

# The Family Changes in Contemporary Japan<sup>1</sup> : Overview of the Results of the Fourth National Survey on Family in Japan (2008)

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## I. Introduction

### 1. Overview

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

To address these issues, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research thus conducted the Fourth National Survey on Family in July 2008 in order to understand the functions of the family, relationships among family members, and attitudes toward the family. This is the fourth time that the National Survey on Family was conducted. The first survey was conducted in 1993, the second in 1998, and the third in 2003.

### 2. Data Collection and Response Rate

The sample in this survey consists of ever-married women of all households in 300 census tracts that were randomly selected from the 1,088 census

tracts. These 1,088 tracts were selected by a systematic sampling method for the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of People on Health and Welfare conducted in 2008 (if there were more than 2 ever-married women in a household, the youngest female was selected, and if there were no subjects, then the head of the household was selected as a respondent). Questionnaires were self-administered.

Out of 13,045 questionnaires distributed, 11,046 questionnaires, or 84.7%, were returned. Those returned blank and those without essential information were treated as invalid (854 questionnaires), yielding a total of 10,192 valid responses (valid response rate=78.1%). The attitudes and behaviors related to the family and family lives are expected to differ greatly among people who are currently married, who have never married, and who are either divorced or widowed. Therefore, we focus solely on the 6,870 responses of currently married women (Table I-1).

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

Age of wife	Sample size of the survey	
Total	6,870	(100.0%)
29 years old and under	330	( 4.8 )
30 to 34 years old	597	( 8.7 )
35 to 39 years old	772	( 11.2 )
40 to 44 years old	734	( 10.7 )
45 to 49 years old	667	( 9.7 )
50 to 54 years old	728	( 10.6 )
55 to 59 years old	875	( 12.7 )
60 to 64 years old	750	( 10.9 )
65 to 69 years old	616	( 9.0 )
70 to 74 years old	420	( 6.1 )
75 years old or above	381	( 5.5 )

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

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

The wife's mother and the husband's mother (mothers-in-law) are considered as the most important supporters of and resources for child-rearing. For the purpose of looking at the availability of help in rearing children, we asked wives about the status of their parents and parents-in-law. Table II-1 displays high survival rates of wives' mothers and mothers-in-law (Table II-1). For wives age 29 or younger, over 95% have both theirs and husband's mothers alive. Even among the wives in their early 40s, around 90% of them still have theirs and the husbands' mothers. The share of married women with at least one of the mothers alive reaches to 100 % for wives in the youngest group (age 29 or younger). The corresponding figures for wives in their 30s and 40s are 99% and 97-98%, respectively. The survival rates of mothers are high and the figures are higher than those in the third survey. In particular, there is a 5-point

increase from the low 90% range to the high 90% range for wives in their 40s.

The share of wives co-residing with their mothers or mothers-in-law is approximately one in five persons (21.5%) for wives age 29 or younger (Table II-2). The percentage falls to 14.8% for wives in their early 30s, rises again to 18.6% for wives in their late 30s, 22.3% for wives in their early 40s, and 32.2% for wives in their late 40s. Similarly, the share of wives living with one of their parents or husband's parents is about one in four (24.9%) for wives age 29 or younger, slightly lower at 16.5% for wives in their early 30s, 20.6% for wives in their late 30s, 25.1% for wives in their early 40s, and finally reaches to 36.8% for wives in their late 40s. In the third survey there was an apparent trend where the share of wives co-residing with a parent increases gradually with the age of wives. In the fourth survey, the percentage of wives who co-reside with a parent is very high among those in age 29 and younger but the figure decreases in the early 30s, and rises again thereafter.

**Table II-1 Proportion of Wives with Living Parents/Parents-in-Law by Wife's Age**

Age of wife	Total	Wife's parents		Husband's parents		At least one of the mothers alive	
		Father	Mother	Father	Mother	4th survey	3rd survey
29 years old and under	330	95.4%	98.7%	89.8%	95.6%	100.0%	98.2%
30 to 34 years old	597	89.7	96.6	84.1	94.2	99.5	98.2
35 to 39 years old	772	82.9	92.6	79.6	92.7	99.3	97.0
40 to 44 years old	734	72.4	91.0	62.3	89.2	98.9	93.8
45 to 49 years old	667	59.5	85.9	48.7	77.8	96.8	92.3

Note: Percentages are calculated excluding unknown figures.

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

Age of wife	Total	Co-residing with wife's parents	Co-residing with husband's parents	Co-residing with one of the mothers	Co-residing with at least one parent/parent-in-law	Not co-residing with parents/parents-in-law	
						4th survey	3rd survey
29 years old and under	330	8.0%	16.0%	21.5%	24.9%	75.1%	81.9%
30 to 34 years old	597	5.2	11.2	14.8	16.5	83.5	80.2
35 to 39 years old	772	6.1	14.7	18.6	20.6	79.4	74.5
40 to 44 years old	734	7.0	18.9	22.3	25.1	74.9	69.4
45 to 49 years old	667	8.8	32.7	32.2	36.8	63.2	63.3

Note: Percentages are calculated excluding unknown figures.

**Table II-3 Living Arrangement in Relation to Parents by Area of Residence**

Area	Total	Co-residing with wife's parents	Co-residing with parents-in-law	Co-residing with one of the mothers	Co-residing with at least one parent/parent-in-law	Not co-residing with parents/parents-in-law	
						4th survey	3rd survey
Nationwide	3,100	6.9%	18.5%	21.7%	24.6%	75.4%	73.3%
Non Densely Inhabited Districts	1,111	9.1	30.2	33.4	37.8	62.2	59.5
Densely Inhabited Districts	1,989	5.6	11.9	15.2	17.2	82.8	81.3

Note: The figures in the table are computed for wives age 49 or younger. Percentages are calculated excluding unknown figures.

**Table II-4 Distance from Non Co-residing Parents (the closer of the two sides) by Age of Wife**

Age of wife	Total		Living in different houses on the same property		Less than 15 minutes		15 to less than 30 minutes		30 to less than 60 minutes		More than 60 minutes	
	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
29 years old and under	388	202	5.3%	4.5%	39.5%	38.1%	21.9%	20.3%	10.7%	12.9%	22.7%	24.3%
30 to 34 years old	605	430	4.8	4.4	38.0	40.2	18.0	18.6	13.4	12.8	25.9	24.0
35 to 39 years old	591	540	5.8	6.9	31.0	37.6	19.5	23.0	15.7	12.8	27.9	19.8
40 to 44 years old	521	466	7.5	8.6	32.1	37.6	13.5	14.8	19.6	10.7	27.3	28.3
45 to 49 years old	459	344	9.2	5.8	30.0	33.7	15.1	18.6	12.8	11.6	32.9	30.2

Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to the rounding.

Whether or not wives co-reside with their parents varies by the type of area that wives reside. The percentage of wives co-residing with their parents is higher in the Non Densely Inhabited Districts (Non-DID)(Table II-3). For instance, the percentage of wives who co-reside with either the wife or husband's mother is 15.2% in the Densely Inhabited Districts (DID) and 33.4% in Non-DID. In Non-DID, there is a higher proportion of wives co-residing with the husband's parents than those of the wife's. The percentage of wives that co-reside with the husband's parents is 11.9% in the DID while the corresponding figure in the Non-DID is over 30%. The percentage of wives that co-reside with the wife's parents is 5.6% in the DID and 9.1% in the Non-DID.

For wives living apart from their parents, it is easier to obtain support from their parents in child-rearing if they live close to them. Table II-4 shows the distance that wives live apart from their parents (the closer of the two) by the time it takes to reach their residence. In table II-2 it was clear that for wives age 29 or younger, the percentage of those co-residing with parents is actually higher

than was shown on the third survey. Actually, even among those who are not co-residing with a parent, three in four (75.8%) wives in this age group live less than 1 hour from a parent, and over 60% of them live 30 minutes or less away from a parent. As shown in Table II-2, the percentage of wives in their 30s and 40s that do not co-reside with parents increased compared to figures from the third survey. Moreover, the share of wives that live 30 minutes or less away from a parent is 63.2% for wives in their early 30s, 67.5% in the late 30s, 61.0% in the early 40s, and 58.1% in the late 40s, displaying a 2.4-11.2 point increase relative to the third survey.

Table II-5 restricts the respondents to those who live apart from mothers (including mothers-in-law) and shows the distance between the respondents and their mothers and mothers-in-law by area of residence. In the Non-DID, over 50% of parents of both sides live within 30 minutes distance. The percentage of wives' mothers who live within 30 minutes distance in the Non-DID is 52.1% and the corresponding figure for husbands' mothers is 62.7%, indicating the higher share of

wives living closer to husbands' mothers than their own mothers. Also, 57.3% of the mothers (those who live closer of the two) live within 15 minutes distance, and nearly three-fourth (74.9%) of the mothers (those who live closer of the two) live within 30 minutes distance in the Non-DID. Meanwhile, in the DID, the proportion of mothers living within 15 minutes distance from the respondents is about 20% for both the wife and husband (20.9% and 22.4%, respectively) and corresponding figures are just under 40% (37.6% and 37.9%, respectively) when the distance between

respondents and mothers is within 30 minutes. The corresponding figures in the DID are lower than those in the Non-DID. In the DID, there is no disparity in distance between the parents of the wife and husband. In addition, the percentage of the nearer of the two mothers living within 15 minutes of the couple is just under 40% (35.7%), while the corresponding figure is just over 50% (54.8%) for those residing within 30 minutes. In the Non-DID, parents, particularly the parents of the husband, tend to live closeby.

**Table II-5 Distance from Non Co-residing Parents by Area of Residence**

Area	Non co-residing parents	Total		Less than 15 minutes		15 to less than 30 minutes		More than 30 minutes	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Nationwide	Wife's mother	2,784	2,471	23.3%	23.5%	19.4%	19.2%	57.3%	57.3%
	Husband's mother	2,285	2,029	26.8	28.7	14.9	17.0	58.2	54.4
	Closer of the two mothers	1,955	2,116	42.5	42.3	17.1	18.7	40.4	39.0
Non Densely Inhabited Districts	Wife's mother	949	861	30.1	28.2	23.2	23.9	46.7	47.9
	Husband's mother	675	633	44.9	42.5	15.9	20.2	39.3	37.3
	Closer of the two mothers	548	647	62.0	57.3	15.1	17.6	22.8	25.0
Densely Inhabited Districts	Wife's mother	1,835	1,610	19.8	20.9	17.4	16.7	62.8	62.4
	Husband's mother	1,610	1,396	19.3	22.4	14.5	15.5	66.2	62.1
	Closer of the two mothers	1,407	1,469	34.8	35.7	17.9	19.1	47.3	45.2

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 49 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

The living arrangement of the respondents' mothers and mothers-in-laws who live apart, shows that the younger the respondent is, the lower the percentage of mothers that live alone and the higher the proportion of mothers that live with an unmarried sibling (Table II-6). Meanwhile, the older the respondent is, the higher the percentage of mothers that live alone or live with a married sibling. Also, the share of the husband's mothers that have entered hospitals or nursing homes increases as wives reach their late 40s.

Compared with the third survey, the share of mothers living together with a married sibling has changed drastically. The percentage decreased for the both wives' and husbands' sides.

## 3. Health Conditions and Care Needs of Parents

The health conditions of parents are an important factor in receiving support from parents related to child-bearing and child-rearing. If a parent requires special care, it will be difficult for their children to rely on them for child-rearing support. Table II-7 shows the percentages of parents of the wife and husband that require special care. As can be seen, the percentage of parents that require special care is low for both sides of the parents when wives are age 29 or younger, and the percent of parents with special care needs ranges between 0.7% and 2.7%. For wives in their 30s the figure remains around 5% and for those in their 40s, the percent ranges between 14% and 18%. Compared to the third survey, there was a slight increase in the share of wives with a parent that requires special care, excluding the father of the wife.

**Table II-6 Living Arrangement of Wife's Mother (Non Co-residing) by Wife's Age Relationship**

Relationship	Age of wife	Total		Living alone		Living with spouse alone		Living with married siblings		Living with unmarried siblings		Staying at hospitals/nursing homes		Other living arrangement	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Husband's mother	Total	2,234	1,988	13.7%	15.8%	47.7%	46.9%	14.3%	10.4%	18.0%	19.5%	1.9%	2.4%	4.3%	4.9%
	29 years old and under	356	226	7.0	11.9	45.5	37.6	7.0	4.0	30.9	38.9	-	-	9.6	7.5
	30 to 34 years old	572	446	10.8	11.9	55.8	50.2	10.1	6.5	17.7	22.6	0.3	0.7	5.2	8.1
	35 to 39 years old	521	554	13.2	12.1	53.2	53.1	10.6	9.4	19.0	20.2	0.6	0.7	3.5	4.5
	40 to 44 years old	429	463	17.9	20.3	45.7	47.5	21.0	13.0	11.0	12.1	2.3	3.7	2.1	3.5
	45 to 49 years old	356	299	20.5	24.4	31.2	36.8	25.8	19.1	12.9	10.4	7.9	8.0	1.7	1.3
Wife's mother	Total	2,853	2,450	11.5%	11.9%	40.8%	44.7%	20.1%	14.0%	22.0%	23.3%	1.1%	1.1%	4.5%	5.1%
	29 years old and under	420	271	6.0	5.2	35.0	35.1	8.1	8.9	42.1	41.0	0.2	-	8.6	10.0
	30 to 34 years old	653	509	9.0	8.3	47.3	45.8	11.5	8.4	25.3	28.5	0.5	-	6.4	9.0
	35 to 39 years old	658	622	10.9	10.1	47.4	53.7	18.5	11.3	19.9	20.9	0.2	0.3	3.0	3.7
	40 to 44 years old	588	575	13.8	15.1	41.2	43.7	24.7	16.5	15.3	20.0	2.0	1.0	3.1	3.7
	45 to 49 years old	534	473	17.2	18.2	28.8	38.3	36.9	23.3	12.2	14.8	2.8	3.8	2.1	1.7

Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

Relationship	Age of wife	Total		Need special care	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Wife's father	29 years old and under	415	283	1.9%	0.7%
	30 to 39 years old	1,220	1,085	5.2	5.1
	40 to 49 years old	871	843	14.6	13.9
Wife's mother	29 years old and under	449	297	1.3	2.7
	30 to 39 years old	1,397	1,208	3.5	4.6
	40 to 49 years old	1,241	1,132	13.1	14.2
Husband's father	29 years old and under	402	247	2.5	1.2
	30 to 39 years old	1,122	980	4.3	5.6
	40 to 49 years old	700	656	11.9	14.3
Husband's mother	29 years old and under	432	274	0.7	1.8
	30 to 39 years old	1,346	1,150	3.7	4.5
	40 to 49 years old	1,131	1,002	15.2	18.1

#### 4. Resources to Support Child-Bearing and Child-Rearing

So far, we have overviewed the situation of the parents of the wife and husband—the greatest resource for support for child-rearing. However, the parents of the wife and husband are not the only supporting resource for child-rearing. The resources include the wife herself, husband, siblings of the couple, other relatives, neighbors and

friends, and even social resources such as nurseries and health centers.

There are many different types of child-rearing support. The support can be broadly separated into two categories; 1)psychological support for those who are taking care of children, and 2)physical support providing care for children on behalf of daily care provider. The former takes the form of an advisor when one has worries or troubles related to

**Table II-8 Human and Social Resources for Child-Rearing**

Support resources	Advising on child-bearing and child-rearing troubles					Taking care of the first child on daytime during weekdays until the child turns 1 year old				
	Most important		2nd	3rd	4th	Most important		2nd	3rd	4th
	3rd survey	4th survey				3rd survey	4th survey			
Total	5,706	5,399	4,753	4,037	3,458	5,819	5,454	3,355	2,186	1,547
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
I. Human support	95.7	96.0	93.8	84.8	69.7	97.3	97.0	96.5	95.1	90.1
(1) Relatives	89.6	91.5	78.7	54.6	31.2	97.0	96.5	93.9	85.8	70.7
1. Husband	38.7	39.3	16.5	8.6	3.1	1.1	0.5	37.4	19.8	10.3
2. Parents	44.3	44.8	43.2	23.8	10.8	12.5	10.5	46.7	48.6	32.7
3. Siblings	5.7	6.2	17.2	19.3	12.5	0.6	0.3	3.4	12.9	21.3
4. Other relatives	0.6	0.3	1.3	2.7	4.4	0.3	0.1	0.8	2.7	5.9
5. (Wife)	0.3	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.4	82.4	85.1	5.6	1.8	0.5
(2) Non-relatives	6.2	4.5	15.0	30.2	38.5	0.3	0.5	2.6	9.3	19.5
II. Public institutions, etc.	3.7	3.4	6.2	15.2	30.3	2.3	2.9	3.5	4.9	9.9
III. No support	0.6	0.6	-	-	-	0.5	0.2	-	-	-
(No experience)	1.5	1.4	-	-	-	0.5	0.6	-	-	-

Support resources	Taking care of the first child on daytime during weekdays between the ages of 1 and 3				Support for the wife when bearing the first child			Taking care of the first child while the wife is bearing the second		
	Most important	2nd	3rd	4th	Most important		2nd	Most important		2nd
					3rd survey	4th survey		3rd survey	4th survey	
Total	5,375	3,128	1,967	1,402	5,838	5,381	3,262	4,751	4,528	2,982
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
I. Human support	91.5	93.3	94.7	90.8	97.8	97.6	97.7	97.8	97.4	96.9
(1) Relatives	91.1	90.2	84.4	71.9	97.6	97.5	96.0	97.4	97.0	95.1
1. Husband	1.6	30.4	21.2	13.1	13.6	14.8	40.5	13.4	18.6	40.8
2. Parents	13.8	45.2	43.7	30.8	78.1	70.6	35.3	64.0	64.8	36.1
3. Siblings	0.3	3.7	13.9	20.5	3.3	3.0	14.9	3.7	3.2	12.4
4. Other relatives	0.1	1.0	2.4	5.7	0.9	0.7	1.9	0.7	0.3	1.5
5. (Wife)	75.3	9.9	3.3	1.8	1.7	8.5	3.5	15.5	10.1	4.3
(2) Non-relatives	0.4	3.2	10.3	18.9	0.2	0.1	1.6	0.4	0.4	1.8
II. Public institutions, etc.	8.2	6.7	5.3	9.2	1.2	1.5	2.3	2.0	2.4	3.1
III. No support	0.2	-	-	-	1.0	0.9	-	0.3	0.2	-
(No experience)	1.1	-	-	-	0.4	0.4	-	8.1	8.1	-

Support resources	Taking care of the child when the wife is sick			Taking care of the child when the wife takes care of her parents			Taking care of the child when the wife goes to work		
	Most important		2nd	Most important		2nd	Most important		2nd
	3rd survey	4th survey		3rd survey	4th survey		3rd survey	4th survey	
Total	5,255	5,062	3,178	3,708	3,620	1,881	3,407	3,686	1,798
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
I. Human support	98.4	97.7	98.0	95.5	91.9	94.1	69.6	67.6	85.6
(1) Relatives	97.7	97.2	93.7	93.7	90.1	86.8	68.2	66.0	80.1
1. Husband	50.8	50.3	34.6	50.4	48.6	25.3	17.7	18.9	24.4
2. Parents	40.7	37.3	46.8	34.3	29.6	41.3	45.3	41.5	43.3
3. Siblings	2.0	1.9	8.0	3.2	3.2	15.0	1.2	1.3	7.6
4. Other relatives	0.8	0.5	1.8	1.7	1.3	3.6	1.6	0.6	3.6
5. (Wife)	3.5	7.2	2.5	4.3	7.4	1.5	2.5	3.6	1.3
(2) Non-relatives	0.7	0.6	4.3	1.8	1.8	7.3	1.3	1.6	5.5
II. Public institutions, etc.	0.6	1.2	2.0	2.2	5.4	5.9	26.7	29.5	14.4
III. No support	1.1	1.0	-	2.3	2.7	-	3.7	2.9	-
(No experience)	7.3	4.9	-	26.8	24.1	-	26.8	21.0	-

Note 1: The percentages are calculated using the total (excluding “no experience” from the total) as the denominator. The percentages for the category “no experience” are calculated using the total (total plus the number of “no experience”) as the denominator. Non-relatives include neighbors, acquaintances through children’s schools and friends, volunteers, and friends etc. Public institutions include hospital, health center, day care center, child care center, books and mass media. ③ “taking care of the first child on daytime during weekdays between the ages of 1 and 3” is included for the first time in this survey.

Note 2: The third survey targeted at the youngest women among the ever-married.

Note 3: The choice “wife” should be excluded for the statement “Advising on child-bearing and child-rearing troubles”, but it was systematically impossible to delete the choice “wife” from the questionnaire.

Note 4: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

raising their child. The advisor provides the parent with the necessary information and relieves them of their concern or worry regarding child-rearing. The latter can be separated into several different categories, including unexpected assistance that is provided when the necessary timing and period of time for assistance is not known beforehand, support for which the period of time that support is needed is known to a relative degree beforehand, and support that requires long-term. It is expected that the person raising a child will go to different sources for help in accordance with the type of assistance that they require.

In order to investigate whom wives seek assistance based on the various different support needs that arise in daily life, a set of concrete child-bearing and child-rearing situations was established and then respondents were asked to choose an order of priority of who they would rely on for support in each of those situations. The situations were set just as on the previous surveys. There are three categories of settings: support related to child-bearing ((4) Support for the wife when bearing the first child), psychological support for the wife ((1) Advising on child-bearing and child-rearing troubles), and physical support for actually taking care of the child ((2) Taking care of the first child on daytime during weekdays until she/he turns 1 year old, (3) Taking care of the first child on daytime during weekdays between the ages of 1 and 3, (5) Taking care of the first child while the wife is bearing the second child, (6) Taking care of the child when the wife is sick, (7) Taking care of the child when the wife takes care of her parents, and (8) Taking care of the child when the wife goes to work). For this survey respondents were asked to rank in an order of priority from the top to the fourth, for each of the 3 categories above.

The results show that while wives receive assistance from different sources based on the type of support that they need, wives tend to rely on parents (particularly her own parents) for support more than her husband himself in various settings (Table II-8). For item (4) Support for the wife when bearing the first child, 70.6% of respondents identify parents as the most important source of support, while only 14.8% identified husbands. Moreover, for item (5) Taking care of the first child while the wife is bearing the second, nearly 70% (64.8%) identify parents as the most important source of support, while only 18.6% identify husbands. What is more, "parents" indicated by respondents refers to parents on the wife's side. In addition, for item (1) Advising on child-bearing and child-rearing troubles, parents were identified as the most important and second

most important source for support, indicating that parents (particularly the wife's parents) are relied on as advisors for child-bearing and child-rearing more than the husband (Most important: husband 39.3%, parents 44.8%; Second most important: husband 16.5%, parents 43.2%). In regards to item (1), while approximately 30% of wives did not indicate "husband" in any of the top 4 choices, 30% to 40% indicated non-family choices, including friends and neighbors, for the third and fourth choice.

Parents also play a major role in the physical support of substituting mothers in taking care of the children. In particular, in regards to items (2) and (3), which pertain to taking care of children during weekdays, the majority answered "wife" as the most important, while the percentage of respondents that answered "parents" accounted for around 10% (10.5%, 13.8%), and "parents" usually fell somewhere around the second to the fourth choices. Meanwhile, "husband" was most often indicated as the most important resource in unexpected circumstances, such as (6) Taking care of the child when the wife is sick and (7) Taking care of the child when the wife takes care of her parents, accounting for 50.3% for (6) and 48.6% for (7). Nevertheless, the most common answer for the second most important source was "parents." In regards to (8) Taking care of the child when the wife goes to work, or, assistance needed for taking care of children in the long-term, 29.5% of respondents indicated that the most important source is "public institutions, etc." but "parents" still surpassed that figure at 41.5%.

While wives tend to rely on their own parents instead of the husband's parents as important sources of support for child-bearing and child-rearing across many circumstances, there are instances where wives rely on the husband's parents just like their own parents depending on the type of support needed. For support related to child-bearing, such as (4) Support for the wife when bearing the first child and (5) Taking care of the first child while the wife is bearing the second, and for psychological support pertaining to the problems of child-rearing, there was a strikingly strong trend for respondents to rely on their own parents. Meanwhile, in regards to situations where the need for assistance is known beforehand, or for the long-term assistance such as (2) and (3) which relate to taking care of children on daytime during weekdays, and (8) Taking care of the child when the wife goes to work, there is no visible difference between the parents of the husband and the wife, as both appear to be relied on. Furthermore, there was a trend of relying on the husband

for support for unexpected circumstances such as in item (6) Taking care of the child when the wife is sick.

Nevertheless, the percentage of wives that indicate “parents” as a source of support has slightly declined. For instance, the percentage that choose “parents” as the most important source of support for (4) Support for the wife when bearing the first child and (6) Taking care of the child when the wife is sick, has declined, while the percentage who answered “wife” has increased. As there is no significant change apparent in the percentage for “husband,” there is a possibility that there are more wives that do not receive support from parents while not being able to expect support from their husbands as well. Conversely, the percentage choosing wife decreased for (5) Taking care of the first child while the wife is bearing the second, but the percent choosing husband increased. Also, the proportion for “parents” decreased for (8) Taking care of the child when the wife goes to work, while that of “public institution, etc.” increased.

Parents are still the most important source of support for child-bearing and child-rearing. However, compared to the results from the third survey the percentage of parents who actually take care of children is decreasing, and this is made up for by the wife, husband, or public institutions, etc., depending on the type of support in question. Meanwhile, there is no apparent difference with respect to the importance of psychological support that parents provide.

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

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

With respect to the number of hours that wives spent on housework on weekdays by wives’ age group, the age group that spent the longest was wives in their 30s, 20s, 40s, 60s, and 50s, in order from most to least. Responses show that all age groups other than the 50s spend generally around 5 hours on housework on weekdays (Figure III-1). The 30s and the 50s spend the greatest and the least amounts of time on housework, respectively, and there is an approximate 1 hour gap (63.7 minutes) between the two. The age group with the highest percentage of wives that spend 6 or more hours is the 30s at 30.4% and 25.0% even for the 20s. Also, the age group with the largest share of wives that spend 2 hours or less on housework was the 20s at 12.3%.

In terms of weekends, the average amount of time spent on housework is generally the same as

on weekdays for wives in their 20s, 30s, and 60s, while wives in their 40s and 50s spend about 30 minutes longer compared to weekdays. About one in three wives in their 40s (33.4%) spend over 6 hours performing housework on the weekends. There is about a 55-minute difference in the amount of time spent on housework on the weekends by wives in their 30s who perform the most, and the 60s who perform the least. The reason that the amount of time spent on housework by wives in their 40s and 50s increases on the weekends compared to the weekdays can be attributed to the fact that many wives in these age groups have part-time jobs and thus make up for not being able to do housework during the weekdays on the weekends.

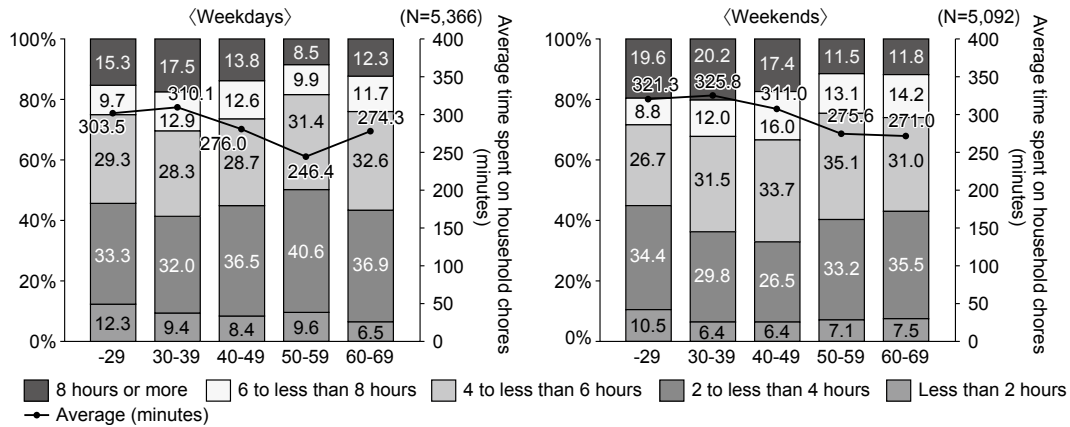
Figure III-2 shows the time wives spend on housework by their employment status. Wives who work full-time spend nearly 60 minutes less than those working part-time or who are self-employed, and about 140 minutes less time on housework compared to full-time homemakers. However, even for the wives working full-time, nearly 30% (31.1%) spend 4 or more hours on housework on weekdays.

Moreover, an examination of the length of time wives spend on housework by the time their husbands normally come home from work reveals that there is approximately a 50-minute difference depending on when their husbands come home. There is a difference between those whose husbands come home before 19:00 and those after 22:00. The time wives spend on housework tends to be shorter if their husbands come home earlier (Figure III-3), indicating that the burden of housework on the wife is reduced by her husband’s being at home earlier.

Table III-1 shows the degree of help on housework that wives receive from co-residing mothers. Mothers apparently help with housework across a wide range of areas, but wives are more likely to receive assistance when wives co-reside with the wife’s mother rather than the husband’s mother. Laundry is the chore in which wives receive most assistance; between 60% and 70% of wives get help from co-residing mothers. However, there is a significant difference in the percentages of wives receiving help from mothers between the wife and husband side, where the share of wives receiving help from co-residing own mothers is 15 points higher than those co-residing with husband’s mother. In addition, there is marked disparity in the assistance levels for other chores between mothers of the wife and husband side, including preparing meals, clearing tables, washing dishes, and cleaning the rooms. In these cases as well, the

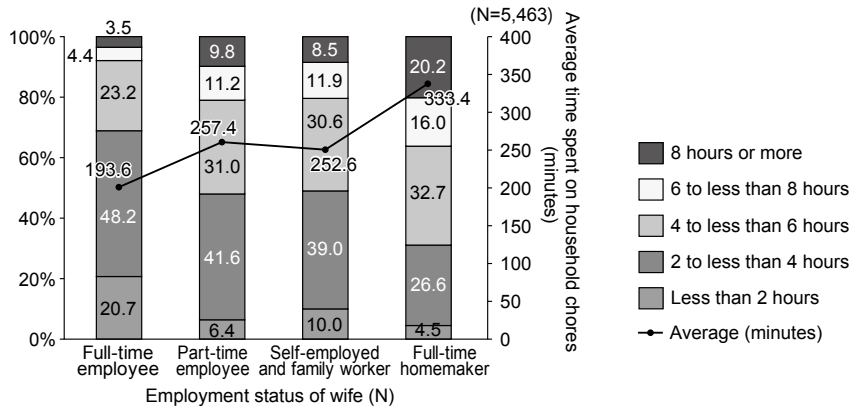


**Figure III-1 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays and Weekends) by Age of Wife**



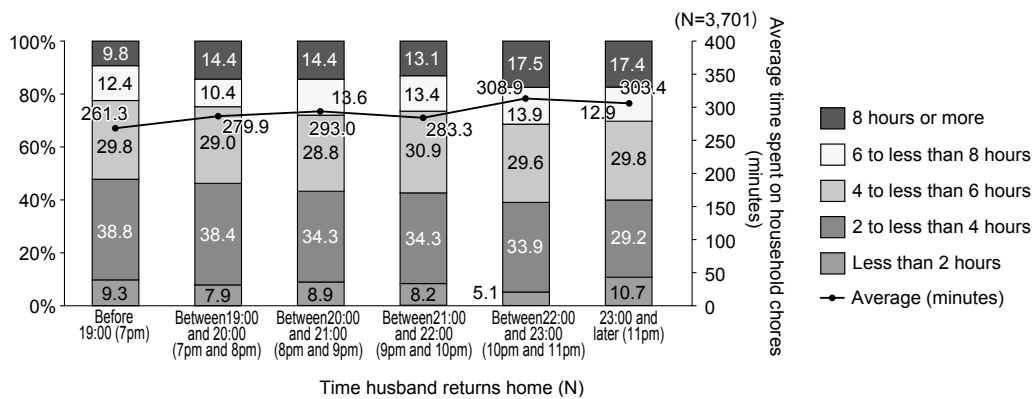
Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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



Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure III-3 Time Wife Spends on Housework (Weekdays) by Time Husband Returns Home**



Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

percentage of wives receiving assistance is 8 to 8.5 points higher for those co-residing with own mothers than those co-residing with husband's mothers.

The amount of help wives receive for housework from co-residing mothers also differs by wives' employment status. The percentage of wives who receive mothers' help in housework is higher when wives work full-time relative to those in other employment status. When the wives co-reside with husband's mother, the share of those receiving help in doing laundry and preparation of meals is 27 to 28 points higher when wives

work full-time compared to wives who are not employed. For those co-residing with the wife's mother, the share of those receiving help from mothers is about 14 to 17 points higher when wives work full-time compared to wives who are not employed.

Table III-2 shows the time mothers spend on housework. The time spent by the wife's own mothers is longer than that of the mothers-in-law; more than 25% of mothers spend 4 hours or more on housework on weekdays, while over 15% of the husband's mothers spend 4 or more hours a day.

**Table III-1 Help in Household Chores from Co-residing Mothers**

Relationship	Employment status of wife	Total	Taking out garbage	Grocery shopping	Cleaning	Cleaning bathroom/bathtub	Laundry	Preparing meals	Clearing the table	Other
Wife's mother	Total	209	47.8%	33.0%	41.6%	41.1%	74.2%	56.0%	59.8%	20.1%
	Full-time employee	60	50.0	36.7	40.0	46.7	80.0	65.0	50.0	18.3
	Part-time employee	62	51.6	29.0	43.5	35.5	74.2	54.8	64.5	19.4
	Self-employed and family worker	21	42.9	23.8	38.1	66.7	85.7	57.1	71.4	9.5
	Full-time homemaker	66	43.9	36.4	42.4	33.3	65.2	48.5	60.6	25.8
Husband's mother	Total	425	41.6	25.9	33.6	42.1	58.8	47.5	51.8	16.9
	Full-time employee	155	48.4	31.6	36.1	49.0	69.0	60.0	56.1	13.5
	Part-time employee	118	39.8	24.6	33.1	50.0	58.5	48.3	47.5	18.6
	Self-employed and family worker	66	28.8	15.2	36.4	27.3	59.1	36.4	51.5	16.7
	Full-time homemaker	86	41.9	25.6	27.9	30.2	40.7	32.6	50.0	20.9

**Table III-2 Time spent on Housework by Co-residing Mothers (Weekdays)**

Relationship	Employment status of wife	Total	Not at all	Less than 15 minutes	15 to 30 minutes	30 to 60 minutes	1 to 2 hours	2 to 3 hours	3 to 4 hours	4 hours or longer
Wife's mother	Total	236	20.3%	1.7%	0.4%	7.2%	17.8%	14.8%	12.3%	25.4%
	Full-time employee	62	9.7	3.2	-	6.5	14.5	12.9	9.7	43.5
	Part-time employee	64	14.1	-	-	9.4	15.6	21.9	15.6	23.4
	Self-employed and family worker	25	16.0	4.0	-	-	20.0	12.0	20.0	28.0
	Full-time homemaker	85	34.1	1.2	1.2	8.2	21.2	11.8	9.4	12.9
Husband's mother	Total	537	33.5	2.0	2.0	10.2	17.5	11.2	8.4	15.1
	Full-time employee	179	21.8	-	2.2	10.1	12.8	15.1	14.0	24.0
	Part-time employee	141	29.1	3.5	0.7	14.9	17.0	14.2	9.2	11.3
	Self-employed and family worker	89	38.2	2.2	1.1	9.0	23.6	6.7	5.6	13.5
	Full-time homemaker	128	51.6	3.1	3.9	6.3	20.3	5.5	1.6	7.8

Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

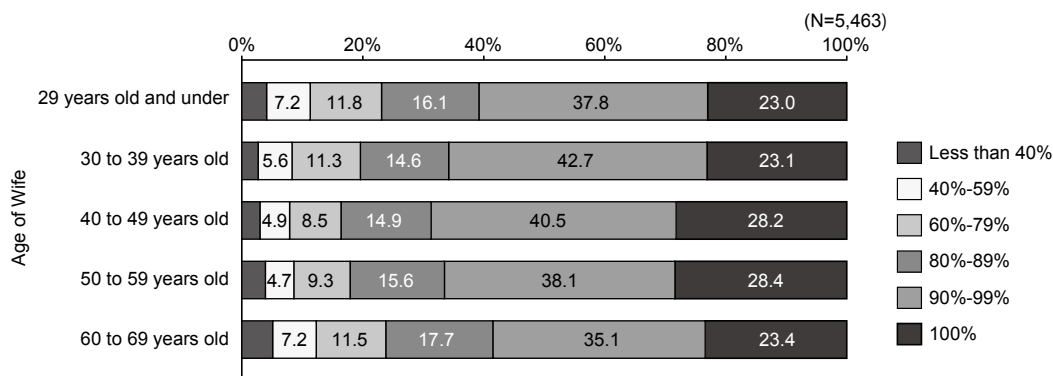
The degree to which husbands and wives share housework is a better indicator than the time spent on housework of how gendered the division of labor is. In this survey, we asked wives to report how much, in percentages, of the total housework they undertake.

Figure III-4 shows the breakdown of the proportion of housework wives take up by age group. The percentage of wives handling 80% or more of all household chores (“heavily dependent on wives”, indicating that these households depend heavily on the wives for household chores), account for over 80% of all age groups excluding the 20s (76.9%) and the 60s (76.2%). In particular, nearly 85% of wives in the 40s fall under this category. Cases where husbands do not engage in any housework (“100% dependent on wives”, indicating that these households depend entirely on wives to do the household chores) make up nearly 30% (28.2% to 28.4%) of wives in their 40s and 50s. Although the percentages of respondents that fall under this category are slightly lower for the 20s, 30s, and the 60s, about 20% (23.0%) of respondents in their 20s fall under this category.

Figure III-5 shows the breakdown of the

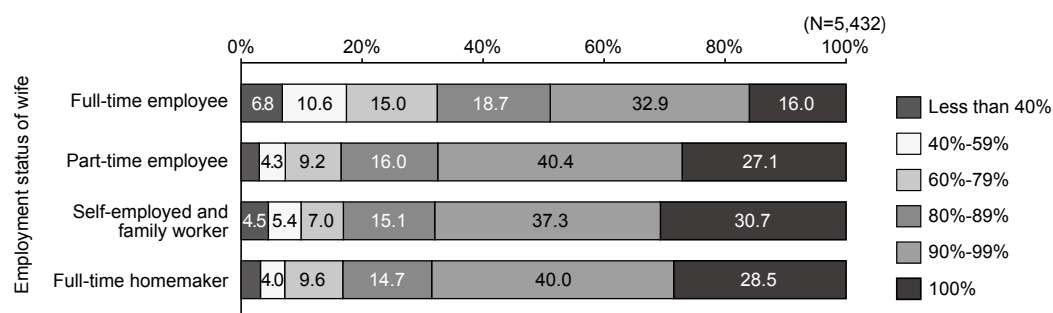
proportions of housework performed by wives by their employment status. The percentage of respondents classified as “heavily dependent on wives”(i.e., 80% or more of housework is handled by wives) is high regardless of the wife’s employment status. However, while over 80% (about 83%) of wives who are part-time employees, self-employed/family business workers or full-time homemakers fall under this category, the figure is below 70% (67.6%) for wives who are full-time employees, displaying a 15-point difference. For wives working full-time, those who share household chores equally with their husbands (wives handling 40% to 59% of the chores) and those whose husbands do more housework than wives (wives handling less than 40% of the chores) add up to over 15%. The proportion of cases where wives do all the housework and husbands do none is around 30% (27% to 31%) in the following categories: wives who work part-time, wives who are self-employed, and those who are full-time homemakers. Approximately 20% (16.0%) of husbands never do any housework even if their wives work full-time.

Figure III-4 Proportion of Housework Undertaken by Wife by Age



Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Figure III-5 Proportion of Housework Undertaken by Wife by Employment Status



Note: The proportion in the table may add not up to 100% due to rounding.

## 2. Changes in Husbands' Participation in Housework

Figure III-6 shows the percentage of husbands undertaking typical housework tasks "once or twice per week" or more. These tasks include taking out garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, cleaning bathrooms/bathtubs, doing laundry, cooking, and clearing the table. The results show that the percentage of husbands that take out the garbage and go grocery shopping once or twice a week or more is 42.1% and 39.9%, respectively. The figures for all the tasks have increased since the third survey. In particular, grocery shopping, doing laundry, and clearing the table displayed an 8-point increase.

Figure III-7 shows the husband's overall housework score by wife's age group. All the figures showed an increase compared with the third survey, and there was a marked increase for the 60s. The score is the lowest for respondents in their 40s as indicated by the shallow bar graph with a U-shaped pattern with this age group at the bottom, just as on the third survey.

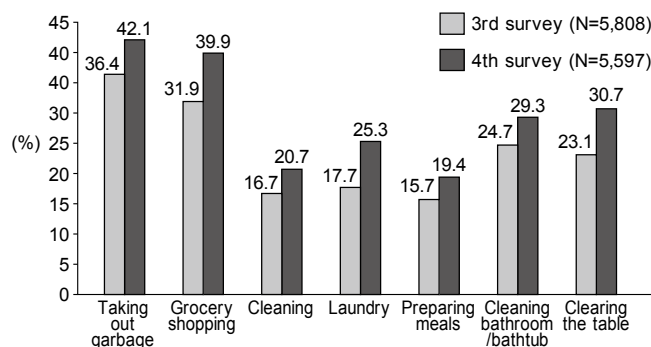
Table III-3 shows the percentages of husbands undertaking each task (i.e., doing the task at least once or twice a week), by various socio-economic factors. First, the breakdown by the age of wives shows that husbands of younger wives tend to

be more cooperative in each task, which is also reflected in the husbands' housework participation scores by age group. There is a trend that the older the wives are, the lower the percentage of husbands who do household tasks. However, the trend reverses in the 60s, and the husbands tend to do more housework than those in the 50s.

An analysis by the age of the youngest children shows that higher percentage of husbands participate in housework when the youngest child is younger than 3 years old compared to husbands whose youngest child is 3 years old or older. Furthermore, for wives with the youngest child age less than 3, the percentage of husbands who do housework rose in all types of housework compared to the figures in the third survey.

A comparison of the percentages of husbands who do housework by wives' employment status shows that in all the tasks, the highest figure is found among wives who work full-time. Moreover, the percentages of husbands who do housework are higher than the figures from the third survey for all the tasks. This is particularly true for grocery shopping and clearing the table, where there is a 10-point increase compared to the third survey. This indicates that the husbands' participation rate in housework improved somewhat for dual-earning couples.

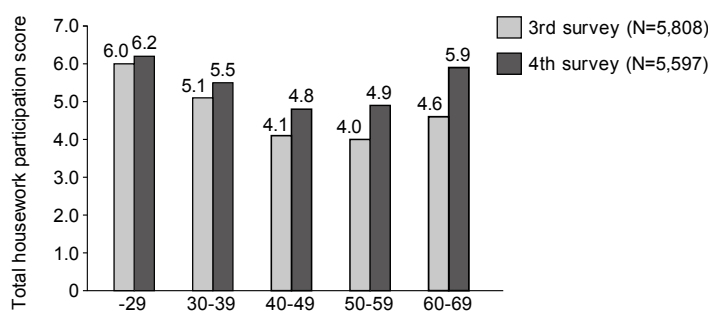
**Figure III-6 Percentage of Husbands Undertaking Housework (at least Once or Twice a Week)**



Note 1: For taking out garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, laundry and cooking, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation. For "cleaning bathroom/bathtub", only the respondents with valid answers to the 5 items above and this item were included in the calculation (N=5,597). For "clearing the table", respondents with valid answers to all 7 housework tasks were included in the calculation (N=5,568).

Note 2: The figures are computed for the wives age 69 or younger.

**Figure III-7 Husband's Housework Participation Scores by Age of Wife**



Note: The husband's total housework participation score was computed by first assigning for each task a score of 1 if a husband performs the task "once or twice a month," 2 for "once or twice a week," 3 for "three to four times a week," 4 for "every day, each time" and 0 for "never", and then summing up the scores across 5 tasks that were also asked in the third survey (taking out garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, laundry, and cooking).

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

	Total		Taking out garbage		Grocery shopping		Cleaning		Laundry		Preparing meals		Cleaning bathroom/bathtub		Clearing the table	
	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	5,808	5,597	36.4%	42.1%	31.9%	39.9%	16.7%	20.7%	17.7%	25.3%	15.7%	19.4%	24.7%	29.3%	23.1%	30.7%
Age of wife																
29 years old and under	459	309	53.6	57.3	37.9	51.8	19.6	23.6	19.2	29.4	21.8	24.9	34.8	34.3	36.5	44.7
30 to 39 years old	1,482	1,297	43.8	45.7	35.9	39.2	15.7	20.4	19.6	25.1	15.7	20.7	29.0	30.6	27.6	35.8
40 to 49 years old	1,439	1,317	31.0	36.4	29.9	36.6	15.2	16.6	15.5	22.2	14.7	19.7	20.4	26.4	20.5	28.7
50 to 59 years old	1,591	1,478	28.7	38.4	28.2	38.2	15.7	18.1	16.3	23.1	14.5	17.0	21.5	25.7	19.0	25.8
60 to 69 years old	837	1,196	37.6	45.2	31.8	43.6	21.3	27.9	19.8	30.6	16.7	19.3	25.1	34.0	19.7	29.9
Age of the youngest child																
Less than 18 years old	722	609	28.5	36.3	29.8	33.7	14.0	15.3	14.8	22.5	12.6	17.6	19.6	23.4	18.6	26.5
Less than 12 years old	738	698	32.1	33.8	32.9	33.8	15.4	17.5	16.3	23.1	17.1	19.9	24.1	24.7	23.8	30.4
Less than 6 years old	481	420	39.5	37.1	33.1	36.9	16.6	17.9	19.8	18.6	17.3	20.0	26.7	28.4	27.2	30.3
Less than 3 years old	472	365	48.9	60.3	33.9	39.7	14.8	21.6	15.5	24.4	14.0	17.8	33.2	36.2	26.9	35.6
Less than 1 year old	284	210	53.2	54.8	35.2	45.7	16.5	17.1	15.1	21.0	18.0	20.0	34.6	38.6	29.9	36.7
Employment status of wife																
Full-time employee	963	1,061	45.3	52.4	34.9	44.8	21.8	27.0	30.3	37.1	23.5	28.3	33.3	36.4	34.1	43.8
Part-time employee	1,386	1,319	31.5	34.6	30.1	35.3	15.4	19.3	17.0	25.5	13.9	18.4	23.1	27.5	21.8	28.5
Self-employed and family worker	695	645	30.5	37.8	22.7	32.7	13.7	14.7	14.1	19.1	14.5	16.3	20.5	23.1	16.9	23.5
Full-time homemaker	2,521	2,187	37.7	42.5	34.5	41.7	16.2	20.1	13.9	20.4	13.7	16.0	23.5	28.8	21.3	27.7

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

Note 2: For taking out the garbage, grocery shopping, cleaning, laundry, and cooking, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation. For cleaning bathroom/bathtub, only the respondents with valid answers to all 6 items were included in the calculation (N=5,597). For clearing the table, only the respondents with valid answers to all 7 items were included in the calculation (N=5,568).

Note 3: The figures are computed for the wives age 69 or younger.

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

Figure III-8 shows the extent to which wives take up child-rearing during the period when the family grows with the birth and growth of children. For all age groups, around 70% of the wives do more than 80% of the child-rearing (indicating that these households depend heavily on the wives for child-rearing). The proportion of households that leave 100% of the child-rearing to wives is lower for younger wives. However, even among wives in the youngest age group (age 29 or younger), 5.6% of households leave 100% of child-rearing to their wives. The percentage of households that depend predominantly on the wives for child-rearing (i.e., wives handle 60% to 79% of the child-rearing tasks) account for 17.4% even among the youngest age group (wives who age 29 or younger), while the combined percentage of households where husbands are relatively active in child-rearing (i.e., husbands handle 60% or more of the child-rearing tasks), and of households where the wife and the husband share the tasks equally (i.e., both assume 40% to 59% of the responsibilities), is only 7.5%. Overall, Japanese husbands still participate only to a very small degree in child-rearing, leaving wives to the primary responsibility of child-rearing. These patterns have not changed since the previous survey.

Figure III-9 shows the distribution of the percentage of child-rearing assumed by wives by age of the youngest child. The households that depend heavily on wives for child-rearing (i.e.,

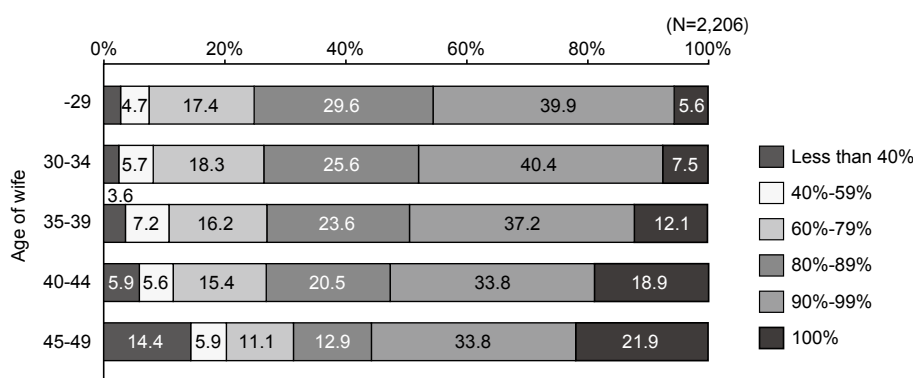
where wives takes at least 80% of the responsibility) account for between 70% and 80% of all the cases (i.e., for households with the youngest child under 1 year old, 1 to less than 3 years old, and 3 to less than 6 years old). The total percentage of households in which husbands and wives share responsibilities and in which husbands assumes more responsibility than wives is merely 2.9%, even in households with children younger than 1 year old. Furthermore, 6.3% of all husbands do not participate at all in child-rearing even if their youngest child is less than 1 year old.

### 4. Changes in Husband's Participation in Child-Rearing

In the survey, we asked the wives about the nature of their husbands' participation in child-rearing. The tasks related to child-rearing include the following 7 items: playing with children, bathing children, feeding children, putting children to sleep, cradling crying children, changing diapers and picking up and dropping off children at preschool. The last item was added for the first time in this survey. Figure III-10 shows the percentage of husbands that perform each of the 7 tasks once or twice per week.

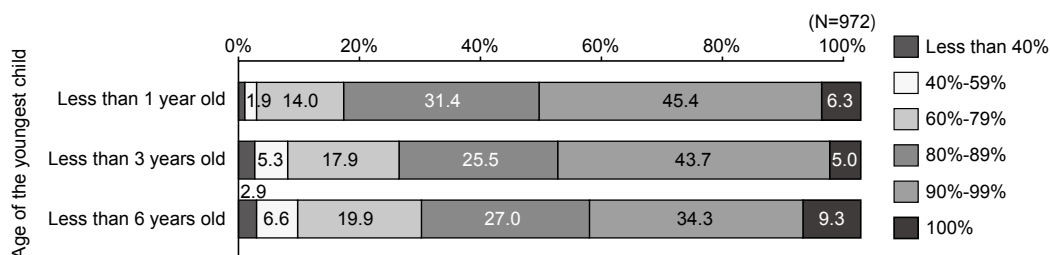
The percentage of husbands who put their children to sleep is less than half and only 25% of husbands engage in picking up and dropping off children at preschool. However, there were 4 to 6 point increases in all categories except for cradling crying children.

Figure III-8 Percentage of Child-Rearing Assumed by Wife by Age



Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure III-9 Percentage of Child-Rearing Assumed by Wife by Age of the Youngest Child**

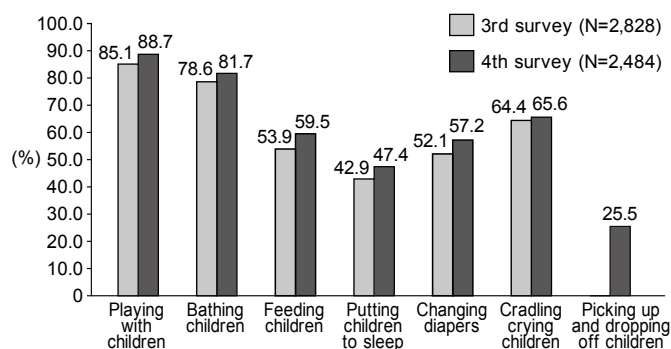


Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Figure III-11 shows the total scores measuring the extent to which husbands participate in child-rearing by the age of wives. The total scores are higher in all age groups relative to those in the

previous survey except for the youngest age group (age 29 or younger), indicating that the level of husbands' participation in child-rearing improved somewhat.

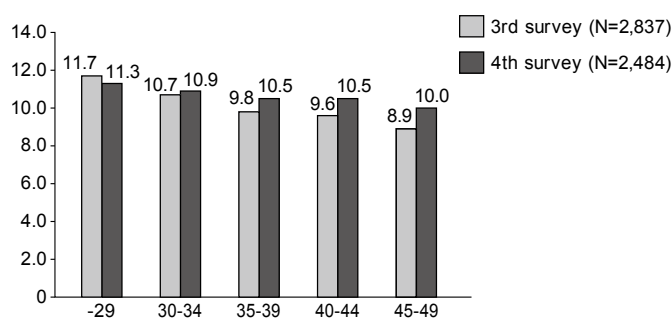
**Figure III-10 Percentage of Husbands Participating in Child-Rearing (at Least Once or Twice a Week)**



Note 1: For playing with children, bathing children, feeding children, putting children to sleep, and changing diapers, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation. For cradling crying children, only the respondents with valid answers to all 6 items were included in the calculation (N=2,479). For picking up and dropping off children at preschool, only the respondents with valid answers to all 7 items were included in the calculation (N=1,810).

Note 2: The figures are computed for wives age 49 or younger.

**Figure III-11 Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score by Age**



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

**Table III-4 Percentage of Husbands Participating in Child-Rearing by Age of Wife, Age of the Youngest Child, and Employment Status**

	Total		Playing with children		Bathing children		Feeding children		Putting children to sleep		Changing diapers		Cradling crying children		Picking up and dropping off children at preschool	
	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	4th survey	
Total	2,837	2,484	85.1%	88.7%	78.6%	81.7%	53.9%	59.5%	42.9%	47.4%	52.1%	57.2%	64.4%	65.6%	25.5%	
Age of wife																
29 years old and under	306	212	96.1	96.2	83.7	81.6	64.7	58.5	47.4	54.2	67.6	64.2	77.4	77.4	32.2	
30 to 34 years old	569	447	91.9	92.2	78.9	82.3	59.8	62.4	47.3	47.7	60.6	63.8	72.7	74.5	31.3	
35 to 39 years old	648	631	86.4	89.2	78.5	81.3	54.3	62.8	43.4	47.2	54.6	59.7	65.0	65.5	25.0	
40 to 44 years old	656	617	80.9	88.0	78.7	83.6	51.4	60.3	42.2	48.5	47.4	57.4	60.6	63.7	25.0	
45 to 49 years old	658	577	77.1	83.5	76.1	79.5	46.0	53.4	37.4	43.8	39.7	46.4	54.2	56.4	22.0	
Age of the youngest children																
Less than 6 years old	471	413	88.5	91.5	76.0	82.8	52.4	62.0	42.7	48.9	56.7	58.6	64.0	68.2	31.1	
Less than 3 years old	465	367	94.2	94.8	80.9	81.5	68.0	64.3	46.2	43.1	63.2	63.2	73.9	71.7	34.1	
Less than 1 year old	283	202	94.7	95.5	82.3	83.7	57.6	61.4	51.2	53.0	67.8	71.3	82.7	85.1	31.0	
Employment status of wife																
Full-time employee	513	523	82.8	90.4	79.3	82.6	56.5	64.2	42.9	52.0	55.4	61.6	66.0	67.5	35.1	
Part-time employee	741	690	83.0	87.1	78.7	82.2	51.4	59.4	43.5	46.7	49.4	55.8	60.4	62.4	23.4	
Self-employed and family worker	256	212	83.6	86.8	75.4	81.1	52.0	57.5	38.3	49.5	44.5	50.9	60.4	62.3	34.9	
Full-time homemaker	1,224	919	88.1	89.8	79.0	81.4	55.1	57.6	43.5	46.0	54.8	56.8	67.1	68.6	15.6	

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

Note 2: For playing with children, bathing children, feeding children, putting children to sleep, and changing diapers, only the respondents with valid answers to all 5 items were included in the calculation (N=2,479). For cradling crying children, only the respondents with valid answers to all 6 items were included in the calculation (N=2,479). For picking up and dropping off children at preschool, only the respondents with valid answers to all 7 items were included in the calculation (N=1,810).

Note 3: The figures are computed for wives age 49 or younger.



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

	Total		Before 20:00 (8 pm)		Between 20:00 to 21:00 (8pm to 9pm)		Between 21:00 to 22:00(9pm to 10pm)		After 22:00 (10 pm)	
	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	4,783	3,955	54.5%	55.4%	16.3%	17.0%	12.2%	10.4%	17.0%	17.2%
Age of wife										
29 years old and under	439	260	49.4	49.2	15.0	19.2	13.9	11.9	21.6	19.6
30 to 39 years old	1,392	1,110	42.2	43.1	17.2	20.5	15.6	13.6	25.0	22.9
40 to 49 years old	1,301	1,087	50.7	49.2	17.6	17.9	13.7	13.2	18.3	19.7
50 to 59 years old	1,306	1,047	66.2	66.2	16.9	16.0	8.7	7.0	8.2	10.8
60 to 69 years old	345	451	81.7	79.4	7.8	6.9	3.8	2.9	6.7	10.9
Employment status of wife										
Full-time employee	870	824	59.7	58.6	14.8	18.7	11.5	8.7	14.0	14.0
Part-time employee	1,267	1,070	54.6	55.4	17.4	16.5	12.3	11.1	15.7	16.9
Self-employed and family worker	452	363	62.2	59.2	15.7	16.3	9.3	7.4	12.8	17.1
Full-time homemaker	2,009	1,473	50.7	52.1	16.4	16.8	12.8	11.2	20.1	19.9

Note: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Table III-4 shows the percentage of husbands who participate in child-rearing by various socio-economic characteristics such as the wife's age, the age of the youngest child, and the employment status of the wives. First, considering the figures by wives' age, relative to the results from the third survey, an increase in the percentage of husbands participating in child-rearing cannot be seen for wives in the youngest age group (age 29 or younger) except for putting children to sleep. The figures for all child-rearing tasks display increases in all other age groups. Among the 6 tasks that were asked in the third survey, the husbands' participation rate is lowest in putting children to sleep at under 50%. Even among for those in the youngest age group (age 29 or younger) which has the highest share of husbands in this task, the figure is 54.2%.

Comparing the figures by the age of the youngest children between the two surveys reveals that the percentage of husbands engaging in child-rearing among those with children younger than 1 year old has increased slightly for all the tasks compared to the third survey. The percentage increased by 3.8 points for feeding children and by 3.5 points for changing diapers.

In terms of the employment status of wives, there was an increase in husbands' participation in all child-rearing tasks among wives working full-time. In such categories as picking up and dropping off children at preschool, feeding children, putting children to sleep, and changing diapers, the proportion of husbands who engage in these tasks are higher among those whose wives are working full-time than those of full-time homemakers. These

results imply that husbands whose wives work full-time participate in child-rearing relatively more than those whose wives are homemakers.

Table III-5 shows the distribution of average time at which husbands come home by the wife's age and employment status. Assuming that it is possible for husbands to take part in child-rearing if they are home at 8:00 p.m. at the latest, slightly over 50% of the husbands are home by 8:00 p.m. as it was in the previous survey. There are also no major changes in the percentage of husbands coming home after 8:00 p.m., but there is a slight decrease in the share of husbands who return home after 9:00 p.m. For example, the share of husbands coming home after 9:00 p.m. dropped from 35.5% in the third survey to 31.5% for the wives age 29 or younger, and the corresponding figures dropped from 40.6% to 36.5% for the wives in the 30s.

When we look at the time husbands come home by wives' employment status, the time at which husbands return home has become slightly earlier in this survey. In a case that wives work full-time, there is an approximately 3-point decrease in the percentage of husbands who return home after 9:00 p.m. but the degree of change is still minor and thus there is very little improvement in the time at which husbands return home.

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

Table III-6 looks at the relationship between the degree of husbands' participation in child-rearing and whether the wives continued working after the birth of the first child. The majority of the

respondents still withdraws from the labor force rather than continue working upon giving birth to the first child. Overall, however, the percentage of wives who continue working is high among those whose husbands have high child-rearing scores. On the contrary, many respondents who quit working have husbands whose child-rearing scores are low. This trend is generally consistent regardless of the duration of the marriage.

Table III-7 shows the number of additional children couples plan on having in the future, broken down by the number of children they already have. Among respondents with one child, about 40% of wives whose husbands rarely participate in child-rearing do not wish to have any more children (0 additionally planned children), while

the corresponding figure is less than 30% for the wives with relatively cooperative husbands, indicating a 14.1-point gap between the two. Moreover, the percentage of the respondents who want to have two or more children is 6.8% among those with uncooperative husbands but 15.8% among respondents with cooperative husbands. In this case, there is a 9.0-point disparity. Among wives who already have two children, the proportion of respondents who want to have one more child is higher among those who can obtain the participation of husbands in child-rearing. For the respondents who have either one or two children, the higher the degree of husband's participation in child-rearing, the greater the number of children they want to have in the future.

**Table III-6 Changes in Wife's Work Status upon Birth of the First Child by Duration of Marriage, and by Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score**

Duration of marriage	Child-rearing score	Total	Continued working	Left the workforce
Total	Total	878	29.5%	70.5%
	1st tertile	332	21.4	78.6
	2nd tertile	272	31.3	68.8
	3rd tertile	274	37.6	62.4
0 to 4 years	Total	239	33.1	66.9
	1st tertile	69	23.2	76.8
	2nd tertile	79	31.6	68.4
	3rd tertile	91	41.8	58.2
5 to 9 years	Total	341	30.5	69.5
	1st tertile	148	25.7	74.3
	2nd tertile	101	32.7	67.3
	3rd tertile	92	35.9	64.1
10 to 14 years	Total	241	25.7	74.3
	1st tertile	93	15.1	84.9
	2nd tertile	77	28.6	71.4
	3rd tertile	71	36.6	63.4
15 to 19 years	Total	57	24.6	75.4
	1st tertile	22	13.6	86.4
	2nd tertile	15	33.3	66.7
	3rd tertile	20	30.0	70.0

Note 1: The child-rearing participation scores are the same as those in Figure 3-11. The 1st tertile amounts to 0-9 points in child-rearing participation scores, the 2nd tertile is 10-13 points, and the 3rd tertile is 14-20 points.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Table III-7 Number of Planned Children by the Current Number of Children and Husband's Child-Rearing Participation Score**

Current number of children	Child-rearing participation score	Total	Number of planned children (3 groups)			Average number of children
			0 children	1 child	2 or more children	
1 child	Total	454	39.6%	50.2%	10.1%	0.71
	1st tertile	161	42.9	50.3	6.8	0.64
	2nd tertile	147	46.9	44.9	8.2	0.61
	3rd tertile	146	28.8	55.5	15.8	0.89
2 children	Total	579	86.2	12.3	1.6	0.16
	1st tertile	195	89.2	8.7	2.1	0.13
	2nd tertile	180	87.8	11.7	0.6	0.13
	3rd tertile	204	81.9	16.2	2.0	0.22

Note 1: The child-rearing participation scores are the same as those in Figure 3-11. For those with only 1 child, the 1st tertile amounts to 0-9 points in the child-rearing participation scores, the 2nd tertile is 10-13 points, and the 3rd tertile is 14-20 points. For those with 2 children, the 1st tertile amounts to 0-8 points in the child-rearing participation scores, the 2nd tertile is 9-12 points, and the 3rd tertile is 13-20 points.

Note 2: The figures are computed for wives age 49 or younger.

Note 3: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

#### IV Intergenerational Support between Parents and Children

##### 1. Frequency of Communication

Table IV-1 shows the frequency of conversation between mothers and their married children who do not co-reside. The percentage of respondents who have conversations with their parents more than 3 to 4 times per week was 16.0% for males and 35.9% for females, revealing that daughters have more conversations with their parents. At the same time, however, there are many cases where individuals have very little conversation with their mothers. The share of individuals who rarely converse with their mothers amounts to 23.7% for males and 9.1% for females. These percentages increase with age, rising to over 30% for males and 10% for females between age 40 and 49. Furthermore, compared to the third survey, there is a slight increase in the share of individuals who rarely converse with their mothers.

##### 2. Support from Mothers by the Type of Assistance

Table IV-2 shows the type of assistance provided by mothers to their married children in terms of economic support (providing money for marriage, for buying a house, and for grandchildren) and providing care (for adult children when their children are born and for grandchildren themselves). With respect to economic support, over 50% of mothers provided funding for marriage for all age groups, except for those in the 40s. There also is a slight gap in the percentage of receiving economic support for marriage between males and

females; mothers tend to provide economic support to male children in the event of marriage. In terms of funding for buying a house, 25.3% of males and 12.2% of females receive assistance, indicating the slight advantage for males over females here as well. The percentages of adult children receiving funding for a house increase with age for both males and females reaching 29.0% for males and 14.4% for females between the ages 40 and 49. Nearly 20% to 30% of adult children receive economic support for grandchildren, and the share increases with age, excluding females in their 40s. The percentages of adult children receiving economic support for grandchildren are higher for females than males.

In contrast, the share of adult children receiving support when grandchildren are born is much higher for females. For those between 20 and 29, 9.5% of males and 49.2% of females received help, and for those in the 30s or higher, around 20% of males and over 60% of females received help from mothers. There is also a clear disparity in the percentage of receiving care for grandchildren between females and males; while around 40% of females received help, only 20% of males received help.

Mothers are more likely to provide help to daughters than sons with respect to assistance concerning grandchildren such as economic support for grandchildren, providing help when grandchildren are born, and providing care for grandchildren. This reflects the importance of the wives' parents as a resource of support for child-rearing. When ranking the type of assistance provided by parents in order of the highest to the lowest by

gender, for male children the order is as follows; economic support for costs related to grandchildren, providing care for grandchildren, and providing help when grandchildren are born. The order for female children is as follows; providing help when grandchildren are born, providing care for grandchildren, and providing economic support for costs related to grandchildren. The order indicates that for male children, mothers tend to help them economically while for female children mothers tend to help them by providing care. If

the gender disparity in providing economic support for buying a house is taken into account, the nature of support provided to married children differ between sons and daughters. From married children's point of view, wives' mothers are perceived as care providers while husbands' mothers are perceived as economic supporters.

The percentages providing help to married children are higher in all types of assistance in the fourth survey relative to the third.

**Table IV-1 Frequency of Conversation between Non Co-residing Parents and Married Children by Child's Gender and Age**

Gender of child	Age of child	Total		Everyday		3 to 4 times per week		1 to 2 times per week		1 to 2 times per month		Seldom	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Male	Total	1,219	1,233	7.0%	6.8%	9.8%	9.2%	23.9%	23.6%	40.2%	36.7%	19.1%	23.7%
	20 to 29 years old	225	169	5.3	8.9	12.4	8.9	12.4	8.9	34.7	27.8	14.7	14.8
	30 to 39 years old	613	670	6.2	6.0	8.6	10.0	8.6	10.0	24.6	25.5	17.1	21.5
	40 to 49 years old	381	394	9.2	7.4	10.2	8.1	10.2	8.1	16.3	18.5	24.9	31.2
Female	Total	1,506	1,481	17.1	12.9	21.0	23.0	21.0	23.0	30.5	30.0	5.8	9.1
	20 to 29 years old	371	240	25.6	17.1	24.5	25.8	24.5	25.8	31.5	31.3	2.7	5.8
	30 to 39 years old	773	824	16.4	12.9	21.3	25.0	21.3	25.0	32.0	30.5	5.3	7.5
	40 to 49 years old	362	417	9.9	10.6	16.6	17.5	16.6	17.5	26.2	28.3	9.9	14.1

Note 1: The figures are computed for the first child to the third child age 20 to 49. The definition of co-residence is determined by the answers to Q5(4) in the fourth survey and to Q8(6) in the third survey. Those residing within the same household as their mothers are defined as co-residing children.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Table IV-2 Percentage of Wives Providing Support to Married Children by Child's Gender and Age**

Gender of child	Age of child	Total		Funding for marriage		Funding for purchasing a house		Costs related to grandchildren		Help when grandchildren are born		Care for grandchildren	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Male	Total	1,177	1,198	47.7%	53.5%	18.3%	25.3%	21.0%	27.5%	15.7%	18.2%	20.6%	25.4%
	20 to 29 years old	216	168	48.1	56.5	13.9	15.5	21.8	20.8	15.3	9.5	17.6	19.0
	30 to 39 years old	598	647	48.5	56.6	17.6	25.7	21.2	27.8	14.5	18.4	21.4	26.6
	40 to 49 years old	363	383	46.0	47.0	22.0	29.0	20.1	29.8	17.9	21.7	20.9	26.1
Female	Total	1,474	1,454	45.3	49.2	9.2	12.2	24.9	29.8	60.4	61.5	38.3	43.0
	20 to 29 years old	368	238	42.9	51.3	5.7	7.1	24.7	28.6	48.9	49.2	31.0	42.9
	30 to 39 years old	756	814	47.4	50.0	9.9	12.5	26.3	32.1	64.6	65.2	41.4	45.7
	40 to 49 years old	350	402	43.4	46.3	11.1	14.4	22.0	25.9	63.4	61.2	39.4	37.6

Note 1: The figures are computed based on the same individuals as in the Table IV-1.

Note 2: Whether married children received assistance or not, is based on their experience from the time they turned to 18 to the time of the survey.

### 3. Regular Financial Support

Table IV-3 shows whether parents regularly provide money to their children, and if they do, how much per month. For both sons and daughters,

around 10% of parents provide money on a regular basis, although the share is slightly higher for daughters than sons. There is a rather large share of sons and daughters who receive economic support

**Table IV-3 Regular Financial Assistance (Monthly) Provided to Non Co-residing Married Children by Child's Gender and Age**

Gender of child	Age of child	Total		None		30,000 yen or less		Between 30,000 yen and 50,000 yen		50,000 yen or more	
		3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Male	Total	1,130	1,195	87.6%	91.7%	7.3%	5.4%	1.0%	1.2%	4.1%	1.7%
	20 to 29 years old	219	165	85.4	88.5	8.7	8.5	1.4	0.6	4.6	2.4
	30 to 39 years old	576	648	88.5	92.9	7.6	4.9	1.0	0.9	2.8	1.2
	40 to 49 years old	335	382	87.5	91.1	6.0	5.0	0.6	1.8	6.0	2.1
Female	Total	1,395	1,439	88.5	89.5	7.1	8.2	1.6	1.3	2.8	1.0
	20 to 29 years old	360	237	88.3	88.2	6.7	9.3	2.2	1.3	2.8	1.3
	30 to 39 years old	721	807	88.8	89.6	7.1	7.4	1.7	1.6	2.5	1.4
	40 to 49 years old	314	395	87.9	90.1	7.6	9.1	1.0	0.5	3.5	0.3

Note 1: The figures are computed based on the same individuals as in the Table IV-1.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

in their 20s, but there is no apparent trend for the percentages of respondents who receive economic support from parents to decline as they age. In regards to the amount of money given, most parents provide 30,000 yen or less. Little less than 5 % of parents give 50,000 yen or more. Relative to the third survey, the percentage of parents providing regular financial support to their children declined.

## V. Child-Bearing/Child-Rearing and Wives' Labor Force Participation

### 1. Labor Force Participation of Wives Before and After the Birth of the First Child

The percentage of wives who were working when they found out that they were pregnant with their first child (hereafter referred to as the employment rate) was 69.1% (Table V-1). Of that, 32.5% continued working after giving the birth of the first child (hereafter referred to as the employment continuance rate), while the remaining 67.5% quit working. Furthermore, of those who were working when they found out that they were pregnant with their first child, about 60% (61.0 %) were working full-time. The percentage of wives working full-time out of those who continued working after giving the birth of the first child was 40.5%, which is nearly 8 points higher than the overall percentage.

With respect to the educational attainment, the higher the education that wives attained, the higher the share of wives working. For example, while 68.0% percent of wives who finished high school or less were working, 71.3% of wives who graduated from university or above were working.

Moreover, the employment continuance rate is also higher for those highly educated; while 27.5% of wives who finished high school or lower continued working, 45.7% of wives who graduated from university or higher continued, creating an 18-point gap. The percentage of wives who work full-time is also higher for those graduated from university or higher, and the share of wives who continued working full-time after giving the birth of the first child is about 60% (59.4%).

Analyzed by area of residence, the employment rate of wives is higher in the Non-DID than those in the DID. Within the DID, the percentage working is lower in the wards in Tokyo, the government ordinance-designated cities and surroundings of major cities. The employment continuance rate of wives is also higher in the Non-DID while the lowest employment continuance rate within the DID is observed in surroundings of major cities at 24.9%. The same trend exists for the employment continuance rate of full-time workers; the rate was lowest in the surroundings of major cities at 34.5.

Looking at figures by work status at the time when the wife discovered that she was pregnant with the first child, the employment continuance rate for full-time workers was 40.5% and 10.2% for part-time, temporary, and other non full-time workers, showing that approximately one in four full-time workers continue to work after giving birth to their first child (Table V-2).

When analyzed by occupation, the employment continuance rate of wives of specialized, technical, and managerial occupations was 49.7%, and the share of wives in these occupations that were full-time was 55.3%. Meanwhile, the employment continuance rate of wives in sales and services-

**Table V-1 Employment Status of Wives at the Time of Pregnancy of the First Child and the Employment Continuation Rate after the Birth of the First Child**

	Total	Employment status at the time of first pregnancy		The employment continuance rate after the birth of first child	
		Employed	Full-time out of the employed	Employed	Full-time
Total	2,530	69.1%	61.0%	32.5%	40.5%
Educational attainment of wife					
High school or below	1,102	68.0	59.1	27.5	33.0
Junior/technical college	1,033	69.5	61.1	33.0	40.8
University or above	362	71.3	67.8	45.7	59.4
Area of residence					
Densely Inhabited District	1,583	66.7	59.5	29.0	37.6
Tokyo's wards/government ordinance-designated cities	509	63.5	59.8	28.8	37.3
Surroundings of major cities	672	66.4	57.2	24.9	34.5
Other	402	71.4	62.7	35.5	42.2
Non Densely Inhabited District	947	73.0	63.4	37.8	44.7

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives aged 49 or younger and those who gave the first birth by the time of survey. Those wives whose employment status at the time of first pregnancy is not known, or those whose employment situation after giving birth is not known, are excluded from the calculation.

Note 2: The surrounding areas of major cities under the densely inhabited districts include following prefectures: Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gifu, Aichi, Mie, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, and Fukuoka. Tokyo's wards and government ordinance-designated cities are excluded.

**Table V-2 The Employment Continuance Rate after the Birth of the First Child for Wives who were Employed at the Time of First Pregnancy**

	Total	Full-time out of the employed	The employment continuance rate	
			Employed	Full-time
Employment status				
Full-time employee	1,066	100.0%	40.5%	40.5%
Part-time/temporary/other non fulltime workers	576	-	10.2	-
Self-employed/family worker	105	-	72.4	-
Occupation				
Agriculture/self-employed/family worker	106	66.7	71.7	-
Professional/technical/managerial	366	82.0	49.7	55.3
Clerical	605	71.9	26.6	35.4
Sales/services-related	433	45.5	18.0	26.4
Manufacturing Process worker/unskilled	103	60.2	28.2	40.3

Note: The figures are computed based on the same individuals as in the Table V-1.

related occupations was 18.0% and among these wives, only 26.4% were working full-time.

A comparison of figures by the distance between respondents' residence and that of their parents reveals that the employment rate and the employment continuance rate both decrease as the distance from their parents increases (Table V-3). The employment continuance rate is 41.0% for those that co-reside with their parents and 24.6% for those who reside more than 1 hour from their parents. The same trend is observed for the full-time workers as well. The percentage of

respondents who co-reside with their parents that work full-time is 65.1% and the employment continuance rate for these full-time workers is 46.9%. The percentage of full-time workers who live more than 1 hour's distance from their parents, however, is 58.2% and the employment continuance rate is 35.6%. As can be seen from the table, the further the distance between wives and her parents, the lower the proportion of wives working full-time and lower the employment continuance rate of full-time workers.

**Table V-3 Employment Status of Wives at the Birth of First Child and the Employment Continuance Rate after the Birth by Distance from Parents**

Distance from parents	Total	Employment status at the time of pregnancy of the first child		The employment continuance rate after birth of first child	
		Employed	Full-time out of the employed	Employed	Full-time
Total	2,117	68.8%	61.1%	32.7%	41.0%
Co-residing with parents	619	70.9	65.1	41.0	46.9
Not co-residing with parents	1,498	67.9	59.4	29.1	38.2
Less than 1 hour	1,112	70.6	59.7	30.4	39.0
1 hour or more	386	60.1	58.2	24.6	35.6

Note 1: The figures are computed based on the same individuals as in the Table V-1. Those whose parents are all gone or those whose distance from their parents is not known, are excluded.

Note 2: Those residing in a separate household but within the same land with their parents are classified as co-residents of their parents.

## 2. Life Course concerning Marriage, Child-Rearing, and Employment

In this survey we asked respondents about the expected life course that they think they would follow concerning work, marriage and having children. The results were classified into 4 different life course models. These models are: 1) wives that continue to work regardless of marriage or child-rearing (the employment continuation model), 2) wives that quit working after marriage or childbirth, but then go back to work after completing child-rearing duties (the re-employment model), 3) wives that quit working after marriage or childbirth and do not go back to work (the retirement model), and 4) other. As has already been seen, nearly 70% of wives quit work when having their first child. By comparing the distribution of wives across these life course models, we analyze the way in which wives engage in work in relation to major life events. In this analysis, we targeted wives in relatively younger age groups who have already experienced childbirth and child-rearing—specifically, wives age 49 or younger and those with the youngest child age 3 or older.

The result of distribution of the life courses indicates that 22.4% of wives selected the employment continuation model, 54.6% for the re-employment model, 18.6% for the retirement model, and 4.4% for other (Table V-4). Combining the re-employment model and the retirement model shows that 73.2% quit work at the time of marriage or childbirth. However, 74.6% of this group returns to work after finishing child-bearing duties (hereinafter, the proportion of wives who selected the re-employment model out of the total of the re-employment model and the retirement model is called the “re-employment rate”).

A comparison of wives’ life cycle by the

educational attainment shows that the re-employment model is the most common among all academic backgrounds but there are also some differences. The percentage of wives that follow the employment continuation model is 21.2% for those that have graduated high school or less, while the corresponding figure for those graduated from university or above is 26.8%. The percentage of wives that follow the retirement model is 16.8% for those that have graduated high school or less, while the corresponding figure is 23.0% for those that have completed university or above. Relative to wives who finished high school or less, the wives who completed university or above have higher percentages for both the employment continuation model and the retirement model. Accordingly, the percentage of wives in the re-employment model is lower for those who finished university or above than for those who finished high school or less—45.1% and 57.6%, respectively. In addition, the re-employment rate is also 11 points lower for those graduated from university or above (66.3%) than for those who finished high school or less (77.4%). Compared to wives who finished high school or less wives who graduated from university or above are more likely to choose the employment continuation model and the re-employment rate after quitting the job at the time of marriage or childbirth, is lower.

Examining life courses by the region of residence shows us that while the re-employment model is the most common in all regions, there are some disparities between regions. A higher proportion of residents in the Non-DID follow the employment continuation model and the percentage that follow the retirement model is lower compared to their counterparts in the DID. Even within the DID, the percentage of women that follow

**Table V-4 Expected Life Course Models by Wife's Socio-Economic Characteristics**

	Total	Employment continuation model	Re-employment model	Retirement model	Other	The Re-employment rate
Total	1,780	22.4%	54.6%	18.6%	4.4%	74.6%
Educational attainment of wife						
High school or below	821	21.2	57.6	16.8	4.4	77.4
Junior/technical college	709	22.4	54.0	19.3	4.3	73.7
University or above	235	26.8	45.1	23.0	5.1	66.3
Area of residence						
Densely Inhabited District	1,090	19.1	53.5	22.8	4.6	70.1
Tokyo's wards/government ordinance-designated cities	355	17.2	48.5	28.7	5.6	62.8
Surroundings of major cities	458	18.1	55.2	21.4	5.3	72.1
Other	277	23.1	57.0	17.7	2.2	76.3
Non Densely Inhabited District	690	27.7	56.4	11.9	4.0	82.6
Distance from parents						
Co-residing with parents	492	30.7	51.0	14.0	4.3	78.4
Not co-residing with parents	1,028	17.7	56.8	21.1	4.4	72.9
Less than 1 hour	762	19.4	57.2	18.9	4.5	75.2
1 hour or more	266	12.8	55.6	27.4	4.2	67.0

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives (age 49 or younger) with the youngest child age 3 or older.

Note 2: The employment continuation model refers to wives who intend to work regardless of marriage or child birth. The re-employment model refers to wives who intend to quit the job at the time of marriage or child birth, but return to work after children get old enough. The retirement model refers to wives who intend to retire at the time of marriage or child birth.

Note 3: The re-employment rate is the proportion of wives who follow the re-employment model out of those who follow the retirement model or the re-employment model.

Note 4: Those residing in a separate household but within the same land with their parents are classified as the co-residing.

Note 5: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

the employment continuation model is lower and that follow the retirement model is higher among residents of Tokyo's wards, the government ordinance-designated cities, or other major cities. These differences contributed to the higher re-employment rate in the Non-DID. Within the DID, the re-employment rate is lower in Tokyo's wards, the government ordinance-designated cities, or other major cities. The re-employment rate is 62.8% in Tokyo's wards and the government ordinance-designated cities, while it is 82.6% in the Non-DID, making figures in the latter case approximately 20 points higher. In the Non-DID, the employment continuation model is common and the re-employment rate is also high.

The distribution of wives' life course by the distance from the parent that lives nearest to them shows us that over 50% of wives fall under the re-employment model regardless of the distance, while there are some disparities in these figures depending on how far the parents live away. The percentage of wives that fall under the employment continuation model is 30.7% for wives that co-reside with a parent and 12.8% for those that live over 1 hour's distance apart. Conversely, the percentage of wives living together with a parent

that follow the retirement model is 14.0% and the corresponding figure is 27.4% for those that live 1 hour or further away from parents. Although the re-employment rate is higher for wives who do not co-reside with their parents, the rate itself decreases with distance from parents due to the high share of the retirement model for those residing 1 hour or more away from their parents. In other words, for wives that live at a distance of 1 hour or more from parents, very low percentage of wives follow the employment continuation model and the re-employment rate is also low.

Table V-5 shows the relationship between wives' real life course and their work status at the time of survey. It was previously pointed out that the share of wives who continue working after the birth of the first child is high among full-time workers. While 67.7% of mothers following the employment continuation model worked full-time, only 19.2% worked full-time among those following the re-employment model at the time of survey. Put differently, for those following the re-employment model, over 80% of those employed at the time of survey had jobs that were not full-time.



**Table V-5 Employment Status at the Time of Survey by Real Life Course**

Real life course	Total	Full-time	Part-time/temporary/other non full-time workers
Total	966	35.1%	64.9%
Employment continuance model	316	67.7	32.3
Re-employment model	650	19.2	80.8

Note: The figures are computed for wives (age 49 or younger) whose youngest child is age 3 or older and the employed at the time of the survey.

## VI. Wives' Attitudes toward the Family

### 1. Overall Picture

Figure VI-1 shows the proportion of respondents that agree with each type of conventional norms of families from the first to fourth survey. First, looking at the percentage of wives that showed agreement, over 80% expressed agreement with "mothers with children under the age of 3 should concentrate on child-rearing," "husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife does," and "parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means they have to sacrifice themselves." Between around 70% and 80% of wives expressed agreement with "decisions on important family affairs should be always made by husband" and "boys should behave like boys, and girls should behave like girls." Around 60% to 70% expressed agreement with "the husband should give first priority to his work" and "elderly parents in need of special care should be taken care of by their family." Around 40% to 60% agreed with "the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework," "husband and wife can have different family names," and "it is the best for parents in old age to live with their married children." Around 30% to 40% agreed with "married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children," and less than 30% of wives expressed agreement with "financial support for elderly people should be provided by their family rather than the public."

Next, let us look at these attitudes from the following perspectives: gender roles, the style of married couples, the role of parents, and support to elderly parents.

#### (1) View on the Norms regarding Gender Roles

There are signs of change in the views regarding gender roles that were consistent until the third survey in terms of the division of labor between husbands and wives, the roles of husbands and fathers, the roles of mothers, and

the attitudes toward children. The percentage of wives that agreed with "the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework," which pertains to the division of labor between husbands and wives, fell by over 10 points between the second and third surveys to 41.1%, but has changed direction, rising to 45.0% on this survey.

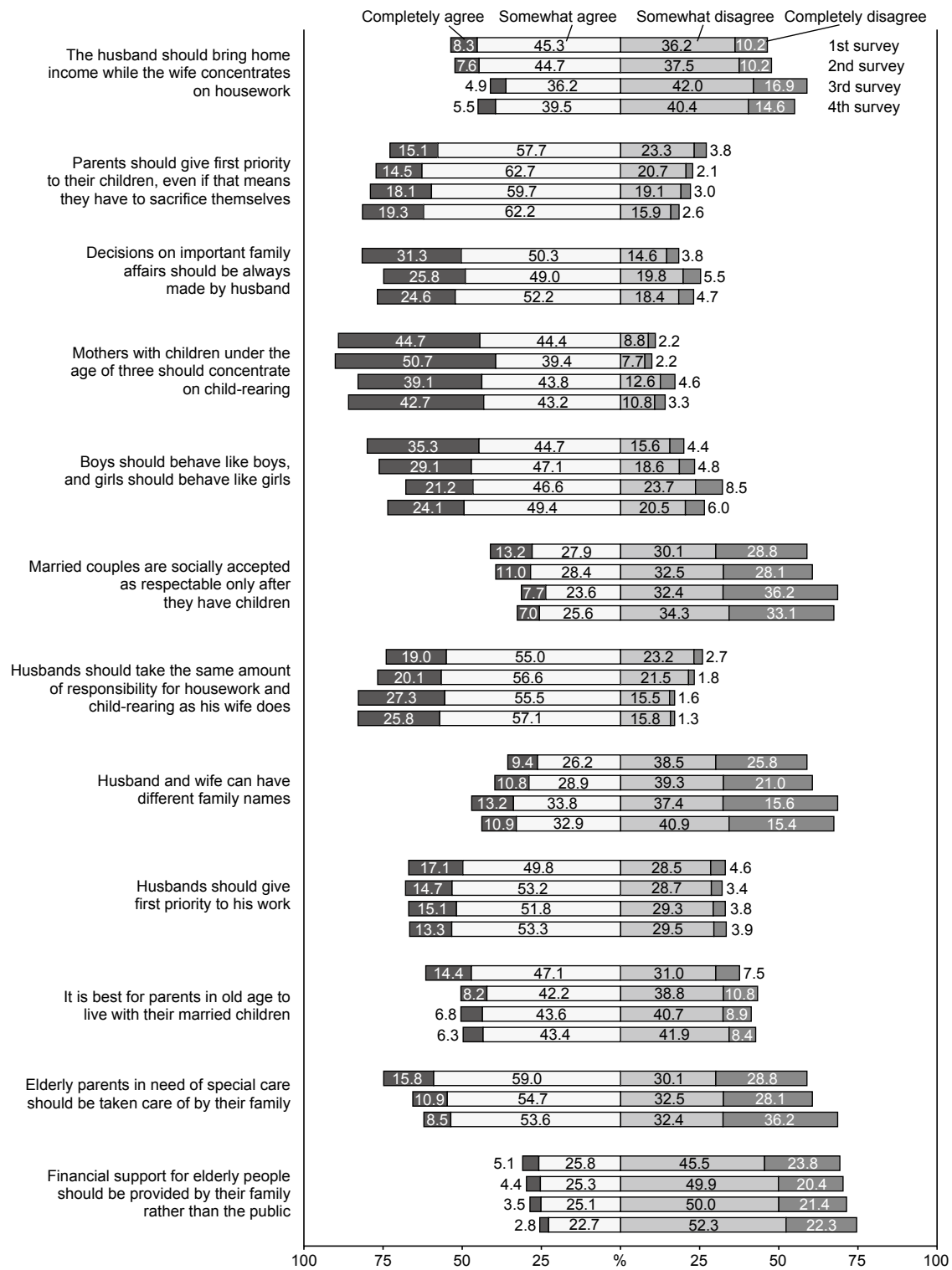
Pertaining to the roles of husbands and fathers, the increase in agreement seen on the third survey for the statement "husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife does" has lost momentum to stop at 82.9%. The decrease in agreement with the statement "decisions on important family affairs should be always made by husband," which fell from 81.6% on the second survey to 74.8% on the third survey, has ceased to decrease and actually presented a small increase on this survey to reach 76.8%. However, figures for "the husband should give first priority to his work" have changed little since the first survey, settling at 66.6% for this survey.

Regarding the role of mothers, the percentages of wives that agree with "mothers with children under the age of 3 should concentrate on child-rearing" decreased from nearly 90% on the first and second surveys to 82.9% on the third survey, but now have again risen slightly to 85.9%. Furthermore, the proportion of wives that affirm the statement "boys should behave like boys, and girls should behave like girls" continued to decline between the first and third surveys, dropping 8 points between the second and third. However, this, too, has now changed directions to rise 6 points, reaching 73.5%.

#### (2) View on Norms regarding the Style of Married Couples

There are also signs of change in the consistent trends present until the third survey regarding views toward the family names of married couples and having children. The percentage of wives that agreed with "husband and wife can have different

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



Note: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger. The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

\*: The questions included from the second survey.

\*\* : In the first and the second survey, the statement asked was, "Elderly parents should co-reside with son and his wife."

family names” increased between the first and third surveys, but the proportion has now fallen by 3 points to reach 43.8%. In regards to “married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children,” the percentage of wives that disagreed rose by 8 points between the second and third surveys to reach 68.8%, but that figure has now fallen slightly to 67.4%.

### **(3) View on the Role of Parents**

The percentage of wives that agree with “parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means they have to sacrifice themselves” increased to the 70th percentile until the third survey, and on this survey the share increased by 4 points to surpass 80.0% and reach 81.5%. The percentage of approval continues to rise as it has in the past.

### **(4) View on the Support to Elderly Parents**

The view on the support to elderly parents that was observed until the third survey continued and lasted through the fourth survey. The percentage of wives that agree with the statement “it is best for parents in old age to live with their married children” sank 10 points between the first and second surveys and thereafter remain around 50%, including this survey (49.7%). While the proportion of wives that agree with “elderly parents in need of special care should be taken care of by their family” exceeds 60%, it sank 4 points between the third and fourth surveys to 62.1%. Moreover, agreement with the statement “financial support for elderly people should be provided by their family rather than by the public” declined by 3 points from the third survey to 25.5%.

To summarize, the results of the fourth survey are consistent with its predecessors in terms of which statements received more agreement and which received more disapproval. However, partly different trends are evident in this survey. Specifically, the increasing disapproval of traditional views on the norms regarding gender roles and the style of married couples that were seen until the third survey lost its momentum, and there were signs of returning to traditional ways of thinking particularly concerning the division of labor between husbands and wives, the roles of wives, and attitudes toward children. At the same time, however, the changes that had continued until the third survey pertaining to views on the role of parents and support to elderly parents continued.

## **2. View on Gender Roles**

### **(1) Division of Labor between Husbands and Wives**

Is there a difference in the percentages of wives who agree with the statement “the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework” depending on the age and employment status of wives? Figures calculated by age group of wives (Table VI-1) show us that the percentage who agreed is highest for wives in their 60s, where more than half of all wives agree (57.2%). Wives age 29 and below come in at second at 47.9%, followed by the 30s, 40s, and 50s, which all fall around the low 40th percentile. Compared with the results from the third survey, the greatest change was observed in the percent of agreement by wives age 29 and younger where the percent who agree increased while it decreased for wives age 50 and older. Concretely, the percentage of agreement increased in the age groups 29 and younger, 30s, and 40s by 12, 8, and 7 points, respectively, while the corresponding figures in the 50s and 60s both fell by several points.

Looking at figures by the employment status of wives, 55.3% of full-time homemakers, 43.5% of the self-employed and wives working for family businesses, 39.6% of part-time workers, and 33.3% of full-time workers agreed with the statement “the husband should bring home income while the wife concentrates on housework.” This order of agreement was the same as on the second and third surveys. However, while there was little difference between the figures for full-time homemaker, the self-employed and family business between the third and fourth surveys, the percentages for full-time and part-time workers rose by nearly 12 and 8 points, respectively, on the fourth survey.

### **(2) Role of Husbands**

The percentage of wives that agreed with the statement “husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife” was over 80% regardless of the age of wives, and there was very little disparity between age groups (Table VI-2). The percentages of agreement by employment status of wives in descending order are as follows; full-time workers (88.1%), part-time (84.3%), the self-employed and family business workers (81.4%), and finally full-time homemakers (79.4%). Thus, excluding full-time homemakers, the percentages of those agreed reached over 80% for all employment statuses. In the third survey, the percentage of agreement was slightly higher for full-time homemakers than for the self-employed and family business workers, but on the fourth survey, the percent agreed was higher for the self-employed and family business workers. In addition, while over 90% of full-time

workers expressed agreement with this statement on the third survey, only 88.1% did so this time.

Nevertheless, there was still very little change from the third survey.

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

	Total			Agree			Disagree		
	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	6,608	6,189	5,678	52.3%	41.1%	45.0%	47.7%	58.9%	55.0%
Age of wife									
29 years old and under	586	479	315	48.8	35.7	47.9	51.2	64.3	52.1
30 to 39 years old	1,578	1,533	1,323	45.4	34.1	41.7	54.6	65.9	58.3
40 to 49 years old	1,995	1,511	1,334	44.8	33.2	39.8	55.2	66.8	60.2
50 to 59 years old	1,552	1,723	1,509	59.7	44.8	42.3	40.3	55.2	57.7
60 to 69 years old	897	943	1,197	70.0	61.2	57.2	30.0	38.8	42.8
Employment status of wife									
Full-time employee	963	1,029	1,101	33.1	21.7	33.3	66.9	78.3	66.7
Part-time employee	849	1,469	1,338	41.7	31.8	39.6	58.3	68.2	60.4
Self-employed and family worker	721	744	662	52.7	43.3	43.5	47.3	56.7	56.5
Full-time homemaker	2,759	2,677	2,190	62.7	53.8	55.3	37.4	46.2	44.7

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Table VI-2 Responses to the Statement “The husband should take the same amount of responsibility for housework and child-rearing as his wife does” by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

	Total			Agree			Disagree		
	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	6,602	6,207	5,680	76.7%	82.8%	82.9%	23.3%	17.2%	17.1%
Age of wife									
29 years old and under	588	477	315	80.4	83.9	84.1	19.5	16.1	15.9
30 to 39 years old	1,582	1,539	1,316	77.9	84.7	82.7	22.1	15.3	17.3
40 to 49 years old	1,994	1,515	1,335	77.8	83.6	82.7	22.3	16.4	17.4
50 to 59 years old	1,558	1,730	1,510	73.2	82.4	83.5	26.7	17.6	16.5
60 to 69 years old	880	946	1,204	75.7	78.9	82.2	24.4	21.1	17.8
Employment status of wife									
Full-time employee	981	1,037	1,096	85.0	90.5	88.1	15.0	9.5	11.9
Part-time employee	849	1,470	1,338	80.4	84.6	84.3	19.7	15.4	15.8
Self-employed and family worker	725	747	660	76.9	78.8	81.4	23.2	21.2	18.7
Full-time homemaker	2,741	2,675	2,195	72.1	79.6	79.4	27.9	20.4	20.6

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### (3) Role of Mothers

Table VI-3 shows the difference in the percentage of wives who agreed with the statement “mothers with children under the age of 3 should concentrate on child-rearing” by age group of wives. Generally, the older the wife, the higher the percentage of agreement; 78.4% of wives in their 30s agree with the statement, while the 29 and under, 40s, and 50s are also in the 80th percentile

(81.7%, 85.8%, and 87.3%, respectively). Over 90% of wives in their 60s agree with this statement (93.3%). An examination of the changes that have taken place since the second survey reveals that there has been a tremendous amount of change in the percentage agreed by wives age 29 or younger,; while there was a 16-point drop between the second and third surveys, and there was a 12 point increase between the third and fourth.

The results categorized by the employment status of wives show that full-time homemakers agree with this statement the most (90.7%), while full-time workers offer the least amount of approval (76.9%). Compared with the third survey,

the percent agreed rose by 12 points for full-time workers, presenting figures that are closer to the results of the second survey (79.5%). Changes in the percentage of agreement for all other employment statuses were less than 3 points.

**Table VI-3 Responses to the Statement “Mothers with children under the age of 3 should concentrate on child-rearing” by Age and Employment Status of Wife**

	Total			Agree			Disagree		
	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	6,626	6,235	5,694	90.1%	82.9%	85.9%	9.9%	17.1%	14.1%
Age of wife									
29 years old and under	587	476	316	85.5	69.5	81.7	14.5	30.5	18.3
30 to 39 years old	1,588	1,537	1,318	84.9	74.4	78.4	15.1	25.6	21.5
40 to 49 years old	1,993	1,519	1,342	90.2	82.5	85.8	9.8	17.5	14.3
50 to 59 years old	1,575	1,743	1,506	94.7	89.2	87.3	5.3	10.8	12.8
60 to 69 years old	883	960	1,212	94.2	92.4	93.3	5.8	7.6	6.8
Employment status of wife									
Full-time employee	984	1,023	1,097	79.5	65.4	76.9	20.5	34.6	23.1
Part-time employee	850	1,481	1,337	89.6	83.0	86.0	10.3	17.0	14.0
Self-employed and family worker	731	757	663	90.2	86.1	85.3	9.9	13.9	14.6
Full-time homemaker	2,754	2,697	2,200	93.4	88.8	90.7	6.5	11.2	9.3

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### 3. View on Norms regarding the Style of Married Couples

Table VI-4 shows that the proportion of wives that disagreed with the statement “married couples are socially accepted as respectable only after they have children” is about the two-thirds (67.4%). The percentage of disagreement is higher, the lower the age of wives; 83.7% of wives age 29 or younger expressed disagreement, 77.2% for those in their 30s, 70.6% in their 40s, 64.8% in their 50s, and 52.0% in their 60s disagreed, producing over 30 point differences between the age group 29 or younger and the group in their 60s.

Looking at the relationship between agreement with this statement and the age of the youngest child (including wives with no children), the largest proportion of wives that disagreed with this statement was those without children at 82.0%. For wives with children, the younger the age of the youngest child, the higher the level of disagreement. For example, nearly 80% (79.4%) of wives whose youngest child is 1 year old or younger disagree. However, disapproval sinks to less than 60% (59.2%) when the youngest child is age 18 or older. There is little disparity with the third survey and the percentage of disapproval declined 4 points for wives whose youngest child

is 1 year old or younger, where there was also a 2- point drop for all other groups.

### 4. View on Norms regarding the Role of Parents

As can be seen in Table VI-5, the percentage of respondents that agreed with the statement “parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means that they may have to make sacrifices themselves” exceeded the three-fourths regardless of the age group of wives. However, there are some differences across the age group; the percent agreed was lower for wives in the 50s and 60s (74.7% and 75.0%, respectively) and higher in the 40s (85.3%), 30s (88.4%), and 29 or younger (93.7%). Compared with the third survey, the percent agreed increased for all age groups. The biggest change was observed for wives in the 40s with an 8-point increase.

The differences in the percent agree by wives’ employment status are not as marked as those by wives’ age. The percent of approval was lowest at 76.6% for wives that are self-employed or worked at family businesses, followed by full-time employees at 81.6%, full-time homemakers at 81.8%, and part-time workers, which presented the highest percentage of agreement at 84.2%.

Compared with the third survey, the percentage of wives agreed increased by 6 points for part-time workers and 5 points for the self-employed, family business workers, and full-time workers.

With respect to the relationship between the percentage of wives agreed with this statement and the age of the youngest child (including wives with no children), the proportion was low for wives without children (77.8%) and those whose youngest child is age 18 or older (75.6%). The younger the age of the youngest child, the higher the level of agreement with this statement; 84.6% of respondents whose youngest child is age 18 or younger agreed, while corresponding figures for wives whose youngest child is 12 or younger, for those whose youngest child is 6 or younger, are 89.7% and 88.9%, respectively. For wives whose youngest child is 3 or younger, and those

whose youngest child is 1 or younger, the percent agree with the statement exceeds 90 % (92.4%, and 94.4%, respectively). It is evident that the majority of wives put children their top priority and wives with younger children show particular support for this statement. The three surveys in the past consistently showed that the wives with younger children are more likely to show support for the statement. The differences between the maximum and minimum figures range between 17 and 20 points. Compared with the third survey, the percentage of wives in agreement with the above statement increased slightly in all categories with respect to the age of the youngest child; it increased by 7 points for wives whose youngest child is 18 or younger, by 6 points for those whose youngest child is 12 or younger, and between 4 and 5 points in all other cases.

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

	Total			Agree			Disagree		
	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	6,487	6,108	5,632	39.4%	31.4%	32.6%	60.6%	68.6%	67.4%
Age of wife									
29 years old and under	584	478	313	23.8	15.9	16.3	76.2	84.1	83.7
30 to 39 years old	1,578	1,524	1,318	29.6	21.8	22.8	70.5	78.2	77.2
40 to 49 years old	1,974	1,506	1,322	36.8	28.2	29.4	63.2	71.8	70.6
50 to 59 years old	1,511	1,682	1,491	48.8	36.1	35.2	51.1	63.9	64.8
60 to 69 years old	840	918	1,188	58.2	51.6	48.0	41.8	48.4	52.0
Age of the youngest child									
Less than 1 year old	181	286	214	25.4	16.8	20.5	74.6	83.2	79.4
Less than 3 years old	532	480	381	26.9	19.6	21.8	73.1	80.4	78.2
Less than 6 years old	512	498	426	30.6	24.9	25.3	69.3	75.1	74.7
Less than 12 years old	922	753	700	34.5	28.8	28.0	65.6	71.2	72.0
Less than 18 years old	972	752	614	37.4	28.2	28.8	62.8	71.8	71.2
18 years and over	2,512	2,650	2,365	50.1	41.3	40.8	49.9	58.7	59.2
No children	525	613	544	20.0	15.5	18.0	80.0	84.5	82.0

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Table VI-5 Responses to the Statement “Parents should give first priority to their children, even if that means they have to sacrifice themselves” by Age, Employment Status of Wife and Age of the Youngest Child**

	Total			Agree			Disagree		
	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey	2nd survey	3rd survey	4th survey
Total	6,558	6,188	5,680	77.2%	77.8%	81.5%	22.8%	22.2%	18.5%
Age of wife									
29 years old and under	589	479	316	83.3	88.7	93.7	16.6	11.3	6.4
30 to 39 years old	1,581	1,539	1,324	80.5	84.3	88.4	19.4	15.7	11.5
40 to 49 years old	1,978	1,513	1,342	72.8	77.7	85.3	27.1	22.3	14.6
50 to 59 years old	1,531	1,718	1,508	74.3	72.6	74.7	25.8	27.4	25.4
60 to 69 years old	879	939	1,190	82.0	71.5	75.0	18.0	28.5	25.0
Employment status of wife									
Full-time employee	968	1,022	1,100	73.8	77.1	81.6	26.3	22.9	18.3
Part-time employee	847	1,466	1,342	73.2	77.8	84.2	26.8	22.2	15.8
Self-employed and family worker	720	755	661	75.5	71.7	76.7	24.5	28.3	23.3
Full-time homemaker	2,727	2,677	2,190	80.5	80.0	81.8	19.5	20.0	18.2
Age of the youngest child									
Less than 1 year old	183	291	216	83.0	90.0	94.4	16.9	10.0	5.6
Less than 3 years old	529	482	381	86.4	87.8	92.4	13.6	12.2	7.6
Less than 6 years old	516	500	424	81.0	85.4	88.9	19.0	14.6	11.1
Less than 12 years old	934	763	706	76.3	83.9	89.7	23.6	16.1	10.3
Less than 18 years old	980	753	624	76.2	77.8	84.6	23.7	22.2	15.4
18 years and over	2,572	2,707	2,392	76.5	72.9	75.6	23.4	27.1	24.4
No children	507	609	545	66.7	73.4	77.8	33.3	26.6	22.2

Note 1: The figures are computed for wives age 69 or younger.

Note 2: The proportion in the table may not add up to 100% due to rounding.