

The Eleventh Japanese National Fertility Survey in 1997
Marriage and Fertility in Present-Day Japan

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. *Overview of the Survey*

1. The purpose and history of the Survey

The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research carried out the 11th Basic Survey on Birth Trends (a national survey on marriage and birth trends) in June 1997 (the 9th year of the Heisei era). This is intended to determine the actual situations and backgrounds, which cannot be found from other public statistics, of marriage and/or fertility of married couples, and to obtain the data necessary for any related measures and future population projections. This first (prewar) Survey was carried out in 1940 (the 15th year of the Showa era), followed by the second one (postwar) in 1952 (the 27th year of the Showa era). After that, it has been taken every five years, and was originally called the Survey on Fertility. At the 10th Survey (in 1992) the name was changed to the Basic Survey on Birth Trends, the name used today. Since the 8th Survey (in 1982), a survey on unmarried persons has been taken simultaneously with the survey on married couples. This report covers the 11th Survey on married couples.

2. Survey procedures and collecting of questionnaires

This is a sampling survey of wives under the age of 50 in Japan, as of June 1 of the 9th year of Heisei (1997). The surveyed regions are 500 districts selected by systematic sampling from among the 1,048 surveyed districts (stratified random sampling from the districts of the National Census in the 7th year of Heisei (1995)) of the Basic Survey on National Life in the 9th year of Heisei (carried out by the Statistics and Information Department of Minister's Secretariat in the Ministry of Health and Welfare). Therefore, all married women residing in those districts under the age of 50 were the subjects of this survey.

This survey was carried out by distributing numbered forms, which were later sealed and collected. Of the 9,417 distributed questionnaires (the number of subjects surveyed), 8,853 questionnaires were collected, so the collection rate was 94.0%. However, 705 of the collected questionnaires that were not properly filled-out were considered invalid and excluded from the total. Therefore, the number of valid questionnaires was 8,148, for a valid collection rate of 86.5%. This report presents the results from 7,345 sets of first-marriage couples.

Table I-2-1 The number of distributed questionnaires and the number/rate of valid collected questionnaires

	Number of questionnaires (collecting rate)
Number of subjects surveyed	9,417
Number of collected questionnaires	8,853 (collection rate 94.0%)
Number of valid questionnaires	8,148 (valid collection rate 86.5%)

Table I-2-2 The number of samples classified by basic attributes

Age of wife	Number of samples	Duration of marriage	Number of samples
Undre 20	11 (0.1%)	Under 5 year	1,304 (17.7%)
20-24	215 (2.9)	5-9	1,301 (17.7)
25-29	914 (12.4)	10-14	1,304 (17.7)
30-34	1,327 (18.0)	15-19	1,350 (18.4)
35-39	1,428 (19.4)	20-24	1,436 (19.5)
40-44	1,581 (21.5)	25-29	560 (7.6)
45-49	1,878 (25.5)	30 year or more	10 (0.1)
		Not stated	89 (1.2)
Total	7,354 (100.0%)	Total	7,354 (100.0%)

II. Getting Married

1. Timing of first marriages

1) As the trend towards later marriage proceeds, the duration of premarital relationships becomes longer.

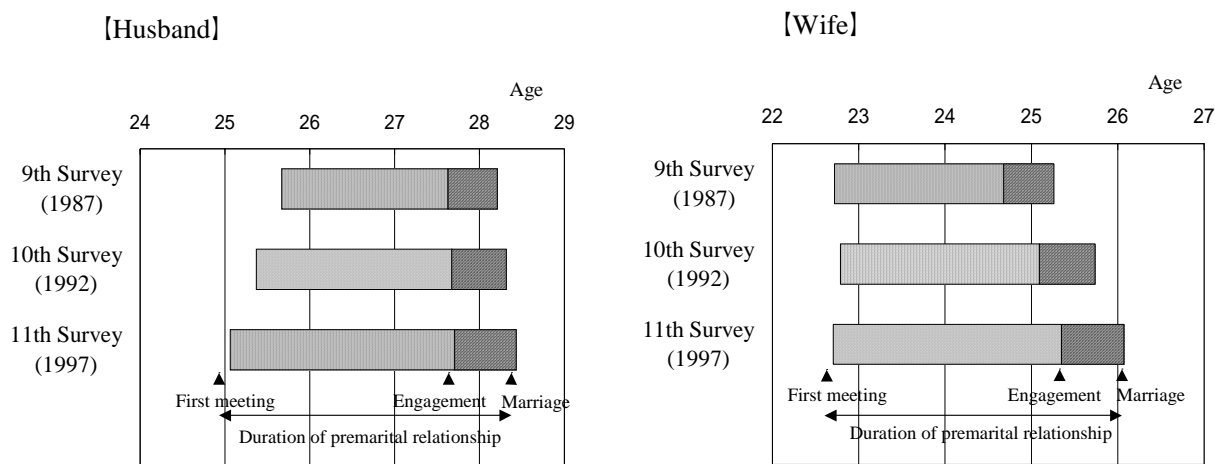
In our country, the recent remarkable trend towards later marriage has lead to an increasing unmarried rate, which in turn causes a tendency toward fewer births. In this survey, the average age at first marriage is getting higher and this tendency is becoming conspicuous, especially in recent years. However, the average age at which husband and wife met for the first time has remained quite the same, or, for males, has become slightly earlier. Therefore, the average duration of the relationship from the time they meet until they get married has become longer year by year. Compared with ten years ago, the duration is no less than 32% longer. That means that our trend towards later marriage has been ongoing in the form of extended duration of relationships.

Table II-1-1 Average age at first meeting and first marriage, and the average duration of the relationship, classified by survey

Year of survey	Husband		Wife		Average duration of relationship
	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	
9th Survey (1987)	25.7	28.2	22.7	25.3	2.5
10th Survey(1992)	25.4	28.3	22.8	25.7	2.9
11th Survey(1997)	25.1	28.4	22.7	26.1	3.4

Note: This date shows a comparison of couples who were married during the five years preceding each survey, excluding wives who did not state their processes of marriage, or who's data was inconsistent. The subjects specified their ages in years and months, and the age calculations are accurate to one month. Number of samples: the 9th Survey(1,289), the 10th Survey(1,342), the 11th Survey(1,145).

Figure II-1-1 The average duration of the relationship from the time couples meet until they age married, for first marriages, classified by survey



Note: The subjects of this survey are the same as those in Table II-1-1. The average age at engagement for the 9th, 10th and 11th Surveys are 27.6, 27.7, 27.7 for husbands and 24.7, 25.1, 25.3 for wives, respectively.

2) Timing of marriage varies greatly, depending on how they met.

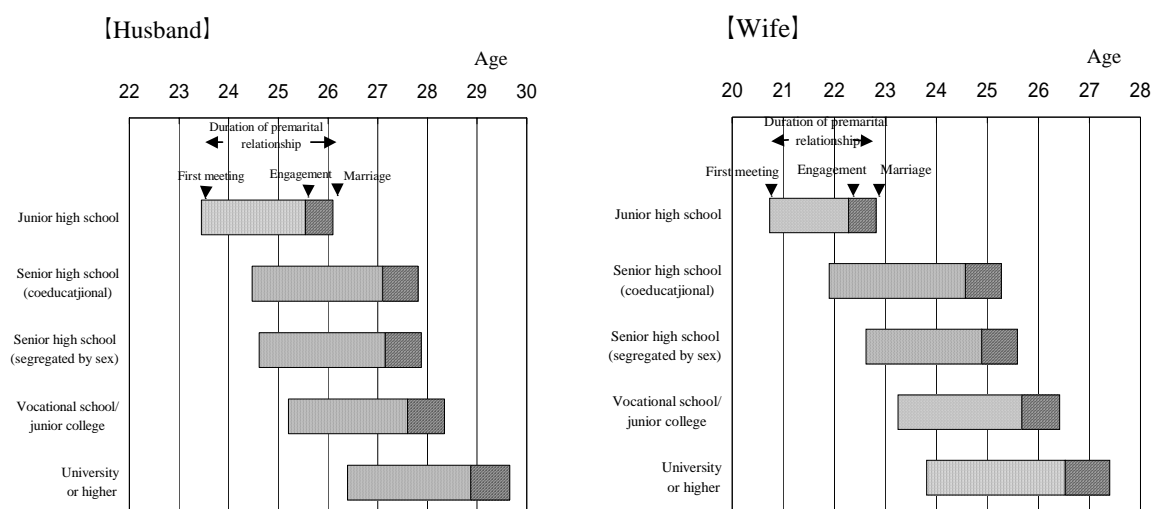
When we compare the age at marriage and the duration of premarital relationships on the basis of how they met, we see big differences. If they met at school, the first meeting occurs much earlier than that for other types of meeting and the length of relationship before marriage is at least twice as long, on average, as that of the general public (the total number). On the other hand, if they met by arranged introduction, the timing of the first meeting is the latest among all,

Table II-1-2 Average age at first meeting and first marriage, and average duration of premarital relationship, classified by type of meeting

Type of meeting	Husband		Wife		Average duration of premarital relationship
	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	
At school	18.3	25.7	17.7	25.1	7.4
Through a part-time job	22.6	26.3	20.6	24.3	3.7
While downtown or during a trip	24.4	27.8	22.1	25.4	3.3
Through friends or siblings	25.3	28.1	23.1	25.8	2.7
Through clubs or accomplishments	24.6	28.3	22.7	26.4	3.7
At the workplace or through my job	25.2	28.4	22.4	25.6	3.2
Through an arranged introduction (including matrimonial agencies)	31.3	32.3	27.1	28.1	1.0
Total	25.3	28.5	22.7	26.0	3.2

Note: This data shows a comparison of married couples who were married within the ten years prior to each survey, excluding wives who did not state their processes of marriage, or whose data was inconsistent. The average difference in age is accurate to one month. Number of samples: At school (202), Through a part-time job (101), While downtown or during a trip (109), Through friends or siblings (550), Through clubs or accomplishments (112), At the workplace or through work (725), Through an arranged introduction (339). A childhood friend/neighbor (37), Other (28), and Not stated (8) have been omitted. However, all categories are included in the total (2,211). Concerning the composition of types of first meeting, see Table II-2-1.

Figure II-1-3 Average duration of the relationship from the time couples meet until they get married, for first marriages, classified by final school background



Note: The subjects are the same as in Table II-1-3. The average age of engagement: Junior high school (usband at 25.5, wife at 22.3), Senior high school (coeducational) (27.1, 24.6), Senior high school (segregated by sex) (27.2, 24.9), Vocational school/Junior collegae (27.6, 25.7), University or higher (28.9, 26.5).

and about 6.1 years for men and about 4.4 years for women later than that of the general public. In this case, the duration of the premarital relationship is much shorter than that of the general public, no more than one third. If they met through a part-time job, the timing of the first meeting and marriage tend to be earlier. If they met at the workplace, their timing tends to be later.

3) The more education they receive, the more delay in meeting and marrying.

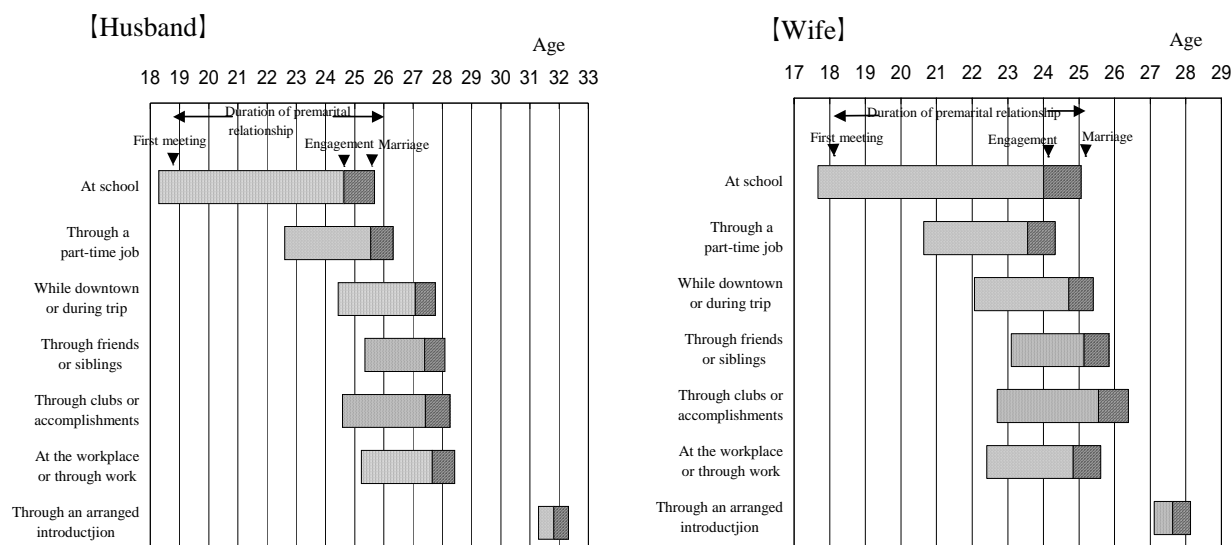
Table II-1-3 Average age at first meeting or first marriage, and average duration of premarital relationship, classified by final school background

Final school background	Husband			Wife		
	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	Average duration of premarital relationship	Average age at first meeting	Average age at first marriage	Average duration of premarital relationship
Junior high school	23.5	26.1	2.6	20.7	22.8	2.1
Senior high school (coeducational)	24.5	27.8	3.3	21.9	25.3	3.4
Senior high school (segregated by sex)	24.6	27.9	3.3	22.6	25.6	3.0
Vocational school/junior college	25.2	28.3	3.1	23.2	26.4	3.2
University or higher	26.4	29.7	3.3	23.8	27.4	3.6
Total	25.3	28.5	3.2	22.7	26.0	3.2

Note: The subjects are couples who were married during the ten years prior to each survey, excluding wives who did not state their processes of marriage, or who's data was inconsistent. The age calculations are accurate to one month. Number of samples: Junior high school (129 husbands, 72 wives), Senior high school (coeducational) (673, 672), Senior high school (segregated by sex) (247, 321), Vocational school/Junior college (255, 820), University or higher (891, 315). Other/Not stated (16, 11) have been omitted. The total is the same as in Table II-1-2.

The age at meeting/marriage, and the duration of premarital relationship (which are classified by various social/economic attributes of the individuals), vary widely depending on final school background. In other words, the more highly educated subjects show higher ages at both meeting and marriage, and the duration of the premarital relationship tends to be longer. It is clear from this study that a tendency toward higher education (increasing proportion of highly educated persons) in the younger generation causes later marriages in that same generation.

Figure II-1-2 Average age duration of the relationship from the time couples meet until they age married, for first marriages, classified by type of first meeting



Note: The subjects are the same as in Table II-1-2. The average age of engagement: At school (husband at 24.6, wife at 24.0, Through a part-time job (25.5, 23.6), While downtown or during a trip (27.1, 24.7), Through friends or siblings (27.4, 25.1), Through clubs or accomplishments (27.4, 25.5), At the workplace or through work (27.7, 24.8), Through an arranged introduction (31.8, 27.6).

4) The difference in age has been shrinking

The difference in age between husbands and wives who were married after the mid 1980s has significantly decreased. Particularly during the past five years, “older wife” couples have been rapidly increasing. The proportion of same-aged couples has also risen gradually, and recently this combination has the highest proportion among the combinations of age by age. “Older husband” couples account for 60 percent of married couples. This compares with a figure of 75 percent ten years ago. It is apparent from the average difference in age of couples that the difference in ages of married couples tends to be decreasing.

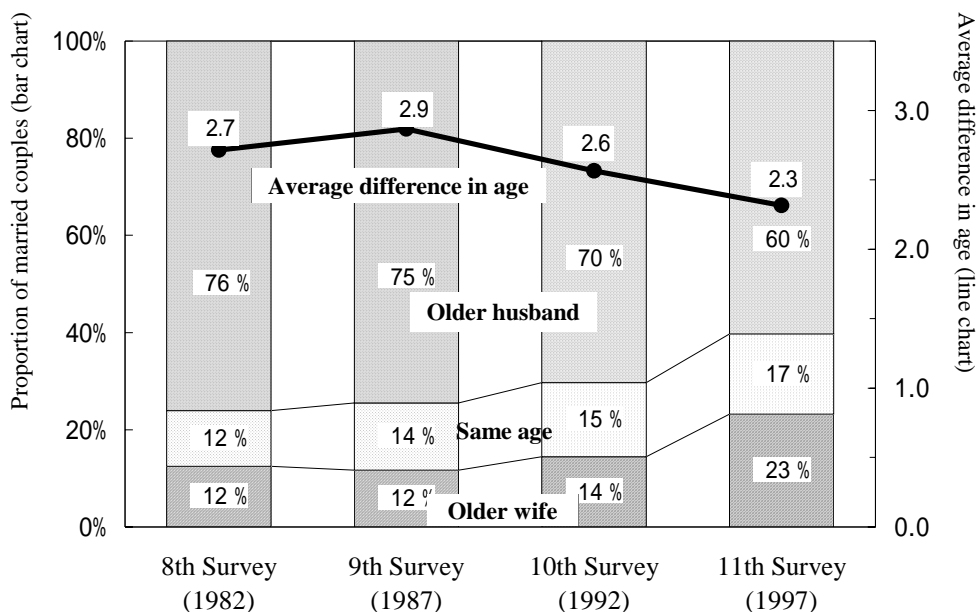
* Here, the difference in age of a married couple is based on birthdays. Therefore, “same-age” means the difference is less than one year. If the difference is one year or more, the case is included in the category of older husband or older wife. However, the average difference in age, which is shown in the bottom of the following table, is accurate to one month, and is not affected by the differences among classified items.

Table II-1-4 Proportion of difference in age, and average difference in age, classified by survey

Difference in age between husband and wife	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
Wife 3 years older or more	3.9 %	3.3 %	4.5 %	6.9 %
Wife 2 years older	2.7	2.2	3.4	4.4
Wife 1 years older	5.9	6.2	6.6	11.9
The same age	11.5	13.8	15.2	16.5
Husband 1 year older	13.3	13.3	13.8	12.8
Husband 2 year older	11.8	11.6	10.8	10.7
Husband 3 year older	12.8	11.1	10.1	9.2
Husband 4 year older	12.1	8.6	9.5	7.5
Husband 5 year older	8.1	9.2	7.8	6.3
Husband 6 year older	6.5	7.0	6.1	4.1
Husband 7 year older	4.7	5.1	3.9	3.0
Husband 8 year older	2.4	3.1	2.8	1.9
Husband 9 year older	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.0
Husband 10 year older or more	2.6	3.5	3.8	3.8
Total (number of samples)	100.0 % (1,294)	100.0 % (1,408)	100.0 % (1,520)	100.0 % (1,292)
Average difference in age	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.3

Note: This date is for couples married during the five years prior to each survey, excluding couples who didn't state their birthdays or marriage date. The average difference in age is accuratge to one month.

Figure II-1-4 Proportion of difference in age, and average difference in age, classified by survey



Note: The subjects of this survey are the same as in Table II-1-4.

2. Type of meeting

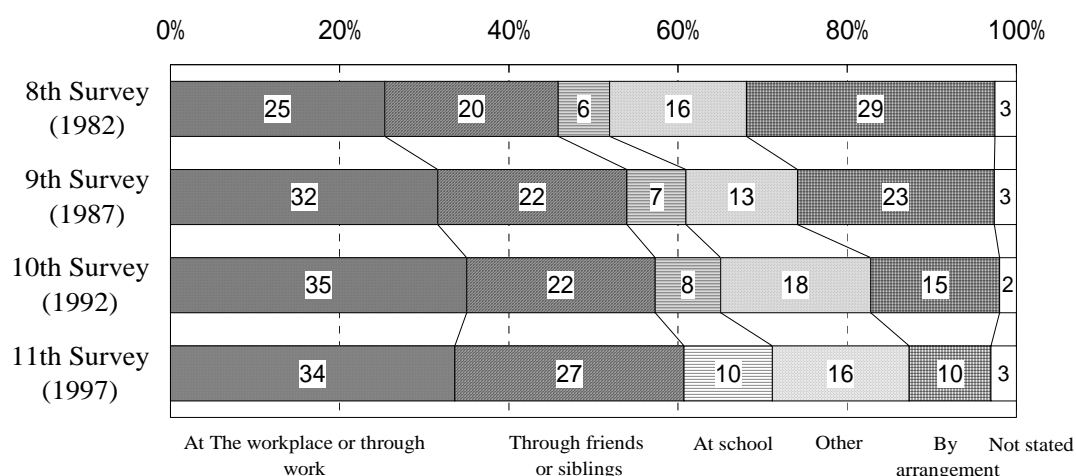
1) More couples met at the workplace or through friends, whereas marriages resulting from arranged introductions have decreased.

The most common place to meet a future spouse is “At the workplace or through work,” which accounts for about one-third, followed by “Through friends/siblings,” less than 30 percent, and “At school,” about 10 percent. In general, couples who met in everyday life make up the majority. Couples who married through an arranged introduction have been declining at every survey, and in this survey the proportion falls a little short of 10 percent (concerning “arranged marriage/love marriage, see the next section). Love marriages have increased, though its composition of type of meeting hasn’t changed much over recent surveys.

Table II-2-1 Composition of type of meeting, classified by survey

Survey year	Total	Love marriage							Marriage by arrangement	Other/not stated
		At the workplace or through work	Through friends or siblings	At school	While downtown or during a trip	Through clubs or accomplishments	Through a part-time job	A Childhood friend/neighbor		
8th Survey (1982)	100.0 %	25.3 %	20.5	6.1	8.2	5.8	-	2.2	29.4 %	2.5 %
9th Survey (1987)	100.0	31.6	22.4	7.0	6.3	5.4	-	1.5	23.3	2.6
10th Survey (1992)	100.0	35.0	22.3	7.8	6.2	5.5	4.2	1.8	15.2	2.0
11th Survey (1997)	100.0	33.6	27.1	10.4	5.2	4.9	4.6	1.5	9.6	3.0

Note: The subjects are couples who were married during the five years prior to each survey, excluding wives who didn't state their birthdays or marriage date. Marriage by arrangement means “Through an arranged introduction” or “Through matrimonial agency.” In the 8th and 9th surveys, “Through a part-time job” was excluded from the choices. Number of samples: 8th Survey (1,298), 9th (1,418), 10th (1,522), 11th (1,296).



Note: The subjects are the same as in Table II-2-1. Here, “Other” is the total of “While downtown or during a trip,” “Through clubs or accomplishments,” “Through part time jobs,” and “A childhood friend/neighbor” in Table II-2-1.

2) Love marriage has completely replaced arranged marriage during the postwar fifty years, and the form of marriage has dramatically changed.

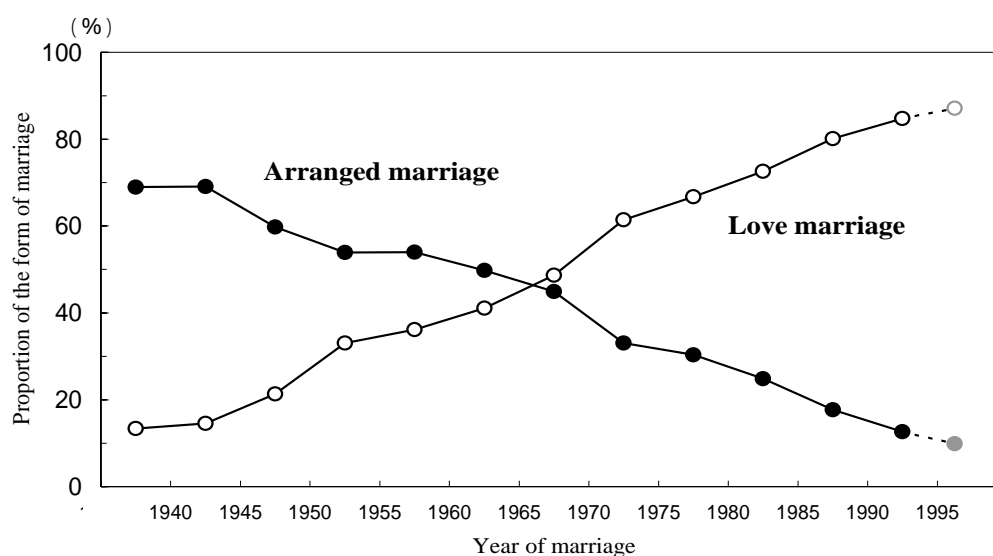
Table II-2-2 Composition of love marriage and arranged marriage classified by year of marriage

Year of marriage	Total (number of samples)	Love marriage	Arranged marriage	Other/not stated
1930-39	100.0 % (583)	13.4 %	69.0	17.7
1940-44	100.0 (556)	14.6	69.1	16.4
1945-49	100.0 (960)	21.4	59.8	18.9
1950-54	100.0 (992)	33.1	53.9	13.0
1955-59	100.0 (1,275)	36.2	54.0	9.9
1960-64	100.0 (1,578)	41.1	49.8	9.1
1965-69	100.0 (1,819)	48.7	44.9	6.4
1970-74	100.0 (2,078)	61.5	33.1	5.5
1975-79	100.0 (1,485)	66.7	30.4	2.9
1980-84	100.0 (1,519)	72.6	24.9	2.5
1985-89	100.0 (1,547)	80.2	17.7	2.1
1990-94	100.0 (1,312)	84.8	12.7	2.6
After 1995	100.0 (628)	87.1	9.9	3.0

Note: These results are based on the data of the 7th survey (for 1930-1939 to 1970-1974), the 8th Survey (for 1975-1979), the 9th Survey (for 1980-1984), the 10th Survey (for 1985-1989), and the 11th survey (for 1990-1994 and after 1995). The figures in "After 1995" are for marriages during the period from 1995 to the time of the 11th Survey conducted on June 1, 1997.

These figures are totaled again in order to compare strictly, and differ from the past reported values slightly. For terms like "arranged marriage/love marriage," see the Glossary.

Figure II-2-2 Changes in composition of love marriage and arranged marriage classified by year of marriage



Note: The subjects are the same as in Table II-2-2. "After 1995" is for the marriages up to the time of the 11th Survey (June 1, 1997).

When we study the proportions of love marriage and arranged marriage based on the results of the past five surveys, we see that after the war, the process of marriage in Japan has greatly changed. The proportion of arranged marriages, which exceeded 70 percent at the end of the war, has consistently fallen since then. During 1965-1969, the percentage of arranged marriages was superseded by that of love marriages. This trend still exists, and among recent marriages, the ratio of love marriage to arranged marriage is approximately 9:1.

III. The Fertility of Married Couples

1. The fertility of married couples

1) The completed fertility of couples remains unchanged: 2.2 persons.

The average number of births in the group of married couples who have almost no possibility of bearing more children is called the completed fertility value. Table III-1-1 compares changes in this value for couples whose duration of marriage is 15-19 years, and is based on the past Basic Surveys on Birth Trend. It is apparent from this table that the completed fertility value, which had greatly decreased after the war, increased to 2.2 persons in 1972, among the couples married for 15-19 years (couples who were married in about 1955, after the end of the baby boom). After that, it has remained fairly stable at 2.2 persons. Since the current survey also shows 2.2 persons, this same value has continued since the 1970's.

Table III-1-1 The average number of births to married couples, based on each survey (duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Survey year	Average number of birth
1th Survey (1940)	4.27 persons
2th Survey (1952)	3.50
3th Survey (1957)	3.60
4th Survey (1962)	2.83
5th Survey (1967)	2.65
6th Survey (1972)	2.20
7th Survey (1977)	2.19
8th Survey (1982)	2.23
9th Survey (1987)	2.19
10th Survey (1992)	2.21
11th Survey (1997)	2.21

Note: The subjects of each survey are first-marriage couples.

2) Eighty percent of married couples bear 2-3 children

When we compare the fertility distribution of couples married for 15-19 years, from the 7th Survey to the 11th Survey, we see the basic framework in which half of all couples have 2 children and one-fourth bear 3 children hasn't changed. However, compared with the results of surveys 7-10, the current survey reveals new features in which the proportion of childless couples has risen a little, and the proportion of couples who bear 2 children has fallen.

Table III-1-2 Changes in average fertility distribution classified by survey
(duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Survey year	None	1 Child	2 children	3children	4 children or more	Average (number of samples)	
7th Survey (1977)	3.0%	10.8	56.9	24.1	5.1	2.19	(1,426)
8th Survey (1982)	3.2	9.2	55.6	27.3	4.9	2.23	(1,421)
9th Survey (1987)	2.8	9.7	57.8	25.9	3.8	2.19	(1,760)
10th Survey (1992)	3.1	9.3	56.3	26.5	4.8	2.21	(1,850)
11th Survey (1997)	3.7	9.8	53.6	27.9	5.0	2.21	(1,334)

Note: Since the past surveys were totaled again in order to make a strict comparison, the values differ slightly from those reported in the past. This is true for the following tables as well.

3) Couples who marry later have fewer children

It has remained unchanged since the 8th Survey that wives whose age at first marriage are higher tend to have fewer births.

Table III-1-3 Average number of births by wife's age at first marriage, classified
by survey (duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Wife's age at first marriage	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
Under 19	2.50	2.46	*	*
19-20	2.34	2.38	2.51	2.35
21-22	2.27	2.28	2.25	2.34
23-24	2.25	2.15	2.27	2.21
25-26	2.22	2.15	2.15	2.24
27-28	2.09	2.03	2.20	2.15
29-30	1.89	1.85	1.81	1.78
Total	2.23	2.19	2.21	2.21
Mean age atfirst marriage	23.4	23.4	23.7	24.3

Note: Those whose age at first marriage was 31 or over were omitted because of few samples, but are included in the total. An * means that the number of samples was under 20.

4) Socioeconomic difference still affect number of children.

The number of births classified by region reveals that urban regions tend to have fewer births, and this tendency hasn't changed much recently.

Among husbands classified by occupation, the white collar husbands have the fewest births, followed by blue collar workers, then non-farm self-employed persons. Those engaged in agriculture/forestry/fishery have the most. This pattern hasn't changed since the 8th Survey.

Table III-1-4 Average number of births by socioeconomic attributes, classified by survey (duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Socioeconomic attributes	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
Classified by current residence				
Non-densely inhabited districts	2.31 (39.8%)	2.28 (40.4)	2.30 (40.6)	2.32 (38.7)
Densely inhabited districts (under 2 million)	2.17 (49.1)	2.14 (46.0)	2.19 (48.3)	2.16 (51.2)
Densely inhabited districts (over 2 million)	2.17 (11.1)	1.98 (13.6)	2.00 (11.1)	2.09 (10.1)
Classified by occupation of husband				
Agriculture/forestry/fishery	2.60 (4.2%)	2.41 (4.3)	2.73 (2.2)	2.64 (1.6)
Non-farm self-employed	2.31 (19.8)	2.46 (19.1)	2.27 (15.8)	2.27 (16.3)
Blue collar worker	2.18 (26.8)	2.18 (21.8)	2.25 (16.2)	2.26 (14.2)
White collar worker	2.17 (45.8)	2.08 (49.7)	2.18 (63.9)	2.17 (63.2)

Note: The figures in brackets show the proportion of married couples. For more information about densely inhabited districts and blue-collar worker/white collar workers, see the Glossary.

2. Birth timing

1) Tendency to finish bearing children after 4 and a half years

The couples married for 15-19 years bore the first child 1.60 years after marriage, and the second child at 2.85 years after, on average. Therefore, they finish bearing a little more than 2 children, on average, about 4 and a half years after marriage. The same tendency has been seen in the results from past surveys.

Table III-2-1 Ordre-specific average birth intervals, classified by survey (duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Birth order	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
(Average number of births)	(2.23)	(2.19)	(2.21)	(2.21)
Marriage - First child	1.73	1.54	1.52	1.60
First child - Second child	2.96	2.84	2.86	2.85
Years between marriage and second birth (average)	4.69	4.38	4.38	4.45

2) If birth intervals become longer, the number of births is reduced.

Concerning the couples married for 15-19 years, if the number of births they finish bearing becomes larger, each birth interval become shorter. Conversely, the couples whose birth intervals are longer have less children. Compared with the results of the previous survey, the total of the birth intervals classified by the completed fertility value (average period from marriage to the time they finish bearing children) has become longer, though the change in each number is slight.

Table III-2-2 Order-specific average birth intervals classified by number of births(duration of marriage: 15-19 years)

Birth order	Number of birth			
	1 Child	2 children	3children	4 children
Marriage - First child	2.83	1.59	1.24	1.15
First child - Second child	-	3.14	2.36	2.26
Second child - Third child	-	-	3.76	2.80
Third child - Fourth child	-	-	-	3.97
Total	2.83	4.73	7.36	10.18
10th Survey(1992) Total	2.83	4.50	7.23	9.68

3) Delay in fertility process of married couples

Compared with the results of these several surveys, every marriage duration of 0-4 years, 5-9 years, and 10-14 years has an decreasing average number of births. This has consistently declined since the 9th Survey, especially among couples whose duration of marriage is 0-4 years or 5-9 years. It is clear from this that the fertility process of young couples married in the late 1980's or later has been delayed.

Table III-2-3 Marriage duration-specific average number of births, classified by survey

Duration of marriage	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
0-4	0.80	0.91	0.80	0.71
5-9	1.95	1.96	1.84	1.75
10-14	2.16	2.16	2.19	2.10
15-19	2.23	2.19	2.21	2.21
20-24	2.24	2.31	2.21	2.24
25 years or more	2.32	2.36	2.31	2.19

4) Couples with no children have increased

The proportion of childless couples has increased for all durations of marriage. Even among the couples with 15-19 years who have almost finished bearing children, the proportion was 3.7%, up 0.6 points compared with the previous survey. The 9th and later Surveys reveal that the proportion of childless couples has risen gradually.

Table III-2-4 Marriage duration-specific proportion of married couples, classified by average number of births

Duration of marriage	Total (number of samples)	None	1 Child	2 children	3children	4 children	5 children or more
0-4	100.0 (1,273)	42.6%	44.7	12.1	0.6	-	-
5-9	100.0 (1,276)	10.3	21.0	53.6	13.9	1.2	-
10-14	100.0 (1,287)	5.5	11.6	54.2	25.2	3.3	0.3
15-19	100.0 (1,334)	3.7	9.8	53.6	27.9	4.6	0.4
20-24	100.0 (1,419)	2.3	8.1	57.0	28.9	3.4	0.4
25 years or more	100.0 (559)	1.3	12.2	58.3	24.0	3.9	0.4

Table III-2-5 Marriage duration-specific proportion of married couples whose number of births is none, classified by survey

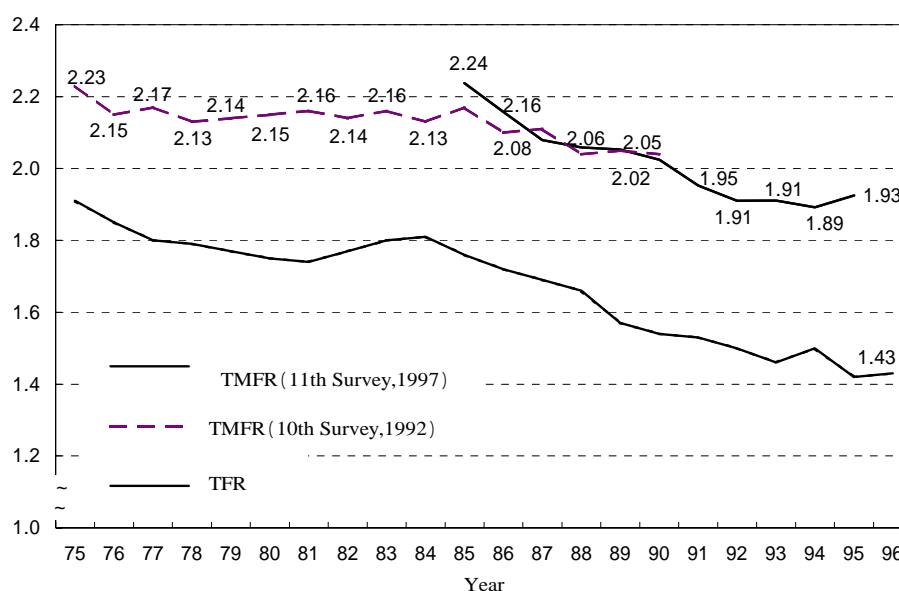
Duration of marriage	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
0-4	38.9%	32.5	38.9	42.6
5-9	4.3	4.8	8.6	10.3
10-14	2.5	3.3	4.8	5.5
15-19	3.2	2.8	3.1	3.7
20-24	2.2	2.1	2.8	2.3
25 years or more	3.8	2.2	1.9	1.3

5) The total marital fertility rate has fallen below 2.0.

This survey provides yearly “total marital fertility rates.” The index of this rate is the expected number of births per couple, which is based on the assumption that the marriage year-specific pattern of fertility rate for a certain year will continue. This index, however, is affected by not only changes in the completed fertility value, but also by changes in birth timing.

The solid line in Figure III-2-1 shows the total marital fertility rates since 1985, which are based on the data of the 11th Survey. The declining tendency since 1985 was already seen at the 10th Survey, and the current survey shows the same tendency from 1990 onward: the rates have fallen below 2.0 since 1990. This indicates a recent trend toward delayed birth timing by married couples.

Figure III-2-1 Changes in total marital fertility rates(TMFR) and total fertility rates (TFR)



Note: For further information on total marital fertility rates, see the glossary.
 Total Marital Fertility Rates is a three-year moving average for both the 10th and 11th Surveys.
 Total Fertility Rates (TFR) is from the yearly data on Vital Statistics and Information Department of the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

3. Fertility regulation

1) Wives aged 35-39 have the highest rate of practicing contraception.

Looking at the situation regarding contraceptive practice as of this survey (Table III-3-1), we found that 60.4% of married couples are practicing contraception, and if we add the 21.2% of couples who were formerly practicing it, 80% of wives have had experience with contraception. Among the age-specific wives, those in their late 30's have the highest rate of practicing contraception (68.7%) as usual. Compared with the past surveys, among the wives in their 40's, the rate of practicing contraception has tended to rise in general. On the other hand, among the wives in their 20's and 30's, the rate has fallen for each age group this time.

Table III-3-1 Contraceptive practices, classified by age of wife

Age of wife	Total (number of samples)	Contraceptive practice				Reference:currently practicing	
		Currently practicing	Currently not practicing		Not stated	7th Survey (1977)	9th Survey (1987)
			Have experience	No experience			
20-24	100.0% (215)	45.6%	30.2	18.1	6.0	50.0%	51.1
25-29	100.0 (914)	53.6	29.6	11.5	5.3	60.2	60.3
30-34	100.0 (1,327)	59.5	21.6	11.5	7.4	72.0	71.6
35-39	100.0 (1,428)	68.7	14.4	9.6	7.3	69.4	74.1
40-44	100.0 (1,581)	66.8	16.1	9.7	7.5	53.1	68.1
45-49	100.0 (1,878)	54.3	25.1	8.8	11.8	22.9	45.2
Total	100.0% (7,354)	60.4%	21.2	10.3	8.2	57.3%	64.6

Note: Those under the age of 20 were omitted because of few samples, though they (11 cases) are included in the total.

2) Condoms overwhelm the other contraception methods

The proportion of contraception methods which couples currently use, classified by method (Table III-3-2), reveals that condoms, 75.5%, overwhelm other methods, followed by coitus interruptus (withdrawal) (20.1%), and rhythm methods (8.6%). In Western countries, use of the so-called modern contraception methods, including sterilization, IUD (intra-uterine devices), and oral contraceptives (the pill), are increasing. In Japan, the total proportion of these three methods remains at 8.6%. Since the proportions of those practicing sterilization and IUD are higher among the older age groups, we see that modern contraception methods are more frequently used by the elderly.

Table III-3-3 Proportion of contraception method currently used, by age of wife

(accept multiple choice)

Contraception method	Total	Wife's current age					
		20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
Condom	75.5%	79.6%	79.8	79.7	74.4	73.7	72.5
Contraceptive film/jelly	1.2	-	1.6	2.5	0.5	1.0	0.8
Rhythm methods	8.6	6.1	10.6	7.6	11.1	7.5	7.4
IUD	2.6	-	0.8	2.3	2.7	3.6	2.9
Pill(Oral contraceptive)	0.9	1.0	0.6	1.4	0.6	0.9	1.1
Coitus interruptus(Withdrawal)	20.1	28.6	22.9	22.6	22.5	17.9	15.9
Sterilization of men	1.2	-	0.2	0.3	1.2	1.1	2.6
Sterilization of women	3.8	-	0.6	1.9	3.2	5.6	6.1
Othet	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.4	1.4	0.9	1.3
Not stated	2.3	1.0	1.4	1.1	2.5	2.0	3.7
(Reference)							
Modern contraception methods	8.6%	1.0	2.2	5.8	7.6	11.2	12.8
Nnumber of samples	4,439	98	490	789	981	1,056	1,019

Note: - indicates no appropriate samples. Rhythm methods include Ogino method, basal body temperature method, and cervical mucus method. Modern contraception methods are a combination of IUD, pills and sterilization of men/women.

Since the questions concerning contraception methods allowed multiple choices, some totals exceed 100%. Those under the age of 20 are omitted because of few samples, though they (6 cases) are included in the total.

3) About 20% of wives have experienced induced abortions.

The number of wives who have experienced an induced abortion (except those that did not indicate anything) after marriage, classified by age of wife (Table III-3-3) discloses that those in their 20's have the smallest proportion of "have experienced" and the smallest average number of abortions, compared with older wives. Classified by pregnancy order, the abortion rate is higher among the third or later pregnancies.

Table III-3-3 Induced abortions, classified by age of wife

Age of wife	Total	No experience	Have experienced						Average among all (times)	Average among those who experienced one or more abortion (times)
			Subtotal	Once	Twice	Three times	Four times	Five times or more		
20-24	142	92.3%	7.7%	6.3%	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.10	1.27
25-29	605	91.6	8.4	7.3	1.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.10	1.16
30-34	858	88.9	11.1	8.0	2.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.15	1.39
35-39	847	79.7	20.3	16.6	2.5	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.25	1.24
40-44	944	73.7	26.3	19.5	5.1	1.3	0.1	0.3	0.36	1.36
45-49	1,050	58.3	41.7	27.0	10.6	3.2	0.9	0.1	0.62	1.48
Total	4,451	77.2%	22.8%	16.4%	4.6	1.4	0.3	0.1	0.32	1.38
Reference:9th Survey(1987)										
Total	8,533	78.9%	21.1%	13.0%	6.0	1.7	0.3	0.1	0.32	1.51

Note: Those aged under 20 are omitted because of few samples, though they (5 cases) are included in the total.

Since quite a few responses regarding pregnancy/abortion were not stated (no response), we cannot say for sure, but it is likely that abortions occupy a certain position among the fertility regulation of married couples even today, since those who have experienced abortions account for 30-40% of the wives aged 40 and over. It is also found that those who have experienced one abortion tend to “repeat abortions.”

IV. Views on the Number of Children - Ideal number of children and intended number of children -

1) The gap between ideal number of children and intended number of children still exists, while the ideal number of children has somewhat decreased.

This survey covers research on how many children married couples want to have under ideal conditions (ideal number of children), and how many children they actually intend to have (intended number of children) (*). Table IV-1 shows average ideal number of children and average intended number of children, classified by years of marriage (duration of marriage) for each survey. Both numbers haven't changed much with duration of marriage, though younger couples tend to choose smaller numbers. The average intended number of children always falls short of the average ideal number of children. This survey reveals that the average ideal number of children has slightly declined.

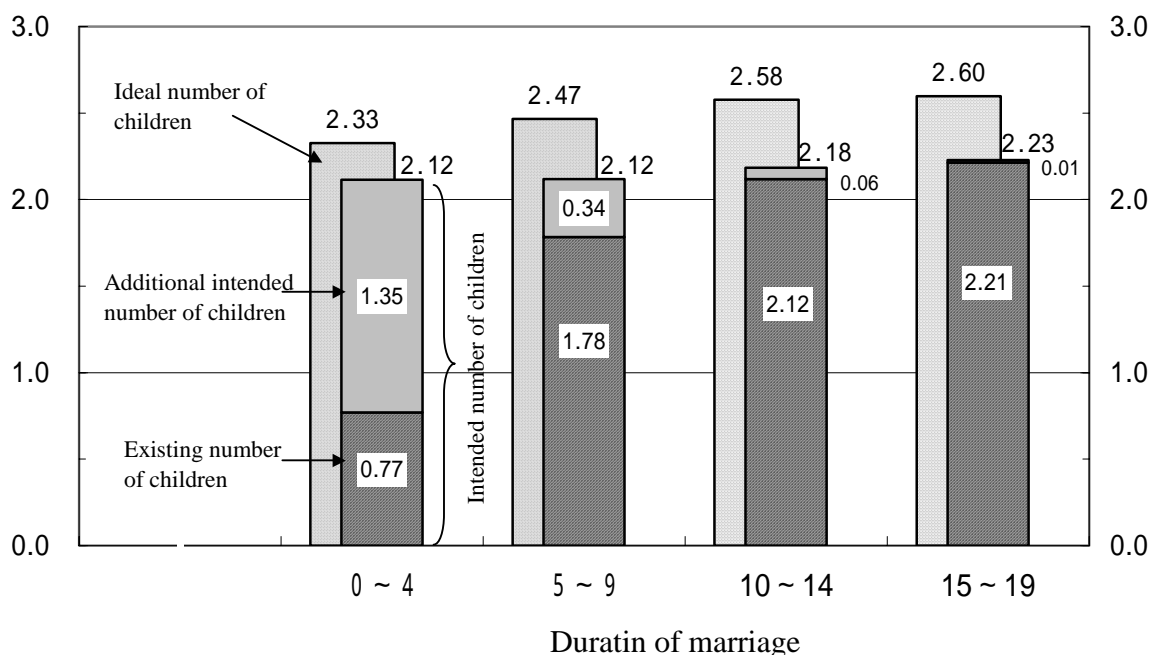
*Here, the ideal number of children is the answer to the question “How many children would be ideal for you?,” and the intended number of children is the sum of the answer to the question “How many children do you intend to bear from now on?” (the additional intended number of children) and the number of currently existing children.

Table IV-1 Marriage duration-specific average ideal/intended number of children, classified by survey

Duration of marriage	Average ideal number of children					Average intended number of children				
	7th Survey (1977)	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)	7th Survey (1977)	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
0-4 years	2.42	2.49	2.51	2.40	2.33	2.08	2.22	2.28	2.14	2.12
5-9 years	2.56	2.63	2.65	2.61	2.47	2.17	2.21	2.26	2.19	2.12
10-14 years	2.68	2.67	2.73	2.76	2.58	2.18	2.18	2.20	2.25	2.18
15-19 years	2.67	2.66	2.70	2.71	2.60	2.13	2.21	2.18	2.18	2.23
20-24 years	2.75	2.60	2.71	2.69	2.67	2.22	2.17	2.23	2.17	2.21
25 years and longer	2.86	2.70	2.77	2.70	2.58	2.46	2.26	2.25	2.19	2.14
Total	2.61	2.62	2.67	2.64	2.53	2.17	2.20	2.23	2.19	2.17
(number of samples)	(8,314)	(7,803)	(8,348)	(8,627)	(7,069)	(8,129)	(7,783)	(7,995)	(8,295)	(6,427)

Note: The first-marriage couples with wives under the age of 50 are the subjects of each survey. In order to make accurate comparisons, the results from the past surveys were re-calculated, so the values differ slightly from the past reported ones (this is also true for all the following tables). The numbers of samples in brackets exclude the subjects who did not specify ideal/intended numbers of children.

Figure IV-1 Marriage duration-specific average ideal/intended number of children
11th Survey

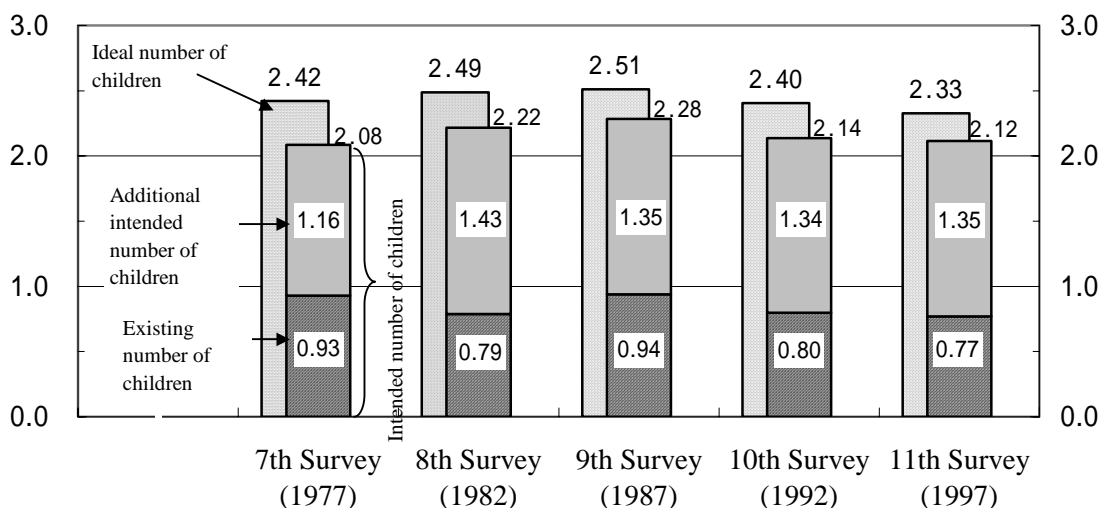


2) Both ideal and intended number of children have declined slightly among the younger couples.

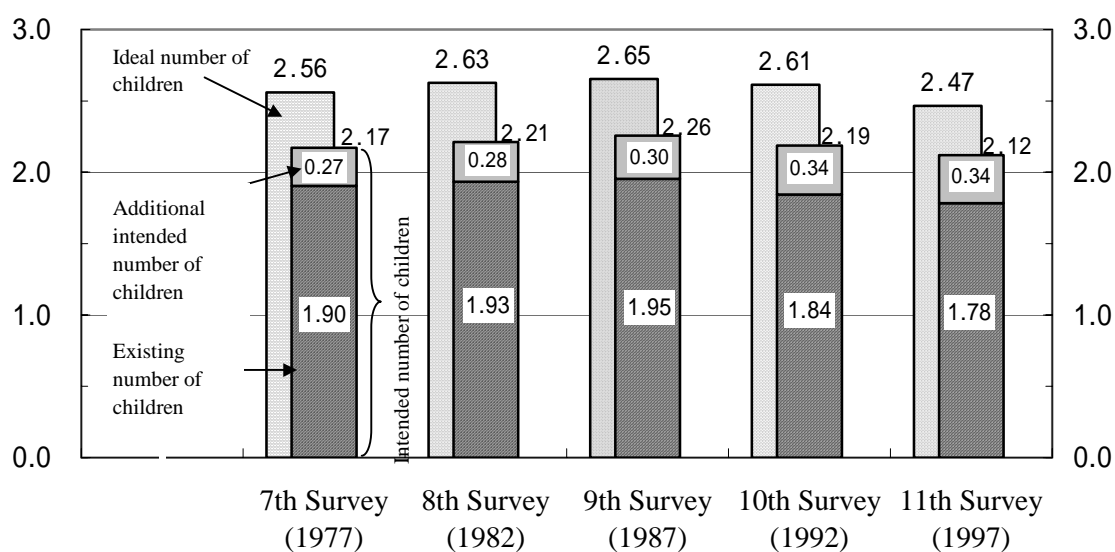
This survey resulted in the discovery that both the ideal and intended number of children have recently declined a little (Figure IV-2). The decrease is minor, though a certain tendency can be seen in this and the previous survey. This fact suggests that the number of children desired by younger couples (who plan on having children) has somewhat decreased.

Figure IV-2 Changes in average ideal/intended number of children for couples married less than 10 years

Couples whose duration of marriage is 0-4 years



Couples whose duration of marriage is 5-9 years



3) The ideal number of children for 90 percent of couples remains unchanged at 2 or 3, while those wanting 3 children have decreased and those wanting 2 have increased.

When we look at the distribution of ideal number of children for younger couples married less than 10 years, those regarding 2 or 3 children as ideal make up the majority, 87-90%, which hasn't changed in every survey, and those regarding no children, 1 child, or 4 children and more as ideal are relatively few (Table IV-2). However, in this survey, the number of couples regarding 3 children as ideal has fallen remarkably, and the number regarding 2 children as ideal has risen. As a result, the average ideal number of children among younger couples has decreased to 2.4 persons from the usual 2.5-2.6.

Table IV-2 Distribution of ideal number of children for couples married less than 10 years, classified by survey

Survey year	Ideal number of children							Average ideal number of children
	Total (number of samples)	None	1 child	2 child	3 child	4 child	5 children or more	
7th Survey (1977)	100.0% (3,728)	0.3%	3.9	49.2	40.4	5.2	1.0	2.49
8th Survey (1982)	100.0 (3,046)	1.5	2.3	44.4	43.0	7.9	1.0	2.57
9th Survey (1987)	100.0 (2,984)	1.3	2.4	41.3	46.6	7.9	0.5	2.59
10th Survey (1992)	100.0 (3,042)	1.8	3.7	43.3	44.8	5.8	0.6	2.51
11th Survey (1997)	100.0 (2,517)	2.1	4.5	51.5	37.0	3.9	1.0	2.40

Note: The subjects of each survey are the first-marriage couples with wives under the age of 50, married less than 10 years. Proportions and averages exclude those who did not specify an ideal number of children.

4) The number of couples who intend to have 3 children or more has declined.

Among younger couples, those intending to have 2 children are the majority, 64% in this survey (Table IV-3). Those intending to have less than 2 children, which means no children or 1 child, are no more than 12% in total, though those intending to have 1 child have increased a little. The couples who intend to have 3 children or more have slightly decreased to 22% in this survey. This proportion falls fairly short of that of couples who regard 3 children as ideal (37%).

Table IV-3 Distribution of intended number of children for couples married less than 10 years, classified by survey

Survey year	Intended number of children							Average intended number of children
	Total (number of samples)	None	1 child	2 child	3 child	4 child	5 children or more	
7th Survey (1977)	100.0% (3,418)	1.7%	12.4	59.4	24.4	1.8	0.3	2.13
8th Survey (1982)	100.0 (3,029)	1.9	6.7	61.4	28.2	1.7	0.1	2.21
9th Survey (1987)	100.0 (2,907)	1.2	6.9	57.9	31.6	2.1	0.2	2.27
10th Survey (1992)	100.0 (2,980)	2.4	9.1	60.1	26.5	1.7	0.1	2.16
11th Survey (1997)	100.0 (2,258)	2.3	9.7	64.3	21.8	1.8	0.2	2.12

Note: The subjects of each survey are the first-marriage couples, with wives under the age of 50, who have been married less than 10 years. Proportions and averages exclude those who did not specify an intended number of children.

5) Why the intended number falls short of the ideal number: the cost of raising children and the avoidance of elderly labor

We asked the couples whose intended number of children falls short of their ideal number why they do not plan to have the ideal number of children. This was a multiple-choice question (Table IV-4). As a whole, the three reasons: "Cost to raise children" (37%), "Cost to educate children" (34%) and "Hate to produce children at older age" (34%) were the most frequently chosen, followed by "Mental and physical burden of child care" (21%), "Small house" (13%), "Can't produce a child" (13%), and "Interference with one's work." (13%) If we look at the reasons classified by age, younger couples tend to mainly give economic reasons such as "Cost" and "Small house." The proportion of "Incompatible with one's hobbies or entertainment" is not high, but younger couples did select it more frequently. Compared with the past surveys, those giving economic reasons have increased in total.

Table IV-1 Reasons why couples do not plan to have the ideal number of children

(multiple-choice)

Age of wife (number of samples)	Reasons why the intended number of children falls short of the ideal number											
	Can't produce a child	Hate to produce children at older age	Cost to educate children	Cost to raise children in general	Can't bear mentally/physically the burden of child rearing any more	Too small of a house	Want to match the public average	Interference with one's job or business	Incompatible with one's hobbies or entertainment	Want the last child to grow up before the husband retires	Other	Not stated
Under 25 (26)	3.8%	7.7	53.8	73.1	19.2	30.8	-	7.7	7.7	7.7	15.4	7.7
25-29 (188)	3.2	8.0	50.5	70.2	17.6	23.4	1.6	13.3	12.8	6.4	12.8	5.3
30-34 (333)	7.5	20.1	46.5	53.8	32.1	21.3	1.2	14.1	9.6	12.6	17.1	3.3
35-39 (440)	12.3	40.9	34.1	40.7	25.5	14.5	0.9	18.0	8.4	13.6	12.3	6.6
40-44 (495)	15.2	47.5	31.3	28.1	19.4	9.9	1.4	13.1	3.0	11.7	10.3	7.1
45-49 (620)	18.5	33.2	22.7	20.8	13.7	7.3	1.3	8.2	1.6	6.3	6.9	18.5
Total (2,102)	13.1%	33.5	33.8	37.0	20.8	13.4	1.2	12.8	5.7	10.1	11.1	9.6

Results of past surveys (Total)

10th Survey (1992)	(3,341)	14.1%	29.6	28.3	30.1	20.6	12.4	1.1	9.2	3.4	7.7	6.3	11.9
8th Survey (1982)	(2,845)	17.7%	27.4	22.0	24.3	17.0	10.9	1.2	10.8	2.0	8.0	4.0	8.8

Note: Couples whose intended number of children falls short of their ideal number were surveyed. Because of multiple choices, the sum exceeds 100%. Since the number of items available as reasons has increased at every survey, the total sums have been rising (8th 145%, 10th 163%, 11th 193%, excluding "Not stated").

6) The tendency to prefer female children has gradually accelerated.

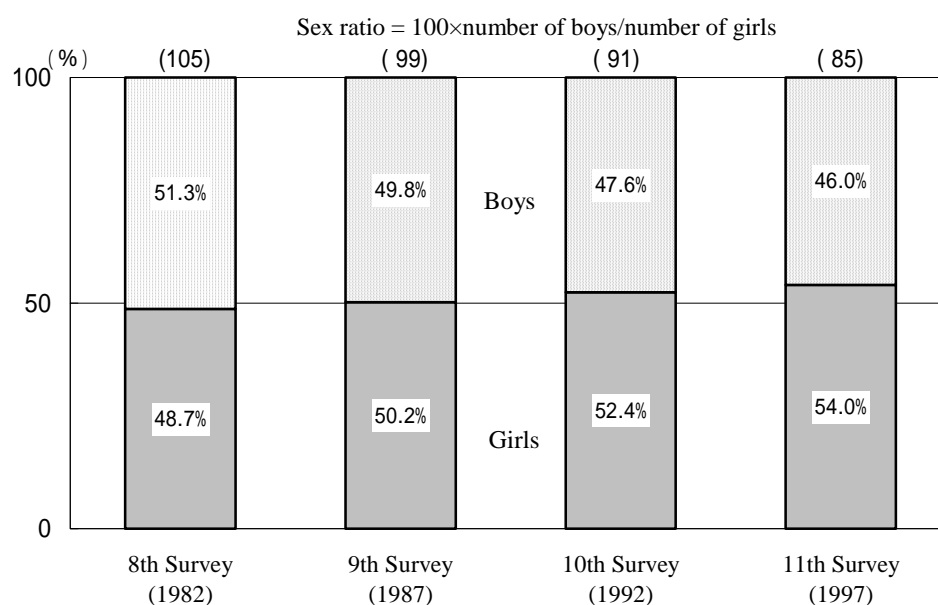
In addition to the ideal number of children, the ideal combination of boys and girls was asked. The proportion of those wanting girls has consistently increased since the 8th Survey (1982), when this question was first added. When we study the combinations of children classified by ideal number of children (Table IV-5), it is absolutely clear that girls tend to be preferred, especially if the ideal number of children is an odd number. For instance, the proportion of couples who regard 2 girls in 3 children as ideal has jumped to 59% in the 11th Survey, 23 points higher than the 36% figure in the 8th Survey. If we look at the proportion of boys to girls (sex ratio) based on the ideal combinations of children, boys were superior in the 8th Survey, but the proportion was reversed in the 9th Survey, and since then the tendency to want girls has consistently accelerated (Figure IV-3).

Table IV-5 Changes in the proportion of couples who have an ideal combination of boys and girls, classified by ideal number of children

Ideal number of children (number of samples)	Ideal combination of children	8th Survey (1982)	9th Survey (1987)	10th Survey (1992)	11th Survey (1997)
1 child (47)	1 boy/no girls	51.5 %	37.1	24.3	25.0
	no boys/1 girl	48.5	62.9	75.7	75.0
2 children (1,384)	2 boys/no girls	8.8 %	4.1	2.7	2.1
	1 boy/1 girl	82.4	85.5	84.0	84.9
	no boys/2 girls	8.9	10.4	13.3	13.0
3 children (1,372)	3 boys/no girls	0.7 %	0.5	0.3	0.4
	2 boys/1 girl	62.4	52.3	45.1	38.4
	1 boy/2 girls	36.2	46.2	52.9	58.9
	no boys/3 girls	0.7	0.7	1.6	2.3

Note: Subjects are those who specified an ideal combination of boys and girls, among the couples whose ideal number of children is 1 or more. The combinations in which the ideal number of children was 4 or more (332 cases) were omitted.

Table IV-3 Sex ratios, based on the ideal combination of children



Note: Shows sex ratios, based on the ideal combination of children, specified by couples whose ideal number of children is 1 or more. The figures in brackets in the above graph show the sex ratio for each survey (the number of boys in contrast to 100 girls).

V. Working Wife, Nurturing Environment and Couple's Fertility

1. Working wife and fertility

This survey identifies 3 main life courses (consistent working course, housewife course, and return to work course) (*) depending on if the wife was working or not at the three points (before marriage, at first childbearing, and now (at the time of the survey)) and studies the relationships with fertility.

*The definitions of each life course are as follows:

Consistent working course: worked before marriage, working now if she has no children, working at childbearing/now if she has children.

Housewife course: worked before marriage, not working now if she has no children, not working at childbearing/now if she has children.

Return to work course: worked before marriage, not working at childbearing, working now (all the subjects of this course have children)

Table -1-1 Marriage duration-specific distribution of wife's life course

11th Survey (1997)

Area	Life course or wife	Duration of marriage			
		0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
The whole of Japan	Consistent working course	36.5 %	25.9	24.0	24.3
	Non-consistent working course	57.4	67.3	68.6	66.5
	Housewife course	54.5	51.4	36.7	27.7
	Return to work course	2.9	15.9	32.0	38.8
Densely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	37.1	24.6	19.2	18.4
	Non-consistent working course	58.2	69.4	73.2	72.0
	Housewife course	55.7	55.8	42.5	34.1
	Return to work course	2.5	13.6	30.7	37.9
Sparsely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	35.2	28.6	33.5	33.5
	Non-consistent working course	55.2	62.9	59.5	57.8
	Housewife course	51.3	42.0	24.9	17.5
	Return to work course	3.9	20.9	34.5	40.3

(Reference) 10th Survey (1992)

Area	Life course or wife	Duration of marriage			
		0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
Densely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	31.2 %	21.1	16.8	23.1
	Non-consistent working course	62.4	68.3	68.6	62.5
	Housewife course	59.6	55.6	44.6	25.6
	Return to work course	2.8	12.7	24.0	36.9
Sparsely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	43.4	32.5	39.5	39.5
	Non-consistent working course	50.1	57.0	48.8	49.5
	Housewife course	46.8	39.6	21.7	13.6
	Return to work course	3.4	17.3	27.1	35.9

Note: The non-consistent working course is a combination of the housewife course and the return to work course. The samples from the 11th Survey are: the whole of Japan (4,645), densely inhabited districts (3,124), sparsely inhabited districts (1,521). The samples from the 10th Survey are: the whole of Japan (6,213), densely inhabited districts (4,052), sparsely inhabited districts (2,161). Since the past surveys were totaled again in order to make accurate comparisons, the values differ slightly from those reported in the past. This is true for all the following tables. Other life courses (343 cases for the 11th Survey, and 685 cases for the 10th Survey) have been omitted.

1) Wife's consistent working course has risen in densely inhabited districts.

The breakdown of wife life courses related to working and childbearing reveals that more than one out of three wives whose duration of marriage is 0-4 years (36.5% for all of Japan) continue working, while among those married 5 years or longer, about one out of four wives continue to work. The proportion continuing along the housewife course gradually decreases as the duration of marriage gets longer, with the return to work course increasing. Among the wives whose duration of marriage is 15-19 years and who have finished the childbearing process, the proportion following the return to work course is 38.8%, with 27.7% for housewife, and 24.3% for consistent working. If we compare these with the results of the 10th Survey (taken five years ago), the proportion for the consistent working course has increased in urban areas (densely inhabited districts), and somewhat decreased in rural areas (sparsely inhabited districts).

2) The consistent working group in densely inhabited districts has a low average number of births.

A study to determine whether the average number of births varies with the wife's life course (related to working) discovered that the number of births for the consistent working group was always lower than that for the non-consistent working group. Also, this difference in the number of births gets bigger as the duration of marriage gets shorter, so the birth timing for the consistent working group is remarkably delayed. When we study the number of births classified into urban areas (densely inhabited districts) and rural areas (sparsely inhabited districts), it is clearer in urban areas that the number of births for the consistent working group tends to be lower.

If we compare the proportions of couples who have no children, classified by the life course of the wife (Table V-1-3), the consistent working group (in urban areas) has a noticeably higher proportion.

Table -1-2 Marriage duration-specific average number of births, classified by the life course of the wife

Area	Life course of wife	Duration of marriage				10th Survey (1992)	
		0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
The whole of Japan	Consistent working course	0.34	1.40	1.85	2.18	2.10	2.18
	Non-consistent working course	0.88	1.86	2.18	2.23	2.23	2.22
	Housewife course	0.85	1.84	2.14	2.18	2.21	2.12
	Return to work course	1.34	1.90	2.23	2.26	2.26	2.27
Densely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	0.25	1.20	1.64	2.07	1.73	2.00
	Non-consistent working course	0.84	1.82	2.13	2.14	2.18	2.18
	Housewife course	0.82	1.80	2.11	2.12	2.18	2.10
	Return to work course	1.30	1.91	2.16	2.17	2.18	2.24
Sparsely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	0.60	1.75	2.09	2.28	2.34	2.34
	Non-consistent working course	0.99	1.93	2.30	2.39	2.33	2.27
	Housewife course	0.96	1.95	2.22	2.35	2.28	2.19
	Return to work course	1.42	1.89	2.36	2.41	2.37	2.31

Note: The definition of each life course is the same as in Table V-1-1. The reason the number of births for the return to work course is larger among the shorter duration of marriage groups (0-4 years, 5-9 years) is because wives in the return to work course are supposed to have at least 1 child.

Table -1-3 Proportion of couples who have no children, classified by the life course of the wife

Area	Life course of wife	Duration of marriage			
		0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
The whole of Japan	Consistent working course	72.2%	29.7	14.4	9.7
	Non-consistent working course	28.3	3.9	3.2	1.8
	Housewife course	29.8	5.1	5.9	4.2
Densely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	78.8	37.0	20.3	12.6
	Non-consistent working course	29.6	3.7	3.4	1.7
	Housewife course	30.9	4.6	5.8	3.6
Sparsely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	53.2	16.3	7.8	7.1
	Non-consistent working course	24.6	4.4	2.6	1.9
	Housewife course	26.4	6.5	6.3	6.2

Note: The definition of each life course is the same as in Table V-1-1.

3) The consistent working course in densely inhabited districts has a lower intended number of children

If we classify the number of intended births by the life course of the wife, those married for less than 5 years have the same 2.11 children for both the consistent working course and the non-consistent working course, so the fertility-plan can be seen to be at the same level. However, among those married for 5 years or more in the consistent working group, the intended number of children has fallen, and their fertility-plan is lower than that of the non-consistent

Table -1-4 Marriage duration-specific average number of intended children, classified by the life course of the wife

Area	Life course of wife	11th Survey (1997)			10th Survey (1992)		
		Duration of marriage			Duration of marriage		
		0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years
The whole of Japan	Consistent working course	2.11	1.95	2.04	2.09	2.11	2.20
	Non-consistent working course	2.11	2.18	2.24	2.16	2.23	2.27
	Housewife course	2.11	2.19	2.24	2.16	2.22	2.28
	Return to work course	2.09	2.15	2.25	2.16	2.26	2.26
Densely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	2.08	1.79	1.86	1.99	1.95	1.93
	Non-consistent working course	2.10	2.15	2.19	2.12	2.18	2.23
	Housewife course	2.10	2.16	2.22	2.12	2.17	2.25
	Return to work course	2.05	2.12	2.16	2.13	2.21	2.21
Sparsely inhabited districts	Consistent working course	2.20	2.22	2.24	2.30	2.31	2.38
	Non-consistent working course	2.14	2.25	2.36	2.32	2.34	2.35
	Housewife course	2.13	2.28	2.31	2.33	2.34	2.40
	Return to work course	2.17	2.19	2.40	2.25	2.33	2.32

Note: The definition of each life course is the same as in Table V-1-1.

working group. This tendency is more remarkable in urban areas (densely inhabited districts), where the fertility-plan for consistent working wives is fairly low. Though the same tendency was noticed in the previous survey, the decreasing fertility-plan level for consistent working wives whose duration of marriage is 5 years or more is remarkable, since the number of intended children has slightly decreased overall in this survey.

2. Nurturing environment and fertility

1) Child care assistance given by couples' parents supports working mothers.

When we asked wives who participated in child-care when the first child was in infancy (within a year after birth), the nurturing person mentioned by wives was the wife herself (100%), followed by “husband” (33.9%), “parents living with us” (19.2%), and “parents living in the neighborhood” (16.7%). It is apparent from this that children are generally nurtured by the wife and husband, or their relatives (Table V-2-1 [total]). When we relate this to the wife’s working, the proportion for “husband” is low in the case of a working wife, and instead “parents living with us” or in the neighborhood play important roles. Especially if the wife works full-time, “parents living with us” and “parents living in the neighborhood” are 44.0% and 26.0% respectively, which is notably higher when compared to non-working wives, at 12.1% and 14.4%. These figures show the importance of child-care assistance given by parents to working mothers. Working wives also have higher proportions of using other nurturing resources (such as public institutions and facilities) and using “child care leave” (14.5%).

Table -2-1 Working state of wife and nurturing, when the first child was in infancy

(multiple-choice)

Persons in charge of nurturing/institutions	Total	Non-working wives	Working wives		
			Employee	Self-employed/ Agriculture	Part-time/ Temporary
Wife	100.0%	100.0%	100.0	100.0	100.0
Husband	33.9	36.7	20.8	37.6	22.0
Parents living with us	19.2	12.1	44.0	38.1	28.6
Parents of husband	14.8	9.2	33.3	30.0	25.0
Parents of wife	4.4	2.9	10.7	8.1	3.6
Parents living in the neighborhood	16.7	14.4	26.0	17.7	28.5
Parents of husband	4.1	3.0	8.4	5.7	7.7
Parents of wife	12.6	11.4	17.6	12.0	20.8
Other relatives	2.5	1.7	4.6	5.7	4.2
Authorized day nursery	2.8	0.5	12.7	3.4	8.3
In-company day nursery	0.6	0.0	3.0	0.2	1.2
Other nursery facilities	0.9	0.3	4.1	0.7	3.0
Private home nursery/Baby sitter	1.1	0.2	4.2	1.7	7.7
Child care leave	2.8	0.7	14.5	0.2	1.8
Number of samples	5,811 (100.0%)	4,348 (74.8%)	888 (15.3)	407 (7.0)	168 (2.9)

Note: The subjects are couples with 1 child or more who specified a person in charge of nurturing when the first child was in infancy and the working state of the wife. Since the answer for person in charge of nurturing allowed multiple choices, each item is shown as the proportion against the number of samples.

2) For wives working full-time, the number of births is higher if their parents assist them.

We compared average number of births based on the working states of the wife when the first child was in infancy, with or without the child-care assistance of parents (Table V-2-2 [total]). If child-care assistance was given, those whose duration of marriage is 5 years or more tend to have a few more children, though, the difference is small. This tendency is clearer in the case of wives working as a “Company employee” (*full-time), and the number of births becomes higher if child-care assistance by parents is given.

Table -2-2 Average number of births, with/without parent's assistance, classified by working state of wife when the first child was in infancy

Working states		Child-care assistance of parents	Number of samples	Duration of marriage			
				0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
Non-working wife		Had assistance	1,069	1.25	1.98	2.29	2.29
		No assistance	3,279	1.24	1.93	2.23	2.26
Working wife	Company employee	Had assistance	592	1.23	2.03	2.24	2.35
		No assistance	296	1.29	1.92	2.09	2.31
	Self-employed/ Agriculture	Had assistance	212	1.29*	2.20	2.33	2.50
		No assistance	195	1.13*	2.25	2.24	2.60
	Part-time/ Temporary	Had assistance	89	1.22*	1.82*	2.05	2.00*
		No assistance	79	1.25*	1.95	2.46*	2.50*
Total		Had assistance	1,962	1.24	2.00	2.27	2.32
		No assistance	3,849	1.24	1.94	2.22	2.29

Note: Subjects are the same as in the previous table. * means the number of samples is under 20.

Had assistance and no assistance are defined as follows:

Had assistance: Chose “Parents living with us” or “Parents living in the neighborhood” as person in charge of nurturing the first child within a year after birth.

No assistance: Choose neither “Parents living with us” nor “Parents living in the neighborhood” as person in charge of nurturing the first child within a year after birth.

VI. The Wife's Views on Marriage/Family

1) Diversifying views on marriage/family

In order to find women's views concerning marriage, family, and relationships with the opposite sex, we asked the wives surveyed if they agree or disagree with each item a - i shown in Table V-1. The results revealed that more than three fourths of the wives agreed with such traditional views on marriage systems and children as “b. Men and Women should marry if they live together” and “g. One ought to have children if one gets married.” However, their opinions (about the couple's responsibilities, allocated by sex - f; the choice of individual or family - d,e; pre-marital sexual intercourse - c; divorce for incompatible temperaments - h) were widely divided. (For a comparison of each question with the previous survey, see the following sections).

Table I-1 The wife's views on marriage/family

Views on marriage/family	Totally agree	If anything, agree	If anything, disagree	Totally disagree	Not sated
a It is not desirable to remain single for one's entire life	12.7 %	38.2	36.7	8.1	4.2
b Men and Women should marry if they live together	26.0	49.4	16.2	5.3	3.1
c Unmarried men and women may have sexual intercourse if they love each other	23.2	46.6	20.0	6.3	3.9
d One ought to have personal goals other than just getting married and raising a family, even if one gets married	33.7	45.6	14.4	2.7	3.7
e It is natural that one should sacrifice half of one's own personality or lifestyle for the family	4.6	30.1	43.4	18.5	3.5
f Husbands should work and wives should take care of the home after marriage	4.5	28.3	39.3	24.5	3.4
g One ought to have children if one gets married	30.4	47.6	11.6	6.4	4.1
h No one should get divorced for a small reason such as incompatible temperaments	14.4	36.7	32.1	12.9	3.9
i Love and marriage are not the same	21.6	35.3	29.9	9.3	3.8

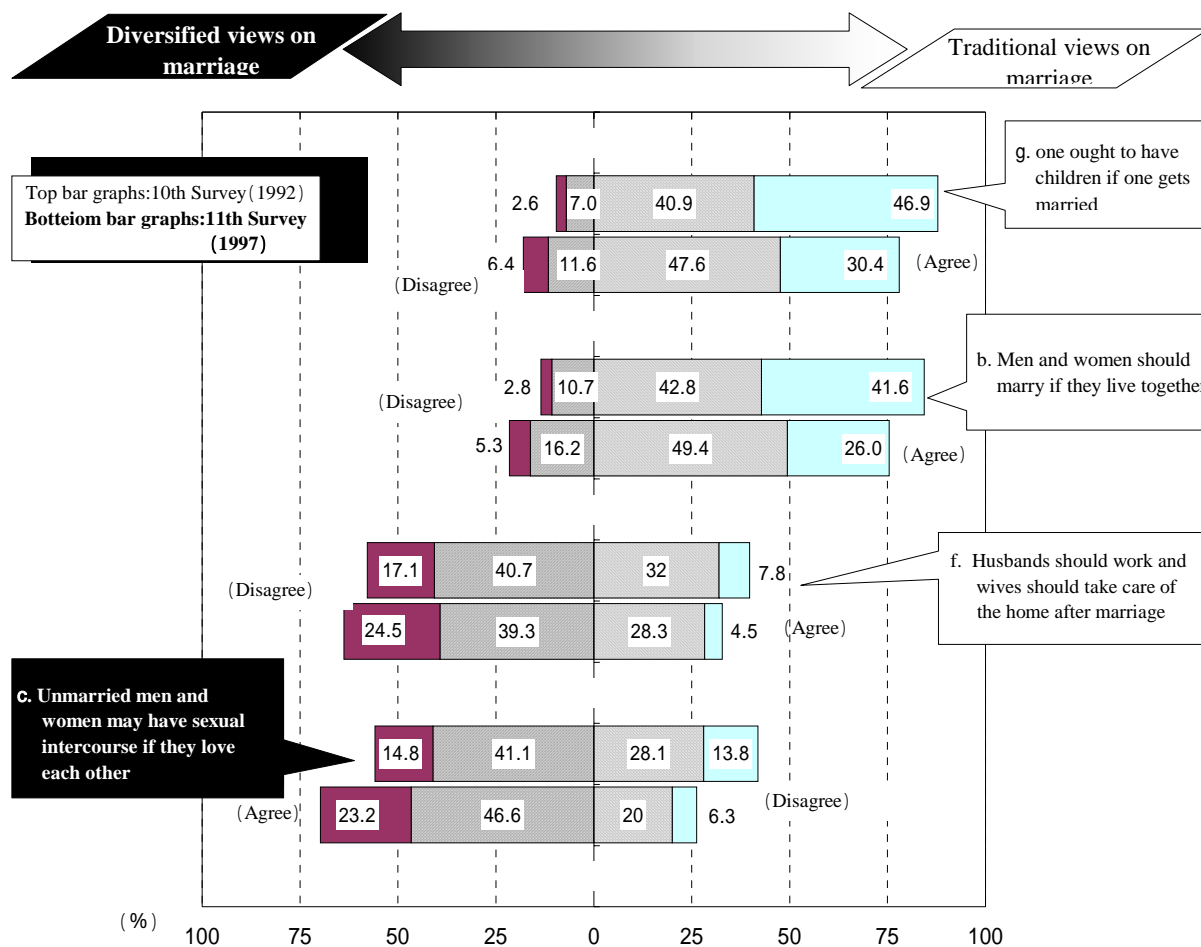
Note: The number of samples was 7,354 for each questing.

2) Tendency toward traditional views on marriage has weakened, and views on marriage have been diversifying.

Items g, b, f, and c present pros and cons concerning traditional views on marriage. We compare the current answers with the results from the 10th Survey (1992) in Figure VI-1.

Those who accept pre-martial sexual intercourse (item c), and those who object to responsibilities allocated by sex (item f) were in the majority in the 10th Survey, and this survey shows these tendencies have accelerated (accept pre-martial sexual intercourse, 69.9%, and object to the responsibilities allocated by sex, 63.8%). However, those who agree that one "ought to have children if one gets married" (item g) made up 77.9%, which is 9.8 points lower than the 87.7% of the previous survey. Those who oppose cohabitation (item b) are 75.4%, which has also decreased by 9.0 points when compared with the previous survey (84.4%). These results show the diversified views on marriage of wives who are freed from traditional standards.

Table I-1 Tendency toward diversified views on marriage



Note: "Not stated" are excluded from the figures (%). Number of samples: 10th Survey (8,844), the 11th Survey (7,354). The subjects are wives of first-marriage couples.

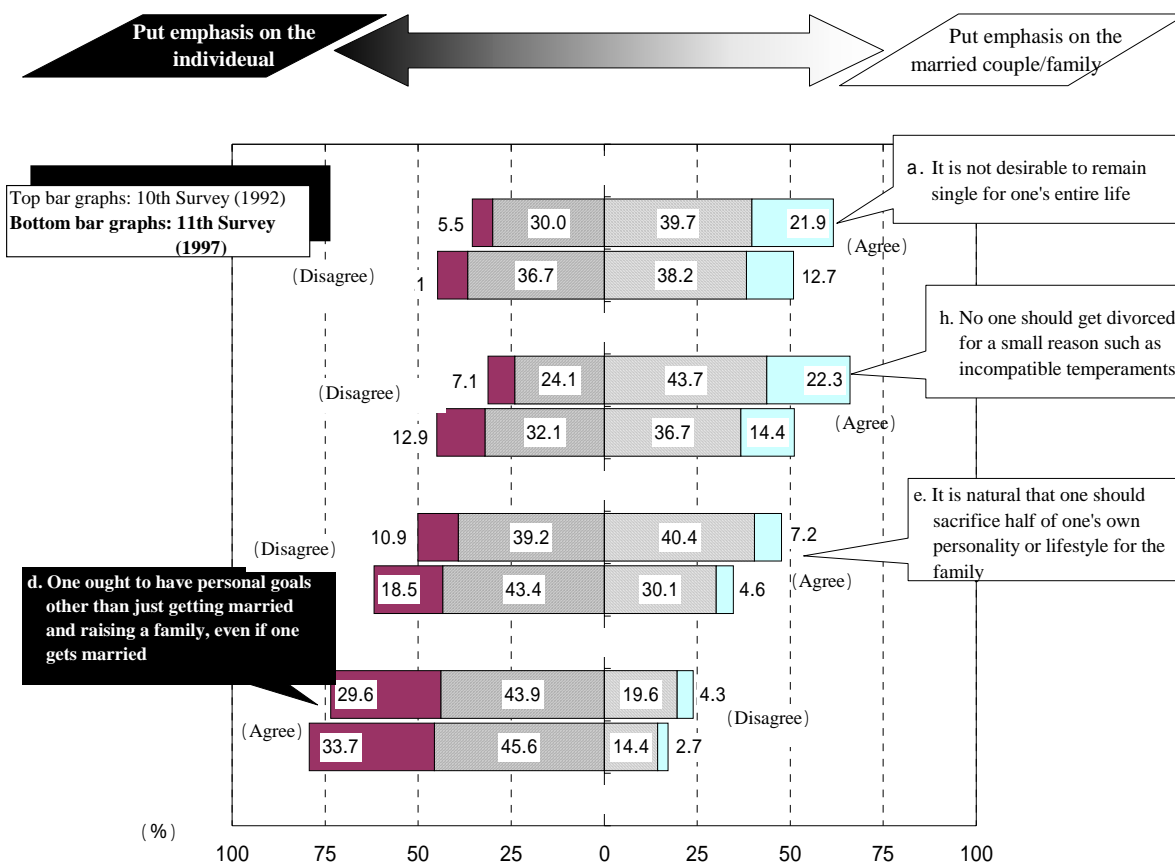
In each of the bar graphs, the distributions (%) of "Totally agree," "If anything, agree," "If anything, disagree," and "Totally disagree" are indicated in order from right to left.

3) More and more support is seen for the independent/self-directed life of women

Items a, h, e, and d are used to determine to what degree the individual is emphasized in marriage and family relationships. We compare the current answers with the 10th Survey (1992) in Figure VI-1.

More and more support is seen for life styles centered on individuality, and independence from marriage, such as acceptance of divorce for incompatible temperaments (item h), and approval of remaining single for a lifetime (item a). The views that emphasize individual goals and deny self-sacrifice for marriage or family (items e and d) are also supported, and tend to be supported more strongly now.

Table I-2 Tendency to put emphasis on the individual



Note: "Not stated" are excluded from the figures (%). Number of samples: 10th Survey (8,844), the 11th Survey (7,354). The subjects are wives of first-marriage couples.

In each of the bar graphs, the distributions (%) of "Totally agree," "If anything, agree," "If anything, disagree," and "Totally disagree" are indicated in order from right to left.

Basic Survey on Birth Trends Glossary

Densely inhabited districts:

In the National Census, surveyed districts classified as cities, wards, towns and villages are divided into urban (densely inhabited districts) and rural (sparsely inhabited districts) by population density. Specifically, “densely inhabited district” means: (1) Surveyed districts, where the population density per one square kilometer is more than 4,000 persons in principle, and which are adjacent to each other within the border of the city, ward, town or village, and (2) the adjacent areas have a population of more than 5,000.

In the National Census of the 7th year of the Heisei era (1995), 64.7% of the total population is from the densely inhabited districts, while in this survey the respondents from the densely inhabited districts make up 65.3%.

Arranged marriage/Love marriage:

In the questions about types of meeting for a future husband/wife, those who answered “Through an arranged introduction” or “Through a matrimonial agency” are regarded as arranged marriages, and those who answered “At school,” “At the workplace or through work,” “A childhood friend or neighbor,” “Through club activities or accomplishments,” “Through friends or siblings,” “While downtown or during a trip,” or “Through a part-time job” are grouped into the “love marriage” category for this survey.

Completed fertility value:

The number of children that a couple has, when they have almost no possibility of bearing more children, is called the completed fertility value. Since, in Japan, additional births are rarely found among couples married for 15 years or more, the average number of births for the couples whose duration of marriage is 15-19 years is referred to as the completed fertility value in this survey.

Total marital fertility rate:

The total marital fertility rate is the total of all couple’s marriage duration-specific fertility rates. This is calculated using the marriage duration-specific fertility rate (number of births of couples) observed in a certain period (usually one year) as a numerator, and the number of those couples as the denominator. This rate equals the average number of children born to a couple, assuming that the couple’s fertility rate in that period is known. Total fertility rate is the total of the female’s age-specific fertility rates based on the population of females as the denominator, and equals the average number of children born to a female.

The total marital fertility rate is the average number of children for couples, while the total fertility rate is the average number of children for the total population of females, including unmarried and divorced females. Therefore, the latter is affected by such matrimonial trends as

a tendency toward later marriage and a growing number of lifetime singles. On the other hand, the total marital fertility rate does not depend on matrimonial trends, though it does tend to be affected by changes in the childbearing pace of couples.

“Blue collar worker” and “white collar worker” occupational classifications:

In this survey, those who work in factories are called blue collar workers, and those usually considered to be “experts,” “executive staff,” “office clerks,” and “sales/service staff” are called white collar workers.