

Japanese Society and Families After COVID-19 —Responding to Changes

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Sorry, this translation is unfinished

(<https://www.nippon.com/en/column/g00347/>)

1 .Japanese families after covid-19

■ the trend of Japanese family after WW.Ⅱ

* **Showa period** (1945-1989) the age of stability

Most people could get married and few divorce

Most men' s wage had increased

Most young people could make traditional family (men mainly work outside, and women mainly do housework)

* **Heisei period**(1989—2019)

It becomes difficult for young to make and maintain traditional families

Young people who have not spouses or boy/girl friends have been increasing

Whether Covid-19 pandemic may change that trend?

1 .Japanese families after covid-19

■ Covid-19 and 'Intimacy'

1. Differences between features of intimacy

* Western countries (esp. Latin countries)

- Intimacy is expressed by body communications

(people usually hug and kiss between family, relatives and friends)

* Japan (and east Asian countries)

people rarely express their intimacy by body communications even among families

people often buy intimacy outside family(kyabakura, hostclub, prostitution)

people often are satisfied by virtual relationship (idle, anime charactes)

There ara a lot of isolated singles (like 'Hikikomori')

感染の広がりの経路、速度に何かしらの影響を与えているだろう。

1 .Japanese families after covid-19

■ Covid-19 and 'Intimacy'

What do Covid-19 effect intimacy ?

2. 「new lifestyle」 「complete transformation of behavior」 (5/1 the experts committee offered opinions during the pandemic)

but

* That opinions do not mention romantic love, marriage life or sexual life.
(There are no opinions whether spouses should avoid sexual relationship)

(I'm interested in the number of birth 10 months later)

1 .Japanese families after covid-19

■ Covid-19 and 'Intimacy'

What do Covid-19 effect intimacy ?

2. 「new lifestyle」 「complete transformation of behavior」

* Effects on match-making ?

* Effects on love relationship ?

1 .Japanese families after covid-19

■ Long-term Effects of covid-19

* Japanese families after the end of covid -19

2. Japan's marriage crisis

❖ Japan's 'couple formation crisis'

* Decline in marriage

The unmarried rate in the 30-34 age

male 47.1% / female 34.5% (in 2015)

(in 1975, 14.3% for men, and 7.7% for women)

* Decline in real relationships and sexual activities

The rate who have a steady girlfriend or boyfriend

(include 'engaged') among unmarried

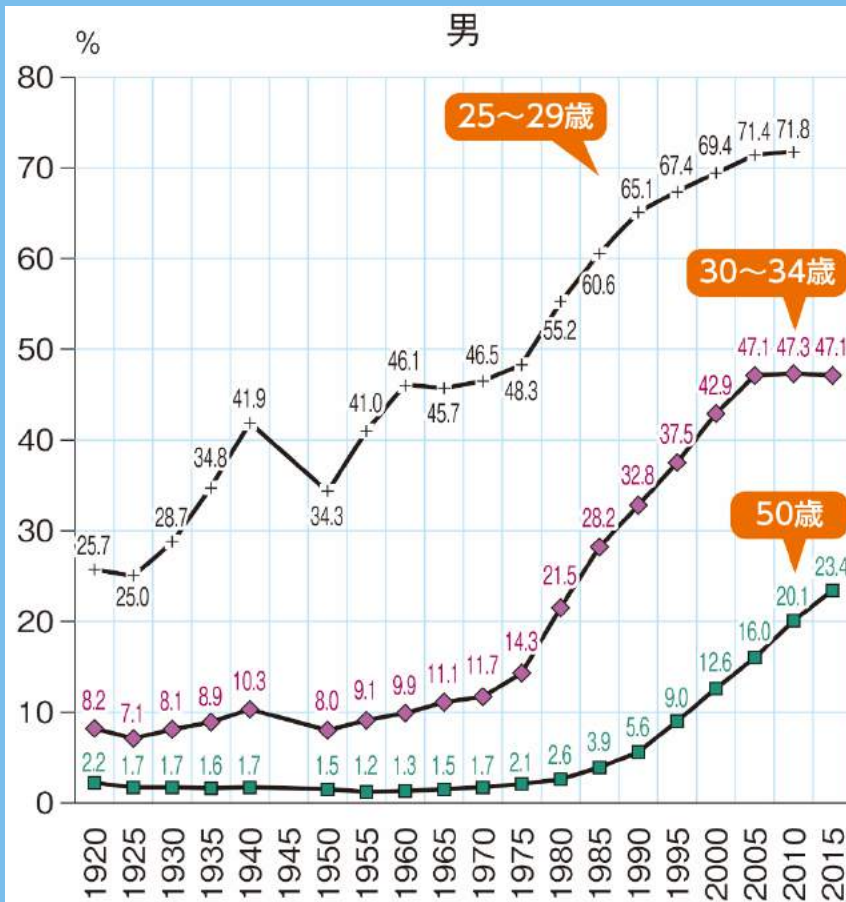
male 21.3% / female 30.2% (in 2015, 18-34 age)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

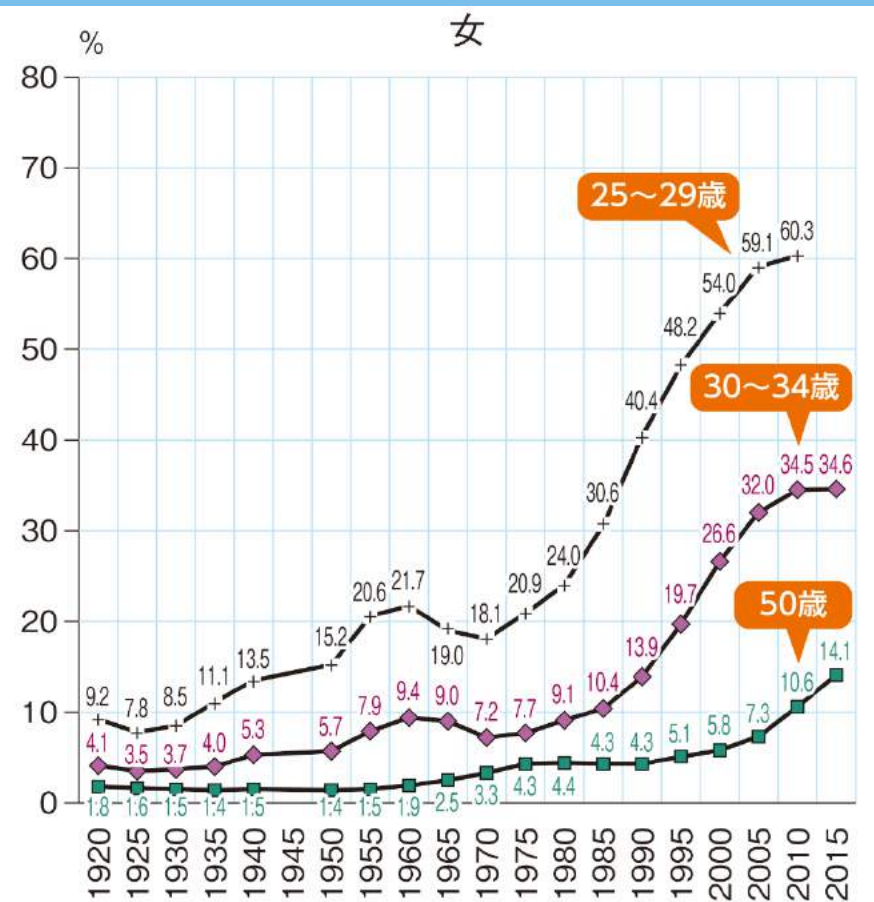
Figure 1

Transition of unmarried rate by age

Male



Female



(Source: Census)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

Figure 2 The rate of people who have a steady girlfriend or boyfriend among unmarried people (%)

	1992	1997	2002	2005	2010	2015
Male						
Has a steady girlfriend	26.3	26.2	25.1	27.2	24.6	21.3
Has a girlfriend	19.2	15.3	11.3	14.0	9.4	5.9
Female						
Has a steady boyfriend	35.5	35.4	37.0	37.0	34.0	30.2
Has a boyfriend	19.5	15.9	12.4	12.4	11.9	7.7

* a steady girl/boyfriend includes 'is engaged'

(Source: The report on the 15th Japanese National Fertility Survey, 2015, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

Figure 3 The rate of people who *never have* a sexual experience among unmarried people by age (%)

	1992	1997	2002	2005	2010	2015
Male						
18-19(age)	70.9	64.9	64.2	60.7	68.5	72.8
20-24	43.0	42.5	35.8	33.6	40.5	47.0
Female						
18-19	77.3	68.3	62.9	62.5	68.1	74.5
20-24	53.0	42.6	38.3	36.3	40.1	46.5

(Source: The report on the 15th Japanese National Fertility Survey, 2015, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

Figure 4

*The rate of students who **have** a sexual experience(%)*

	1987	1993	1999	2005	2011	2017
Male						
High school students	11.5	14.4	26.5	26.6	14.6	13.6
University students	46.5	57.3	62.5	63.0	53.7	47.0
Female						
High school students	8.7	15.7	23.7	30.3	22.5	19.3
University students	26.1	43.4	50.5	62.2	46.0	36.7

- (Source: The Japanese Association for Sex Education)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

- ❖ The differences of marriage crisis between European countries and Japan
- ❖ The decline in marriage in European countries is the result of a 'life-style revolution' after 1960's
They prefer alternative life-styles to traditional marriage.
ex) increase of 'co-habitations' and
'having children without marriage'
(the power of couple-formation has not become weak)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

- ❖ The decline in marriage in Japan is the result of obsession with the traditional life-style(gender role)

- ❖ Few cohabitations in Japan

The rate of cohabitation among unmarried adults was only 1.8% in 2015, the rate has decreased since 2002 (2.3%).

- ❖ Few unmarried mothers In Japan

The rate of unmarried mothers was only 2.3% in 2015.
Cf. Korea 1.9%(2014)

2. Japan's marriage crisis

figure3. Percentage of Birth Outside Marriage

Figure8. Percentage of Birth Outside Marriage

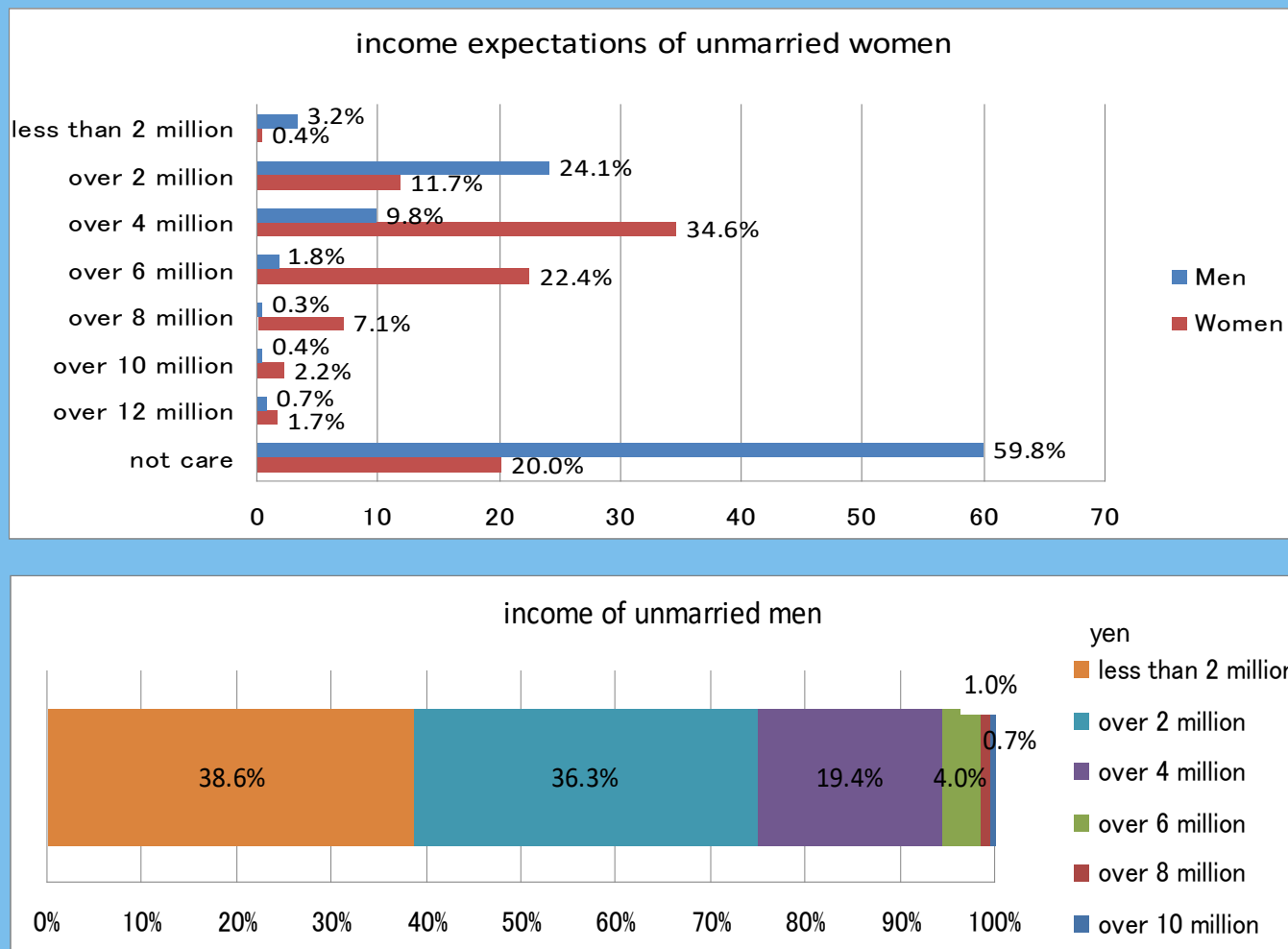
	1970	1990	2012
Sweden	18.6	47.0	54.5
France	6.8	30.1	56.7
Britain	8.0	27.9	47.6
US	10.0	28.0	40.7
Germany	7.2	15.3	34.5
Spain	1.4	9.6	39.0
Italy	2.2	6.5	25.7
Japan	0.9	1.1	2.2

3. The reasons behind Japan's marriage crisis

- ❖ The combination of three factors has caused Japan's marriage crisis
- 1. Strong tendency for women to be homemakers
- 2. Young men who cannot support their family have increased
- 3. Most of unmarried young live with and are supported by their parents('parasites single' phenomena.)

3. The reasons behind Japan's marriage

Figure 12



(Source : 'Seikatsufukusikenkyu' No.74 2010 Meiji Yasuda Institute of Life and Wellness)

3. The reasons behind Japan's marriage crisis

The logic of decline in marriage in Japan

1. Young people hope to create a traditional family, even now
'Traditional family' means
a husband mainly works outside, a wife mainly does
housework and lead a decent life.
2. The current economic situations of Japan doesn't permit
all young people to create traditional families.
3. Most unmarried people live with their parents, waiting for a
suitable marriage partner to emerge.
(but won't emerge)

3. The reasons behind Japan's marriage crisis

Differences between Europeans and Japanese

- ❖ European people have moved to the priority on 'intimacy'
Men and women are required economical independence.
They try alternative lifestyles to satisfy their intimacy even though they cannot accomplish economic roles.
- ❖ Japanese people adhere to traditional economic roles
They tend to hope to make traditional families.
If they cannot, they prefer remaining single living with their parents to alternative lifestyles
Even the level of intimacy of spouses is low in Japan.

4. The development of virtual relationships and commercialization of intimacy.

Some prefer virtual relationships or to buy intimacy for satisfying their intimacy and passionate feelings

- ❖ Pet as a family
- ❖ indulged in imaginative romance in computer-games, comics, or animations
- ❖ pursuit for young idols, singers, stars---
- ❖ buy a temporal intimacy (especially for men)
 - maid-café, 'kyabakura(Japanese-style club)', prostitutes
- even some women use rentaru-karesi(a rental-boyfriend)

4. The development of virtual relationships and commercialization of intimacy

Figure research data (by Cabinet Office in 2010)

A 'Do you fall in love with a character in media'

(メディアの中のキャラクターや登場人物に恋をすることがありますか)

Percentage of saying 'Yes' age 20-39 (10000samples)

	married	have partner	had partner	never had partner
male	5.3	7.5	8.0	14.6
female	13.5	18.0	18.1	30.2

B. 'Do you fall in love with a star or an idol'

(身近にいないタレントやアイドルに恋をすることがありますか)

male	7.3	9.7	10.3	11.3
female	15.6	18.3	20.2	25.3

4. The development of virtual relationships and commercialization of

Figure research data (by Yamada in 2019-unpublished)

% (frequent + sometime)

* 'Do you fall in love with a character in media(anime or game)'

male 12.2% female 11.6%

* 'Do you fall in love with a star, an idol or sports athletes

male 14.3% female 18.0%

* 'Do you visit kyabakura, maid café, hostclub or so on.

male 10.1% female 2.3%

* 'Do you use sexual services(prostitutes or so on)

male 16.3% female 1.4%

(sample 5991 age 20-39 live in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba area)

5. Japanese families after covid-19

The trend of Japanese families in the Heisei era

1. It has become for young to make a traditional family (a husband mainly works outside, a wife mainly does housework and lead a decent)
2. Even now, young adhere to making a traditional family, so young become conservative and avoid real love
3. Young who cannot make a traditional family tend to be satisfied with virtual relationship or buying intimacy in market.
4. Some young try to make a new lifestyle, but it doesn't spread

5. Japanese families after covid-19

Whether that trend will be reversed or accelerated after covid-19

1. It will become harder to make and maintain a traditional family.

During this pandemic, it revealed that a lot of non-regular workers and self-employed persons cannot lead decent lives

(The number of women who want to get married with men who have stable jobs like public servants employees of large companies may increase. ? Then, the number of marriages will decrease.?)

5. Japanese families after covid-19

2. How about real love relationships

*To avoid the risk of infection, real love relationships will decline.?

or

*Because of the need of real intimacy, after covid-19 the number of people who want to experience real intimacy. ?

5. Japanese families after covid-19

3. How about virtual relationships and commercialization of intimacy?

① commercialization of intimacy

- decline because of the risk of infection?
- increase after the pandemic?
- increase of online intimacy service

② virtual relationship

- increase ?
- but cannot do events

③ pet → pet owner increase

5. Japanese families after covid-19

- This trend leads to a class society and the increase of people who have no relatives
middle aged people who cannot make or maintain traditional families has been increasing.

* covid-19 may accelerate the gap between people who can make a traditional families and cannot

- ❖ Japanese society - familism 日本社会の前提 家族主義
- ❖ Aged people who have no relatives tend to be isolated

5. Japanese families after covid-19

■ Covid-19 has revealed that--

The gap society of Japan

Japan is notorious about the high rate of poverty but not apparent before the

コロナ災害

The pandemic revealed that the risk of non-regular workers, freelances and self-employees (esp. Young women who are engaged in serving customers)

there are over 50,000 kyabakura clubs (there are over 500 host clubs in Japan)

5. Japanese families after covid-19

- * The current government's plans will improve making a family and diversity of

- * 1000000 yen payment for all people

 - a kind of basic income

- *

- * Whether the government will continue that plans like basic income or stop after the pandemic