

# The Family Changes in Contemporary Japan<sup>1</sup>: Overview of the Results of the Third National Survey on Family in Japan (2003)

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## I Introduction

### 1. Overview

In recent years, the family in Japan is going through major changes in its structure and functions due to such demographic changes as the decline in birthrate and rapid aging of the population. Such changes are exemplified by an increase in the proportions of households consisting of a single person, married couples without children, and a single parent with children, as well as an increase in dual-earning families due to the rise in women's labor force participation. The changes observed in the functions of the family not only affect the ways in which families raise children and provide financial support to and/or take care of elderly parents, but also have significant influence on the society as a whole. As Japan enters the era of ever-decreasing population and smaller number of children/aging of the population, there are increased needs for social services policies addressing child-rearing and financial support and/or care of elderly people, which are affected significantly by the changes in the family. Therefore, it is ever more important to grasp accurately the nature of changes in the structure and functions of the family, the current situation and the trend of childbirth and child-rearing, as well as the factors affecting these changes. To address these

issues, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research thus conducted the Third National Survey on Family in July 2003 in order to understand the functions of the family, relationships among family members and attitudes toward the family.

### 2. Data Collection and Response Rate

The population of this survey is all households in Japan. Three hundred census tracts were randomly selected from the 1,083 census tracts that had been selected by a systematic sampling method for the *Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of People on Health and Welfare* conducted in 2003. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed and collected in person. Out of 14,332 questionnaires distributed, 12,681 questionnaires, or 88.5%, were returned. Among the questionnaires collected, those returned blank and those with essential information missing were treated as invalid (1,663 questionnaires), yielding a total of 11,018 valid responses (valid response rate=76.9%). The attitudes and behaviors related to the family and family lives are expected to differ greatly among people who are currently married, who have never married, and who are either divorced or widowed. Therefore, this paper will focus solely on the responses of currently married

**Table I-1 Sample Size of the Survey**

| Age of wife            | Sample size of the survey |                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
|                        | (1)                       | (2)             |
| 29 years old and under | 496 ( 6.4% )              | 496 ( 6.8% )    |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 781 ( 10.1 )              | 781 ( 10.8 )    |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 825 ( 10.6 )              | 825 ( 11.4 )    |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 806 ( 10.4 )              | 806 ( 11.1 )    |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 804 ( 10.3 )              | 795 ( 11.0 )    |
| 50 to 54 years old     | 1,137 ( 14.6 )            | 1,090 ( 15.0 )  |
| 55 to 59 years old     | 860 ( 11.1 )              | 809 ( 11.2 )    |
| 60 years old or above  | 2,062 ( 26.5 )            | 1,650 ( 22.8 )  |
| Total                  | 7,771 ( 100.0 )           | 7,252 ( 100.0 ) |

Notes: (1) All married women

(2) Married women of the youngest generation in households with more than one married woman.

women. (Note that if a household has more than one married women, only the responses of the wife of the younger generation are included in the comparison with the results of the previous surveys.)

## II Relationships with Parents as Resources for Child-Rearing

### 1. Mothers as Resources for Child-Rearing

In general, the wife's mother and the husband's mother are thought to be the most important supporters of and resources for child-rearing, and direct help can be expected from them. For the purpose of looking at the availability of help in rearing children, we asked the wives in reproductive age (i.e., under 49) about the status of their parents and parents-in-law. At the time of the research, ninety percent of wives under 40 years old still had both theirs and the husbands' mothers, and for 97 to 98% of them, at least one of the mothers was alive. The corresponding figures for wives between ages 45 and 49 also exceeded 90%.

The examination of the living arrangements with parents by age group shows that the percentage of wives who live with their mothers or mothers-in-law, and the percentages of wives living with at least one parent/parents-in-law are higher among those in older age groups, compared

with those in younger age groups. The proportion among the wives in their 20s and early 30s ranges from 10 to 20%, while the figures are higher at one in four in their late 30s, about 30% in their early 40s, and 37% in their late 40s. On the other hand, the proportion of wives who live apart from any of the parents (obtained by subtracting the percentage of wives living with at least one parent/parents-in-law from 100) is higher among the younger generations; slightly over 80% of the wives in their 20s do not live with any of the parents. The figure is lower among wives in their late 40s, as reflected by a higher percentage of those living with their parents. The high proportion of wives living with at least one of the parents among this age group is probably due to an increase in longevity among the parents, and hence, such tendency might not necessarily reflect their preference for living apart from or together with their parents.

Whether or not they live with their parents varies by the type of area the couples reside. The wives in rural areas, as indicated by low population density, are more likely to live with their parents-in-law; more than 40% of them lived with either their mother or mother-in-law. On the other hand, the percentage living with their mother was around 20% in areas with high population density. As these results show, living arrangements in

**Table II-1 Proportion of Wives with Parents/Parents-in-Law who are Alive**

|                        | Total | Wife's parents |        | Husband's parents |        | At least one of the mothers alive |            |
|------------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|------------|
|                        |       | Father         | Mother | Father            | Mother | 3rd survey                        | 2nd survey |
| 29 years old and under | 496   | 89.3%          | 96.5%  | 87.8%             | 94.8%  | 98.2%                             | 99.8%      |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 781   | 84.2           | 94.8   | 80.3              | 94.5   | 98.2                              | 99.9       |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 825   | 78.9           | 91.7   | 73.8              | 90.4   | 97.0                              | 98.3       |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 806   | 65.3           | 86.8   | 54.8              | 82.0   | 93.8                              | 97.6       |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 795   | 51.7           | 82.0   | 44.5              | 76.9   | 92.3                              | 91.5       |

Note: The "total" refers to the total number of cases in each age group. The denominator is different for each parent/parents-in law.

**Table II-2 Living Arrangement in Relation to Parents, by Age Group**

|                        | Total | Living with parents | Living with parents-in-law | Living with mother or mother-in-law | Living with at least one parent/parent-in-law | Living apart from all the parent/parent-in-law |            |
|------------------------|-------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|------------|
|                        |       |                     |                            |                                     |   | 3rd survey                                     | 2nd survey |
| 29 years old and under | 496   | 4.3%                | 14.5%                      | 16.7%                               | 18.1%   | 81.9%  | 82.8%      |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 781   | 6.7                 | 14.6                       | 19.4                                | 19.8  | 80.2   | 79.2       |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 825   | 6.9                 | 21.4                       | 25.4                                | 25.5  | 74.5   | 74.0       |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 806   | 9.6                 | 26.6                       | 30.2                                | 30.6  | 69.4   | 68.5       |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 795   | 10.6                | 35.1                       | 36.7                                | 36.7  | 63.3   | 69.6       |

relation to the parents' generation vary significantly according to the area of residence.

For the couples living apart from their parents, it is easier to obtain support from their parents in child-rearing if they live close to them. The following tables show the geographic distance from their parents as indicated by the time it takes to reach their residence. As mentioned earlier, younger age groups tend to live apart from their parents' generation. At the same time, however, two thirds of respondents in their 20s and nearly 60% in their early 30s lived within 30 minutes of their parents' or parents-in-law's residences. Unlike the younger respondents, a higher proportion of those in older age groups lived far away, or 60 or more minutes, from their parents. Overall, the young generations tend to choose living apart over living together with their parents, but when they live apart, they

tend to choose living nearby so that they are able to obtain support from their parents easily. This trend was also observed in the previous survey.

The percentage of respondents who live relatively close (within 15 minutes or 30 minutes) to parents is high in areas with low population density, and even among those living apart from their parents, more than 50% of parents of both sides live within 30 minutes. Among the parents who live closest to them, over half (62%) live within a 15-minute distance, and over 70% live no more than 30 minutes away. On the other hand, in high density areas, just over one third of the respondents have mothers of both sides living within 30 minutes. Slightly above 30% have at least one parent live within 15 minutes and just over 40% within 30 minutes, leaving with more than 50% of the respondents living 30 or more minutes

**Table II-3 Proportion of Wives Living with their Parents/Parents-in-Law, by Density of the Area of Residence**

|                                    | Total | Living with their parents | Living with their parents-in-law | Living either with their mothers or mothers-in-law | Living with at least one parent/parent-in-law | Living apart from all the parents/parents-in-law |            |
|------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|--|------------|
|                                    |       |                           |                                  |  |   | 3rd survey                                       | 2nd survey |
| Nationwide                         | 7,252 | 8.7%                      | 25.6%                            | 26.9%  | 26.8%   | 73.2%  | 73.8%      |
| Areas with low population density  | 2,797 | 11.1                      | 40.8                             | 40.2   | 39.8  | 60.2   | 58.4       |
| Areas with high population density | 4,455 | 7.3                       | 16.5                             | 18.9   | 18.9  | 81.1   | 82.5       |

Note: The "total" refers to that of each type of area. The denominator is different for each parent/parent-in-law.

**Table II-4 Distance from Parents' Households, by Age Group**

|                        | Total      |            | Living in different houses on the same property |            | Within 15 minutes |            | Within 30 minutes |            | Within 60 minutes |            | More than 60 minutes |            |
|------------------------|------------|------------|---|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
|                        | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                                      | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey           | 3rd survey |
| 29 years old and under | 436        | 388        | 3.9%  | 5.3%       | 43.1%             | 39.5%      | 22.7%             | 21.9%      | 13.5%             | 10.7%      | 16.7%                | 22.7%      |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 516        | 605        | 7.2   | 4.8        | 32.9              | 38.0       | 21.3              | 18.0       | 14.3              | 13.4       | 24.2                 | 25.9       |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 516        | 591        | 5.7   | 5.8        | 27.1              | 31.0       | 22.5              | 19.5       | 13.4              | 15.7       | 31.4                 | 27.9       |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 465        | 521        | 7.9   | 7.5        | 27.6              | 32.1       | 20.0              | 13.5       | 12.0              | 19.6       | 32.5                 | 27.3       |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 381        | 459        | 5.3   | 9.2        | 26.5              | 30.0       | 16.5              | 15.1       | 13.7              | 12.8       | 38.1                 | 32.9       |

**Table II-5 Distance from Parents Living Apart from Respondents, by Area of Residence**

|                                       | Within 15 minutes |            | 15 to 30 minutes |            | More than 30 minutes |            |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
|                                       | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey           | 3rd survey |
| Nationwide                            |                   |            |                  |            |                      |            |
| Own mother                            | 19.7%             | 22.9%      | 19.8%            | 18.9%      | 60.5%                | 58.2%      |
| Mother-in-law                         | 24.1              | 26.5       | 17.2             | 14.5       | 58.7                 | 58.9       |
| Mother/mother-in-law who lives closer | 36.7              | 35.2       | 20.9             | 17.0       | 42.4                 | 47.8       |
| Areas with low population density     |                   |            |                  |            |                      |            |
| Own mother                            | 24.4              | 30.8       | 26.4             | 23.8       | 49.2                 | 45.3       |
| Mother-in-law                         | 34.6              | 44.5       | 19.2             | 16.3       | 46.2                 | 39.2       |
| Mother/mother-in-law who lives closer | 48.9              | 51.5       | 20.8             | 18.0       | 30.4                 | 30.5       |
| Areas with high population density    |                   |            |                  |            |                      |            |
| Own mother                            | 17.4              | 18.6       | 16.5             | 16.3       | 66.1                 | 65.1       |
| Mother-in-law                         | 19.7              | 18.8       | 16.4             | 13.8       | 63.9                 | 67.5       |
| Mother/mother-in-law who lives closer | 32.1              | 27.9       | 20.9             | 16.6       | 47.0                 | 55.4       |

away from their parents. Compared to the areas with low population density, lower percentages of respondents live with or live close to their parents in high density areas, making it more difficult for them to obtain direct support from their parents in child-rearing.

## 2. Living Arrangements of Parents Living Apart from the Respondents

The living arrangement of the respondents' mother and mother-in-law's living apart from them show that for the younger respondents, it is common for their mothers to live with their unmarried children (i.e., the respondents' siblings) or with their spouses alone. However, the older the respondents, the higher the proportion of their mothers' living with one of the married children (other than the respondents). This tendency is understandable, since their parents also age as the respondents get older.

## 3. Health Conditions and Care Status of Parents

In considering parents as resources for child-rearing support, it is important to examine the parents' health condition as it could affect whether or not they are able to provide support for their children's child-rearing. If the parents themselves require special care, their children would not be able to rely on them for help. Table II-7 shows whether or not the wife's and the husband's parents require special care. The percentage of parents who need

special care ranged from 0.7% to 2.5% for respondents under 30 years old, and for respondents in their 30s, the figure was around 3% for the mother of either side. The percentages exceed 10% for parents of both sides for respondents in their 40s. The figures here indicate that only a small number of parents are in need of special care for the wife in her 20s and 30s. In the future, however, there would be more cases of parents of married couples in childbearing and child-rearing ages being required to look after their own elderly parents, who will be living longer due to increasing longevity. In such an event, the parents would not be able to help their daughters and sons with child-rearing or be a sufficient resource for childrearing support, even if they themselves were in good health.

Next, the need for special care of parents/parents-in-law living apart from the respondents is examined. About 3% to 6% of parents and parents-in-law need assistance and/or special care, and 1% to 2% need complete assistance. The role played by the wife in caring for parents in need for special care seems to vary, depending on whether it is her own parents or parents-in-law who need care and whether the one in need is the father or the mother. Nonetheless, the percentage of respondents who are acting as main caretakers is below 10%. In other words, it is unlikely for the wife to become the main caretaker if the couple and the parents live apart.

**Table II-6 Living Arrangements of Respondents' Mothers (living apart from the respondents), by Age of the Respondents**

|                        | Living alone |            | Living with spouse alone |            | Living with married children |            |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|
|                        | 2nd survey   | 3rd survey | 2nd survey               | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                   | 3rd survey |
| <b>Mother-in-law</b>   |              |            |                          |            |                              |            |
| Total                  | 13.9%        | 13.7%      | 43.1%                    | 47.7%      | 19.8%                        | 14.3%      |
| 29 years old and under | 7.2          | 7.0        | 45.1                     | 45.5       | 7.8                          | 7.0        |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 12.2         | 10.8       | 52.8                     | 55.8       | 12.0                         | 10.1       |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 11.8         | 13.2       | 48.9                     | 53.2       | 20.8                         | 10.6       |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 17.8         | 17.9       | 38.7                     | 45.7       | 26.0                         | 21.0       |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 20.4         | 20.5       | 28.7                     | 31.2       | 31.6                         | 25.8       |
| <b>Own mother</b>      |              |            |                          |            |                              |            |
| Total                  | 12.0%        | 11.5%      | 36.5%                    | 40.8%      | 25.5%                        | 20.1%      |
| 29 years old and under | 8.8          | 6.0        | 32.6                     | 35.0       | 9.9                          | 8.1        |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 9.7          | 9.0        | 45.3                     | 47.3       | 12.2                         | 11.5       |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 12.1         | 10.9       | 41.9                     | 47.4       | 23.6                         | 18.5       |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 13.1         | 13.8       | 36.4                     | 41.2       | 34.9                         | 24.7       |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 15.4         | 17.2       | 25.6                     | 28.8       | 42.5                         | 36.9       |

|                        | Living with unmarried children |            | Staying at hospitals/nursing homes |            | Other living arrangement |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
|                        | 2nd survey                     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                         | 3rd survey | 2nd survey               | 3rd survey |
| <b>Mother-in-law</b>   |                                |            |                                    |            |                          |            |
| Total                  | 15.3%                          | 18.0%      | 2.2%                               | 1.9%       | 5.8%                     | 4.3%       |
| 29 years old and under | 31.4                           | 30.9       | 0.8                                | —          | 7.6                      | 9.6        |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 17.1                           | 17.7       | 0.9                                | 0.3        | 4.9                      | 5.2        |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 12.3                           | 19.0       | 1.6                                | 0.6        | 4.6                      | 3.5        |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 8.8                            | 11.0       | 3.0                                | 2.3        | 5.8                      | 2.1        |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 8.3                            | 12.9       | 4.5                                | 7.9        | 6.5                      | 1.7        |
| <b>Own mother</b>      |                                |            |                                    |            |                          |            |
| Total                  | 20.7%                          | 22.0%      | 1.7%                               | 1.1%       | 3.9%                     | 4.5%       |
| 29 years old and under | 40.8                           | 42.1       | 0.4                                | 0.2        | 7.6                      | 8.6        |
| 30 to 34 years old     | 27.2                           | 25.3       | 0.8                                | 0.5        | 4.8                      | 6.4        |
| 35 to 39 years old     | 17.3                           | 19.9       | 1.4                                | 0.2        | 3.8                      | 3.0        |
| 40 to 44 years old     | 11.3                           | 15.3       | 1.8                                | 2.0        | 2.5                      | 3.1        |
| 45 to 49 years old     | 11.2                           | 12.2       | 3.8                                | 2.8        | 1.5                      | 2.1        |

**Table II-7 Special Care Needs of Parents, by Age of Wife**

| Age of wife            | Own parents |                          |                   |        |                          |                   | Parent(s)-in-law |                          |                   |               |                          |                   |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
|                        | Father      |                          |                   | Mother |                          |                   | Father-in-law    |                          |                   | Mother-in-law |                          |                   |
|                        | Total       | No need for special care | Need special care | Total  | No need for special care | Need special care | Total            | No need for special care | Need special care | Total         | No need for special care | Need special care |
| 29 years old and under | 415         | 98.1%                    | 1.9%              | 449    | 98.7%                    | 1.3%              | 402              | 97.5%                    | 2.5%              | 432           | 99.3%                    | 0.7%              |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 1,220       | 94.8                     | 5.2               | 1,397  | 96.5                     | 3.5               | 1,122            | 95.7                     | 4.3               | 1,346         | 96.3                     | 3.7               |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 871         | 85.4                     | 14.6              | 1,241  | 86.9                     | 13.1              | 700              | 88.1                     | 11.9              | 1,131         | 84.8                     | 15.2              |

**Table II-8 Special Care Needs of Parents Living Apart from Respondents**

| Relationship |        | Need for special care |                          |                    |                        |                        |
|--------------|--------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|              |        | Total                 | No need for special care | Mostly independent | Need some special care | Need full special care |
| Wife         | Father | 2,404                 | 94.9%                    | 1.8%               | 2.1%                   | 1.2%                   |
|              | Mother | 3,269                 | 93.9                     | 2.2                | 2.4                    | 1.5                    |
| Husband      | Father | 1,830                 | 97.0%                    | 0.7%               | 1.3%                   | 1.0%                   |
|              | Mother | 2,512                 | 93.9                     | 1.5                | 2.4                    | 2.2                    |

**Table II-9 Role Played by Wife in Providing Special Care for Parents Living Apart from Respondents**

|         |        | Total | Main caretaker | Not main caretaker |
|---------|--------|-------|----------------|--------------------|
| Wife    | Father | 252   | 11.9%          | 88.1%              |
|         | Mother | 433   | 14.8           | 85.2               |
| Husband | Father | 123   | 7.3%           | 92.7%              |
|         | Mother | 304   | 8.2            | 91.8               |

### III The Roles of the Husband and the Wife

The participation of husbands in housework and child-rearing is an issue of the amount of time to be spent as well as that of the extent to which the husband and the wife share such duties. Even to this day, Japanese married couples continue to divide housework and child-rearing duties based on traditional gender role division. This section examines the time spent by the wife on household chores, how much the husband takes up the tasks within the family, and the degree to which the husband and the wife share duties within the family. In addition, how wives view and evaluate their husbands' participation in housework and child-rearing will be examined.

#### 1. Time Spent on Housework by Wives and Degree of Sharing between Husbands and Wives

We asked the respondents to report how many hours per day they spend on housework on the average. They spend around 5 hours on average on housework on regular days (referred to as weekdays hereafter): the average hours spent on housework is the longest among respondents in their 60s, followed by those in their 30s, 40s, 50s and 20s, in this order. The difference between those in their 60s and those in their 20s (i.e., the longest and the shortest) is 36.3 minutes per weekday. The percentage of respondents spending more than 6 hours a day on housework is the highest at 31.6%

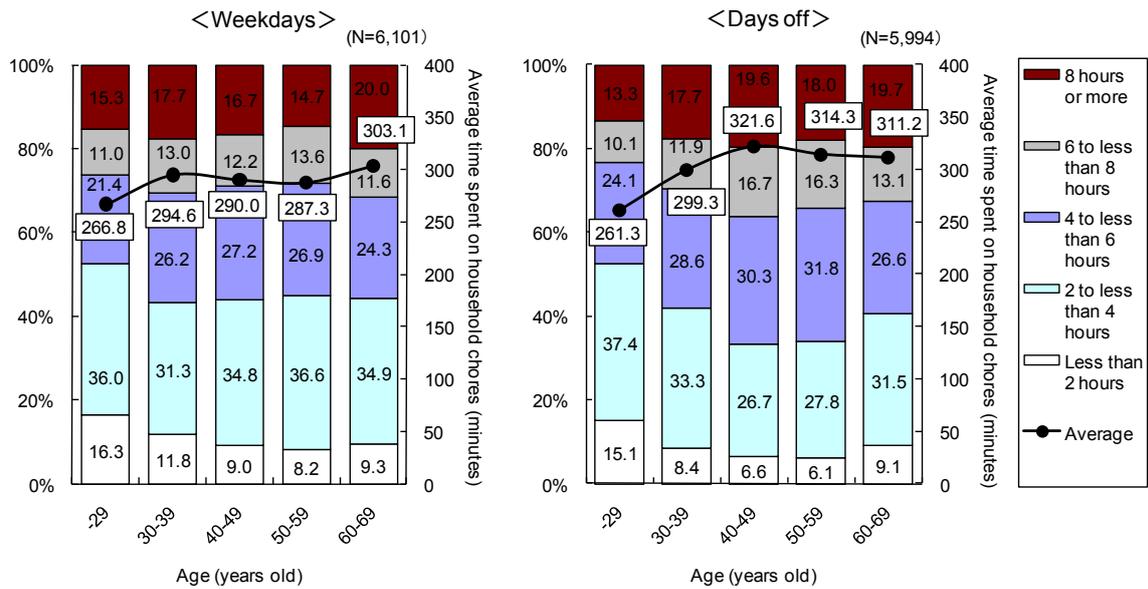
among wives in their 60s. The figure is above 30% (30.7%) even for those in their 30s. Those in their 20s show the highest percentage (16.3%) spending less than 2 hours on housework.

The differences among age groups in hours spend on housework on days off are greater than those on weekdays. While there is no difference in the time spent on housework between days off and weekdays for the respondents in their 20s and 30s, those in their 40s and 50s spend about 30 minutes more on weekends. Further, 35% of the wives in their 40s and 50s spend more than 6 hours a day on average on housework on days off. The difference in the average time spent on housework on days off between respondents in their 40s, who spend the most time, and those in their 20s, who spend the least time, is nearly 60 minutes.

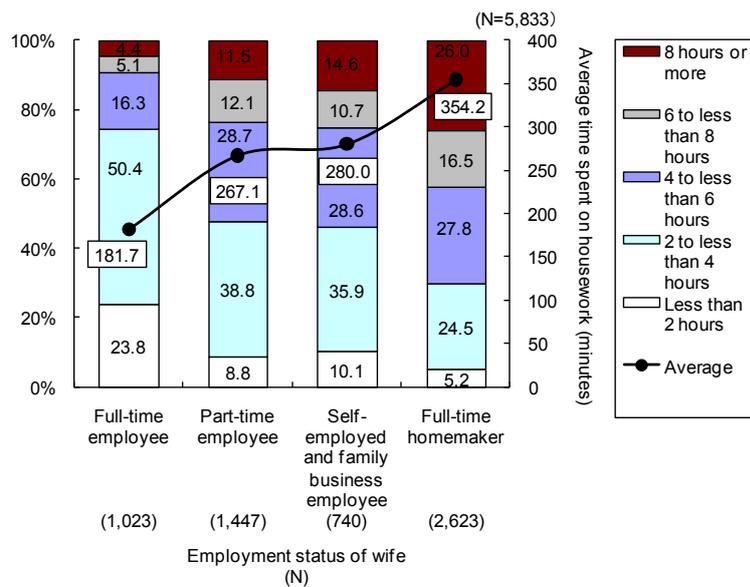
Since many wives in their 40s and 50s work part-time on weekdays, they might be doing more housework on days off to make up for the weekdays. It is also possible that the husband's participation and cooperation might be contributing to wives in their 20s spending less time on housework on weekends.

Next, the average time wives spend on housework is shown by their employment status. Wives who work full time spend 80 to 100 minutes less time on housework than those working part-time or who are self-employed, and more than 170 minutes less time on housework compared to full-time homemakers. However, even for the wives

**Figure III-1 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays and Days off), by Age of Wife**



**Figure III-2 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays), by Employment Status of Wife**



working full time, 25.8% spend at least 4 hours on housework on days off.

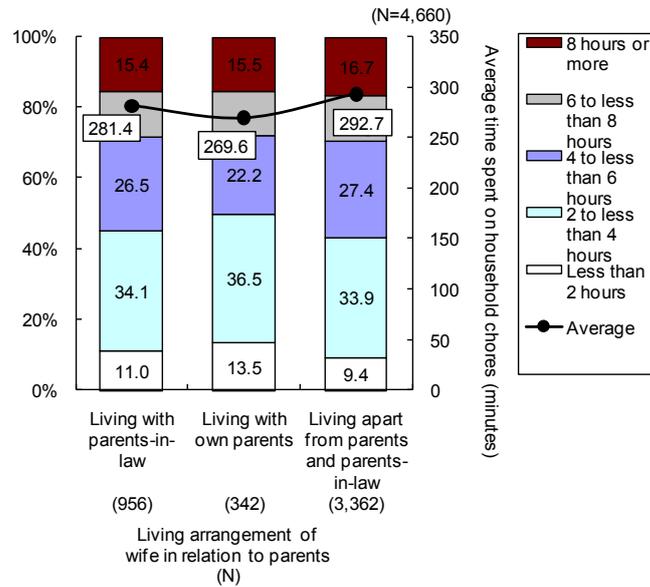
Figure III-3 shows the time wives spend on housework by living arrangement in relation to their parents. Wives living with parents spend about 15 minutes less on housework than those living apart from parents. Moreover, wives living with their own parents tend to spend slightly less time on housework than those living with their in-laws.

Examining the time wives spend on housework by the time their husbands usually come home from work reveals that there is approximately

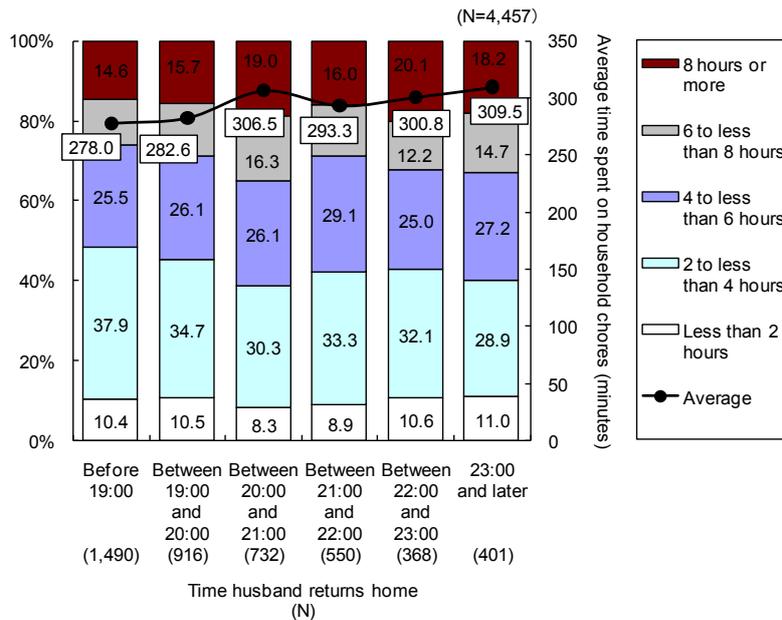
a thirty-minute difference depending on when their husbands come home. There is a difference between those whose husbands come home before 19:00 and those after 23:00. The time wives spend on housework tends to be shorter if their husbands come home earlier, indicating that the burden of housework on the wife is reduced by her husband's being at home earlier.

We also asked wives living with their mothers/mothers-in-law about the help they get from their mother or mother-in-law in household chores (Table III-1). Although the difference between living with the mother or the mother-in-law is small,

**Figure III-3 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays), by Living Arrangement in Relation to Parents**



**Figure III-4 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays), by Time Husband Returns Home**



the wife generally obtains help in a wider range of tasks from the mother. Specifically, between 60% and 80% of the wives get help from their mother for cleaning, doing laundry, preparing meals and clearing tables, and washing dishes. The differences in percentage between those who get help from their mother and from their mother-in-law are 9.9 points for preparing meals and 7.8 points for washing dishes. Differences also vary by the employment status of the wife. For wives working

full time, mothers tend to do more housework compared to mothers of wives with other employment status (i.e., wives who work part-time, are self employed, or are not employed at all). In particular, a higher proportion of those working full time gets help in preparing meals than full-time homemakers; the difference is 15 points for those living with the mother-in-law and 28 points for those living with their mother.

Table III-2 shows the time mothers spend on

**Table III-1 Help in Household Chores from Mothers Living in Respondents' Households**

|  | Total | Taking out garbage | Grocery shopping | Cleaning | Cleaning bathroom/bathtub |
|--|-------|--------------------|------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Own mother                                 |       |                    |                  |          |                           |
| Total                                      | 239   | 51.5%              | 44.8%            | 69.9%    | 47.3%                     |
| Full-time employee                         | 71    | 57.7               | 49.3             | 81.7     | 59.2                      |
| Part-time employees                        | 49    | 51.0               | 40.8             | 63.3     | 46.9                      |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 33    | 39.4               | 36.4             | 57.6     | 36.4                      |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 76    | 48.7               | 44.7             | 65.8     | 39.5                      |
| Mother-in-law                              |       |                    |                  |          |                           |
| Total                                      | 684   | 49.0%              | 39.9%            | 68.4%    | 45.5%                     |
| Full-time employee                         | 191   | 50.8               | 39.8             | 66.0     | 51.8                      |
| Part-time employees                        | 171   | 46.2               | 41.5             | 67.3     | 45.0                      |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 115   | 43.5               | 32.2             | 66.1     | 39.1                      |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 193   | 54.4               | 46.1             | 72.5     | 43.0                      |

|  | Laundry, hanging and taking in clothes | Preparing meals | Clearing the table | Washing dishes |
|--|--|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Own mother                                 |  |                 |                    |                |
| Total                                      | 82.4%                                  | 64.9%           | 62.8%              | 68.6%          |
| Full-time employee                         | 93.0                                   | 80.3            | 62.0               | 67.6           |
| Part-time employees                        | 87.8                                   | 59.2            | 65.3               | 77.6           |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 72.7                                   | 63.6            | 72.7               | 72.7           |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 75.0                                   | 52.6            | 55.3               | 60.5           |
| Mother-in-law                              |  |                 |                    |                |
| Total                                      | 79.8%                                  | 55.0%           | 58.6%              | 60.8%          |
| Full-time employee                         | 81.2                                   | 68.1            | 64.4               | 62.3           |
| Part-time employees                        | 84.2                                   | 51.5            | 57.9               | 62.0           |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 74.8                                   | 45.2            | 50.4               | 54.8           |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 77.2                                   | 52.8            | 59.6               | 63.7           |

housework. Time spent by the wife's own mothers is longer than that of the mother-in-law: more than 40% of mothers spend 2 hours or more on housework every day, while about 30% of mothers-in-law do so. The degree to which husbands and wives share housework is a better indicator than the time spent on housework of how gendered the division of labor is. In this survey, we asked wives to report how much, in percentages, of the total housework they undertake.

Figure III-5 shows the breakdown of the proportion of housework wives take up by age group. The percentage of wives handling 80% or more

of all household chores ("heavily depending on wives", indicating that these households depend heavily on the wives for household chores) exceeds 80% in all age groups except for those in their 20s (77.1%), and 85% of respondents in their 30s, 40s and 50s fall under this category. Cases where husbands never do any housework ("100% depending on wives", indicating that these households depend entirely on wives to do the household chores) make up nearly 40% (37.8%) of the respondents in their 50s. The figures for those in their 60s and 40s are also similar. The percentage is lower for respondents in their 20s and 30s, but

even so, nearly one in five (19.1%) husbands whose wives are in their 20s never does any housework and leaves all chores to their wives.

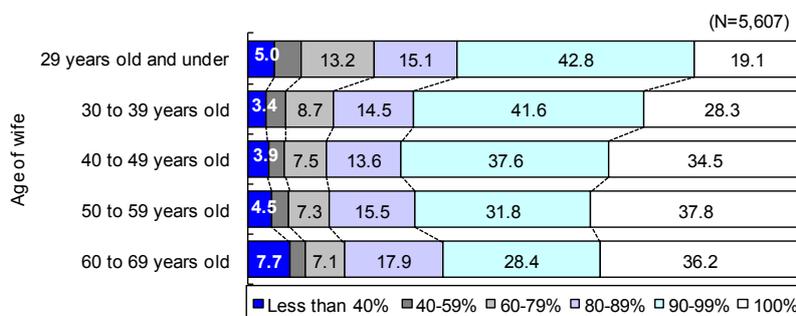
Figure III-6 shows the breakdown of the proportions of housework performed by wives by their employment status. The percentage of husbands depending heavily on wives for household

chores (i.e., 80% or more of housework is handled by wives) is high regardless of the wife's employment status. However, while nearly 90% of wives who are part-time employees, self-employed/family business employees or full-time homemakers fall under this category, the figure is below 70% (68.7%) for wives who are full-time employees;

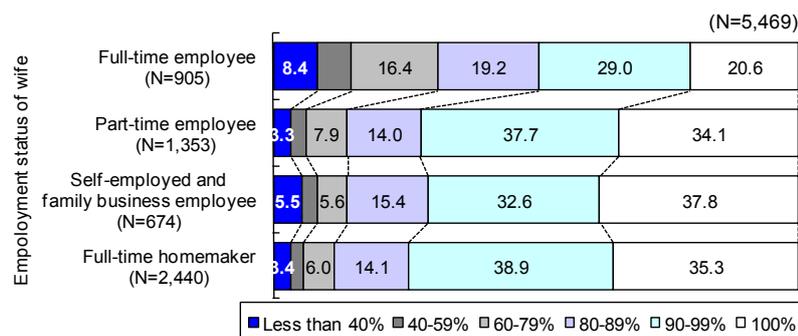
**Table III-2 Time Spent on Housework by Mothers Living in Respondents' Households**

|  | Total | Seldom | 15 minutes or less | 15 to 30 minutes | 30 to 60 minutes | 1 to 2 hours | 2 hours or longer |
|--|-------|--------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Own mother                                 |       |        |                    |                  |                  |              |                   |
| Total                                      | 267   | 16.1%  | 5.2%               | 10.1%            | 12.7%            | 13.1%        | 42.7%             |
| Full-time employee                         | 76    | 10.5   | —                  | 7.9              | 9.2              | 11.8         | 60.5              |
| Part-time employee                         | 48    | 8.3    | 4.2                | 12.5             | 16.7             | 27.1         | 31.3              |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 37    | 27.0   | 8.1                | 5.4              | 18.9             | 8.1          | 32.4              |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 96    | 21.9   | 9.4                | 12.5             | 12.5             | 8.3          | 35.4              |
| Mother-in-law                              |       |        |                    |                  |                  |              |                   |
| Total                                      | 765   | 19.6%  | 5.4%               | 13.6%            | 15.7%            | 15.7%        | 30.1%             |
| Full-time employee                         | 202   | 11.4   | 3.5                | 11.9             | 13.4             | 18.3         | 41.6              |
| Part-time employee                         | 177   | 13.6   | 6.2                | 12.4             | 22.6             | 15.8         | 29.4              |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 137   | 24.1   | 8.8                | 16.1             | 16.8             | 15.3         | 19.0              |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 234   | 28.6   | 4.7                | 14.1             | 11.5             | 13.7         | 27.4              |

**Figure III-5 Proportion of Housework Undertaken by Wife, by Age of Wife**



**Figure III-6 Proportion of Housework Undertaken by Wife, by Employment Status**



there is a difference of close to 20%. For wives working full-time, those who share household chores equally with their husbands (wives handling 40 to 59% of the chores) and those whose husbands do more housework (wives handling less than 40% of the chores) add up to nearly 15%. The proportion of cases where the wife does all the housework and the husband none is between 34 and 38% in all the following categories: wives who work part-time, those who are self-employed, and those who are full-time homemakers. Approximately 20% (20.6%) of husbands never do any housework even if their wives work full time.

## 2. Reality of and Changes in Husbands'

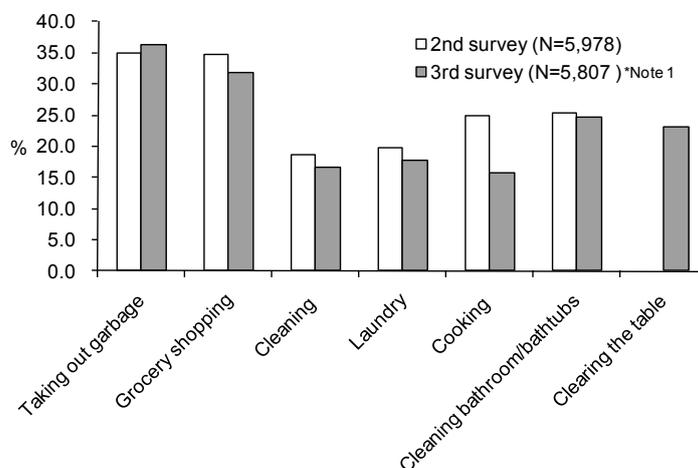
### Participation in Housework

Figure III-7 shows the percentage of husbands undertaking typical housework tasks "once or twice per week" or more. Note that "clearing the table" was added in this survey to the 6 tasks (taking out garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, doing laundry, cooking, cleaning bathrooms/bathtubs) asked in the previous survey in 1998. In both this and the previous survey, there are no tasks in which 40% or more husbands undertake "once or twice per week" or more. A comparison of the two surveys shows a slight increase in the percentage of husbands taking out garbage, but all the other tasks show a decrease in the figures. The percentage of "cooking" might have decreased due to the addition of a new item "clearing the table"; nonetheless, it appears that husbands in this survey tend to be even less cooperative than before.

Figure III-8 shows the husbands' housework score for this and previous surveys by age group. The score, which indicates the extent to which husbands perform housework as a whole, was computed by first assigning a point to each task depending on the frequency of doing housework, and next adding up the points across 5 tasks. The difference between this and the previous survey is greater among respondents in their 40s, 50s and 60s than that among the younger generations. The score is the lowest for respondents in their 40s as indicated by the bar graph with a U-shaped pattern with this age group at the bottom, which is also observed in the previous survey. Husbands whose wives are in their 60s tend to participate more in housework, probably due in part to their having more time at home after retirement. Moreover, the noticeable trend observed in this generation is a clear division between husbands who participate in household chores and husbands who do not at all. Health conditions of their wives and themselves might be an important factor that divides the two groups.

Table III-3 shows the percentages of husbands undertaking each task (i.e., doing at least once or twice a week), by various socio-economic factors. First, the breakdown by the age of wives shows that husbands of younger wives tend to be more cooperative in each task, which is also reflected in the husbands' housework participation scores by age. For the wives under 60, the older they are, the lower the percentage of husbands who do household tasks. The lowest percentage of husbands'

**Figure III-7 Percentage of Husbands Undertaking Housework (at least Once or Twice a Week)**



Note 1: Cleaning bathrooms/bathtubs: N=5,735, clearing tables: N=5,595. Only the respondents with valid answers to all the items were included in the calculation.

Figure III-8 Husband's Housework Participation Scores, by Age of Wife

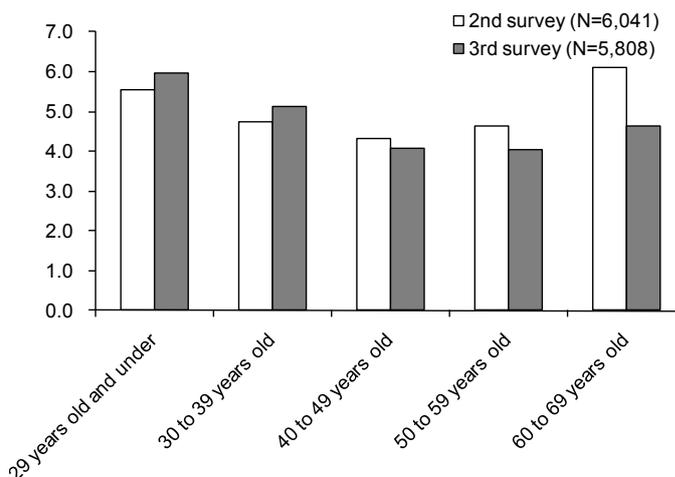


Table III-3 Percentage of Husbands Undertaking Housework, by Socio-Economic Characteristics of Wife

|  | Total      |            | Taking out garbage |            | Grocery shopping |            | Cleaning   |            | Laundry    |            | Cooking    |            | Cleaning the bathroom/bath tub |            | Clearing the table<br>3rd survey only |
|--|------------|------------|--------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey         | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                     | 3rd survey |                                       |
| Total  | 6,041      | 5,807      | 33.4%              | 36.4%      | 34.7%            | 31.9%      | 18.7%      | 16.7%      | 19.7%      | 17.7%      | 24.9%      | 15.7%      | 25.4%                          | 24.7%      | 23.1%                                 |
| Age of wife                                  |            |            |                    |            |                  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |                                |            |                                       |
| 29 years old and under                       | 563        | 459        | 47.6%              | 53.6%      | 42.1%            | 37.9%      | 15.3%      | 19.6%      | 21.3%      | 19.2%      | 27.2%      | 21.8%      | 32.9%                          | 34.8%      | 36.5%                                 |
| 30 to 39 years old                           | 1,541      | 1,482      | 36.5               | 43.8       | 36.3             | 35.9       | 15.5       | 15.7       | 16.5       | 19.6       | 25.4       | 15.7       | 24.8                           | 29.0       | 27.6                                  |
| 40 to 49 years old                           | 1,851      | 1,439      | 28.6               | 31.0       | 32.3             | 29.9       | 16.3       | 15.2       | 16.4       | 15.5       | 21.4       | 14.7       | 21.3                           | 20.4       | 20.5                                  |
| 50 to 59 years old                           | 1,359      | 1,590      | 32.7               | 28.7       | 30.8             | 28.2       | 19.6       | 15.7       | 20.7       | 16.3       | 24.2       | 14.5       | 24.3                           | 21.5       | 19.0                                  |
| 60 to 69 years old                           | 727        | 837        | 41.4               | 37.6       | 38.9             | 31.8       | 32.7       | 21.3       | 31.6       | 19.8       | 32.3       | 16.7       | 33.8                           | 25.1       | 19.7                                  |
| Age of youngest children                     |            |            |                    |            |                  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |                                |            |                                       |
| Less than 1 year old                         | 175        | 284        | 50.9%              | 53.2%      | 52.0%            | 35.2%      | 17.1%      | 16.5%      | 16.6%      | 15.1%      | 32.0%      | 18.0%      | 36.6%                          | 34.6%      | 29.9%                                 |
| 1 to less than 3 years old                   | 516        | 472        | 42.4               | 48.9       | 38.6             | 33.9       | 16.1       | 14.8       | 17.6       | 15.5       | 24.4       | 14.0       | 32.0                           | 33.2       | 26.9                                  |
| 3 to less than 6 years old                   | 510        | 481        | 34.9               | 39.5       | 32.4             | 33.1       | 15.3       | 16.6       | 17.1       | 19.8       | 24.1       | 17.3       | 21.1                           | 26.7       | 27.2                                  |
| 6 to less than 12 years old                  | 885        | 738        | 27.9               | 32.1       | 33.7             | 32.9       | 13.6       | 15.4       | 12.0       | 16.3       | 20.9       | 17.1       | 20.1                           | 24.1       | 23.8                                  |
| 12 to less than 18 years old                 | 916        | 722        | 27.9               | 28.5       | 31.4             | 29.8       | 15.3       | 14.0       | 16.8       | 14.8       | 20.7       | 12.6       | 19.7                           | 19.6       | 18.6                                  |
| 18 years and over                            | 2,240      | 2,492      | 32.5               | 31.6       | 31.4             | 28.1       | 21.7       | 17.2       | 21.7       | 16.9       | 24.0       | 14.8       | 26.2                           | 22.3       | 18.7                                  |
| Living arrangement                           |            |            |                    |            |                  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |                                |            |                                       |
| Living with parents-in-law                   | 931        | 906        | 23.0%              | 23.4%      | 31.0%            | 26.5%      | 16.3%      | 13.4%      | 14.5%      | 13.0%      | 18.8%      | 12.6%      | 19.3%                          | 17.6%      | 16.3%                                 |
| Living with own parents                      | 295        | 334        | 22.0               | 30.5       | 30.8             | 28.1       | 16.3       | 18.6       | 13.2       | 14.7       | 19.0       | 14.1       | 19.7                           | 20.3       | 21.7                                  |
| Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 3,800      | 3,231      | 37.8               | 39.7       | 35.3             | 33.1       | 17.0       | 15.5       | 23.9       | 17.8       | 25.5       | 15.8       | 26.0                           | 27.1       | 25.5                                  |
| Employment status of wife                    |            |            |                    |            |                  |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |                                |            |                                       |
| Full-time employee                           | 910        | 963        | 41.4%              | 45.3%      | 34.0%            | 34.9%      | 21.8%      | 21.8%      | 28.1%      | 30.3%      | 30.9%      | 23.5%      | 30.6%                          | 33.3%      | 34.1%                                 |
| Part-time employee                           | 786        | 1,385      | 29.0               | 31.6       | 30.3             | 30.1       | 14.1       | 15.5       | 16.2       | 17.0       | 23.0       | 13.9       | 21.6                           | 23.1       | 21.8                                  |
| Self-employment and family business employee | 648        | 695        | 35.3               | 30.5       | 30.9             | 22.7       | 19.6       | 13.7       | 20.7       | 14.1       | 24.2       | 14.5       | 22.2                           | 20.5       | 16.9                                  |
| Full-time homemaker                          | 2,552      | 2,521      | 34.8               | 37.7       | 37.5             | 34.5       | 17.8       | 16.2       | 16.8       | 13.9       | 22.5       | 13.7       | 26.0                           | 23.5       | 21.3                                  |

Note 1: The figures in the table show the percentages of respondents who answered at least "once or twice a week" to each item.

- 2: For taking out garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, laundry and cooking, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation.
- 3: For "cleaning bathroom/bathtub", only the respondents with valid answers to the 5 items above and this item were included in the calculation.
- 4: For "clearing the table", respondents with valid answers to all seven housework tasks asked in the 2003 survey (the 3rd survey) were included in the calculation.
- 5: The figure for "cooking" in the 2nd survey includes "washing dishes" as well.
- 6: The figures are computed for the wives under 70 years old.

participation is found for wives either in their 40s or 50s, depending on the task. For all the tasks, the wives in their 60s have the higher percentages of husbands undertaking the tasks.

Analysis by the age of the youngest children shows that the younger the children, the higher the proportion of husbands who undertake housework. In most of the tasks, the percentage of husbands doing the work is highest among those with the youngest child under 1 year old. However, the percentages of husbands who do housework are lower compared to the previous survey for all tasks, except for “taking out garbage.”

Comparison of the figures by living arrangement in relation to parents shows that husbands who live with their parents or parents-in-law are less likely to undertake housework than their counterparts who live apart from them for all the tasks. The proportion of husbands doing housework is lower for each item among those living with their own parents as opposed to those living with their wives’ parents. One possible explanation is that they do not have to do the part of housework they are supposed to do since their own parents take up the role of doing housework on their behalf, who therefore play the supportive roles.

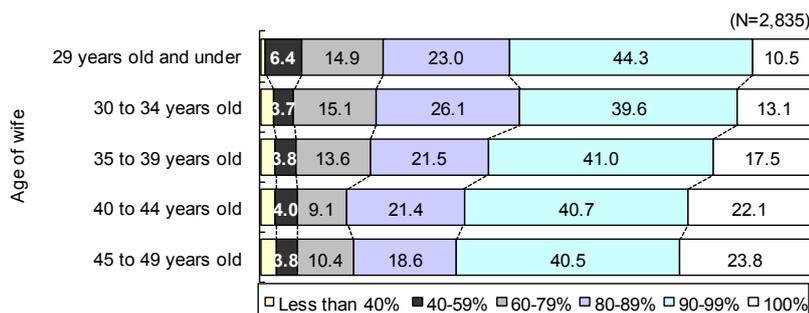
Comparing the percentages of husbands who do housework by employment status of wives shows that in all the tasks, the highest figure is found among wives who work full time. Compared to the previous survey, the percentages of husbands undertaking the work are lower for all the tasks. However, among the husbands whose wives work full time, the figures are higher in the current survey for all items except “cooking”. It should be noted that the percentage would be higher than in the previous survey for “cooking” if the category were replaced by “clearing the table”. In other words, the rate of husbands’ participation in housework can be seen as having improved somewhat for dual-earning couples.

### 3. Sharing of Child-Rearing Responsibilities in Married Couples

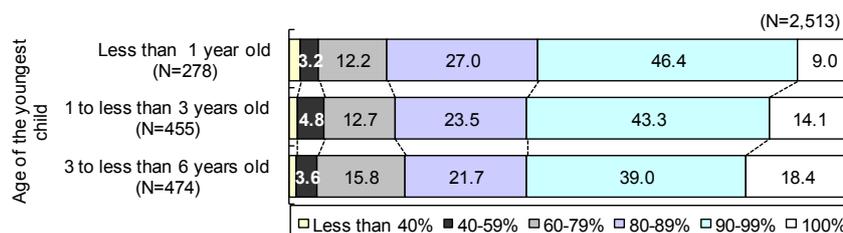
Figure III-9 shows the extent to which wives take up child-rearing during the period when the family grows due to the birth and growth of children. For all age groups, around 80% of the wives do more than 80% of the child-rearing (indicating that these households depend heavily on the wives for child-rearing). The proportion of this type of households is the lowest among wives in their 20s, but still 77.8% of them belong to this group. Among these households, there are some cases in which husbands do not take any part in child-rearing at all, leaving 100% of the work to the wives. Proportionally, there are fewer among the younger generations of these households that depend exclusively on the wife for child-rearing, but even among the wives in their 20s, 10.5% handle all child-rearing tasks. Clearly, the majority of households are heavily dependent on the wife for child-rearing: 14.9% depend predominantly upon the wife (i.e., wives handle 60 to 79% of the child-rearing tasks), while the combined percentage of households relying on the husband, where husbands are relatively active in child-rearing (i.e., husbands handle 60% or more of the child-rearing tasks), and the sharing type, where the wife and the husband share the tasks equally (i.e. both assume 40 to 59% of the responsibilities), is only 7.4%. Overall, Japanese husbands participate only to a very small degree in child-rearing, leaving wives to the primary responsibility of child-rearing; these patterns have not changed since the previous survey.

Figure III-10 shows how much of the child-rearing responsibilities is handled by wives, by the age of the youngest child. The households that depend heavily on the wife for child-rearing (i.e., where the wife takes at least 80% of the responsibility) account for about 80% of all the cases (i.e., for households with the youngest child under 1

Figure III-9 Distribution of the Percentage of Child-Rearing Assumed by Wife, by Age of Wife



**Figure III-10 Distribution of the Percentage of Child-Rearing Assumed by Wife, by Age of Youngest Child**



year old, 1 to less than 3 years old, and 3 to less than 6 years old), indicating that no significant differences by life-stages are observed. The total percentage of households in which the husband and wife share responsibilities and in which the husband assumes more responsibility than the wife is a mere 5.4%, even in households with children younger than 1 year old. Furthermore, nearly 10% of the husbands do not do any child-rearing even if their child is younger than 1 year old. Thus, even when child-rearing alone is considered, the actual workload of the wife seems to be contributing to the general feelings of psychological cost and burden of marrying and having children.

#### 4. The Trend in Husbands' Participation in Child-Rearing

In the survey, we asked the wives about the nature of their husbands' participation in child-rearing. The tasks related to child-rearing were categorized into the following six items: playing with children, bathing children, putting children to sleep, feeding children, changing diapers, and cradling crying children. Figure III-11 shows the percentage for each task undertaken by the respondents' husbands at least once or twice a week.

The percentages of husbands who engage in feeding children, putting children to sleep and changing diapers at least once to twice a week are low, ranging from 40 to 50%. However, the figures are higher by 4 to 6 points than the previous survey for these three items.

Figure III-12 shows the extent to which husbands participate in child-rearing by tasks and the total scores computed from them by the age of wives. The total score is higher in all age groups compared to the previous survey; thus, there are some improvements in husbands' participation in child-rearing, although the change is small.

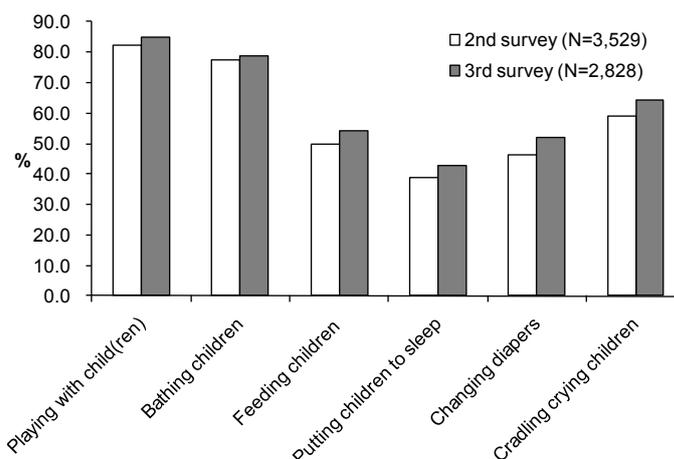
Table III-4 shows the percentage of husbands who participate in child-rearing by various factors such as the wife's age, the age of the youngest child, living arrangement with parents, and

employment status of the wives. First, considering the figures by wives' age, the percentage of husbands who engage in child-rearing is the highest among wives in their 20s, followed by wives in their early 30s for all the tasks. Among the wives in their 20s, the percentages are 2 to 10 points higher than the figures in the previous survey for all items; specifically, the increases are prominent in "feeding children" at 5.3 points and "changing diapers" at 9.7 points. The husbands' participation rate is the lowest for "putting children to sleep;" with only slightly over 40% overall and less than half (47.4%) of those in their 20s taking up the task. The time the husband comes home would probably affect the results for this task. The percentage of the participation of husbands of the wives in their 30s is the second highest among the age groups, with a few points lower than the corresponding figures of those in their 20s for all the tasks.

Comparing the figures by the age of the youngest children between the two surveys reveals that the percentage of husbands engaging in child-rearing among those with children younger than 1 year old has declined in almost all child-rearing tasks, except for "changing diapers," which has increased 5.7 points. About 2 out of 3 husbands (67.8%) change diapers of their children at least "once or twice a week". For husbands who have children under 3 years old, the percentages of those who participate in the task increased by 4 and 3.5 points, respectively, for "changing diapers" and "feeding children," with the latter reaching 68.0%.

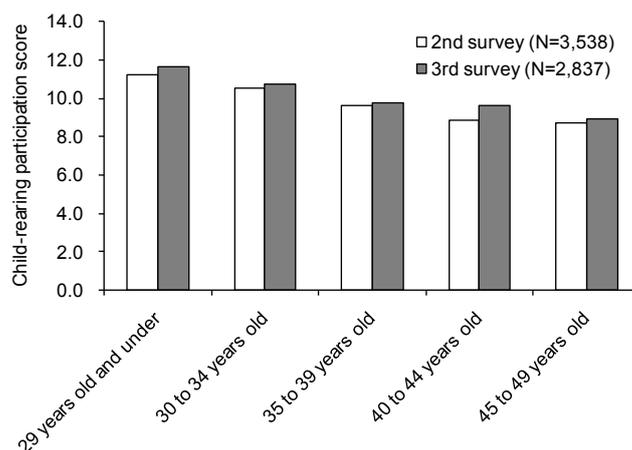
Comparison of the figures by living arrangement in relation to parents shows that husbands who do not live with their parents are more likely to participate in almost all of the child-rearing tasks (except "putting children to sleep"), regardless of whether they live with their own parents or with parents-in-law. Husbands living with parents-in-law tend to do more energy-consuming child-rearing tasks (such as feeding, putting them to

**Figure III-11 Percentages of Husbands Participating in Child-Rearing (at Least Once or Twice a Week)**



Note1: The figures shown here are of wives under 50.

**Figure III-12 Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score, by Age of Wife**



Note: The husband's child-rearing participation score was computed by first assigning for each task a score of 1 if a husband performs the task "once or twice a month," 2 for "once or twice a week," 3 for "three to four times a week," 4 for "every day, each time" and 0 for "never", and then summing up the scores across 5 tasks asked also in the 2nd survey (playing with child(ren), bathing children, feeding children, putting children to sleep, and changing diapers).

sleep and changing diapers) than those living with their own parents, as indicated by the difference of several percentage points. Thus, it can be said that the living arrangement in relation to parents does influence child-rearing-related behaviors of husbands.

On the other hand, there appears to be little difference in husbands' participation in child-rearing in relation to different employment status of the wife. The percentage of husbands participating in child-rearing tasks is lower among wives working full time than among full-time homemakers for some tasks. This result indicates that husbands basically leave child-rearing to their wives, who

take primary responsibility regardless of their employment status.

Table III-5 shows the average time at which husbands come home by the wife's age and employment status. Assuming that it is possible for husbands to take part in child-rearing if they are home latest by around 8 pm, slightly over 50% of the husbands are home by 8 pm, as it was in the 1998 survey. Among those coming home after 8pm, however, more husbands come home in the later hours than they did in the previous survey. The percentage of husbands coming home before 9 pm decreased while those coming home after 9 pm have increased. The percentages of husbands

**Table III-4 Percentage of Husbands Participating in Child-Rearing, by Socio-Economic Status of Wife (Age, Age of Youngest Child, Living Arrangement in Relation to Parents, and Employment Status of Wife)**

|  | Total      |            | Playing with child(ren) |            | Bathing children |            | Feeding children |            | Putting children to sleep |            | Changing diapers |            | Cradling crying children |
|--|------------|------------|-------------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------------------|
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey              | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 3rd survey               |
| Total  | 3,538      | 2,837      | 82.3%                   | 85.1%      | 77.4%            | 78.6%      | 49.9%            | 53.9%      | 38.8%                     | 42.9%      | 46.1%            | 52.1%      | 64.4%                    |
| Age of wife                                  |            |            |                         |            |                  |            |                  |            |                           |            |                  |            |                          |
| 29 years old and under                       | 397        | 306        | 93.2%                   | 96.1%      | 78.8%            | 83.7%      | 59.4%            | 64.7%      | 45.6%                     | 47.4%      | 57.9%            | 67.6%      | 77.4%                    |
| 30 to 39 years old                           | 612        | 569        | 90.0                    | 91.9       | 82.5             | 78.9       | 58.7             | 59.8       | 46.2                      | 47.3       | 56.5             | 60.6       | 72.7                     |
| 40 to 49 years old                           | 763        | 648        | 82.0                    | 86.4       | 78.1             | 78.5       | 51.4             | 54.3       | 40.2                      | 43.4       | 47.8             | 54.6       | 65.0                     |
| 50 to 59 years old                           | 852        | 656        | 77.0                    | 80.9       | 76.5             | 78.7       | 44.7             | 51.4       | 33.9                      | 42.2       | 40.8             | 47.4       | 60.6                     |
| 60 to 69 years old                           | 914        | 658        | 77.5                    | 77.1       | 73.6             | 76.1       | 43.4             | 46.0       | 34.4                      | 37.4       | 37.5             | 39.7       | 54.2                     |
| Age of youngest children                     |            |            |                         |            |                  |            |                  |            |                           |            |                  |            |                          |
| Less than 1 year old                         | 174        | 283        | 96.6%                   | 94.7%      | 86.8%            | 82.3%      | 60.9%            | 57.6%      | 56.9%                     | 51.2%      | 62.1%            | 67.8%      | 82.7%                    |
| 1 to less than 3 years old                   | 524        | 465        | 93.9                    | 94.2       | 82.1             | 80.9       | 64.5             | 68.0       | 45.8                      | 46.2       | 59.2             | 63.2       | 73.9                     |
| 3 to less than 6 years old                   | 506        | 471        | 83.4                    | 88.5       | 78.1             | 76.0       | 53.0             | 52.4       | 44.5                      | 42.7       | 53.0             | 56.7       | 64.0                     |
| Living arrangement in relation to parents    |            |            |                         |            |                  |            |                  |            |                           |            |                  |            |                          |
| Living with parents-in-law                   | 701        | 574        | 82.7%                   | 83.1%      | 73.5%            | 75.8%      | 45.1%            | 48.8%      | 37.2%                     | 42.0%      | 37.1%            | 44.8%      | 61.8%                    |
| Living with own parents                      | 202        | 202        | 80.2                    | 84.7       | 71.8             | 74.8       | 47.0             | 55.0       | 35.6                      | 49.0       | 37.1             | 49.0       | 63.0                     |
| Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 2,557      | 1,829      | 82.4                    | 86.3       | 79.1             | 80.3       | 51.3             | 56.0       | 39.5                      | 42.6       | 49.4             | 55.1       | 65.7                     |
| Employment status of wife                    |            |            |                         |            |                  |            |                  |            |                           |            |                  |            |                          |
| Full-time employee                           | 560        | 513        | 84.5%                   | 82.8%      | 75.7%            | 79.3%      | 55.2%            | 56.5%      | 43.2%                     | 42.9%      | 48.9%            | 55.4%      | 66.0%                    |
| Part-time employee                           | 565        | 741        | 81.4                    | 83.0       | 80.0             | 78.7       | 50.3             | 51.4       | 36.8                      | 43.5       | 41.6             | 49.4       | 60.4                     |
| Self-employment and family business employee | 339        | 256        | 74.9                    | 83.6       | 69.0             | 75.4       | 41.0             | 52.0       | 36.3                      | 38.3       | 40.1             | 44.5       | 60.4                     |
| Full-time homemaker                          | 1,456      | 1,224      | 85.2                    | 88.1       | 79.7             | 79.0       | 50.7             | 55.1       | 40.2                      | 43.5       | 50.0             | 54.8       | 67.1                     |

- Notes 1: The figures in the table show the percentages of respondents who answered at least "once or twice a week" to each item.
- 2: For playing with child(ren), bathing children, feeding children, putting children to sleep, and changing diapers, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation.
- 3: For cradling crying children, only the respondents with valid answers to all 6 items were included in the calculation.
- 4: The figures are computed for wives under 50 years old (except for the figures on their age).
- 5: "Full-time homemaker" as an employment status of the wife corresponds to "not in labor market" in the 2nd survey.

**Table III-5 Average Time Husband Comes Home, by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Before 20:00 (8 pm) |            | Between 20:00 (8 pm) to 21:00 (9 pm) |            | Between 21:00 (9 pm) to 22:00 (10 pm) |            | After 22:00 (10 pm) |            |
|--|------------|------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                           | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                            | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 4,573      | 4,783      | 54.3%               | 54.5%      | 18.3%                                | 16.3%      | 11.7%                                 | 12.2%      | 15.7%               | 17.0%      |
| Age of wife                                  |            |            |                     |            |                                      |            |                                       |            |                     |            |
| 29 years old and under                       | 495        | 439        | 50.7                | 49.4       | 19.2                                 | 15.0       | 13.1                                  | 13.9       | 17.0                | 21.6       |
| 30 to 39 years old                           | 1,307      | 1,392      | 43.8                | 42.2       | 20.9                                 | 17.2       | 15.1                                  | 15.6       | 20.2                | 25.0       |
| 40 to 49 years old                           | 1,493      | 1,301      | 51.1                | 50.4       | 19.8                                 | 17.6       | 13.2                                  | 13.7       | 15.9                | 18.3       |
| 50 to 59 years old                           | 978        | 1,306      | 67.8                | 66.2       | 14.9                                 | 16.9       | 7.0                                   | 8.7        | 10.3                | 8.2        |
| 60 to 69 years old                           | 300        | 345        | 77.3                | 81.7       | 8.3                                  | 7.8        | 3.0                                   | 3.8        | 11.3                | 6.7        |
| Employment status of wife                    |            |            |                     |            |                                      |            |                                       |            |                     |            |
| Full-time employee                           | 767        | 870        | 62.6                | 59.7       | 16.9                                 | 14.8       | 8.6                                   | 11.5       | 11.9                | 14.0       |
| Part-time employee                           | 658        | 1,267      | 53.0                | 54.6       | 18.7                                 | 17.4       | 12.5                                  | 12.3       | 15.8                | 15.7       |
| Self-employment and family business employee | 376        | 452        | 52.7                | 62.2       | 15.2                                 | 15.7       | 11.4                                  | 9.3        | 20.7                | 12.8       |
| Full-time homemaker                          | 1,928      | 2,009      | 50.9                | 50.7       | 19.1                                 | 16.4       | 13.1                                  | 12.8       | 16.9                | 20.1       |

Note: The figures shown in this table are of wives under 70 years old.

coming home after 9 pm are quite high at 35% and 40% for wives in their 20s and 30s, respectively.

More than 20% of husbands do not come home before 10pm, an increase of nearly 5 points since the previous survey. They generally tend to come home later if their wives are either working full time or are full-time homemakers. The percentage of husbands who come home after 9pm increases by 5 points for those whose wives are working full-time. If husbands come home late, they are unable to participate in child-rearing. Among husbands whose wives are in their 20s and 30s, 30% to 40% return home after 9 pm in both surveys. The data do not indicate that the average time at which husbands come home has improved; rather, the condition seems to have worsened.

### 5. Participation of Husbands in Child-Rearing, Wives' Continuation of Working, and the Number of Children

This survey investigated the relationship between the degree of cooperation of husbands in child-rearing and whether or not the wives continue working outside home after the birth of the first child. Note that some caution should be taken in the interpretation of the data since there are cases in which the wives decide whether or not to continue working before giving birth and

only continue working on the premise that their husbands would cooperate in child-rearing. The majority of the respondents withdraw from the labor force rather than continue working upon giving birth to the first child. Overall, however, the percentage of wives who continue working is high among those who have relatively cooperative husbands. On the contrary, respondents are more likely to quit working if husbands are not cooperative in child-rearing. The more cooperative the husband, the smaller the difference in the proportions of wives who continue to work and those who quit work, regardless of the length of marriage.

Table III-7 shows a breakdown of the degree of participation of husbands in child-rearing and the number of children by the length of marriage. The husbands are classified into two groups by their degree of participation in child-rearing: those who are not taking active roles in child-rearing (scores of 0-4 points and 5-8 points) and those who can be considered as being relatively cooperative (9 points or higher). Wives whose husbands are classified as being relatively cooperative tend to have slightly more children than those belonging to the uncooperative group for all lengths of marriage.

Table III-8 shows the number of additional number of children couples plan on having in the

**Table III-6 Changes in Wife's Working Status upon Birth of First Child by Length of Marriage and by Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score**

| Length of marriage | Child-rearing score | Change in working status upon birth of first child |                   |                    |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------|
|                    |                     | Total  | Continued working | Left the workforce |
| 0 to 4 years       | 0~4                 | 46   | 34.8%             | 65.2%              |
|                    | 5~8                 | 61   | 34.4              | 65.6               |
|                    | 9~20                | 79   | 43.0              | 57.0               |
|                    | Total               | 186  | 38.2              | 61.8               |
| 5 to 9 years       | 0~4                 | 116  | 27.6              | 72.4               |
|                    | 5~8                 | 101  | 36.6              | 63.4               |
|                    | 9~20                | 131  | 47.3              | 52.7               |
|                    | Total               | 348  | 37.6              | 62.4               |
| 10 to 14 years     | 0~4                 | 105  | 28.6              | 71.4               |
|                    | 5~8                 | 107  | 29.0              | 71.0               |
|                    | 9~20                | 70   | 48.6              | 51.4               |
|                    | Total               | 282  | 33.7              | 66.3               |
| 15 to 19 years     | 0~4                 | 103  | 37.9              | 62.1               |
|                    | 5~8                 | 75   | 48.0              | 52.0               |
|                    | 9~20                | 70   | 54.3              | 45.7               |
|                    | Total               | 248  | 45.6              | 54.4               |
| Total              | 0~4                 | 370  | 31.6              | 68.4               |
|                    | 5~8                 | 344  | 36.3              | 63.7               |
|                    | 9~20                | 350  | 48.0              | 52.0               |
|                    | Total               | 1,064  | 38.5              | 61.5               |

Note: The child-rearing participation scores are the same as those in Figure 3-12, Table 3-7 and Table 3-8.

**Table III-7 Number of Children by Length of Marriage and Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score**

| Length of marriage | Child-rearing score | Total | Number of children (3 groups) |            |                    | Average number of children |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
|                    |                     |       | 1 child                       | 2 children | 3 or more children |                            |
| 0 to 4 years       | 0~4                 | 97    | 76.3%                         | 20.6%      | 3.1%               | 1.29                       |
|                    | 5~8                 | 114   | 85.1                          | 14.9       | -                  | 1.15                       |
|                    | 9~20                | 162   | 74.7                          | 20.4       | 4.9                | 1.30                       |
|                    | Total               | 373   | 78.3                          | 18.8       | 2.9                | 1.25                       |
| 5 to 9 years       | 0~4                 | 237   | 35.0                          | 52.7       | 12.2               | 1.78                       |
|                    | 5~8                 | 195   | 30.8                          | 53.8       | 15.4               | 1.85                       |
|                    | 9~20                | 220   | 29.1                          | 56.4       | 14.5               | 1.86                       |
|                    | Total               | 652   | 31.7                          | 54.3       | 14.0               | 1.83                       |
| 10 to 14 years     | 0~4                 | 215   | 20.9                          | 49.8       | 29.3               | 2.11                       |
|                    | 5~8                 | 183   | 21.9                          | 57.9       | 20.2               | 2.01                       |
|                    | 9~20                | 145   | 15.2                          | 53.8       | 31.0               | 2.19                       |
|                    | Total               | 543   | 19.7                          | 53.6       | 26.7               | 2.10                       |
| 15 to 19 years     | 0~4                 | 228   | 18.4                          | 50.9       | 30.7               | 2.19                       |
|                    | 5~8                 | 166   | 12.7                          | 55.4       | 31.9               | 2.22                       |
|                    | 9~20                | 161   | 13.0                          | 49.7       | 37.3               | 2.27                       |
|                    | Total               | 555   | 15.1                          | 51.9       | 33.0               | 2.22                       |
| Total              | 0~4                 | 777   | 31.4                          | 47.4       | 21.2               | 1.93                       |
|                    | 5~8                 | 658   | 33.1                          | 48.6       | 18.2               | 1.87                       |
|                    | 9~20                | 688   | 33.1                          | 45.8       | 21.1               | 1.90                       |
|                    | Total               | 2,123 | 32.5                          | 47.2       | 20.3               | 1.90                       |

**Table III-8 Number of Additionally Planned Children by the Current Number of Children and Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score**

| Current number of children | Child-rearing score | Total | Number of additionally planned children (3 groups) |         |                    | Average number of children |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-------|--|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|
|                            |                     |       | 0 children   | 1 child | 2 or more children |                            |
| 1 child                    | 0~4                 | 168   | 31.0%  | 58.3%   | 10.7%              | 0.80                       |
|                            | 5~8                 | 160   | 28.1   | 59.4    | 12.5               | 0.85                       |
|                            | 9~20                | 159   | 19.5   | 59.7    | 20.8               | 1.04                       |
|                            | Total               | 487   | 26.3   | 59.1    | 14.6               | 0.89                       |
| 2 children                 | 0~4                 | 207   | 87.0   | 11.6    | 1.4                | 0.14                       |
|                            | 5~8                 | 190   | 85.3   | 13.7    | 1.1                | 0.16                       |
|                            | 9~20                | 208   | 82.2   | 15.9    | 1.9                | 0.21                       |
|                            | Total               | 605   | 84.8   | 13.7    | 1.5                | 0.17                       |

future, broken down by the number of children they already have. Among respondents with one child, about 30% of the those whose husbands seldom participate in child-rearing do not wish to have any more children (0 additionally planned children), while the corresponding figure is nearly 20% for the wives with relatively cooperative husbands.

Moreover, the percentage of the respondents who want to have two or more children is 10.7% among those with uncooperative husbands; the

proportion is virtually double at 20.8% among respondents with cooperative husbands. The proportion of wives who already have two children but want to have one more is also higher among those who can obtain cooperation of husbands in child-rearing. For the respondents who have either one or two children, the higher the degree of husbands' participation in child-rearing, the greater the number of children they want to have in the future.

### 6. Wives' Evaluation of their Husbands' Participation in Housework and Child-Rearing

In general, the degree of husbands' contribution and participation in housework and child-rearing is low. Table III-9 shows how the wives feel about the actual conditions of their husbands' cooperation in household chores and child-rearing. Table III-9 indicates their levels of satisfaction.

Overall, the percentage of those who take their husbands' cooperation in housework and child-rearing positively and are satisfied (including the responses "rather satisfied" and "extremely satisfied") is slightly higher than those who are not (including the responses "rather unsatisfied" and "extremely unsatisfied"), but the two percentages are almost the same. There is little change from the result from 5 years ago. Considering the figures by

the wife's age, it can be seen that the proportion of wives who evaluate their husbands' contribution positively increases among those in their 30s and 40s, while the proportion with negative evaluation has increased among those in their 50s and 60s. Although the proportion of satisfied respondents has increased among those in their 40s, this age group also has the highest proportion of unsatisfied responses. Those in their 40s and 50s who answer "extremely unsatisfied" reach 17.0% and 19.3%, respectively. The high proportion of unsatisfied wives in their 40s correlates well with the actual (lower) level of their husbands' participation in household chores (the U-shaped curve in Figure III-8 discussed above).

The breakdown by employment status of wives shows a slight increase in the proportion of satisfied wives among full-time workers and full-time

**Table III-9 Wife's Level of Satisfaction Regarding Husband's Participation in Household Chores and Child-Rearing (by Age of Wife, Employment Status, Living Arrangement and Average Time Husband Comes Home)**

|  | Total      |            | Satisfied           |            |                  |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Extremely satisfied |            | Rather satisfied |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 6,197      | 5,998      | 51.7%               | 52.5%      | 10.1%            | 10.9%      | 41.6%      | 41.6%      |
| Age of wife                                      |            |            |                     |            |                  |            |            |            |
| 29 years old and under                           | 562        | 461        | 63.3                | 63.8       | 16.2             | 19.7       | 47.2       | 44.0       |
| 30 to 39 years old                               | 1,543      | 1,513      | 52.4                | 57.2       | 11.8             | 12.9       | 40.6       | 44.3       |
| 40 to 49 years old                               | 1,896      | 1,484      | 44.8                | 48.1       | 8.5              | 10.9       | 36.3       | 37.2       |
| 50 to 59 years old                               | 1,410      | 1,661      | 52.3                | 48.5       | 8.7              | 8.5        | 43.7       | 39.9       |
| 60 to 69 years old                               | 786        | 879        | 57.3                | 53.6       | 8.8              | 7.2        | 48.5       | 46.4       |
| Employment status of wife                        |            |            |                     |            |                  |            |            |            |
| Full-time employee                               | 925        | 1,001      | 52.4                | 55.6       | 12.6             | 15.7       | 39.8       | 40.0       |
| Part-time employee                               | 812        | 1,438      | 45.2                | 46.9       | 7.3              | 9.0        | 37.9       | 37.9       |
| Self-employment and family business employee     | 664        | 718        | 49.1                | 49.7       | 8.3              | 7.9        | 40.8       | 41.8       |
| Full-time homemaker                              | 2,604      | 2,580      | 54.7                | 55.5       | 10.4             | 11.1       | 44.3       | 44.4       |
| Living arrangement in relation to parents        |            |            |                     |            |                  |            |            |            |
| Living with parents                              |            |            |                     |            |                  |            |            |            |
| Living with either own parents or parents-in-law | 1,270      | 1,295      | 46.7                | 49.4       | 9.1              | 10.5       | 37.6       | 38.9       |
| Living with parents-in-law                       | 956        | 944        | 47.3                | 49.7       | 9.1              | 9.9        | 38.2       | 39.8       |
| Living with own parents                          | 306        | 350        | 43.8                | 48.9       | 9.2              | 12.3       | 34.6       | 36.6       |
| Living apart from parents and parents-in-law     | 3,872      | 3,305      | 52.2                | 53.8       | 10.7             | 11.5       | 41.5       | 42.2       |
| Average time husband comes home                  |            |            |                     |            |                  |            |            |            |
| Before 20:00                                     | 2,189      | 2,382      | 53.5                | 56.5       | 10.9             | 13.1       | 42.6       | 43.4       |
| Between 20:00 and 21:00                          | 772        | 715        | 48.2                | 49.1       | 9.6              | 9.4        | 38.6       | 39.7       |
| Between 21:00 and 22:00                          | 497        | 540        | 45.7                | 50.6       | 6.6              | 10.0       | 39.0       | 40.6       |
| 22:00 or later                                   | 661        | 772        | 43.7                | 46.4       | 8.5              | 9.3        | 35.2       | 37.0       |

**Table III-9 Wife's Level of Satisfaction Regarding Husband's Participation in Household Chores and Child-Rearing (by Age of Wife, Employment Status, Living Arrangement and Average Time Husband Comes Home) (Cont.)**

|  | Dissatisfied |            |                     |            |                        |            |
|--|--------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
|  |              |            | Rather dissatisfied |            | Extremely dissatisfied |            |
|  | 2nd survey   | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey             | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 48.3%        | 47.5%      | 32.4%               | 31.2%      | 15.9%                  | 16.3%      |
| Age of wife                                      |              |            |                     |            |                        |            |
| 29 years old and under                           | 36.7         | 36.2       | 26.7                | 25.2       | 10.0                   | 11.1       |
| 30 to 39 years old                               | 47.6         | 42.8       | 33.2                | 28.8       | 14.3                   | 13.9       |
| 40 to 49 years old                               | 55.2         | 51.9       | 36.1                | 34.8       | 19.1                   | 17.0       |
| 50 to 59 years old                               | 47.7         | 51.5       | 31.9                | 32.2       | 15.7                   | 19.3       |
| 60 to 69 years old                               | 42.7         | 46.4       | 26.7                | 30.3       | 16.0                   | 16.2       |
| Employment status of wife                        |              |            |                     |            |                        |            |
| Full-time employee                               | 47.6         | 44.4       | 31.5                | 27.9       | 16.1                   | 16.5       |
| Part-time employee                               | 54.8         | 53.1       | 35.8                | 34.8       | 19.0                   | 18.4       |
| Self-employment and family business employee     | 50.9         | 50.3       | 33.9                | 33.0       | 17.0                   | 17.3       |
| Full-time homemaker                              | 45.3         | 44.5       | 31.6                | 30.0       | 13.7                   | 14.4       |
| Living arrangement in relation to parents        |              |            |                     |            |                        |            |
| Living with parents                              |              |            |                     |            |                        |            |
| Living with either own parents or parents-in-law | 53.4         | 50.6       | 36.4                | 33.1       | 17.0                   | 17.5       |
| Living with parents-in-law                       | 52.7         | 50.3       | 35.7                | 33.2       | 17.1                   | 17.2       |
| Living with own parents                          | 56.2         | 51.1       | 39.2                | 33.1       | 17.0                   | 18.0       |
| Living apart from parents and parents-in-law     | 47.8         | 53.8       | 32.0                | 11.5       | 15.8                   | 42.2       |
| Average time husband comes home                  |              |            |                     |            |                        |            |
| Before 20:00                                     | 46.5         | 43.5       | 32.6                | 29.1       | 13.9                   | 14.4       |
| Between 20:00 and 21:00                          | 51.8         | 50.9       | 35.4                | 35.0       | 16.5                   | 15.9       |
| Between 21:00 and 22:00                          | 54.3         | 49.4       | 37.0                | 33.0       | 17.3                   | 16.5       |
| 22:00 or later                                   | 56.3         | 53.6       | 33.1                | 33.8       | 23.1                   | 19.8       |

Note: The figures shown in this table are of wives under 70 years old.

homemakers, albeit with virtually no difference in the degree of satisfaction. Also, the proportion of those who give the response “extremely unsatisfied” has remained at a similar level at 16.5% and 14.4%, respectively, since the previous survey. A comparison by living arrangement with respect to parents also shows an increase in respondents who evaluate their husbands’ participation positively, regardless of whether they live with their parents or not. However, more wives living with their parents indicated negative attitudes. Examination of the results by the average time at which husbands come home shows that the percentage of satisfied wives is the highest among those whose husbands come home before 8 pm, while the percentage is the lowest among those whose husbands come home after 10 pm; 19.8% of the respondents with husbands in the latter group answer “extremely

unsatisfied” with respect to their husbands’ participation.

The fact that approximately half of the wives respond that they are satisfied with their husbands’ contribution appears inconsistent with the actual trends of husbands’ participation in household chores and child-rearing, considering that more than 80% of the wives agree with the idea that “husbands should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as their wives” (see Section V). However, if we base our interpretation on the premise that the respondents’ opinions reflect their wishes and ideals, while at the same time their evaluation of the actual situation reflects their subconscious acceptance of conventional gender roles in their everyday lives or their sense of helplessness and have made their judgments accordingly in the survey, the discrepancy

**Table III-10 Level of Wife's Expectation Regarding Husband's Participation in Housework and Child-Rearing (by Age and Employment Status of Wife)**

|  | Total                      |            | Expected cooperation                 |            |  |            |   |            |
|--|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|------------|--|------------|---|------------|
|  |                            |            | Expected a high level of cooperation |            | Expected a reasonable level of cooperation |            |   |            |
|  | 2nd survey                 | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                           | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                                 | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                                    | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 6,440                      | 6,110      | 47.5%                                | 41.2%      | 13.7%                                      | 13.1%      | 33.8%   | 28.1%      |
| Age of wife                                  |                            |            |                                      |            |  |            |   |            |
| 29 years old and under                       | 571                        | 472        | 59.9%                                | 61.4%      | 18.9%                                      | 22.5%      | 41.0%   | 39.0%      |
| 30 to 39 years old                           | 1,583                      | 1,527      | 50.0                                 | 48.9       | 13.6                                       | 17.1       | 36.4  | 31.8       |
| 40 to 49 years old                           | 1,962                      | 1,498      | 43.7                                 | 38.5       | 12.7                                       | 12.6       | 31.0  | 25.9       |
| 50 to 59 years old                           | 1,486                      | 1,704      | 45.6                                 | 35.9       | 13.0                                       | 10.4       | 32.6  | 25.5       |
| 60 to 69 years old                           | 838                        | 909        | 46.1                                 | 32.2       | 13.8                                       | 7.6        | 32.3  | 24.6       |
| Employment status of wife                    |                            |            |                                      |            |  |            |   |            |
| Full-time employee                           | 952                        | 1,025      | 53.6%                                | 50.1%      | 17.3%                                      | 20.7%      | 36.3%   | 29.5%      |
| Part-time employee                           | 833                        | 1,453      | 43.1                                 | 38.1       | 11.9                                       | 11.7       | 31.2  | 26.4       |
| Self-employment and family business employee | 701                        | 733        | 44.9                                 | 34.4       | 13.4                                       | 10.6       | 31.5  | 23.7       |
| Full-time homemaker                          | 2,699                      | 2,631      | 47.8                                 | 41.3       | 13.0                                       | 11.9       | 34.8  | 29.4       |
|  | Did not expect cooperation |            |                                      |            |  |            |   |            |
|  |                            |            | Did not expect much cooperation      |            | Did not expect any cooperation             |            | Never expected cooperation in the first place |            |
|  | 2nd survey                 | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                           | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                                 | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                                    | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 52.5%                      | 58.8%      | 30.8%                                | 30.0%      | 13.6%                                      | 17.2%      | 8.1%  | 11.6%      |
| Age of wife                                  |                            |            |                                      |            |  |            |   |            |
| 29 years old and under                       | 40.2%                      | 38.6%      | 24.0%                                | 22.2%      | 10.2%                                      | 10.2%      | 6.0%  | 6.1%       |
| 30 to 39 years old                           | 49.9                       | 51.1       | 29.6                                 | 25.9       | 13.5                                       | 16.1       | 6.8   | 9.0        |
| 40 to 49 years old                           | 56.3                       | 61.5       | 32.3                                 | 31.6       | 15.8                                       | 18.3       | 8.2   | 11.6       |
| 50 to 59 years old                           | 54.4                       | 64.1       | 33.0                                 | 32.3       | 12.6                                       | 18.7       | 8.8   | 13.0       |
| 60 to 69 years old                           | 53.8                       | 67.8       | 30.3                                 | 33.7       | 12.9                                       | 17.8       | 10.6  | 16.3       |
| Employment status of wife                    |                            |            |                                      |            |  |            |   |            |
| Full-time employee                           | 46.4%                      | 49.9%      | 27.0%                                | 26.5%      | 11.6%                                      | 14.9%      | 7.8%  | 8.4%       |
| Part-time employee                           | 57.0                       | 61.9       | 35.1                                 | 30.9       | 14.2                                       | 18.5       | 7.7   | 12.5       |
| Self-employment and family business employee | 55.0                       | 65.6       | 29.5                                 | 31.5       | 15.1                                       | 19.8       | 10.4  | 14.3       |
| Full-time homemaker                          | 52.3                       | 58.7       | 30.8                                 | 30.8       | 13.7                                       | 16.6       | 7.8   | 11.3       |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old.

between their opinions and their evaluation of the actual situation can be explained.

The result that still about half of wives are satisfied with their husbands' participation in household chores seems to show the wives to be too lenient in light of the low level of husbands' actual share of housework. Table III-10 shows how much the wives expect from their husband in the first place, in terms of housework and child-rearing.

The percentage of wives who expect their

husbands to take part in household chores is 41.2%, which includes the responses "expect a high level of cooperation" and "expect a reasonable level of cooperation". On the contrary, the percentage of negative answers expressing no expectations from the husbands is 58.8%, which includes the responses "do not expect much cooperation," "do not expect any cooperation" and "never expected in the first place". The percentage of respondents with positive expectation, 41.2%, has dropped 6.3 points from the 47.5% in the previous survey.

Conversely, responses clearly indicating a lack of expectation (“do not expect any cooperation” and “never expected cooperation in the first place”) has increased by 7.1 points, from 21.7% to 28.8%.

The level of expectation is inversely related to age, lowering as the age of the respondent increases. Respondents in their 20s have the highest level of expectation; indeed, this is the only age group with the majority (slightly above 60%) expecting the husband to cooperate. The level of expectation declines with the respondent’s age thereafter, to just about 30% of respondents in their 60s expecting their husbands to cooperate, which is half of the percentage of 20s age group. Compared to the results of the previous survey, the percentage of respondents with some expectation has increased only among those in the 20s, and it has decreased significantly for those in their 30s or older; the amount of decrease is 5.2 points for those in the 40s, 9.7 points, for the 50s age group and 13.9 points for the 60s age group. Negative responses of the wives who expect little to begin with from their husbands to take up household chores increase significantly as they age, from below 40% in their 20s to nearly 70% in their 60s. There are more negative responses than in the previous survey in all age groups except for those in their 20s. Furthermore, the proportion of wives who are not expecting or have never expected cooperation from their husband has increased, and with larger increments with increasing age:

4.8 points for the 30s, 5.9 points for the 40s, 10.3 points for the 50s and 10.6 points for the 60s.

Looking at the data by employment status, the proportions of wives who are positive and negative respectively about their husbands’ cooperation are about half and half among wives working full time. For those of other employment status, around 60% give negative responses. The percentages of positive responses have decreased in all the employment statuses compared to the previous survey. Nonetheless, wives working full time and who respond that they “expect a high level of cooperation” has increased by 3.4 points and reached 20.7% (17.3% in the previous survey).

For full-time homemakers, their role of performing housework can be said to be an alternative act of mutual giving in return for the husband’s role as income earners. Yet, their level of expectations of their husbands’ cooperation with household chores is the second highest, just following the wives working full time.

Table III-11 examines the relationship between the wives’ evaluation of their husbands and the husbands’ actual behavior by showing the level of the wives’ satisfaction with their husband’s housework and child-rearing participation and the actual participation expressed as scales. The wives generally evaluate their husbands highly when their scores are high. The average scores corresponding to the four levels of satisfaction are lower in the current survey than the previous one

**Table III-11 Relationship between the Level of Husband’s Participation in Housework and Child-Rearing and Wife’s Level of Satisfaction**

|                        | Total | Total of husband’s housework participation scores |       |       |       |       |       | Average score |            |
|------------------------|-------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|------------|
|                        |       | 0   | 1~4   | 5~8   | 9~12  | 13~16 | 17~20 | 3rd survey    | 2nd survey |
| Extremely satisfied    | 619   | 6.3%  | 15.8% | 32.6% | 27.6% | 11.1% | 6.5%  | 8.2           | 8.9        |
| Rather satisfied       | 2,391 | 12.8  | 36.9  | 31.6  | 12.3  | 3.9   | 2.6   | 5.3           | 5.9        |
| Rather dissatisfied    | 1,839 | 25.8  | 49.6  | 17.9  | 4.0   | 1.1   | 1.6   | 3.1           | 3.6        |
| Extremely dissatisfied | 989   | 45.3  | 41.5  | 9.0   | 1.0   | 1.2   | 2.0   | 2.1           | 2.2        |
| Total                  | 5,838 | 21.7  | 39.4  | 23.6  | 9.4   | 3.3   | 2.6   | 4.3           | 4.9        |

|                        | Total | Total of husband’s child-rearing participation scores |      |      |       |       |       | Average score |            |
|------------------------|-------|---|------|------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|------------|
|                        |       | 0   | 1~4  | 5~8  | 9~12  | 13~16 | 17~20 | 3rd survey    | 2nd survey |
| Extremely satisfied    | 499   | 2.2%  | 3.0% | 6.2% | 17.8% | 30.3% | 40.5% | 14.3          | 13.5       |
| Rather satisfied       | 2,017 | 2.2   | 8.9  | 19.8 | 32.6  | 23.8  | 12.6  | 10.8          | 10.7       |
| Rather dissatisfied    | 1,622 | 6.0   | 21.8 | 31.6 | 26.9  | 10.2  | 3.5   | 7.5           | 7.7        |
| Extremely dissatisfied | 895   | 15.5  | 37.9 | 28.7 | 12.2  | 3.2   | 2.5   | 5.0           | 5.4        |
| Total                  | 5,033 | 5.8   | 17.6 | 23.9 | 25.7  | 16.4  | 10.6  | 9.0           | 9.0        |

Note: The housework participation scores here are the same as those in Figure 3-8, and the child-rearing participation scores, Figure 3-12.

for housework and marginally higher for child-rearing.

## VI Companionship between Husbands and Wives

### 1. Communication between Husbands and Wives

Table IV-1 shows how often married couples spend time together in activities, such as having dinner, shopping, traveling, talking to each other, and discussing their worries and concerns. The frequencies of doing things together have not changed significantly from the previous survey. The percentage of respondents who often “discuss plan for weekend” and “talk about when to come home and schedules during the week” has increased slightly by 3.2 and 4.3 points, respectively, while the percentage has decreased by 3.6

points for “travel together.”

The percentage of “discuss their worries and concerns” has increased by 2.6 points, showing that approximately 40% of married couples consult each other often, on a daily basis. On the other hand, the total of “rarely” and “none” accounted for 27.3%. Thus, the fact that slightly less than 30% of married couples rarely talk about worries and troubles has not changed since the previous survey.

Table IV-2 shows a breakdown of how much married couples do things together by age. There are basically no noticeable changes in the frequency distribution by age compared to the previous survey. However, the percentage of those who answered “often” has decreased among respondents in their 20s in the majority of activities. For example, “travel together” is 14.7 points

**Table IV-1 Communication between Husband and Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Often      |            | Sometimes  |            | Rarely     |            | None       |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Have dinner together                                       | 7,554      | 6,848      | 72.7%      | 72.5%      | 16.6%      | 16.6%      | 8.4%       | 8.7%       | 2.3%       | 2.2%       |
| Go shopping together                                       | 7,492      | 6,821      | 32.1       | 32.9       | 39.9       | 41.1       | 17.5       | 16.7       | 10.5       | 9.4        |
| Travel together  | 7,334      | 6,758      | 19.6       | 16.0       | 34.3       | 32.4       | 27.4       | 29.2       | 18.7       | 22.4       |
| Talk about when to come home and schedules during the week | 7,334      | 6,726      | 48.6       | 52.9       | 25.0       | 25.1       | 15.9       | 13.8       | 10.5       | 8.2        |
| Discuss plans for weekends together                        | 7,349      | 6,723      | 34.6       | 37.8       | 27.8       | 28.4       | 23.1       | 21.0       | 14.5       | 12.8       |
| Discuss worries and concerns                               | 7,505      | 6,797      | 37.3       | 39.7       | 35.0       | 33.0       | 20.1       | 20.1       | 7.6        | 7.2        |

**Table IV-2 Percentage of Married Couples who “Often” Have Communication Shared Activities**

|                        | Activities performed together by married couples (percentage of respondents who answered "often") |            |                      |            |                 |            |  |            |                                     |            |                              |            |
|------------------------|---|------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|--|------------|-------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|
|                        | Have dinner together  |            | Go shopping together |            | Travel together |            | Talk about when to come home and schedules during the week |            | Discuss plans for weekends together |            | Discuss worries and concerns |            |
|                        | 2nd survey  | 3rd survey | 2nd survey           | 3rd survey | 2nd survey      | 3rd survey | 2nd survey   | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey                   | 3rd survey |
| 29 years old and under | 77.9%   | 72.7%      | 48.5%                | 44.7%      | 28.4%           | 13.8%      | 70.6%  | 70.5%      | 58.5%                               | 58.1%      | 50.4%                        | 54.3%      |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 59.7  | 59.2       | 38.5                 | 35.6       | 20.6            | 15.4       | 54.9   | 60.6       | 45.4                                | 49.3       | 38.2                         | 44.2       |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 62.9  | 63.7       | 28.2                 | 28.5       | 14.3            | 10.9       | 45.3   | 49.9       | 30.9                                | 35.5       | 33.1                         | 36.5       |
| 50 to 59 years old     | 80.3  | 77.9       | 30.3                 | 30.3       | 20.8            | 16.9       | 47.0   | 50.1       | 30.1                                | 31.7       | 37.1                         | 36.4       |
| 60 to 69 years old     | 87.1  | 87.8       | 28.1                 | 35.7       | 22.2            | 23.1       | 39.8   | 47.2       | 24.0                                | 30.7       | 37.0                         | 38.7       |
| 70 years old or above  | 89.3  | 92.2       | 23.0                 | 29.2       | 17.5            | 18.0       | 37.4   | 39.7       | 21.9                                | 22.1       | 37.9                         | 34.0       |

lower than the figure in the previous survey. On the other hand, the percentage of those in their 20s who “discuss their worries and concerns” has increased by 3.9 points, and the corresponding percentages have also increased for respondents in their 30s and 40s by 6.0 points and 3.4 points, respectively.

## 2. Married Couple’s Decision Making

Table IV-3 shows the responses to the questions on who has the main responsibility in making decisions about household matters. The items that are most often decided by husband and wife “together” are “purchases of expensive durable goods such as cars” (51.5%), “interaction with parents and other relatives” (56.4%), and “rearing and education of children” (46.1%), which show increases of 2.9 points, 3.8 points, and 3.1 points, respectively, compared to the previous survey. The proportion of married couples who make decisions by consulting each other rather than on their own has increased. The wife mostly has the right to make decisions on “management of family budget and administration of household”; nearly 70% of wives have decision-making rights. It should, however, be noted that the percentage of respondents who make decisions on the family budget “together” has increased by 2.7 points. The percentages of those who make decisions together on “rearing and education of children” has also increased by 3.1 points, compared to the previous survey, but the decision is still left to the wives in nearly half of the households (50.5%). The presence of husbands in this matter is extremely small; only 3.4% of respondents answer that their husbands make these decisions, which is basically the same in the previous survey,

Table IV-4 shows the relationship between

living arrangement in relation to parents and decision makers among married couples. Compared to married couples not living with either parents, where the wife’s and the husband’s situation is considered neutral, the decision maker(s) tends to be those living with their own parents; i.e., wives take up more responsibility than their husbands if they live with their own parents and vice versa. The same trend was observed in the previous survey as well. However, it should be noted that compared to the previous survey, the percentages of husbands and wives living with their own parents and having the main decision-making right have decreased, while the proportion of couples making decisions together has increased for most areas.

## V Wives’ Attitudes toward the Family

People in modern society live their family lives according to various social norms that determine how married couples and parents and children should behave or relate to one another. In this report, such norms are referred to in the aggregate as “family norms”. As values do, family norms can determine the actions of individual family members by influencing their attitudes, and as a result, they might even prescribe the form, structure and functions of families. It is thus extremely important to explore individuals’ attitudes and changes in family norms in order to predict the direction of families in the future. In this survey, we prepared a number of statements related to representative family norms, including family norms regarding married couples, children and aged parents, and asked the married women respondents what they think about those statements. This section presents the main findings, based primarily on comparison with the second survey conducted in 1998.

**Table IV-3 Main Decision Maker of Married Couples**

|   | Total      |            | Wife       |            | Together   |            | Husband    |            |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|   | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Purchases of expensive durable consumer goods such as cars  | 7,499      | 6,729      | 11.6%      | 11.3%      | 48.6%      | 51.5%      | 39.8%      | 37.2%      |
| Management of family budget and administration of household | 7,487      | 6,794      | 68.8       | 66.5       | 18.1       | 20.8       | 13.1       | 12.7       |
| Interaction with parents and other relatives                | 7,467      | 6,770      | 35.4       | 34.6       | 52.6       | 56.4       | 11.9       | 9.0        |
| Rearing and education of children                           | 6,540      | 5,776      | 53.5       | 50.5       | 43.0       | 46.1       | 3.6        | 3.4        |

### 1. Overview of the Results on the Attitudes toward Family Norms

Among the twelve statements listed in the questionnaire, only one question item, “the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrate on housework,” shows a change of 10 points or more from the previous survey (Figure V-1). The proportion of respondents who agree with the division of labor based on conventional gender roles has dropped 11.2 points to below 50% (41.1%) for the first time since the survey started in 1993. Conversely, the percentage of respondents who are absolutely opposed to this statement, or those who choose “completely disagree”, has increased 6.7 points. Those who agree with another statement that is closely related to the one above, “the husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife,” show an increase of 6.1 points, exceeding 80% of overall responses. However, no changes are observed in the response to the statement that “husbands should give first priority to their work.” Moreover, examining the data from the viewpoint of conventional gender roles, the percentage supporting the idea that “boys should behave like boys, and girls should behave like girls” has decreased by 6.4 points, but 70% of respondents still agree with the statement. It should be noted, however, that confidently affirmative responses (“completely agree”) has decreased by around 8

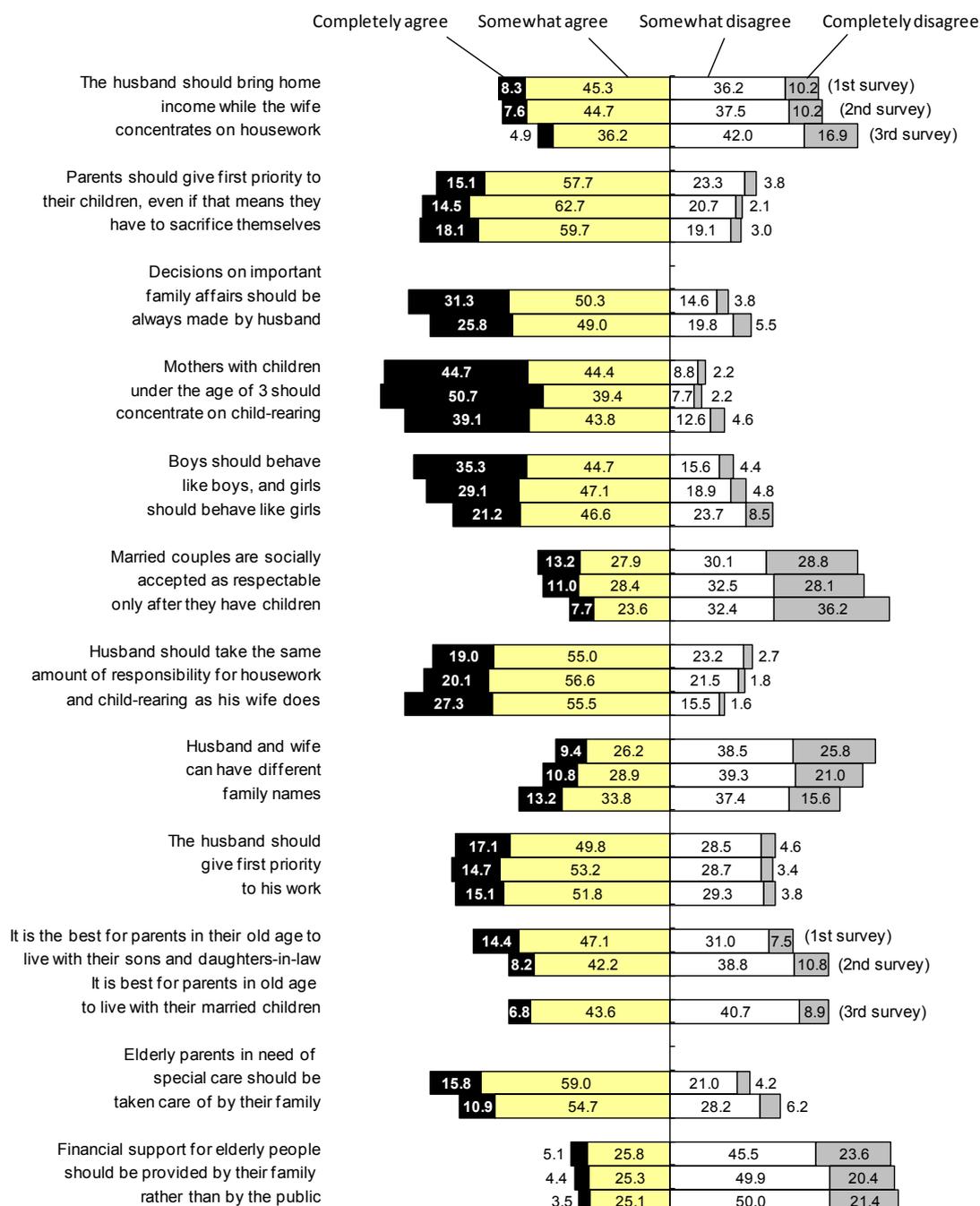
points. For the idea that “decisions on important family affairs should always be made by husbands” has decreased 6.8 points, but it is also true that three out of four respondents still agree with the statement.

Next, some changes are seen in the attitudes toward children as well. The percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement “married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children” has declined by 8.1 points and those completely agreeing with the statement have also decreased by slightly more than 3 points, resulting in a drop in the percentage of respondents who support this idea to around 30%. On the other hand, there is little change in the responses to the statement that “parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means that they may have to make sacrifices themselves,” with the percentage remaining high (77.8%). Moreover, the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement that “it is better for mothers with children under 3 years old not to be employed and to be concentrating on child-rearing” has decreased 7.2 points, but this statement is still supported by more than 80% of all respondents (82.9% give affirmative answers to this statement). It should be noted here as well that the percentage of those who absolutely affirms this statement (choosing “completely agree”) has dropped dramatically by 11.6 points, indicating a shift within the responses

**Table IV-4 Main Decision Maker of Married Couples, by Living Arrangement in Relation to Parents**

|   | Living arrangement                           | Total      |            | Main decision-maker |            |            |            |            |            |
|---|--|------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|   |  |            |            | Wife                |            | Together   |            | Husband    |            |
|   |  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Purchases of expensive durable consumer goods such as cars  | Living with own parents                      | 346        | 363        | 15.0%               | 12.9%      | 52.0%      | 51.0%      | 32.9%      | 36.1%      |
|   | Living with parents-in-law                   | 1,042      | 991        | 6.2                 | 6.3        | 46.2       | 49.6       | 47.6       | 44.1       |
|   | Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 3,946      | 3,434      | 12.2                | 11.8       | 50.6       | 53.9       | 37.2       | 34.2       |
| Management of family budget and administration of household | Living with own parents                      | 344        | 364        | 77.0%               | 70.9%      | 15.1%      | 21.4%      | 7.8%       | 7.7%       |
|   | Living with parents-in-law                   | 1,037      | 991        | 64.8                | 63.7       | 18.9       | 22.4       | 16.3       | 13.9       |
|   | Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 3,938      | 3,445      | 72.8                | 70.3       | 16.7       | 18.5       | 10.5       | 11.2       |
| Interaction with parents and other relatives                | Living with own parents                      | 344        | 361        | 40.7%               | 42.4%      | 50.0%      | 50.7%      | 9.3%       | 6.9%       |
|   | Living with parents-in-law                   | 1,037      | 993        | 31.0                | 28.5       | 51.4       | 56.7       | 17.6       | 14.8       |
|   | Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 3,930      | 3,429      | 37.1                | 36.6       | 53.1       | 56.5       | 9.8        | 6.9        |
| Rearing and education of children                           | Living with own parents                      | 312        | 328        | 58.3%               | 55.2%      | 50.4%      | 43.3%      | 1.3%       | 1.5%       |
|   | Living with parents-in-law                   | 973        | 922        | 50.2                | 47.4       | 45.9       | 49.0       | 3.9        | 3.6        |
|   | Living apart from parents and parents-in-law | 3,488      | 2,919      | 54.5                | 52.0       | 43.0       | 45.8       | 2.5        | 2.2        |

Figure V-1 Wife's Attitudes toward the Conventional Norms of Families



supporting the idea.

One item that shows a large difference compared to the previous survey is “elderly parents in need of special care should be taken care of by their families”. The percentage of respondents who agree with this statement has decreased 9.2 points. In the 5-year period between two surveys, the Long-Term Care Insurance Act has been enforced and special care has become more of an issue for the society at large, which may have

contributed to this result. Still, a solid majority of 65.6 percent agree with the statement. Responses to the statement that “financial support for elderly people should be provided by their families rather than by the public institutions” do not show a significant change from the previous survey: 28.6% of the respondents support the statement. The majority of the responses indicate that economic support should be provided by the society at large rather than by individual families. Thus, it appears

that the respondents consider the role of families in providing special care for the elderly to be separate from the role of providing economic support.

The item “husband and wife can have different family names” also shows significant changes in response from the previous survey. The proportion supporting the idea has increased by 7.3 points and the opinions on married couples’ keeping their respective family names are almost equally divided, although the proportion of those who are in favor has not reached the majority yet (47.0%).

Compared to the second survey, the results of this survey indicate an increase in opinions opposing conventional values for many of the items. For the traditional norms regarding married couples and relationship with aging parents, full-time homemakers in their 20s show positive attitudes toward conventional way of thinking as they did in the previous survey, although there are some differences among generations. Moreover, with respect to the norms related to the relationship between parents and children, responses supporting family lives prioritizing children rather than married couples and individuals still account for a large proportion.

## 2. View on the Norms Regarding Married Couples

### (1) Attitude toward Division of Labor between Husbands and Wives

Table V-1 examines the responses to the statement that “after marriage, the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework” by age of wife. Those who agree with gendered division of labor (sum of responses “completely agree” and “somewhat agree”) have decreased by more than 10 points in all age groups; they have even dropped to below 40% among respondents in their 20s, 30s and 40s. Although 44.8% of the respondents in their 50s agree with the statement, the percentage in this age group has decreased by 15 points. Moreover, the percentage of those who “completely disagree” has increased around 10 points among the respondents in their 20s, 30s and 40s, generally reaching around 20%.

The attitudes toward the traditional norms regarding division of roles at home vary greatly by the employment status of wives as well (Table V-2). However, it is noted that regardless of how they participate in the labor market, those who have positive attitude toward the traditional division of labor by gender role have decreased by

**Table V-1 Responses to the Statement “The husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework”, by Age of Wife**

|                        | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                        |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                        | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                  | 6,608      | 6,189      | 52.3%            | 41.1%      | 7.6%           | 4.9%       | 44.7%             | 36.2%      | 47.7%               | 58.9%      | 37.5%      | 42.0%      | 10.2%      | 16.9%      |
| 29 years old and under | 586        | 479        | 48.8             | 35.7       | 7.0            | 2.3        | 41.8              | 33.4       | 51.2                | 64.3       | 41.1       | 41.5       | 10.1       | 22.8       |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 1,578      | 1,533      | 45.4             | 34.1       | 4.3            | 2.2        | 41.1              | 31.9       | 54.6                | 65.9       | 41.1       | 43.8       | 13.5       | 22.1       |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 1,995      | 1,511      | 44.8             | 33.2       | 5.3            | 3.1        | 39.5              | 30.1       | 55.2                | 66.8       | 43.7       | 47.2       | 11.5       | 19.6       |
| 50 to 59 years old     | 1,552      | 1,723      | 59.7             | 44.8       | 10.0           | 5.4        | 49.7              | 39.4       | 40.3                | 55.2       | 32.4       | 41.9       | 7.9        | 13.3       |
| 60 to 69 years old     | 897        | 943        | 70.0             | 61.2       | 14.4           | 12.6       | 55.6              | 48.6       | 30.0                | 38.8       | 24.2       | 31.4       | 5.8        | 7.4        |

**Table V-2 Married Women’s Responses to the Statement “Husbands should bring home income while wives concentrate on housework”, by Employment Status of Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                                      | 5,292      | 5,919      | 52.6%            | 41.4%      | 7.2%           | 4.9%       | 45.4%             | 36.5%      | 47.5%               | 58.6%      | 37.3%      | 41.8%      | 10.1%      | 16.7%      |
| Full-time employee                         | 963        | 1,029      | 33.1             | 21.7       | 3.3            | 2.3        | 29.8              | 19.3       | 66.9                | 78.3       | 48.6       | 46.6       | 18.3       | 31.8       |
| Part-time employee                         | 849        | 1,469      | 41.7             | 31.8       | 4.5            | 2.5        | 37.2              | 29.3       | 58.3                | 68.2       | 45.6       | 49.6       | 12.7       | 18.7       |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 721        | 744        | 52.7             | 43.3       | 6.7            | 5.8        | 46.0              | 37.5       | 47.3                | 56.7       | 37.2       | 41.5       | 10.1       | 15.2       |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 2,759      | 2,677      | 62.7             | 53.8       | 9.5            | 7.0        | 53.2              | 46.8       | 37.4                | 46.2       | 30.9       | 35.9       | 6.5        | 10.3       |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old.

around 10 points among all types of employment status; only among full-time homemakers have the supporters of the conventional gender roles maintained a majority (53.8%). At the other end of the scale, only 20% of the wives who work full time agree with the statement, while respondents disagreeing with the statement have increased to around 80%. The degree of disagreement has also changed; those who “completely disagree” with the statement have increased from 18.3% to 31.8%, by 13.5 points.

However, the responses were significantly different when the wives are asked about their opinions on the division of labor among married couples using a different expression: “the husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife” (Table V-3). Considering the responses by age, most of the respondents with positive attitudes are found in the 30s age group. Nonetheless, the differences among the age groups are small, with only about a 5-point difference at most; however, the generational differences in the number of respondents who answered “completely agree” have increased. Generally speaking, respondents in all generations hope that their husbands would share housework and child-rearing equally as their role in the family, and this trend has become stronger than the previous survey. Looking at the responses by their employment status, the wives working full time show the strongest support for the statement: 90% agree with the statement. At the same time, 80% of the full-time homemakers also agree with the statement. Furthermore, the percentage of full-time homemakers agreeing has increased by the

greatest margin, by 7.5 points compared to the previous survey.

**(2) Social Recognition of Married Couples**

The proportion of wives responding positively to the statement, “Married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children” increases as their age increases. Conversely, the younger the respondents, the higher the proportion who disagree with the statement (Table V-4). Among all the attitudinal items asked in this survey, the responses to this statement show the biggest difference by age group, with a difference of 35.7 points between respondents in their 20s and those in their 60s. Younger generations express a strong aversion to the norm dictating that a couple must have children in order to gain social recognition, a trend that has become stronger. As a case in point, the percentage of respondents who chooses “completely disagree” as a response to this statement increases by as much as 15.3 points from the previous survey in the 20s age group, accounting for more than half of all responses in this age group (50.2%).

Before the analysis we expected that the social norm dictating that married couples should have children in order to obtain social acceptance would have the strongest support from wives with children in the infant stage, which is normally the time when parental love tends to be most conspicuously expressed. It turns out, however, that the majority of mothers with small children disagree with this norm (Table V-5). The tendency that the proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement to be higher among generations

**Table V-3 Responses to the Statement “The Husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife”, by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                                      | 6,602      | 6,207      | 76.7%            | 82.8%      | 20.1%          | 27.3%      | 56.6%             | 55.5%      | 23.3%               | 17.2%      | 21.5%      | 15.5%      | 1.8%       | 1.6%       |
| Age of wife                                |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| 29 years old and under                     | 588        | 477        | 80.4             | 83.9       | 24.1           | 38.2       | 56.3              | 45.7       | 19.5                | 16.1       | 17.5       | 14.5       | 2.0        | 1.7        |
| 30 to 39 years old                         | 1,582      | 1,539      | 77.9             | 84.7       | 23.8           | 30.7       | 54.1              | 54.0       | 22.1                | 15.3       | 20.9       | 14.3       | 1.2        | 1.0        |
| 40 to 49 years old                         | 1,994      | 1,515      | 77.8             | 83.6       | 21.2           | 29.3       | 56.6              | 54.3       | 22.3                | 16.4       | 20.6       | 14.7       | 1.7        | 1.7        |
| 50 to 59 years old                         | 1,558      | 1,730      | 73.2             | 82.4       | 16.1           | 23.1       | 57.1              | 59.3       | 26.7                | 17.6       | 24.3       | 15.6       | 2.4        | 2.0        |
| 60 to 69 years old                         | 880        | 946        | 75.7             | 78.9       | 15.1           | 20.8       | 60.6              | 58.0       | 24.4                | 21.1       | 22.2       | 19.2       | 2.2        | 1.9        |
| Employment status of wife                  |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| Full-time employee                         | 981        | 1,037      | 85.0             | 90.5       | 30.7           | 38.2       | 54.3              | 52.4       | 15.0                | 9.5        | 13.6       | 7.9        | 1.4        | 1.5        |
| Part-time employee                         | 849        | 1,470      | 80.4             | 84.6       | 21.6           | 29.5       | 58.8              | 55.1       | 19.7                | 15.4       | 18.6       | 13.8       | 1.1        | 1.6        |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 725        | 747        | 76.9             | 78.8       | 20.6           | 22.8       | 56.3              | 56.1       | 23.2                | 21.2       | 22.1       | 19.7       | 1.1        | 1.5        |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 2,741      | 2,675      | 72.1             | 79.6       | 15.1           | 22.6       | 57.0              | 56.9       | 27.9                | 20.4       | 25.5       | 18.7       | 2.4        | 1.7        |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old. The “total” refers to that of wives under 70 years old.

**Table V-4 Responses to the Statement “Married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children”, by Age of Wife**

|                        | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                        |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                        | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                  | 6,487      | 6,108      | 39.4%            | 31.4%      | 11.0%          | 7.7%       | 28.4%             | 23.6%      | 60.6%               | 68.6%      | 32.5%      | 32.4%      | 28.1%      | 36.2%      |
| 29 years old and under | 584        | 478        | 23.8             | 15.9       | 5.0            | 2.9        | 18.8              | 13.0       | 76.2                | 84.1       | 41.3       | 33.9       | 34.9       | 50.2       |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 1,578      | 1,524      | 29.6             | 21.8       | 7.0            | 2.8        | 22.6              | 19.0       | 70.5                | 78.2       | 36.5       | 34.1       | 34.0       | 44.2       |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 1,974      | 1,506      | 36.8             | 28.2       | 8.9            | 6.2        | 27.9              | 22.0       | 63.2                | 71.8       | 35.1       | 35.1       | 28.1       | 36.7       |
| 50 to 59 years old     | 1,511      | 1,682      | 48.8             | 36.1       | 14.1           | 9.2        | 34.7              | 26.9       | 51.1                | 63.9       | 26.9       | 32.9       | 24.2       | 30.9       |
| 60 to 69 years old     | 840        | 918        | 58.2             | 51.6       | 22.1           | 18.2       | 36.1              | 33.4       | 41.8                | 48.4       | 22.5       | 23.5       | 19.3       | 24.8       |

**Table V-5 Responses to the Statement “Married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children”, by Age of Youngest Child**

|                              | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                              |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                              | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                        | 6,156      | 6,032      | 38.9%            | 31.3%      | 10.6%          | 7.7%       | 28.3%             | 23.6%      | 61.2%               | 68.8%      | 32.6%      | 32.5%      | 28.6%      | 36.3%      |
| less than 1 year old         | 181        | 286        | 25.4             | 16.8       | 4.4            | 3.1        | 21.0              | 13.6       | 74.6                | 83.2       | 43.1       | 36.7       | 31.5       | 46.5       |
| 1 to less than 3 years old   | 532        | 480        | 26.9             | 19.6       | 5.5            | 1.9        | 21.4              | 17.7       | 73.1                | 80.4       | 38.9       | 37.5       | 34.2       | 42.9       |
| 3 to less than 6 years old   | 512        | 498        | 30.6             | 24.9       | 7.2            | 4.4        | 23.4              | 20.5       | 69.3                | 75.1       | 36.3       | 33.1       | 33.0       | 42.0       |
| 6 to less than 12 years old  | 922        | 753        | 34.5             | 28.8       | 7.2            | 4.8        | 27.3              | 24.0       | 65.6                | 71.2       | 37.9       | 32.4       | 27.7       | 38.8       |
| 12 to less than 18 years old | 972        | 752        | 37.4             | 28.2       | 10.0           | 6.0        | 27.4              | 22.2       | 62.7                | 71.8       | 35.0       | 38.0       | 27.7       | 33.8       |
| 18 years old and over        | 2,512      | 2,650      | 50.1             | 41.3       | 15.4           | 12.3       | 34.7              | 29.0       | 49.9                | 58.7       | 26.7       | 30.2       | 23.2       | 28.5       |
| No children                  | 525        | 613        | 20.0             | 15.5       | 5.0            | 2.3        | 15.0              | 13.2       | 80.0                | 84.5       | 33.3       | 29.2       | 46.7       | 55.3       |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old.

who have mostly finished the child-rearing period may suggest that the age of the respondent has a stronger influence on their attitudes towards this norm than whether or not she has small children. Respondents without children respond negatively to the statement: 84.5% express disagreement, and among them, 55.3% express complete disagreement.

### 3. Attitudes toward Social Norms Regarding Children

Nearly 80% of the respondents agree with the statement, “parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means they may have to make sacrifices themselves” which is almost the same as the result from the previous survey (Table V-6). Looking at the responses by age, positive responses increase by several points among the respondents in their 20s, 30s and 40s, especially those who say that they “completely agree” with the statement. Responses supporting the idea of prioritizing children increase even among wives

working full time or part time. In the same way as the trend among the younger generations, strong support (“completely agree”) increases by several points. The idea of placing the children first is accepted even among young generations and working wives.

In addition, responses to this question clearly reflect the age of the youngest child the respondent have. The lower the age of the youngest child, the greater the number of respondents agreeing with the statement. Among the respondents whose youngest child is less than 1 year old, 90% agree that children should come first, which is 7 points higher compared to the previous survey. Moreover, a slightly more than 70% of wives without children agree with the idea of giving children first priority.

The social norm that is supported by the highest proportion of respondents in the second survey is “mothers with children under 3 years old are better not employed and should concentrate on child-rearing.” In the present survey, too, the

**Table V-6 Responses to the Statement “Parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means they may have to make sacrifices themselves”, by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                                      | 6,558      | 6,188      | 77.2             | 77.8%      | 14.5%          | 18.1%      | 62.7%             | 59.7%      | 22.8                | 22.2%      | 20.7%      | 19.1%      | 2.1%       | 3.0%       |
| Age of wife                                |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| 29 years old and under                     | 589        | 479        | 83.3             | 88.7       | 24.4           | 31.1       | 58.9              | 57.6       | 16.6                | 11.3       | 14.6       | 9.8        | 2.0        | 1.5        |
| 30 to 39 years old                         | 1,581      | 1,539      | 80.5             | 84.3       | 14.5           | 21.2       | 66.0              | 63.1       | 19.4                | 15.7       | 17.6       | 14.6       | 1.8        | 1.1        |
| 40 to 49 years old                         | 1,978      | 1,513      | 72.8             | 77.7       | 11.4           | 15.4       | 61.4              | 62.3       | 27.1                | 22.3       | 24.7       | 19.4       | 2.4        | 2.9        |
| 50 to 59 years old                         | 1,531      | 1,718      | 74.3             | 72.6       | 12.6           | 14.3       | 61.7              | 58.3       | 25.8                | 27.4       | 23.4       | 22.9       | 2.4        | 4.5        |
| 60 to 69 years old                         | 879        | 939        | 82.0             | 71.5       | 18.1           | 17.9       | 63.9              | 53.6       | 18.0                | 28.5       | 16.5       | 24.1       | 1.5        | 4.5        |
| Employment status of wife                  |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| Full-time employee                         | 968        | 1,022      | 73.8             | 77.1       | 11.9           | 17.5       | 61.9              | 59.6       | 26.3                | 22.9       | 24.1       | 20.1       | 2.2        | 2.8        |
| Part-time employee                         | 847        | 1,466      | 73.2             | 77.8       | 12.5           | 17.5       | 60.7              | 60.3       | 26.8                | 22.2       | 24.3       | 19.6       | 2.5        | 2.6        |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 720        | 755        | 75.5             | 71.7       | 13.3           | 14.6       | 62.2              | 57.1       | 24.5                | 28.3       | 21.7       | 23.7       | 2.8        | 4.6        |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 2,727      | 2,677      | 80.5             | 80.0       | 16.3           | 19.7       | 64.2              | 60.3       | 19.5                | 20.0       | 18.0       | 17.2       | 1.5        | 2.8        |

**Table V-7 Responses to the Statement “Parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means that they may have to make sacrifices themselves”, by Age of Youngest Child**

|                              | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                              |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                              | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                        | 6,558      | 6,188      | 77.2             | 77.8%      | 14.5%          | 18.1%      | 62.7%             | 59.7%      | 22.8                | 22.2%      | 20.7%      | 19.1%      | 2.1%       | 3.0%       |
| Age of the youngest child    |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| less than 1 year old         | 183        | 291        | 83.0             | 90.0       | 28.4           | 33.0       | 54.6              | 57.0       | 16.9                | 10.0       | 15.8       | 8.6        | 1.1        | 1.4        |
| 1 to less than 3 years old   | 529        | 482        | 86.4             | 87.8       | 20.4           | 26.3       | 66.0              | 61.4       | 13.6                | 12.2       | 11.9       | 11.8       | 1.7        | 0.4        |
| 3 to less than 6 years old   | 516        | 500        | 81.0             | 85.4       | 16.1           | 24.2       | 64.9              | 61.2       | 19.0                | 14.6       | 16.5       | 13.6       | 2.5        | 1.0        |
| 6 to less than 12 years old  | 934        | 763        | 76.3             | 83.9       | 12.8           | 16.8       | 63.5              | 67.1       | 23.6                | 16.1       | 21.5       | 14.8       | 2.1        | 1.3        |
| 12 to less than 18 years old | 980        | 753        | 76.2             | 77.8       | 12.4           | 15.4       | 63.8              | 62.4       | 23.7                | 22.2       | 22.0       | 19.5       | 1.7        | 2.7        |
| 18 years old and over        | 2,572      | 2,707      | 76.5             | 72.9       | 13.7           | 16.2       | 62.8              | 56.7       | 23.4                | 27.1       | 21.5       | 23.0       | 1.9        | 4.1        |
| No children                  | 507        | 609        | 66.7             | 73.4       | 9.5            | 14.1       | 57.2              | 59.3       | 33.3                | 26.6       | 29.4       | 21.5       | 3.9        | 5.1        |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old. The “total” refers to that of wives under 70 years old.

percentage of respondents who expressed support was the highest (82.9%) for this item among all the attitudinal questions. It should be noted, however, that the percentage affirming this statement has decreased by 7.2 points compared to the previous survey (Table V-8). Moreover, the percentage of respondents indicating strong support by choosing “completely agree” has also decreased by more than 10 points, from 50.7% to 39.1%.

Looking at the responses by age, the majority of respondents in all generations are in favor of this idea, but the proportion has decreased significantly from the previous survey by 16 points from 85.5% to 69.5% for the respondents in their 20s, and by 10.5 points from 84.9% to 74.4% for those in their 30s. Moreover, the percentage of respondents in

their 20s indicating that they “completely agree” has also decreased dramatically, from 39.7% to 23.9%. Working and employment status is directly influenced by childbirth and child-rearing. With respect to how their attitudes vary depending on whether or not they work and on the employment status, it is found that the percentage of full-time working wives agreeing with the statement is much smaller than the full-time homemakers’ 89%. Further, the proportion has decreased by as much as 14.1% compared to the previous survey, although it still remains greater than 60% (65.4%). The results indicate that many working wives wish to concentrate on child-rearing if it were possible, but some signs of changes can also be observed.

**Table V-8 Response to the Statement “It is better for mothers with children under 3 years old not to be employed and to be concentrating on child-rearing” by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

|  | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                                      | 6,626      | 6,235      | 90.1%            | 82.9%      | 50.7%          | 39.1%      | 39.4%             | 43.8%      | 9.9%                | 17.1%      | 7.7%       | 12.6%      | 2.2%       | 4.6%       |
| Age of wife                                |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| 29 years old and under                     | 587        | 476        | 85.5%            | 69.5%      | 39.7%          | 23.9%      | 45.8%             | 45.6%      | 14.5%               | 30.5%      | 11.4%      | 22.1%      | 3.1%       | 8.4%       |
| 30 to 39 years old                         | 1,588      | 1,537      | 84.9             | 74.4       | 39.1           | 27.2       | 45.8              | 47.2       | 15.1                | 25.6       | 11.7       | 18.9       | 3.4        | 6.8        |
| 40 to 49 years old                         | 1,993      | 1,519      | 90.2             | 82.5       | 50.9           | 35.4       | 39.3              | 47.1       | 9.8                 | 17.5       | 7.2        | 12.8       | 2.6        | 4.7        |
| 50 to 59 years old                         | 1,575      | 1,743      | 94.7             | 89.2       | 59.9           | 47.4       | 34.8              | 41.7       | 5.3                 | 10.8       | 4.2        | 7.9        | 1.1        | 3.0        |
| 60 to 69 years old                         | 883        | 960        | 94.2             | 92.4       | 62.3           | 56.0       | 31.9              | 36.4       | 5.8                 | 7.6        | 5.2        | 5.8        | 0.6        | 1.8        |
| Employment status of wife                  |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| Full-time employee                         | 984        | 1,023      | 79.5%            | 65.4%      | 36.8%          | 23.7%      | 42.7%             | 41.7%      | 20.5%               | 34.6%      | 15.0%      | 22.8%      | 5.5%       | 11.8%      |
| Part-time employee                         | 850        | 1,481      | 89.6             | 83.0       | 48.7           | 40.6       | 40.9              | 42.4       | 10.3                | 17.0       | 8.1        | 13.2       | 2.2        | 3.8        |
| Self-employed and family business employee | 731        | 757        | 90.2             | 86.1       | 47.9           | 42.0       | 42.3              | 44.1       | 9.9                 | 13.9       | 7.7        | 10.8       | 2.2        | 3.0        |
| Full-time homemaker                        | 2,754      | 2,697      | 93.4             | 88.8       | 54.8           | 43.3       | 38.6              | 45.5       | 6.5                 | 11.2       | 5.4        | 8.6        | 1.1        | 2.6        |

Note: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old.

#### 4. Attitudes toward Elderly Parents

The first and second survey included the statement, “it is the best for parents in their old age to live with their sons and daughters-in-law,” while this survey included a slightly differently worded statement, “it is best for parents in old age to live with their married children.” Therefore, we cannot make a simple comparison between the current and previous surveys, and hence, we look at the responses obtained in the present survey only. Respondents are split in their opinions almost equally, with 50.4% agreeing and 49.6% disagreeing, but for either responses, the weaker opinion, as expressed as “somewhat agree” or “somewhat disagree,” are the majority. There are few differences by age.

Considering the responses by the area of residence, the percentage of respondents supporting the normative idea expressed by the statement is higher in areas with low population density than in areas with high population density. While 60% support the idea in areas with low population density, the corresponding figure is only about 45% in areas with high population density. However, the majority of the responses indicated weak opinions. Looking at the data by living arrangement in relation to their parents, the percentage of supportive responses is around 15 points higher among those currently living with parents.

Clearly different results are obtained when the idea of “parents in old age living with their married children” is tapped by the statement that “elderly parents in need of special care should be taken care of by their families” (Table V-10).

Overall, more than 60% of the respondents support this normative idea, which is at least 15 points higher than when the question is just about elderly parents living together with married children. Compared to the previous survey, however, it has dropped 9.2 points. Such a change might have occurred as a result of the enforcement of the Long-Term Care Insurance Act, which might have contributed to special care being recognized as a social issue rather than something each family should deal with individually. Looking at the responses by age, the highest proportion showing support for the idea is found among the respondents in their 20s. The percentage of supportive responses decreases with age and reaches the lowest level for the respondents in their 50s; thereafter, the trend reverses from the age of 60 and upwards. The reason why there are many people supporting the idea among younger generations and a gradual decrease in support with age might be due to differences in their attitudes toward special care, or psychological distance from having to deal with the issue of special care in their actual lives, or in other words, whether they have direct personal experiences of engaging in special care and whether such experience is close to or remote from them. Although the percentage supporting the idea has dropped more than 5 points among all generations from the previous survey, the decline is greatest among those in their 50s at 13.6%, which further supports this speculation. The trend of reverse pattern for respondents in their 60s might be due to an increased sense of reality and urgency in this age group that they might become

the ones needing special care. Nonetheless, overall, 65% agree with the statement, indicating that family members providing special care for elderly parents has not been rejected in itself.

Lastly, the results of asking who should take care of financial needs of elderly people are compared. In terms of economic support of the elderly people, since pension and similar programs have been established, those supporting the idea that families should shoulder the burden are in the minority in the first place. As shown in Table V-11, the percentage of respondents agreeing with

the idea that the family should provide economic support has decreased slightly from the previous survey. Looking at the data by respondents' age, support by 40% or more of the respondents is maintained only in the 60s age group.

**Note**

- 1) This paper is based on the report released on June 9, 2006.
- 2) Faculty of Letters, Konan University
- 3) Graduate Schools, University of Tokyo

**Table V-9 Responses to the Statement “It is best for parents in old age to live with their married children”, by Age, Area of Residence, and Living Arrangement**

|  | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|  |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total  | 6,536      | 6,137      | 50.4%            | 50.4%      | 8.2%           | 6.8%       | 42.2%             | 43.6%      | 49.6%               | 49.6%      | 38.8%      | 40.7%      | 10.8%      | 8.9%       |
| Age of wife                                      |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| 29 years old and under                           | 581        | 474        | 45.4%            | 49.2%      | 5.5%           | 6.8%       | 39.9%             | 42.4%      | 54.6%               | 50.8%      | 42.0%      | 39.2%      | 12.6%      | 11.6%      |
| 30 to 39 years old                               | 1,566      | 1,517      | 44.0             | 47.1       | 5.2            | 4.7        | 38.8              | 42.3       | 56.1                | 52.9       | 41.3       | 44.2       | 14.8       | 8.8        |
| 40 to 49 years old                               | 1,978      | 1,497      | 47.2             | 49.1       | 6.8            | 5.3        | 40.4              | 43.8       | 52.8                | 50.9       | 41.5       | 40.8       | 11.3       | 10.1       |
| 50 to 59 years old                               | 1,528      | 1,699      | 57.6             | 53.1       | 10.7           | 7.7        | 46.9              | 45.4       | 42.5                | 46.9       | 34.9       | 38.9       | 7.6        | 7.9        |
| 60 to 69 years old                               | 883        | 950        | 60.1             | 53.6       | 14.6           | 10.8       | 45.5              | 42.7       | 39.8                | 46.4       | 32.8       | 38.6       | 7.0        | 7.8        |
| Residential area                                 |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| Areas with low population density                | 2,212      | 2,296      | 59.4%            | 59.1%      | 11.7%          | 9.0%       | 47.7%             | 50.1%      | 40.6%               | 40.9%      | 33.6%      | 34.2%      | 7.0%       | 6.7%       |
| Areas with high population density               | 4,324      | 3,841      | 45.9             | 45.2       | 6.5            | 5.5        | 39.4              | 39.8       | 54.1                | 54.8       | 41.4       | 44.5       | 12.7       | 10.3       |
| Living arrangement in relation to parents        |            |            |                  |            |                |            |                   |            |                     |            |            |            |            |            |
| Living with their parents/parents-in-law         | 1,342      | 1,281      | 59.4%            | 61.5%      | 10.6%          | 9.3%       | 48.8%             | 52.2%      | 40.6%               | 38.5%      | 31.6%      | 32.4%      | 9.0%       | 6.1%       |
| Living apart from all the parents/parents-in-law | 3,840      | 3,666      | 44.5             | 46.0       | 5.4            | 5.0        | 39.1              | 41.0       | 55.5                | 54.0       | 43.2       | 44.0       | 12.3       | 9.9        |

Note 1: The figures shown here are of wives under 70 years old.

2: Responses to “It is the best for parents in their old age to live with their sons and daughters-in-law” were used for the second survey.

**Table V-10 Responses to the Statement “Elderly parents in need of special care should be taken care of by their families”, by Age of Wife**

|                        | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                        |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                        | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                  | 6,569      | 6,138      | 74.8%            | 65.6%      | 15.8%          | 10.9%      | 59.0%             | 54.7%      | 25.2%               | 34.4%      | 21.0%      | 28.2%      | 4.2%       | 6.2%       |
| 29 years old and under | 585        | 472        | 83.2             | 78.2       | 20.5           | 18.0       | 62.7              | 60.2       | 16.7                | 21.8       | 13.3       | 17.2       | 3.4        | 4.7        |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 1,569      | 1,512      | 76.6             | 68.1       | 15.0           | 10.3       | 61.6              | 57.8       | 23.4                | 31.9       | 19.0       | 26.4       | 4.4        | 5.5        |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 1,981      | 1,493      | 69.5             | 62.9       | 12.2           | 9.2        | 57.3              | 53.7       | 30.4                | 37.1       | 25.8       | 29.7       | 4.6        | 7.4        |
| 50 to 59 years old     | 1,546      | 1,706      | 74.9             | 61.3       | 16.6           | 9.0        | 58.3              | 52.2       | 25.2                | 38.7       | 21.0       | 32.2       | 4.2        | 6.6        |
| 60 to 69 years old     | 888        | 955        | 77.6             | 67.4       | 20.5           | 14.3       | 57.1              | 53.1       | 22.4                | 32.6       | 19.1       | 27.2       | 3.3        | 5.3        |

**Table V-11 Responses to the Statement “Financial support for elderly people should be provided by their families rather than by the public institutions”, by Age of Wife**

|                        | Total      |            | Agree            |            |                |            |                   |            | Disagree            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                        |            |            | Completely agree |            | Somewhat agree |            | Somewhat disagree |            | Completely disagree |            |            |            |            |            |
|                        | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey       | 3rd survey | 2nd survey     | 3rd survey | 2nd survey        | 3rd survey | 2nd survey          | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey | 2nd survey | 3rd survey |
| Total                  | 6,529      | 6,130      | 29.7%            | 28.6%      | 4.4%           | 3.5%       | 25.3%             | 25.1%      | 70.3%               | 71.4%      | 49.9%      | 50.0%      | 20.4%      | 21.4%      |
| 29 years old and under | 581        | 469        | 29.0             | 26.7       | 4.6            | 3.0        | 24.4              | 23.7       | 71.0                | 73.3       | 52.2       | 51.4       | 18.8       | 22.0       |
| 30 to 39 years old     | 1,567      | 1,507      | 23.4             | 25.7       | 2.4            | 2.6        | 21.0              | 23.1       | 76.5                | 74.3       | 52.8       | 51.4       | 23.7       | 23.0       |
| 40 to 49 years old     | 1,971      | 1,502      | 24.7             | 24.2       | 3.1            | 2.4        | 21.6              | 21.8       | 75.3                | 75.8       | 53.4       | 52.8       | 21.9       | 23.0       |
| 50 to 59 years old     | 1,533      | 1,713      | 35.9             | 29.2       | 5.6            | 3.5        | 30.3              | 25.7       | 64.1                | 70.8       | 45.5       | 50.2       | 18.6       | 20.5       |
| 60 to 69 years old     | 877        | 939        | 41.5             | 40.1       | 8.4            | 7.1        | 33.1              | 33.0       | 58.5                | 59.9       | 42.9       | 42.2       | 15.6       | 17.7       |