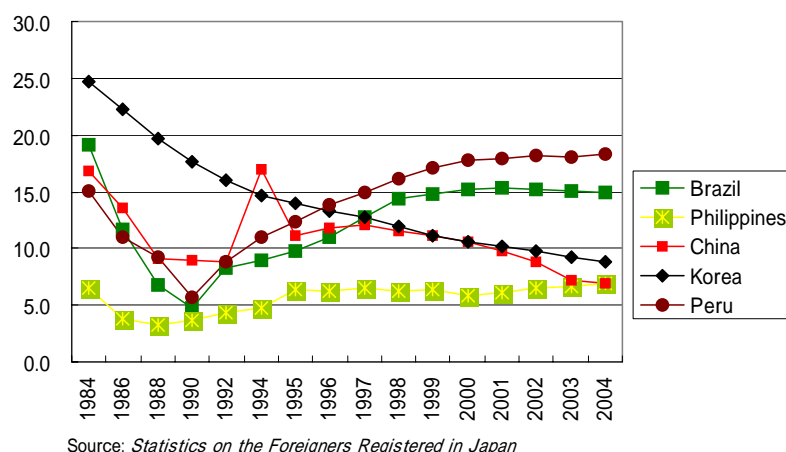
exception among foreign nationals is Koreans, who tend to be relatively old. The age profile of Koreans may be explained by their much longer duration of residence in Japan than other “new comers.” Compared to other foreign nationals, demographic profiles of Koreans are much closer to those of Japanese. The Chinese population was getting younger during the period of 1984 to

2004. Although Chinese are also traditional immigrants in Japan, unlike Koreans, the Chinese population continuously accepts “new comers” and this rejuvenation is reflected in the graph. For the Philippines, the share of the elderly is extremely low, accounting for less than 1 % throughout the two decades.

Graph 6-1: Share of Children (0-14) 1984-2004



Graph 6-2: Share of Children (Age 0-14) by Nationality 1984-2004



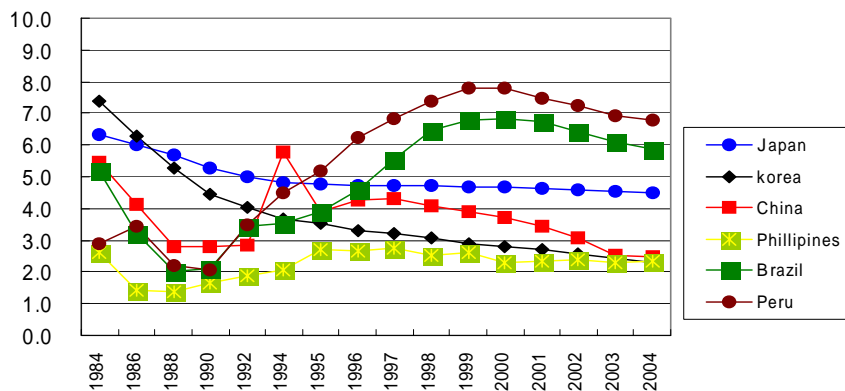
The share of children is only 9.4 % among foreign residents compared to 13.9 %

among the total population in Japan as of the end of 2004 (Graph 6-1). The share of

children is decreasing for both Japanese and foreign residents. However, Graph 6-2 reveals the diverse patterns of change in the proportion of children across nationalities. For example, the share of children among Koreans is consistently decreasing, like the pattern of the Japanese population. That of Chinese shows some ups and downs during

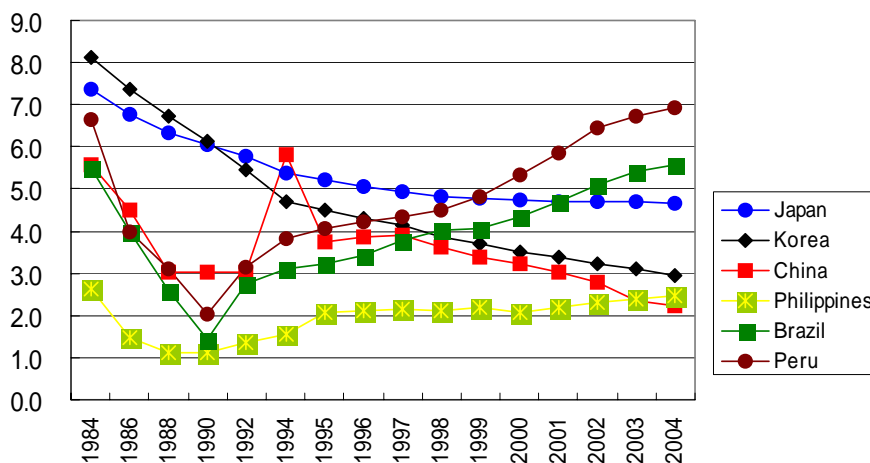
the middle of the 1990s but the recent trend is in the decreasing direction. An increase in the population of working age has squeezed the proportion of Chinese children. In contrast, the changes in percentages of children for Brazil and Peru show a very unique pattern.

Graph 7-1: Share of 0-4 Years Old by Nationality 1984-2004



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan 2004

Graph 7-2: Share of 5-9 Years Old by Nationality 1984-2004



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan 2004

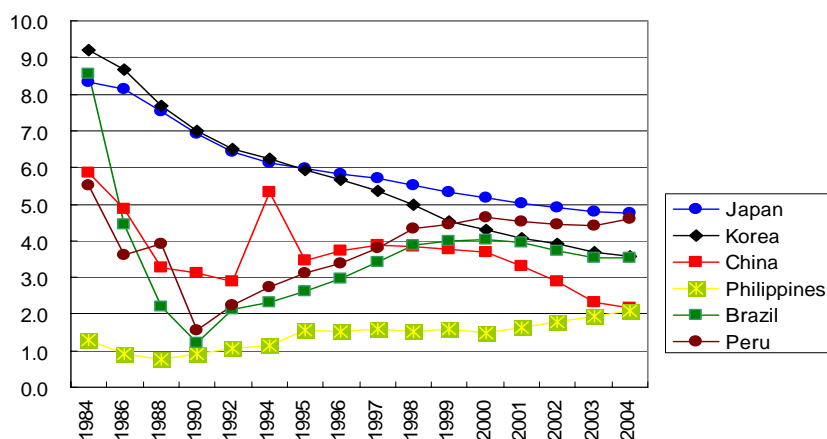
The share of their children has been increasing from 1992. The share of the

child population among Brazilians dropped significantly from 20 % in 1984 to 5 % at the

lowest in 1990. Then it climbed up again to 15 % in 1999, remaining relatively stable thereafter. The pattern is quite similar for

Peruvians. The share of the child population among Peruvians was 15 % in 1984 but dropped to 5.6 % in 1990.

Graph 7-3: Share of 10-14 Year Old by Nationality 1984-2004



Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan 2004*

The proportion started to increase again from 1994, reaching 18 % in 2003. The drop in the share of Brazilian children from 1984 to 1990 may be related to the rapid increase of working age adults during the same period. This period corresponds to what Watanabe (1995c) refers to as the “First Period” and what Higuchi (2005) calls “the Phase Three” for Brazilians to enter Japan. During this period, the Japanese economy grew vigorously and many working age Brazilians started to enter Japan seeking better economic opportunities. During the same period, Brazil was suffering from severe inflation that exceeded 100 %. Many Brazilians entered Japan in this period and worked as unauthorized migrants. After the amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990, Brazilians

were allowed to enter and work legally. The share of children increased and stabilized in 1998, probably because Brazilians started to bring family members or to form their own families in Japan, helped partly by their stable resident status in Japan.

A closer look at the more detailed age breakdown of children reveals that the share of children 0-4 years old and that of 5-9 years old for Peruvian and Brazilian residents is not only higher than those of other foreign nationals, but even surpasses that of the Japanese population (see Graphs 7-1, 7-2). The share of 0-4 year olds for Brazilian residents peaked at 6.8 % in 1999 to 2000, and slightly decreased thereafter. By 2004, the share of 0-4 year old children stood at 5.9 %, while that of the Japanese population was 4.5 %. The share of 0-4 year olds is

even higher for Peruvians. The peak for Peruvians was reached between 1999 and 2000 with a share of 7.8 %. By 2004, the share dropped slightly to 6.9 %. With respect to 5-9 year olds, the proportion is also on the rise for Brazilians, Peruvians and Filipinos. The percentage of 5-9 year old Brazilian children has been gradually increasing from 1992, reaching 5.6 % in 2004. The share of 5-9 year olds has also been rising for Peruvians, reaching 6.9 % in 2004. Among Filipinos, the share is 2.5 %. The increase in 5-9 year olds among Brazilians

and Peruvians contrasts sharply with the decreasing trend of this age group among the total Japanese population, as well as other foreign nationals.

Relative to the younger age groups, the changes in the proportion of 10-14 year olds show an increasing trend again for both Brazilians and Peruvians, but the share itself is lower than that of the Japanese population. The share of this age group is also rising for the Filipinos, but so far, the rate of increase is quite small.

Table 1: Share of Brazilian Residents by Age Group in Selected Prefectures: 2004

	Age Group (%)			
	0-4	5-9	10-14	0-14
Total	0.29	0.27	0.17	0.24
Gunma	1.26	1.13	0.86	1.09
Saitama	0.20	0.19	0.13	0.17
Kanagawa	0.18	0.17	0.10	0.15
Nagano	1.13	0.83	0.48	0.81
Gifu	1.06	1.00	0.64	0.90
Shizuoka	1.72	1.56	1.03	1.44
Aichi	1.14	1.09	0.68	0.97
Mie	1.33	1.13	0.73	1.06
Shiga	1.08	0.91	0.54	0.84

* Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan 2004*
Current Population Estimates as of Oct.1, 2004

Age Distribution of Brazilian Children by Prefecture

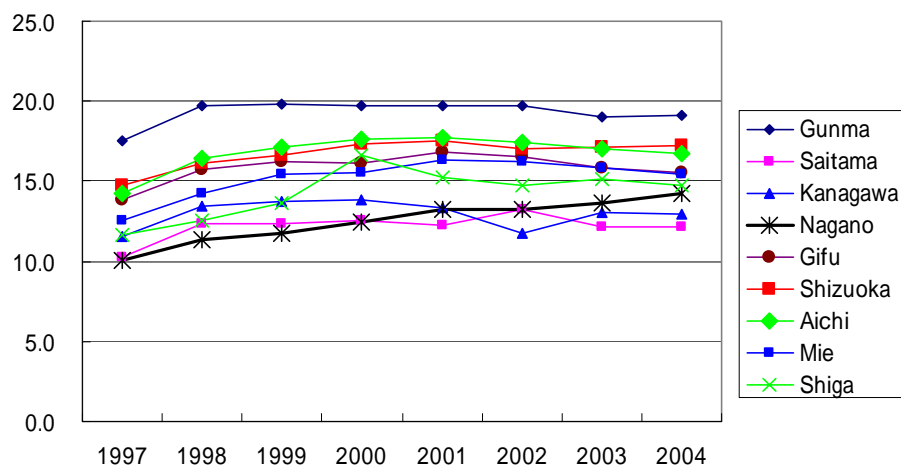
It is well known in migration literature that immigrants tend to concentrate in specific regions. This is also the case in Japan. Brazilian nationals formed large communities in Shizuoka, Aichi and Gunma prefectures where factories of large manufacturing companies are located (Shiho 2005). Table 1 demonstrates the share of Brazilians by age

group in nine prefectures where large Brazilian communities exist. The figures indicate the share of each age group out of the corresponding age group population in the prefecture. Generally, the share of Brazilians in the nine prefectures listed in Table 1 is much higher than 0.22 %, the share of Brazilian nationals out of the total Japanese population in 2004. In particular, the share of 0-14 year old Brazilians exceeds

1 % in Shizuoka, Mie, and Saitama prefectures. When the share of Brazilian population is divided into age groups of children, it is evident that the proportion is relatively high among the younger age groups and low among the older children. For example, there are 7 prefectures (Gunma (1.26%), Nagano (1.13%), Gifu (1.06%), Shizuoka (1.72%), Aichi (1.14%), Mie (1.33%) and Shiga(1.08%)) where the

percentage of 0-4 year olds exceeds 1 %. The number of prefectures with the share of Brazilians exceeding 1 % decreases to five (Gunma(1.13%) , Gifu (1.00%), Shizuoka(1.45%) , Aichi(1.09%), Mie(1.13%)) for 5-9 year olds. With respect to the share of 10-14 year old Brazilians, only Shizuoka prefecture exceeds 1 %.

Graph 8-1: Share of 0-14 Year Old Brazilian Children by Prefecture



Source: Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan

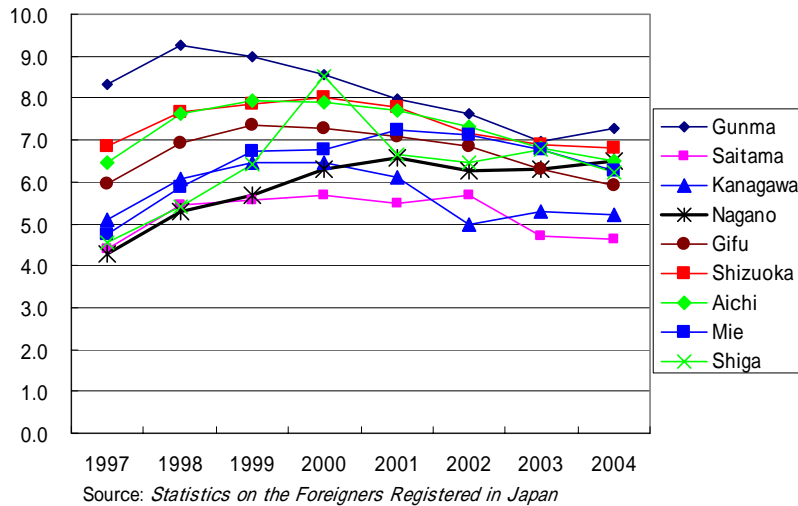
The share of Brazilian children out of the Brazilian population in selected prefectures discloses the diversities in child population. Graph 8-1 indicates the share of 0-14 year old Brazilian children from 1997 to 2004 for the selected nine prefectures where population of Brazilians is high. It is evident from this graph that the share of children is highest in Gunma prefecture, reaching nearly 20 %. Oizumi-cho and Ohta-city, where large Brazilian communities exist are located in Gunma prefecture, and

this may have an effect in raising the share of children in Gunma prefecture. Aichi and Shizuoka prefectures follow Gunma with children accounting for nearly 17 % of the Brazilian population. In contrast, the child population is quite low in Saitama and Kanagawa prefectures with the level of 12-13 %. These figures imply that family formation is taking place among Brazilian residents in areas like Oizumi-cho, Gunma. On the other hand, these figures imply that single men and women dominate in larger

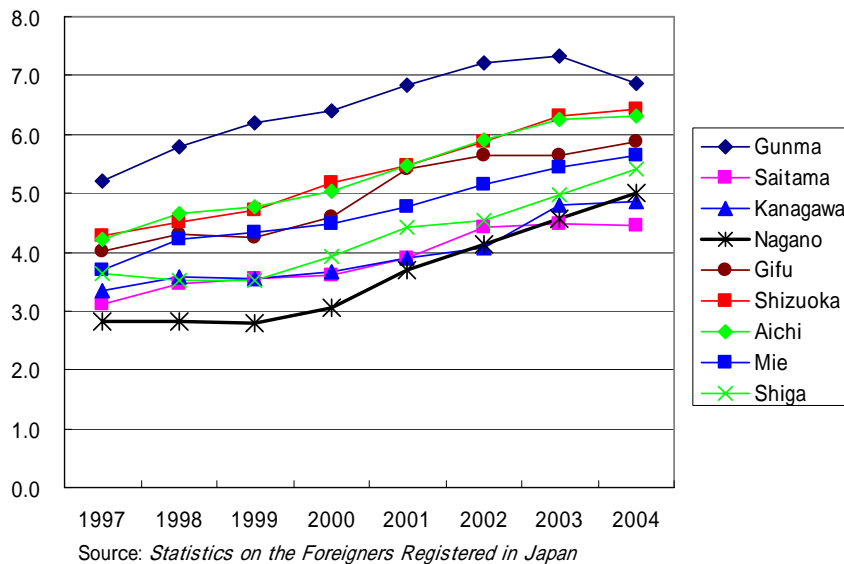
urban areas such as Saitama and Kanagawa. Traditional “dekasegi” type immigrants dominate in these urban areas while family

formation and possible settlement may be slowly proceeding in non-urban areas.

Graph 8-2: Share of 0-4 Year Old Brazilian Children by Prefecture



Graph 8-3: Share of 5-9 Year Old Brazilian Children by Prefecture



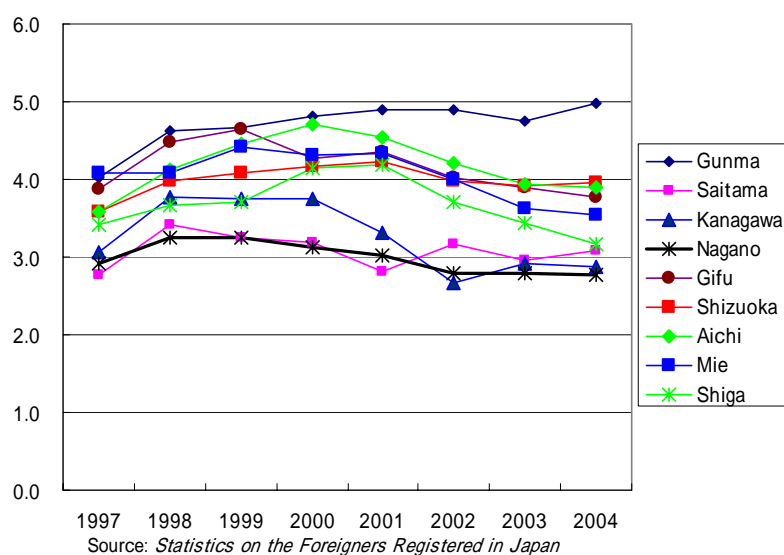
Graphs 8-2 to 8-4 describe the changes in the share of Brazilian children by age group and prefecture. Graph 8-2 shows the changes in the share of 0-4 year olds by prefecture. The share of this age group is decreasing in general, especially in Gunma

prefecture. On the other hand, the share is increasing in Shiga and Nagano prefectures. In contrast to the 0-4 year old group, the share of the 5-9 year old group is on the rise in these prefectures. The 10-14 year old group remains relatively stable in Gunma, but

overall, the share appears to be decreasing. These graphs indicate that the share of children in elementary school age is increasing but as they get older, the share decreases. This may be because families do

not stay long enough to have children of that age. Another possibility is that families tend to return to Brazil, as their children get older.

Graph 8-4: Share of 10-14 Year Old Brazilian Children by Prefecture

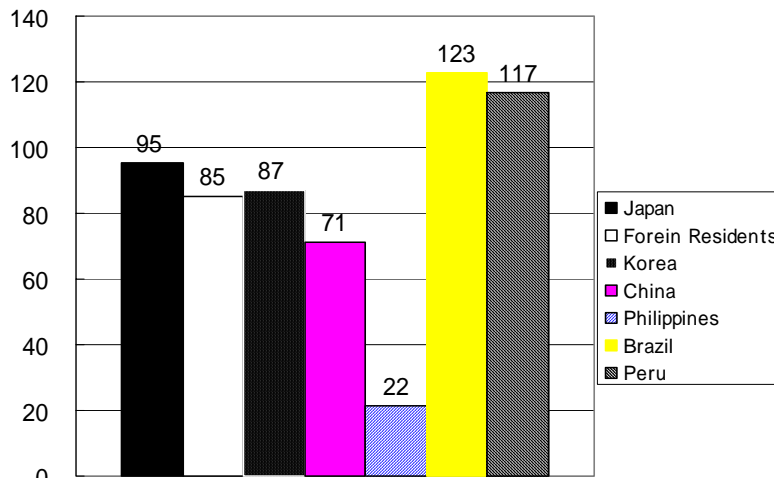


5. Sex Ratio of Foreign Residents

Sex ratios of the population inform us about the possible stages of migration for the particular immigrant group. In the case of international migration, it also reflects the nature of immigration policies. Graph 9 shows the sex ratios of selected foreign nationals as of 2004. Interestingly, compared to the sex ratio for the total population in Japan, foreign residents are much more dominated by women - there are only 86 males per 100 females. The figure for the total foreign nationals, however, masks the diversity across countries of origin. For example, Brazilians and Peruvians are male dominated - there are 122 males and

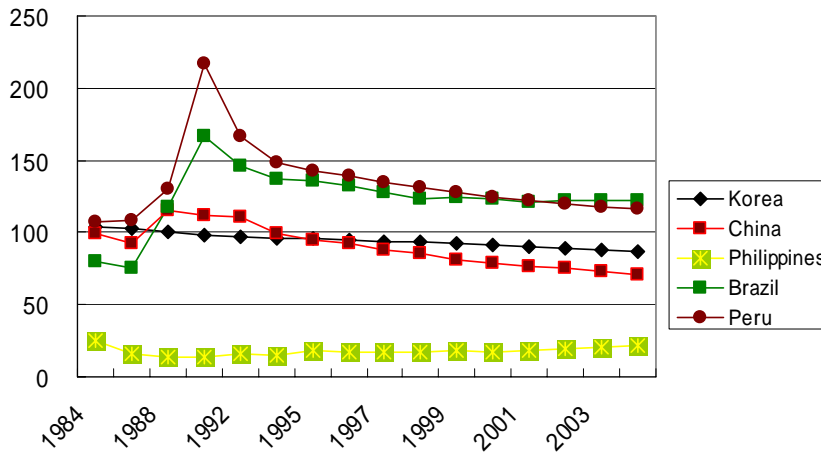
118 males per 100 females, respectively. These figures reflect the fact that labor market demand for Brazilians and Peruvians is concentrated on males as represented by assembly line workers at factories. Although it is said that the number of Brazilians and Peruvians bringing their families to Japan is increasing, there are still many traditional immigrants who enter Japan without family members to work in labor-intensive industries mainly to earn income (*dekasegi*). The other extreme is Filipino nationals. Only 20 % of the Filipino nationals are males. This also reflects the demand for Filipinos in the entertainment industry.

Graph 9: Sex Ratios by Nationality 2004



Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*

Graph 10: Changes in Sex Ratios by Nationality



Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*

Then, how has the sex ratios changed over time? If temporary migration of young men was the dominant form of migration during the early period of new immigration, then the sex ratio of Brazilians in 1989-90 must be quite high. Graph 10 illustrates the changes in the sex ratios of selected foreign nationals from 1984 to 2004. As expected, the sex ratio of Brazilian nationals jumped in

1989-1990, reaching as high as 160 in 1990. More evident is the sex ratio of Peruvians. During the same period, the sex ratio of Peruvians skyrocketed from 130 in 1988 to 217 in 1990. Even after 1990, the sex ratio of Peruvians remained quite high at the level of 130s to 140s during the latter half of the 1990s. In 2003, the sex ratio of Peruvians dropped to 118 but still the figure is relatively

high compared with other nationals.

Table 2 : Changes in Sex Ratio of Brazilians by Prefecture

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Gunma	122	117	117	119	117	117	120	120
Saitama	115	115	119	121	120	119	123	123
Kanagawa	136	121	118	119	122	124	126	126
Nagano	111	105	106	105	105	103	102	102
Gifu	137	132	126	123	125	122	126	126
Shizuoka	125	126	128	129	128	130	129	129
Aichi	138	128	126	124	122	123	123	123
Mie	135	131	132	131	125	122	120	120
Shiga	143	134	135	132	127	126	124	124

Source: *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*

Table 2 lists the changes in sex ratios of Brazilian nationals from 1997 to 2004 for the selected prefectures. In 2004, the highest sex ratio is observed in Shizuoka with 129, followed by Kanagawa and Gifu with 126. Nagano prefecture consistently records the lowest sex ratio, and moreover, the ratio decreased from 143 in 1997 to 124 in 2004. For all prefectures, the sex ratio significantly went down between 1997 and 1998. During this period, the number of registered Brazilians decreased for the first time. The sharp decrease in the sex ratio at this time may be due to the effect of newly arrived and registered Brazilians, who tend to be males. Changes in sex ratios show two patterns. On the one hand, the sex ratio is gradually decreasing in Shiga, Mie, and Nagano prefectures. On the other hand, the sex ratio shows an upward trend in 2003 and 2004, such as in Gunma, Saitama, Kanagawa and Gifu prefectures.

These data appear to suggest that in some areas where sex ratios are converging (Shiga, Mie, Nagano), the settlement of

Brazilians and their families may be slowly proceeding. At the same time, there are some areas where sex ratios are rising (Gunma, Saitama, Kanagawa), which suggest that the share of single male immigrants is increasing.

Summary

The so-called “new comers”, particularly *Nikkei* immigrants from Latin America, will have sizeable effects on the Japanese economy and society in the near future. Of course, the nature of these effects will depend on whether immigrant families including children will settle in Japan or not. In some local areas where large Brazilian communities exist, the various effects of *Nikkei* immigrants have already become a part of daily life. In these cases, the nature of effects will depend more on how *Nikkei* immigrants themselves and their children fare over the course of their life in Japan. To understand the current situation of *Nikkei* immigrants and their children, and to get some implications for their possible

settlement in Japan, I have provided a rough picture of their demographic profiles, using data from the *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*.

One of the most unique demographic features of Latin American *Nikkei* immigrants in Japan is their high share of children. In 2004, the share of 0-14 year olds was 15.0 % for Brazilians and 18.3 % for Peruvians. These figures contrast sharply with 6.9 % for Filipinos and Chinese, and 8.8 % for Koreans. Moreover, while the share of children for other foreign nationals shows a generally decreasing trend between 1984 and 2004, that for Brazilians and Peruvians shows an upward trend, particularly from 1990 to 1992. A more detailed age breakdown of children reveals that the share of 0-4 year olds for Brazilians and Peruvians is especially high compared to other foreign nationals. The share of 0-4 year olds, however, shows a decreasing trend after hitting a peak in 2000. The proportion of 5-9 year olds is also highest for Brazilians and Peruvians, and their share is increasing over time.

Although the share of children among foreign nationals is highest for Brazilians and Peruvians, the sex ratios of these two groups are one of the highest among the selected nationalities. As of 2004, the sex ratio of Brazilians was 122, while that of Peruvians was 118. These figures indicate that *Nikkei* Brazilians and Peruvians are still heavily weighted toward men. At the other extreme is Filipinos. Throughout the period, the sex ratio was very low, ranging from 13 to 25.

This indicates that roughly 80 % of Filipinos in Japan are women. The highest sex ratio for Brazilians and Peruvians was reached between 1990 and 1992, when the “*dekasegi*” rush of *Nikkei* immigrants from Latin America started. Compared to that time, the sex ratios of both Brazilians and Peruvians went down but remain stable at this relatively high level. Of course this general picture masks the significant diversity across prefectures.

In some prefectures, sex ratios of Brazilians are consistently decreasing, particularly in the western part of Japan such as Mie, Shiga, and Nagano. On the other hand, sex ratios in some prefectures are rising, especially those in the eastern part of Japan such as Gunma, Saitama, and Kanagawa. Although the macro data that I presented in this analysis is hardly strong enough to be evidence, I assume that there are two types of Brazilians in today’s Japan. One group consists of those who lived in Japan for quite a long time together with their family members. This type of Brazilians is more likely to be found in the western part of Japan. Another group consists of traditional “*dekasegi*” type immigrants, who are more likely to be single young men. The recent economic recovery of Japan may have stimulated this type of immigrants to enter Japan. These new immigrants may have settled more in the eastern part of Japan, contributing to the rise in the sex ratios of Brazilians in some prefectures like Saitama or Kanagawa.

As my study suggests, in some areas of Japan, the settlement of Brazilians and Peruvians is slowly taking place. Consequently, data as well as research on children's circumstances as they begin their journey in a new country is immediately needed, for they may become important members of Japanese society in the near future.

NOTES

¹ Historically, Koreans and Chinese were dominant among the foreign population in Japan. However, foreign nationals from countries such as Brazil and the Philippines have increased drastically particularly from the 1990s. In order to differentiate these new immigrants from the traditional foreign nationals (or "old comers"), the term "new immigrants" or "new comers" is used widely today.

² The *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan* counts the number of foreign residents as of December 31.

³ Koreans and Chinese who were in Japan before World War II were forced to have Japanese nationality. Under the Peace Treaty in 1952, Koreans and Chinese got back their original nationality. However, because of their foreign nationality, they were in a disadvantaged situation despite the fact that some were born in Japan. Finally in 1992, the law was enacted to give these individuals and their descendents a special permanent resident status.

REFERENCES

- Castles, Stephen, and Mark J. Miller. 2003. *The Age of Migration*. New York: Palgrave.
- Castro, Luis J., and Andrei Rogers. 1983. "What the Age Composition of Migrants Can Tell Us." *Population Bulletin of the United Nations* 15: 63-79.
- Gaikokujin Shujyu Toshi Kaigi. 2004. Toyota Declaration (in Japanese).
- Hayase, Yasuko. 2000. "International Migration and Human Resource Development in Japan: The Trend and Characteristics of Recent Immigration to Japan." Proceedings of the International Workshop on International Migration and Human Resources Development in the APEC Member Economies, January 20-21, 2000, Chiba, Japan.
- Higuchi, Naoto. 2005. "Brazilian Migration to Japan: Trends, Modalities and Impact." Presented at the Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, November 30-December 2, Mexico City, Mexico.
- Hirano, Kenichiro, Stephen Castles, and Patrick Brownlee. 2000. "Towards a Sociology of Asian Migration and Settlement: Focus on Japan." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 9(3): 243-253.

- Ikegami, Shigehiro, ed. 2001. *Brazilians and Internationalization of Local Communities* (in Japanese). Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Ishikawa, Masanori. 1995. "A Response of Local Governments to the Increase of Nikkei Brazilians" (in Japanese). Pp.161-186 in *Dekasegi Brazilians – Work and Life in Japan*, edited by M. Watanabe. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Komai, Hiroshi (ed.) 2004. *Regional Policy related to Immigrants and Social Movement* (in Japanese). Akashi Shoten.
- Massey, Douglas S., Luin Goldring, and Jorge Durand. 1994. "Continuities in Transnational Migration: An Analysis of Nineteen Mexican Communities." *American Journal of Sociology* 99(6): 1492-1533.
- Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Statistics Bureau, 2006. *Current Population Estimates as of Oct. 1, 2004*. (retrieved on March 10, 2006, from <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/jinsui/2004np/index.htm>)
- Ministry of Justice. 2004. *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan*, various years. Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice.
- Ninomiya, Masato. 1994. *Labor and Life of Nikkei Brazilians in Japan and Brazil* (in Japanese). Nikkan Rodo Tsushinsha.
- Onai, Toru. 2003. "The Issue of Schooling among Brazilians in Japan." Pp.216-233 in *Issues of Immigration in Globalizing Japan*, edited by Y. Ishii and H. Komai. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Roth, Joshua Hotaka. 2002. *Brokered Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan*. Cornell University Press.
- Shiho, Kei. 2005. "Determinants of Spatial Concentration of Nikkei Brazilians – A Comparison with Trainees – (in Japanese)" Pp. 45-73 in Report on International Comparative Study on Linkages between International Migration Policy in Response to Population Decline and Social Security Policy. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Grant (H16-Seisaku-022).
- Tsuda, Takeyuki. 2003. *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Return Migration in Transnational Perspective*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tsuzuki, Kurumi. 2000. "Nikkei Brazilians and Local Residents: A Study of the H Housing Complex in Toyota City." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 9(3): 327-342.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2001. Profile of Foreign-Born Population in the

- United States: 2000. Current Population Reports, Series P23-206. U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, DC.
- Watanabe, Masako, ed. 1995a. *Dekasegi Brazilians – Work and Life in Japan* (in Japanese). Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Watanabe, Masako, ed. 1995b. *Dekasegi Brazilians – Their Experience and Thoughts* (in Japanese). Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Watanabe, Masako. 1995c. “Amendments to Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and Trends in Flows of Brazilians” (in Japanese). Pp.19-37 in *Dekasegi Brazilians – Work and Life in Japan*, edited by M. Watanabe. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.
- Yuki, Megumi. 2003. *Diversity of Education and Schooling Choices among Nikkei Brazilians in Japan and Educational Support: A Comparative Study*. 2000-2002 Grant in Aid for Scientific Research B2.
- Yoshimi Chitose
(National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)