

Parent-Adult Child Relationships in Japan

Hachiro NISHIOKA*

Abstract Japan is going to be a ‘super’ aged society in the 21st century. One of the biggest questions facing Japan is how a family can support its elderly members and to what extent the family should be responsible for their care. The purpose of this paper, which represents part of the effort to respond to and address the needs of an aged society, is to examine the current trends in mutual support and assistance between parents and their adult children. Special focus has been given to care and assistance provided by adult children to their parents. The study uses recent research data and compares it with trends in other countries.

In Japanese society, the physical space and substance of care between the generations has traditionally been more intimate than in many other western societies. In other words, care for parents has, in most cases, meant physical care by living with parents in the same house (co-residence). In this context, the paper attempts to analyze the determinants of living arrangements that form the foundation of the care and assistance provided by the child generation to the parent generation.

The study found that the determinants of parent-adult children co-residence are mainly normative factors such as the position in the sibling compositions. In fact, low-income families show higher rates of co-residence with their parents than high-income families. This suggests that greater choice is available with greater economic means.

The socialization of care provision is being promoted with the introduction of the Long-Term Care Insurance System in April 2000. If co-residence with parents is determined by economic factors as well as normative factors, and co-residence is indispensable in providing care to old parents, the issue must be handled very carefully, paying special attention to the status of traditional family care provision.

1. Introduction

Japan is going to be a ‘super’ aged society in the 21st century. One of the biggest questions facing Japan is how a family can support its elderly members and to what extent the family should be responsible for their care. The purpose of this paper, which represents part of the effort to respond to and address the needs of an aged society, is to examine the current trends in mutual support and assistance between parents and their adult children. Special focus has been given

Paper prepared for the Fourth Welfare Policy Seminar, *Families in the New Century*, held at the United Nations University, Tokyo, March 14, 2000.

* National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

to care and assistance provided by adult children to their parents. The study uses recent research data and compares it with trends in other countries. A comparison with other countries will also be made based on recent surveys, notably, “The International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens (1st to 4th)” by the Management and Coordination Agency, and the second “National Survey on Family in Japan (NSFJ)” by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

2. International Comparison on the Living Arrangements of Aged People

The Japanese family system emphasizing the stem family will be reviewed here in comparison with other countries, referring to the result of the aforementioned international comparative surveys (1st to 4th).

The survey was conducted four times in the past targeting about 1,000 people aged 60 and over. The family types showed that single-person households and couple-only households increased in Japan, while three-generation households fell. Distinctive differences between countries can be found in the number of three-generation households. As is widely known, Korea and Japan had similar rates, and European countries resembled the USA, except for Italy which showed a little different tendency. The backgrounds for the family system itself are different. In Japan and Korea, we have a common family-orientation based on traditional Confucian ethics from China, and although changes are taking place, they are not yet so overwhelming as to replace the traditional system with new systems. According to the survey, the greater majority of co-residence families were living with a married child and his/her family in both Japan and Korea. A notable difference between the two countries was found in the ratios of those who were living with married daughters' families. In Korea, the Confucian influence on family preferring sons appeared to be more strongly reflected (Tables 1 and 2).

Opportunities to interact with children and grandchildren showed declines according to the surveys conducted in Japan over the years, as the rates of the elderly who preferred “living always with grandchildren and children” continuously decreased. In comparison with other countries, Japan and Korea stood out with high numbers of people placing importance on parent-child relations, or, furthermore on three-generation relations. It is difficult to draw a conclusion only from the responses to this question, but it may be said that the social structure of each country is reflected whether vertical relations among members of different generations are valued or horizontal relations between husband and wife are accorded a higher value. In Europe, Italy shows a different tendency (Table 3).

Table 1 Living arrangements of the elderly
—Family type—

Family type	Japan			USA			Korea			Thailand			Germany			UK			Denmark			Italy			France		
	1981	1986	1990	1981	1986	1990	1981	1990	1996	1981	1986	1996	1981	1986	1996	1981	1990	1996	1981	1986	1990	1981	1986	1996	1981	1986	1996
Single household	5.7	6.7	5.6	8.0	41.3	44.0	35.1	40.0	11.3	13.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	38.3	38.7	41.6	44.8	44.0	18.8	30.0							
Couple-only household	25.1	27.2	33.8	31.0	40.0	46.6	40.8	35.2	23.7	29.3	6.2	5.4	7.1	37.7	44.0	46.1	39.9	46.6	29.3	46.3							
Parents-and-unmarried children household	15.2	12.4	14.1	14.0	8.3	4.9	9.5	9.3	13.2	11.5	13.8	11.5	15.6	6.8	7.2	5.2	7.5	4.9	22.1	9.5							
Three-generation household	36.9	37.3	31.9	29.1	1.6	0.2	1.3	1.8	38.1	35.5	38.9	48.5	42.6	3.3	1.8	0.7	0.6	0.2	14.1	3.5							
Other household	17.0	16.3	14.6	17.8	8.8	4.4	13.3	13.7	13.7	10.1	36.4	30.1	30.0	13.9	8.3	6.6	7.1	4.4	15.7	10.6							

Source: International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens 1981, 1986, 1990, and 1996, Management and Coordination Agency.

Table 2 Member of household of the elderly (aged 60 and over)

Living with	Japan			USA			Korea			Thailand			Germany			UK			Denmark			Italy			France		
	1981	1986	1990	1981	1986	1990	1981	1990	1996	1981	1986	1996	1981	1986	1996	1981	1990	1996	1981	1986	1990	1981	1986	1996	1981	1986	1996
Spouse	65.4	69.5	77.4	69.8	47.0	49.0	49.4	46.1	52.7	53.4	53.3	51.1	49.4	53.3	45.4	50.4	49.1	46.3	51.0	56.9	55.8						
Married child (male)	41.0	40.4	33.3	32.1	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.1	54.1	39.4	37.5	25.3	23.0	26.2	4.1	2.4	0.5	0.8	0.8	11.1	3.5						
Married child (female)	9.2	10.2	8.6	9.6	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.5	4.5	3.4	3.6	37.8	38.0	36.1	3.4	2.3	1.9	0.9	1.0	11.0	5.6						
Child's spouse	34.0	34.8	26.8	27.3	1.6	0.8	1.3	1.2	52.7	36.9	35.5	49.2	37.9	42.3	3.9	1.5	0.7	0.9	0.3	21.2	3.5						
Unmarried child	18.7	16.0	16.3	17.2	9.0	10.6	11.8	12.5	31.5	18.8	13.8	33.0	30.8	32.8	8.0	8.2	5.1	7.9	5.0	25.4	10.6						
Grandchild	41.0	38.0	33.3	30.2	3.8	2.3	4.3	6.6	58.0	43.4	38.6	62.6	68.6	51.7	4.9	3.0	1.1	1.1	0.8	16.7	5.8						
Other relatives	2.9	4.8	4.3	5.9	4.1	3.7	4.6	3.6	2.3	1.4	0.7	8.2	8.2	9.3	3.8	1.8	4.2	2.6	0.7	6.6	5.3						
Others	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.8	2.3	2.1	3.7	3.7	0.8	0.5	0.1	3.4	1.1	3.5	2.4	1.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.3	1.0						
Nobody	5.7	6.7	5.6	8.0	41.3	39.6	35.1	40.0	4.3	11.3	13.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	38.3	38.7	41.6	44.8	44.0	18.8	30.0						

Source: International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens 1981, 1986, 1990, and 1996, Management and Coordination Agency.

Table 3 Awareness of the elderly
—Interaction with children and grandchildren—

Interaction	Japan		USA		Korea		Thailand		Germany		UK		Denmark		Italy		France				
	1981	1986	1990	1996	1981	1986	1990	1996	1981	1986	1996	1996	1981	1990	1986	1986	1981	1981			
Total																					
I like to live with them	59.4	58.0	53.6	54.2	6.5	2.7	3.4	4.0	83.3	61.4	54.6	58.6	65.9	61.1	15.4	13.4	6.1	3.9	3.8	33.6	11.6
I like to meet them to talk and dine sometimes	30.1	33.7	37.8	38.0	65.5	65.0	72.7	72.6	5.7	33.9	38.9	15.1	9.5	28.8	55.3	64.8	40.3	73.2	74.5	55.0	81.8
I like to talk with them once in a while	7.1	5.8	6.0	5.6	25.0	30.5	21.1	20.3	4.2	3.2	5.4	16.8	21.8	9.0	26.4	19.9	43.8	20.4	17.5	10.0	4.9
I like to live without meeting with them	1.1	1.5	0.9	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.6	6.0	1.0	0.9	2.7	1.2	1.1	1.6	0.6	1.1	1.8	0.2	1.0	0.6
Male																					
I like to live with them	56.0	55.3	46.5	54.9	8.1	2.6	3.2	4.3	—	62.0	49.5	59.8	62.5	60.0	14.5	13.2	7.8	5.0	3.9	32.6	9.8
I like to meet them to talk and dine sometimes	32.7	35.8	43.3	38.7	60.6	58.5	67.7	66.7	—	36.0	43.1	17.4	11.4	30.2	54.0	63.2	33.0	68.5	70.8	58.3	86.0
I like to talk with them once in a while	8.9	6.1	7.2	4.7	27.5	36.4	24.9	26.4	—	1.5	7.1	15.2	23.8	9.0	28.7	21.3	50.1	23.5	19.4	7.6	3.8
I like to live without meeting with them	0.8	1.3	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.7	1.0	—	0.5	0.2	2.9	0.5	0.8	1.4	1.3	1.7	2.2	0.0	0.7	0.3
Female																					
I like to live with them	62.9	60.5	59.8	53.6	5.3	2.8	3.5	3.8	—	61.0	58.4	57.6	68.5	62.1	15.9	13.5	5.0	3.0	3.8	34.2	12.9
I like to meet them to talk and dine sometimes	27.7	31.8	33.0	37.3	69.2	69.9	76.0	76.9	—	32.5	35.8	13.2	8.0	27.5	55.7	65.8	45.0	76.8	77.4	52.8	79.1
I like to talk with them once in a while	5.4	5.5	4.9	6.3	23.1	26.2	18.5	16.0	—	4.4	4.0	18.2	20.3	9.1	25.2	19.0	39.8	18.0	15.9	11.6	5.7
I like to live without meeting with them	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	—	1.3	1.4	2.6	1.7	1.3	1.7	0.2	0.6	1.5	0.3	1.2	0.8

Source: International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens 1981, 1986, 1990, and 1996, Management and Coordination Agency.

Whom do they count on for support in their daily life? (Table 4) Answers to this question were analyzed from three angles, namely “to receive care when sick,” “to talk with them when they are in trouble,” and “to ask for economic assistance.” Both in Japan and Korea, the top three in the respective categories

Table 4 Life and awareness of the elderly
—Whom do you expect to assist you when you are in trouble?—

Person expected care to provide		Japan			USA			Korea			Thailand		Germany			UK	
		1990	1996	Order	1990	1996	Order	1990	1996	Order	1996	Order	1990	1996	Order	1990	Order
Care for the sick	Male																
	Spouse	88.1	82.7	1st	65.0	57.6	1st	74.9	78.3	1st	61.6	2nd	62.0	67.4	1st	59.3	1st
	Child living together	31.8	34.4	2nd	6.9	7.4		45.2	36.9	3rd	65.4	1st	8.5	4.5		6.7	
	Child living apart	25.3	26.9	3rd	31.5	32.4	2nd	45.9	44.5	2nd	45.8	3rd	21.3	30.6	2nd	26.5	2nd
	Other relatives	9.3	8.6		16.0	15.8	3rd	4.5	3.9		13.0		14.2	9.7		9.1	3rd
	Close friends	1.9	0.9		16.3	15.3		4.2	3.5		2.4		16.1	15.3	3rd	8.3	
	Other	0.4	0.9		9.4	9.8		1.2	0.5		2.0		5.7	6.8		7.0	
	None	2.1	2.1		2.5	1.9		1.0	1.4		2.2		1.6	3.7		7.2	
	Female																
	Spouse	52.3	41.5	2nd	29.0	28.1	2nd	22.9	20.9	3rd	22.1	3rd	27.5	32.4	2nd	28.1	2nd
	Child living together	52.7	49.3	1st	11.4	12.9		54.4	51.6	2nd	70.8	1st	12.3	7.9		5.6	
	Child living apart	36.0	36.1	3rd	41.9	47.8	1st	50.9	52.6	1st	48.1	2nd	37.2	43.1	1st	42.1	1st
	Other relatives	11.6	11.4		21.0	21.7	3rd	5.5	3.9		21.5		16.7	15.0		15.9	3rd
	Close friends	3.4	2.9		15.4	20.1		7.7	6.0		4.9		18.2	20.5	3rd	11.6	
Other	2.1	3.7		16.9	13.1		2.3	0.5		3.0		7.0	8.7		8.6		
None	3.9	4.8		2.9	1.7		3.9	5.6		2.5		5.2	4.2		11.3		
Consultation	Male																
	Spouse	86.6	81.6	1st	60.1	54.0	1st	68.7	74.7	1st	61.4	1st	63.9	66.3	1st	52.4	1st
	Child living together	31.2	36.3	2nd	6.2	5.8		38.5	33.6	3rd	51.8	2nd	8.7	4.7		6.1	
	Child living apart	34.8	33.5	3rd	43.1	39.8	2nd	42.4	52.1	2nd	37.6	3rd	24.6	35.3	2nd	34.1	2nd
	Other relatives	15.9	17.7		25.9	21.3		6.7	6.9		11.8		16.7	12.4		12.8	3rd
	Close friends	15.3	15.0		30.0	25.2	3rd	7.4	13.4		6.8		24.3	24.7	3rd	10.9	
	Other	0.8	0.6		9.4	7.4		1.0	0.0		1.0		2.5	3.4		7.6	
	None	3.4	2.1		2.5	2.9		4.2	1.2		5.0		1.1	3.2		6.5	
	Female																
	Spouse	55.5	45.6	3rd	29.4	26.3		25.1	23.2	3rd	25.1	3rd	27.9	33.1	2nd	24.5	2nd
	Child living together	50.3	47.9	1st	11.2	10.7		49.2	48.5	2nd	66.2	1st	11.7	8.2		4.3	
	Child living apart	45.4	46.2	2nd	54.5	54.6	1st	47.6	52.6	1st	39.2	2nd	37.2	45.8	1st	47.7	1st
	Other relatives	19.3	24.1		31.4	27.9	3rd	6.2	6.8		17.0		19.7	20.2		19.5	3rd
	Close friends	18.9	18.9		28.7	33.0	2nd	9.7	21.1		9.4		28.5	32.3	3rd	15.1	
Other	0.9	2.3		11.4	7.2		3.4	0.0		0.6		5.3	5.5		6.3		
None	2.3	1.8		0.5	1.0		8.0	6.7		6.0		2.7	2.4		5.1		
Economic assistance	Male																
	Spouse	54.6	51.3	1st	26.8	25.2	2nd	19.6	20.0	3rd	32.6	3rd	35.0	39.2	1st	22.4	2nd
	Child living together	35.0	37.4	2nd	4.4	4.6		39.0	34.1	2nd	52.8	1st	7.9	4.2		3.5	
	Child living apart	38.9	34.2	3rd	36.2	35.0	1st	52.4	65.0	1st	49.0	2nd	34.7	36.3	2nd	36.3	1st
	Other relatives	13.6	14.3		19.5	18.9		4.5	4.6		11.6		13.4	9.2		10.7	
	Close friends	4.0	5.1		10.8	14.9		1.7	2.8		4.6		15.6	11.1	3rd	4.1	
	Other	1.5	0.9		11.3	20.4	3rd	4.7	0.7		0.6		6.3	8.4		12.6	
	None	11.0	11.1		12.8	10.3		11.7	9.0		10.0		6.3	7.1		19.1	3rd
	Female																
	Spouse	52.9	42.9	2nd	22.7	19.3	3rd	9.0	12.6	3rd	14.7		22.0	24.2	2nd	15.6	3rd
	Child living together	49.9	44.4	1st	7.9	6.9		45.2	46.1	2nd	64.0	1st	11.4	7.1		4.5	
	Child living apart	37.5	37.3	3rd	44.0	44.6	1st	52.9	61.2	1st	47.9	2nd	36.4	41.8	1st	44.0	1st
	Other relatives	9.8	10.6		24.3	24.6	2nd	3.5	2.6		15.1	3rd	14.1	12.7	3rd	13.9	
	Close friends	2.4	1.7		9.4	10.2		1.5	1.2		6.0		7.6	8.5		4.8	
Other	0.9	1.4		9.6	14.6		3.2	0.5		0.6		4.7	5.0		6.5		
None	5.8	9.2		8.9	8.3		13.9	11.8		8.3		10.6	9.8		19.2	2nd	

Source: International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens 1990, 1996, Management and Coordination Agency.

were “spouse,” “children with whom they live together” and “children from whom they live apart.” It is noted that while the Japanese elderly choose to depend on the children living under the same roof, the Korean elderly preferred to turn to children living apart from them for help. This result is in accordance with other studies on families in Korea. The study by Prof. Ik Ki Kim, for example, explains that the contemporary lifestyle of an extended family has only limited function in providing nursing care for sick parents.

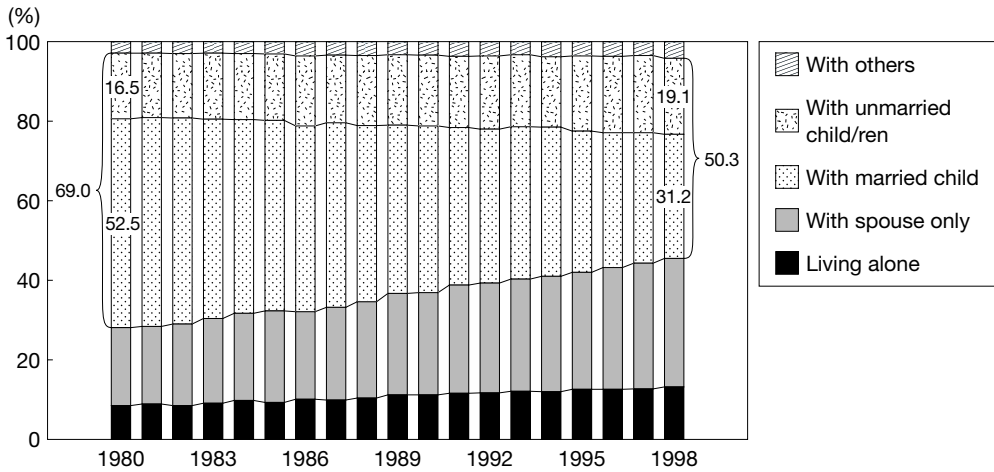
In the USA, few elderly couples live with their adult children. Naturally, they have counted on “relatives and kin other than their own children,” and “close friends,” and the rates of dependence on these people are much higher than in Korea and Japan. There are great differences between Western countries and East Asian countries in the type of human relationships that the elderly consider important, and the sphere of their daily activities. The survey questioned the elderly people’s consciousness about the family system in designated countries, and differences in behavior patterns can be inferred from the results.

3. Determinants of Parents-Adult Child Co-residence

3.1. Trends of the Living Arrangements of the Elderly

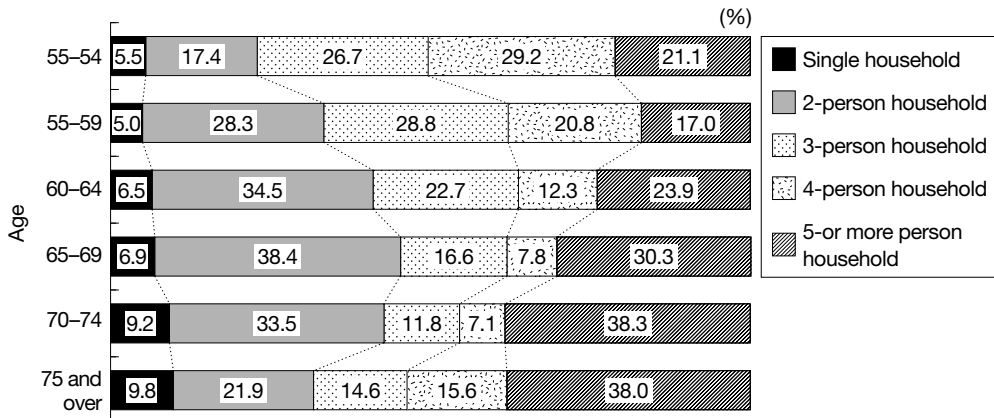
The composition of a family and the size of a household of elderly people vary in generations and depending on the culture of the society in which they live. This is closely connected with the question of socialization of livelihood support and care for the elderly. In Japan, the number of single-person households and couple-only households among the elderly has increased remarkably, while three-generation households have decreased and small-size families are on the rise (Figure 1). In the 21st century, Japan will be a society of super-aged population. According to the household projection we made, the number of households consisting of an elderly couple or a single elderly person is predicted to increase. The change in the structure of elderly households will progress further. Specifically, the results of the recent “National Survey on Family in Japan” reveal that people aged above 60 today belong to larger families with more than four members. The number is greater among older people. Among people aged 70 and above, about 40 percent live in households with more than five members, and more than half of people aged 75 and above belong to households consisting of four and more members. Nearly 70 percent of over 60 year olds belong to households with three or more members (Figure 2). Although the ratio of aged people living with their children has been declining in recent years, the lifestyles of elderly people in Japan are quite different from those of the elderly

in Europe and America. This implies that the family is playing an important role in providing support and care to the elderly in Japan.



Source: The Comprehensive Survey on Living Conditions of the People on Health and Welfare, 1980–1998, Ministry of Health and Welfare.

Figure 1 Trends of the living arrangements of the aged population in Japan (65 years old and over)

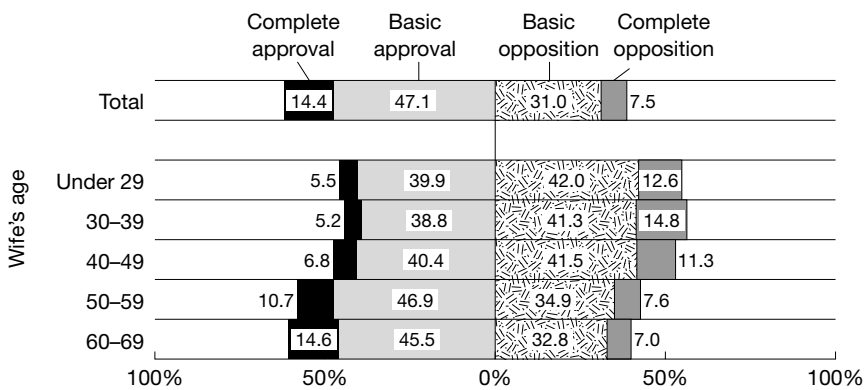


Source: National Survey on Family in Japan, 1998, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

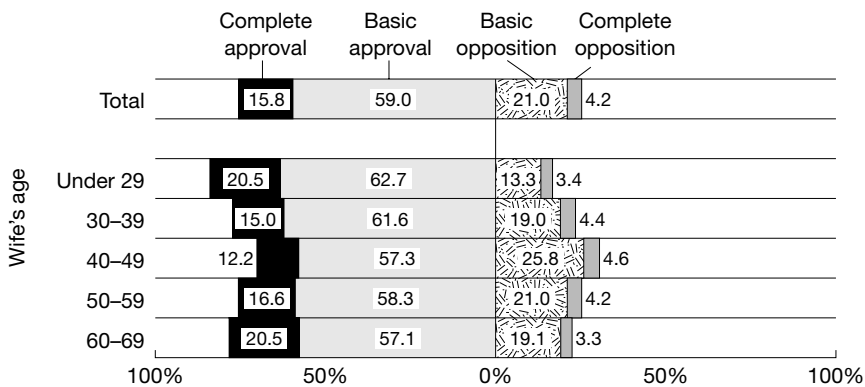
Figure 2 Elderly population by household type

3.2. Awareness of Caring for Elderly Parents

The National Survey on Family among married women contained the question, “Do you think it is better for aged parents to live with their son and his wife?” Those who replied negatively to this increased by ten points from the previous survey, but the number of those in favor or against this practice were nearly equal when including those who responded as being somewhat in favor of the practice (Figure 3). Three quarters of the respondents were affirmative on the notion that “family should give care to aged parents”.



(1) —It is better that aged parents live together with their son and his wife—



(2) —Families have to care of aged parents—

Source: National Survey on Family in Japan 1998, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

Figure 3 Opinion on family support as seen by wives

Traditionally, the need to provide support and care for elderly parents has been met exclusively by kin. But in recent years, broader-based care service systems involving kin, care providers in the private sector and public sector services have been established. However, only comparatively well-off people can afford private sector services. The rapidly increasing aged population puts pressure on the public pension and insurance systems. Therefore, it is most likely that families will continue to perform important roles in providing care for the elderly population.

In family sociology, the relationship of the elderly with their families has been studied from the viewpoint of whether they live together with their children or live separately. There is a counter-move to this that the concept should be reviewed. With the traditional concept that “the elderly should live with their family,” it is difficult to understand the emerging diversity in the ways that elderly people live. Researchers supporting the move insist on the pressing need to change the image of elderly people. Certainly, the generations set to begin their senior citizenship at present, and those who will become senior citizens in the first quarter of the 21st century have different backgrounds in their younger days in education, the sphere of their activities and variety in experience. The numbers living alone, and living as a couple, are also predicted to increase. Therefore, it is a matter of course that the situations of individual elderly people be taken into perspective. But, in Japanese society, the physical space and substance of care between the generations has traditionally been more intimate than in many other western societies. In other words, care for parents has, in most case, meant physical care by co-residence. In this context, next, the paper attempts to analyze the determinants of living arrangements.

3.3. Children Taking Care of Parents and Parents-in-law (Support from Children to Parents)

The overwhelming majority of children living with their parents help their parents with household chores, such as shopping, cooking and washing (Table 5). Comparing wives who live with their husband's parents with those who live with their own parents, the wives in the latter group help with the household work a little more. As expected, more wives talk about their troubles to their own parents than to their husband's parents. When parents are sick, the ratio of wives who extend their care to parents is a little higher in the group of wives living together with their own parents than wives living together with their husband's parents, including providing economic support for daily life and for entering hospitals or care institutions. Wives living apart either from their own or their husband's parents have more frequent communication with their own parents in all aspects than with the husband's side. Among others, a higher ratio of wives consult with

Table 5 Children taking care of parents and parents-in-law (support from children to parents)
—What kind of care do you give to your parents and parents-in-law?—

Type of living with parents/ relation/sex/age group	Total	Shopping for daily necessities	Meals and washing	Give care when sick	Listen to worries and troubles	Support livelihood expenses	Pay hospital/facility expenses	Others	Nothing in particular
Living together	Father	122	62.3%	77.1%	40.2%	12.3%	29.5%	8.2%	11.4%
	under 59	17	52.9	76.5	5.9	0.0	29.4	0.0	23.5
	60-69	56	66.1	80.4	42.9	10.7	19.6	3.6	7.1
	70 and over	49	61.2	73.5	49.0	18.4	40.8	16.3	12.2
	Mother	213	67.6	73.7	52.1	32.8	35.2	12.2	11.7
	under 59	33	75.8	78.8	30.3	24.2	30.3	6.1	12.1
	60-69	75	69.3	72.0	41.3	33.3	30.7	6.7	6.7
	70 and over	105	63.8	73.3	66.7	35.2	40.0	18.1	15.2
	Father	428	48.2	71.7	29.4	5.2	23.4	6.5	12.6
	under 59	37	37.8	73.0	5.4	0.0	16.2	0.0	5.4
60-69	174	43.7	69.0	18.4	1.7	23.0	4.6	14.4	
70 and over	217	53.5	73.7	42.4	8.8	24.9	9.2	12.4	
Mother	713	54.0	68.2	47.1	17.1	31.6	11.6	13.5	
under 59	80	60.0	72.5	17.5	11.3	30.0	0.0	7.5	
60-69	267	55.4	65.2	34.8	14.6	26.2	5.6	15.4	
70 and over	366	51.6	69.4	62.6	20.2	35.8	18.6	13.4	
Living apart	Father	2,362	19.8	26.7	20.3	10.9	5.3	1.7	10.8
	under 59	480	20.0	28.3	11.0	9.2	5.0	1.3	5.0
	60-69	1,011	21.9	29.2	16.2	8.4	5.5	1.4	13.0
	70 and over	871	17.3	22.8	30.3	14.7	5.3	2.4	13.5
	Mother	3,288	27.6	26.1	27.8	31.4	7.7	2.5	14.0
	under 59	847	33.6	32.9	17.0	28.0	8.0	1.1	10.7
	60-69	1,201	28.5	26.0	26.1	30.8	7.5	1.0	13.0
	70 and over	1,240	22.7	21.5	36.8	34.3	7.8	4.8	17.3
	Father	1,531	11.8	16.2	12.8	6.5	6.8	1.6	15.2
	under 59	258	8.9	10.5	4.3	4.3	3.5	0.4	11.6
60-69	629	11.8	17.3	7.9	5.7	5.9	1.4	13.7	
70 and over	644	12.9	17.4	21.1	8.1	8.9	2.3	18.0	
Mother	2,223	16.1	16.8	19.2	15.4	9.6	2.5	15.9	
under 59	472	16.7	15.5	7.8	13.6	5.7	0.0	12.7	
60-69	726	16.4	16.8	15.3	14.3	6.9	1.5	14.7	
70 and over	1,025	15.6	17.5	27.2	17.0	13.3	4.3	18.3	

Source: National Survey on Family in Japan 1993, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

their own parents when they have trouble. Logically speaking, children living away from their parents can extend economic support to their aged parents equally as children living with their parents. In actual fact, they give less economic support. It is easily understood that children living with their parents are intensively bearing the burden of physical, economic and mental support to them. When living separately, frequency of contact with the father is limited in all aspects, and a high number of children give no support to their fathers.

3.4. Determinants of Parent-Adult Child Co-residence

Given such a need, in Japan, living together or apart is a criterion in recognizing a group of people as a family or not. Using the second National Survey on Family in Japan, I would like to analyze what factors make adult-children and their parents decide to live together to obtain hints for future forms of living with elderly parents. Based on the data of wives' responses, the subjects of both husband's and wife's parents are analyzed, and factors for married adult children to decide to live with parents are examined. In other words, a dual-value variable, "wives (married women) live with either of their parents or not" is used as a dependent variable for the analysis (Variables containing any deficiency are excluded). As a factor leading to the decision to live together involves or possibly involves multiple variables, the logistic regression analysis method was used (The list of variables input is shown in Table 6).

First, the analysis on the backgrounds of respective husband's and wife's parents was made from the husband's parents position. Significant results were obtained from the area of living, and the type of areas. Particularly, the probability of fathers living with their children was lower in DID areas (densely populated areas) than in NON-DID areas (not densely populated areas) while in extended family areas and other areas, the probability was higher. In all areas, it was found that co-residence was supported in the areas where the stem family is considered to hold a dominant position.

When observing the data from the variable of the socio-economic position of the couple, the probability of co-residence is higher when husbands are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing, and lower in households with other kinds of occupations. By wife's employment status, the probability of co-residence was higher in households where wives are working on a full-time basis than in households maintained by non-working housewives. By wife's age, the probability rose as wives became older.

When the variables of the siblings of the couples were inputted, the probability of co-residence with parents was by far highest with the first son, and it turns lower in all the rest. In comparison, on the wife's side, women (including

Table 6 Logistic regression analysis on co-residence or separate habitation with husband's or wife's parents

	(1) Husband's father		(2) Husband's mother		(3) Wife's father		(4) Wife's mother		
	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)	
Husband's academic background									
Elementary/lower secondary school	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Upper secondary school	0.019	n.s.	1.019	—	—	—	—	—	
Special school, technical college, 2-year college	0.213	n.s.	1.237	-0.057	n.s.	0.944	0.398	n.s.	1.489
University and higher	0.123	n.s.	1.131	-0.152	n.s.	0.859	-1.231	+	0.292
				-0.245	n.s.	0.783	0.113	n.s.	1.120
									0.156
									n.s.
									2.144
									0.659
									1.169
Wife's academic background									
Elementary/lower secondary school	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Upper secondary school	-0.142	n.s.	0.867	0.158	n.s.	1.172	-0.993	+	0.371
Special school, technical college, 2-year college	-0.304	n.s.	0.738	0.073	n.s.	1.076	-1.009	+	0.365
University and higher	-0.820	n.s.	0.441	0.018	n.s.	1.018	-0.976	n.s.	0.377
									-0.595
									n.s.
									0.552
									0.506
									0.549
Husband's employment									
Self-employed; agriculture, forestry and fisheries	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Self-employed; other than the above	-1.366	*	0.255	-0.812	+	0.444	0.332	n.s.	1.394
White collar	-1.736	**	0.176	-0.975	*	0.377	-0.150	n.s.	0.861
Blue collar	-1.808	**	0.164	-0.961	*	0.382	-0.211	n.s.	0.810
Others	-0.955	n.s.	0.385	-0.571	n.s.	0.565	-4.889	n.s.	0.008
									-4.760
									n.s.
									3.782
									2.982
									4.235
									0.009
Wife's working status									
No employment	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Self-employed, family business	-0.099	n.s.	0.906	0.190	n.s.	1.209	-0.591	n.s.	0.554
Part-time, temporary work	-0.353	n.s.	0.703	-0.300	n.s.	0.741	-0.021	n.s.	0.979
Full time work	0.595	**	1.814	0.386	+	1.471	0.757	*	2.132
									0.281
									n.s.
									1.325
Wife's age									
Under 29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
30-39	0.715	*	2.044	0.551	n.s.	1.735	0.953	+	2.593
40-49	1.194	**	3.300	1.054	*	2.869	0.962	n.s.	2.617
50 and over	0.972	*	2.643	0.603	n.s.	1.827	0.920	n.s.	2.510
									0.333
									n.s.
									1.395
									1.083
									1.350
Husband's siblings									
One child	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
One son and daughters	0.113	n.s.	1.120	0.131	n.s.	1.140	0.128	n.s.	1.136
First son on other composition	0.393	n.s.	1.481	0.166	n.s.	1.181	0.487	n.s.	1.628
One of sons of other composition	-1.860	**	0.156	-1.780	**	0.169	1.580	*	4.853
									0.767
									n.s.
									2.153
Wife's siblings									
One child	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
First daughter of daughters-only	0.493	n.s.	1.637	0.140	n.s.	1.150	0.065	n.s.	1.068
First daughter but not first child	0.679	+	1.972	0.565	n.s.	1.759	-1.416	**	0.243
One of daughters of other composition	0.808	*	2.244	0.655	n.s.	1.925	-2.997	**	0.050
									-2.740
									**
									0.065

(Separate habitation=0, Co-residence=1, including different houses within the same premises)

Table 6 Logistic regression analysis on co-residence or separate habitation with Husband's or Wife's Parents (continued)

	(1) Husband's father		(2) Husband's mother		(3) Wife's father		(4) Wife's mother	
	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)	b	exp.(b)
Father's employment ¹								
Self-employed; Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Self-employed; other than the above	-0.041 n.s.	0.960	-0.021 n.s.	0.979	0.192 n.s.	1.212	-0.475 n.s.	0.622
White collar	-0.215 n.s.	0.807	-0.195 n.s.	0.823	0.980 *	2.665	0.097 n.s.	1.102
Blue collar	-0.193 n.s.	0.825	-0.114 n.s.	0.892	0.752 n.s.	2.122	-0.096 n.s.	0.909
Others	-0.087 n.s.	0.917	0.194 n.s.	1.214	1.635 *	5.130	-0.344 n.s.	0.709
Parent's age ²								
under 64	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65-69	0.031 n.s.	1.032	0.534 +	1.706	0.073 n.s.	1.076	0.081 n.s.	1.084
70-74	-0.020 n.s.	0.980	0.554 +	1.740	-0.147 n.s.	0.864	0.021 n.s.	1.021
75 and over	-0.023 n.s.	0.977	0.725 *	2.064	0.070 n.s.	1.073	0.096 n.s.	1.101
Care required or not ³								
Care not required	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Care required	0.200 n.s.	1.221	-0.197 n.s.	0.822	-0.658 n.s.	0.518	0.194 n.s.	1.214
Parent's marital status								
Married	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Widowed	0.564 *	1.758	1.086 **	2.961	-0.189 n.s.	0.828	0.769 **	2.158
Household income								
Under 5 million yen	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Between 5-8 million yen	-0.786 **	0.456	-0.086 n.s.	0.917	-1.109 **	0.330	-0.346 n.s.	0.708
8 million yen or over	-1.292 **	0.275	-0.397 +	0.673	-1.197 **	0.302	-0.188 n.s.	0.828
Housing								
Leased house	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Owned house	3.259 **	26.018	1.524 **	4.589	2.884 **	17.888	1.567 **	4.792
Area of residence								
NON-DID, Semi DID	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DID	-0.805 **	0.447	-0.661 **	0.516	-0.018 n.s.	0.982	-0.460 *	0.631
Area by family type ⁴								
Nuclear family area	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Extended family area	1.205 **	3.338	1.250 **	3.490	0.776 *	2.172	0.477 +	1.611
Areas of other family types	0.740 **	2.096	0.138 n.s.	1.147	0.081 n.s.	1.085	0.076 n.s.	1.079
Constant member	-2.632 **		-3.567 **		-5.448 **		-3.915 **	
-2 Log Likelihood	1107.399		1205.444		471.063		856.768	
Model Chi-square	638.228 **		486.727 **		218.475 **		263.474 **	
N	1606		2037		1915		2471	

Source: National Survey on Family in Japan 1998, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

1: (1) and (2) show husband's father's occupation and (3) and (4) show wife's father's occupation.

2: Age of parents to whom a dependent variable is applicable.

3: Requirement for care to parents to whom a dependent variable is applicable.

4: Area by family type: Nuclear family area (Hokkaido, Southern Kanto, Keihanshin, Southern Kyushu); extended family area (Tohoku and Hokuriku); areas of other family types (others).

** : p<.01 * : p<.05 + : p<.10 n.s. : p≥.10

the first daughter of mixed siblings) showed stronger support to co-residence, except for the eldest of girls-only siblings. The probability of co-residence with a husband's parents was found to be higher in the case of couples consisting of the first son and a second or other daughter of girls-only siblings, or combinations of the first son and a daughter of a mixed-sibling family. Both data eloquently reflect the co-residence under the stem family system.

When variables of the parents' sides were inputted, only the age of the husband's mother showed a higher probability of living together as her age advances. Other variables did not bring any significant result.

Finally, household variables were inputted. Co-residence probability was distinctively higher among those who lived in their own houses than those who lived in rented houses. Seen from the annual income of wife's parents, the result showed that the higher the income, the lower the co-residence probability. There are precedent studies indicating the fact that co-residence probability is lowered as the standards of expenditure of parents' households rise. Seen from the child's side in the survey used here, co-residence probability was higher as household income decreased. It is possible to determine that co-residence may occur as a result of economic needs of either parent's or child's side.

Next, co-residence with the wife's parents is examined. Only noteworthy facts are explained here, because other factors were found to be similar to the data of the husband's side. In the case of co-residence with the wife's parents, the variables of the husband's occupation did not affect the result. The sibling compositions of both sides were quite different from the cases of co-residence with the husband's parents. Among those who lived with their wife's parents, husbands who were born as second or other sons were significantly high. The wives who lived with their own parents were mostly the eldest of all-daughter families, and co-residence probability of women born as second or other daughters was much lower. This also suggests a continuance of the traditional stem family system.

From the findings of the survey, the highest ratio of women who start living with the husband's parents directly before or after their wedding, followed by the period of child bearing and rearing. The overwhelming majority of co-residence occurs within ten years of marriage, and the decade after marriage is the period in which couples decide whether to live with either of their parents or not. The inclination for living apart is stronger among younger generations, yet they prefer living within a short distance from their parents (Table 7).

Whether this tendency of preferring to "live apart from parents but living close by" continues until parents' deaths, or they choose to live together with the remaining parent after the other is gone, should be watched in relation to the progress of the trend of under-replacement fertility.

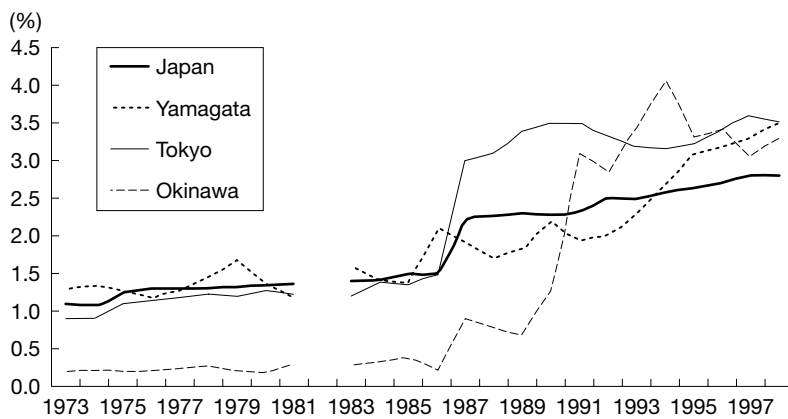
An additional question was posed in the same survey asking whether

respondents would agree on the use of different family names by husband and wife. More negative answers were given by respondents living with the husband's parents. In contrast, people living with the wife's parents gave more affirmative answers. Sibling compositions were also reflected in the answers. Higher than average votes were given by women from families with "only one girl sibling" and "girls-only siblings." Aside from the intention of the survey organizer asking this question, the consciousness to maintain the stem family seems to be expressed. The vital statistics have determined what surname is used when married. Since around 1990, husbands who have taken the wife's family name have been on the rise. More in-depth examinations must be made on this, but what can be inferred at this moment is that the adherence to the family name among men is not as strong as before, but, on the other hand, there still remains a strong attachment to keep a "family name" by families that have no son to inherit that name, a factor which should not be ignored (Figure 4).

Table 7 Time when women begin to live with parents (%)

	Before marriage	At marriage	2-9 years	10 or more years after marriage	n
Husband's parents	7.2	64.6	20.4	7.7	(802)
Wife's parents	36.8	14.9	28.0	20.3	(261)

Source: National Survey on Family in Japan 1998, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.



Source: Vital Statistics of Japan, Statistics and Information Department, Minister's Secretariat, 1973-1998, Ministry of Health and Welfare.

Figure 4 Surname used at the time of marriage

4. The Future of Living Arrangements of the Elderly

As mentioned before, the need for support and care for the elderly traditionally has been met entirely by family and relatives, but comprehensive and complex service channels have been made available in recent years involving family, the care service market and public services. The service market is used by comparatively well-off elderly people, and the public pension scheme and health/medical insurance schemes are suffering from the burden of growing expenditure. Under such circumstances, family and relatives will be expected to play an important role continuously in providing care for the elderly.

However, the scale of the network of family and relatives is predicted to shrink rapidly in the near future. People aged 80 and over now reared their children before the 1950s when fertility rates were still high, hence, they appear to have a large network. When the generations who had their children after the 1950s grow old, the scale of the network will begin to decrease. Furthermore, when generations who reared their children after the late 1970s, when fertility resumed a declining trend, reach senior citizen age, their family support network will be further reduced. Since unmarried people have increased in parallel to the further reduction of birth rates, the ratio of elderly people without children shows a sharp rise over a few decades. This tendency may be set off, to some extent, as a result of increasing cases of divorce and remarriage. A child may become associated with more than two real parents by his/her parent's remarriage. Although bonding may be weaker with foster children, it may mean the expansion of the family network from the elderly. Urgent study will be necessary to examine how much the recent divorce and remarriage trends serve to control the reduction of the family network caused by lowering fertility.

In addition to the family network, the spatial distribution of family members is an important factor to meet the needs for care for the elderly. Even if children do not live with their parents, if they live within easy reach, the potential for extending care to their parents in case of physical needs is greater. The downsizing of the family network may suggest a lower probability for having family members within easy reach. However, the typical pattern of living of parents and children during the rapid economic growth period manifested by "children migrating to large cities leaving parents behind in villages" is now disappearing as those who came to cities are now aging in them. A typical living pattern may become that "both aging parents and their children live in cities," then the distances between family members and relatives may become closer in the future. Another notable trend occurring now is the migration of aged parents to live with or nearby their family members.

The scale and spatial distribution of family networks are determined by many

demographic factors including birth, death, first marriage, divorce, remarriage and migration, which require comprehensive demographic analysis. As seen in the comparison with the USA, the family pattern in Japan is based on the stem family either with the husband's or wife's side. This will continue to be maintained in Japanese society. The degree of adherence to the pattern may be affected by future vital statistics. The survey used here revealed that the probability of co-residence with the husband's parents is higher with couples comprising the first son and the second or other daughter, or those comprising the first son and a daughter of a mixed sibling family, and that with the wife's parents, in turn, is higher with the combination of a daughter of a daughters-only family and the second or other son. The progress of further lower fertility may serve to suppress the traditional co-residence practice, or may lead to the emergence of a completely new yardstick that could overthrow the basis of the family system. Even if people maintain a latent inclination toward living together with their parents as moral norms, they may have to change the practice due to human resources (demographic factors). Continued observation is required in this regard.

Finally, the socialization of care provision promoted with the introduction of the Long-Term Care Insurance System in April 2000. If co-residence with parents is determined by economic factors as well as normative factors, and co-residence is indispensable in providing care to old parents, the issue must be handled very carefully paying special attention to the status of traditional family care provision.

References

- Aday, R. H., and Miles, L.A., 1982. "Long-term impacts of rural migration of the elderly: implications for research." *The Gerontologist* 22 (3): 331–336.
- Biggar, J. C., 1980. "Who moved among the elderly, 1965–1970." *Research on Aging* 2 (1): 73–91.
- Bonaguidi, A., and Abrami, V. T., 1992. "The metropolitan aging transition and metropolitan redistribution of the elderly in Italy." *Elderly migration and population redistribution—A comparative study*, London: Belhaven Press.
- Cribier, F., 1980. "A European assessment of aged migration." *Research on Aging* 2 (2): 255–270.
- Crown, W. H., 1988. "State economic implications of elderly interstate migration." *The Gerontologist* 28 (4): 533–539.
- Golant, S. M., 1990. "Post-1980 regional migration patterns of the U.S. elderly population." *Journal of Gerontology* 45 (4): S135–140.
- Hogan, T. D., 1987. "Determinants of the seasonal migration of the elderly to Sunbelt state." *Research on Aging* 9 (1): 115–133.
- Ik Ki Kim, Keong-Suk Park and Kojima, H., 1998. "Geographic family network of elderly parents in contemporary Korea and Japan." *Journal of Population Problems* 54 (4): 63–84.
- Lee, E. S., 1980. "Migration of the aged." *Research on Aging* 2: 131–135.
- Lichter, D. T., Fuguitt, G. V., Heaton, T. B., and Clifford, W. B., 1981. "Components of change in

- the residential concentration of the elderly population: 1950–1975.” *Journal of Gerontology* 36 (4): 480–489.
- Litwak, E., and Longino, C. F., 1987. “Migration patterns among the elderly: A Developmental perspective.” *The Gerontologist* 27 (3): 266–272.
- Longino, C. F., Wiseman, R. F., Biggar, J. C., and Flynn, C. B., 1984. “Aged metropolitan-nonmetropolitan migration streams over three census decades.” *Journal of Gerontology* 39: 721–729.
- Management and Coordination Agency. 1981, 1986, 1990, and 1996. *International Survey on Living and Consciousness of Senior Citizens*.
- Ministry of Health and Welfare. 1980–1998. *The Comprehensive Survey on Living Conditions of the People on Health and Welfare*.
- Ministry of Health and Welfare. 1973–1998. *Vital Statistics of Japan*.
- Mullins, L. C., Tucker, R., Longino, C. F., and Marshall, V., 1989. “An examination of loneliness among elderly Canadian seasonal residents in Florida.” *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 44 (2): S80–86.
- National Institute of Population and Social Security Research. 1993, 1998. *National Survey on Family in Japan*.
- Pampel, F. C., 1992. “Trends in living alone among the elderly in Europe.” *Elderly migration and population redistribution—A comparative study*, London: Belhaven Press.
- Rogers, A. and Woodward, J., 1998. “The sources of regional elderly population growth: Migration and aging-in-place.” *The Professional Geographer* 40: 450–459.
- Speare, A. J., and Meyer, J. W., 1988. “Types of elderly residential mobility and their determinants.” *Journal of Gerontology* 43 (3): S74–81.
- Tabuchi, Rokuro. 1998. “Determinants of parents-adult child co-residence: the case of Japanese elderly women.” *Journal of Population Problems* 54 (3): 3–19.