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THE TRANSITION OF THE JAPANESE MOTHER'S WAY OF THINKING ABOUT CHILD-REARING

By

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This research aimed at examining the Japanese mother's way of thinking about child-rearing and their actual rearing behaviour in connection with the change of periods - the early days of the Showa era (1930), the disordered period after World War II and today (1970). The subjects were women with a high level of academic career who experienced child-rearing in any of the three periods. The researches were made with questionnaires and interviews.

The results showed remarkable differences between the generations. The actual rearing behaviours reflected differences in terms of family organizations, economic conditions or social situations of each period. In addition to those factors, the change of mother's view of value and a reason for living caused distinctions between the generations concerning the way of thinking about child-rearing.

This research made it clear that there existed a considerable effect of social and cultural factors on child-rearing.

INTRODUCTION

"Child-rearing (C-R)" means to bring up children who were born. This rearing behaviour (R-B), of course, has a long history from the dawn of a human history. It also can be seen among other mammals as well. In the case of other mammals, R-B is generally inborn and fixed. In the case of human beings, however, as is shown in the works of Mead (1935) and other cultural anthropologists, it reflects cultural factors to a high degree. As it is flexible, it differs with individuals. The two main factors which determine human's R-B are biological factors of the mother's body including secretion of a hormone, and personal factors, that is, parents' view of value and their life behaviour. Besides, cultural and social factors can not be ignored. They have a great influence especially upon the thoughts as to C-R and R-B, that is to say, under what kind of mental condition and by what kind of method C-R would be carried out.

In Japan, a value system and a way of life have remarkably changed between pre- and postwar periods. Above all, changes caused by the disruption of "the family system" assumably influenced R-B and the thoughts on C-R to a great degree.

This research aimed at examining the transition of Japanese mother's way of thinking about C-R and their actual R-B in connection with the change of periods-the early days of the Showa era, the disordered period after World War II and today.

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METHOD

Subjects: For the convenience of grasping the transition of mother's way of thinking about C-R and their actual R-B, the authors chose three periods — (1) the early days of Showa era (around 1930's) (2) the years of Showa 20 to 25, the disordered period after World War II (around 1950's) (3) around the year of Showa 45 (around 1970's); and the subjects of this research were mothers who had their first delivery in any of these periods and spent several years in rearing children. We call a group of mothers who belong to the period (1): A generation (A), the period (2): B generation (B), the period (3): C generation (C).

All the subjects had a high level of academic career. For this reason, the result obtained from this research might not necessarily have generality. Nevertheless, we assume that women with a high level of academic career can sensitively realize the change of the age, and can cope with it, so that it might be worth doing to compare the way of thinking about C-R of women with a high level of academic career in different periods.

The subjects in this research were graduates of Ochanomizu Women's University (former Tokyo Women's Higher School of Teachers), one of the authors, Ohinata's Alma Mater.

Supposing the age of the first delivery is 27 years old (according to Yuzawa, 1975), we chose graduates who were supposed to have had their first delivery in any of the three periods above mentioned—100 graduates for each generation, random sampling.

Procedure: The first stage of this research was began with sending questionnaires, and in the second stage, the author (female) visited the subjects individually and had interviews with them. The contents of the research were: (1) concrete R-B (2) mother's mental situation during C-R (How lively she carried out works of C-R and with how much confidence and psychological stability as a mother.) (3) mother's thoughts on C-R (her evaluation of the significance of C-R, her view of children, her self-evaluation as a mother.) The authors consider the results of (1)–(3) in connection with the C-R environment of each generation, and examine the difference among the generations. The C-R environment stated here means family structure, mother's vocational status during the C-R period, the degree of husband's co-operation in C-R, economic conditons, social situation, and so on. Incidentally the questionnaires consisted chiefly of free description, (not the multiple choice type or yes-no type questions,) in order to grasp the way of thinking of each subject more clearly. The subjects of the second stage research were confined to those who accepted their co-operation to our research and who lived in the area where the author could pay visits to them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first stage of the research was to send questionnaires to 300 subjects by mail. 16 questionnaires were returned because of wrong address, and 161 questionnaires were collected. (collection-rate: 56.7%) This is quite high collection-rate considering

that this research was carried out by sending-by-mail method. We then omitted the questionnaires answered by women who haven't experienced delivery and C-R. Consequently, the number of valid answers was 134, that is, 50 from (A), 35 from (B), and 49 from (C). The composition of the subjects can be seen in Table (1).

Table 1. The subjects

		A generation	B generation	C generation	total
Number of valid answers	The first stage of research	50	35	49	134
	†The second stage of research	10	1	8	19
The average age at the time of the research		67.2 (64 to 70)	54.6 (50 to 58)	31.5 (27 to 35)	
The year of graduation		Showa 3 to 8	Showa 15 to 20	Showa 40 to 45	
The major faculty	Literature	15	4	23	42
	Science	25	23	13	61
	Home economics	10	8	13	31

† As far as generation B is concerned, there is only one subject who lives within the area where the authors can pay her a visit, so that generation A and C are the main subjects of the second stage of research.

1. Generation difference in delivery

Table (2) shows the basic generation difference in delivery. As for the age of marriage, (C) married 2 years younger than (A) and (B). This is mainly because (A) and (B) were graduates of the former Tokyo Women's Higher School of Teachers, and they had the obligation to serve as a teacher for a certain period of time after graduation in return for free education fee. In addition to that, there were not sufficient number of men to get married with because of World war II. Concerning the range of marriage-age, that of (A) & (B) is far wider than that of (C). As for the time of the first delivery, it is common to the three generations that it came within 2 years after their marriage. Average number of years from the first delivery to the last one is as follows: (A) 8 years (the longest among the 3 generations, (B) 3.4 years, (C) 3.3 years. This generation difference has some effect on the generation difference in the number of children, that is to say, (A) has more children than (B)&(C): (A) 3.4 children, (B) 2.2 children, (C) 2.0 children. Incidentally this research shows that (A) has 3.4 children, but this number is fewer than that of general average at that time: 5.04 children. ("Research on delivery capability" by the Population Problem Research, 1940) This is because the age of the first delivery of (A) in this research is older than the general average.

Although the numbers of children of (B) and (C) are almost the same, the background of each generation differs. In the case of (B), their C-R period was the

disordered period after World War II, and they couldn't afford to have many children. Consequently, the abortion rate of (B) is much higher than that of the other two generations. (The abortion rate of (B) is almost 50%.) Furthermore, as for the generation difference in the number of children and in the abortion rate, it reflects not only economic conditions but also the degree of spread of contraceptive means, and also the change of mother's view of children. Concerning the mother's view of children, (A) tends to regard children as a gift. At interviews, all the subjects answered that they took it for granted to give birth to children once they got pregnant. There were no question such as whether they should have children or not. On the other hand, the subjects of (C) often used the expression "to make children." Most of them decided the number of children considering their lifeplan and children's education. This is made possible by the spread of contraceptive means.

Table 2. Generation difference concerning delivery

	A generation n=50	B generation n=35	C generation n=49
1. The average age of marriage	26.9	26.1	24.7
2. The distribution of the age of marriage	(22 to 45)	(21 to 37)	(21 to 29)
3. The average age of the first delivery	27.7	28.2	26.4
4. The average age of the last delivery	35.7	31.6	29.5†
5. The average number of children††	3.4 (3.2)	2.2 (2.0)	2.0 (2.0)
6. The abortion rate†††	18.0%	42.9%	16.3%

† Concerning the age of the last delivery of C generation, there are some possibilities of further delivery, so that the average age mentioned here is an assumed average age of the last delivery of those who have more than two children considering the average number of children today.

†† The figures in parentheses show the number of children who were alive at the time of the research.

††† The significant difference
B>A; $p<0.01$ B>C; $p<0.01$

2. Generation difference in C-R behaviour

Generation difference in C-R behaviour can be seen in Table (3).

(1) Giving milk: There are clear differences between (A) and (B) and (C) whether they adopted breast-feeding (B-F) or artificial feeding (A-F). More than 80% of (A) and (B) reared children at B-F but less than half of (C) adopted this way. Reasons why they adopted B-F were "mother's milk is more nutritious," and "B-F is the most natural way of giving milk," which were common to the three generations. In addi-

Table 3. Generation difference concerning child-rearing (C-R) behaviour†

	A generation n=50	B generation n=35	C generation n=49	††		
				A-C	B-C	A-B
1. The percentage of those who have a job graduation to marriage marriage to 1st delivery during the C-R period after the C-R period	98.0 74.0 62.9 74.0	97.0 60.0 57.1 74.3	93.9 62.9 24.5	**	**	
2. I have someone or some place to depend upon for my children's care	84.0	74.3	40.8	**	**	
3. Giving milk Breast-feeding††† The rigid pattern	84.0 (40.0) 86.0	80.0 (34.3) 71.4	44.9 (8.2) 51.0	** **	** *	 *
4. The sources of information on C-R are C-R books	40.0	28.8	63.3	**	**	
5. The way of children's education I, as a mother, decide it by myself consult with my husband	42.0 38.0	45.7 34.3	24.5 55.1	* *	** *	
6. Husband's participation in C-R My husband shows interests in C-R and children's education My husband actually helps daily C-R I ask my husband to cooperate in C-R	56.0 22.0 40.0	60.0 37.1 34.3	75.5 51.0 85.7	** ** **	 **	 *

† The figures in the Table 3. show the percentages of those who were affirmative about the content of each item in the valid data of each generation.

†† The significant difference; *: $p < 0.05$, **: $p < 0.01$

††† The figures in the parentheses show the percentages of those who feed children at the breast and also give them artificial milk.

tion to these reasons, many of (B) answered, "it was natural to rear children at B-F if possible because there was milk rationing system at that time." As for (C), there were various answers saying, "B-F does good to both mother's and children's emotional stability," or "by B-F, we can have a skinship at the time of giving milk, and it is good for baby's psychological development." This is a reflection of knowledge acquired from child-rearing books or lectures of psychology. Incidentally, there were a few answers saying, "A-F is better for the beauty of mother and for the rationalization of C-R." That kind of answer could not be seen in the answers of (A) and (B) at all.

About half of those who adopted B-F in (A) and (B), gave children artificial milk, too. This way of giving milk is called, "the mixed way of giving milk." They adopted "mixed way of giving milk" because they had their own jobs. About 60% of (A) and (B) had their own jobs during the C-R period.

What is peculiar to (B) is that after they reared their first children at B-F, more than 10% of them gave their second and third children artificial milk. One of the subjects of (B) stated that mother's milk was not available because of weariness and malnutrition. It shows how hard their life was at that time.

The way of giving milk: Most of (A) and (B) gave milk regularly after a certain time of duration (the rigid pattern), but only a half of (C) adopted the same way. The main reason why (A) and (B) adopted the rigid pattern was that it was the most popular way of giving milk at that time. As for (C), there is a strong tendency that mothers themselves decide whether they should adopt the rigid pattern or the demand-feeding, that is, to give children milk in accordance with their need. The criteria of their decision are: which is better for children's body and mental development, and which is more convenient for C-R. Consequently, as for the way of giving milk, (C) can have their choices, though they have some difficulty in selecting the right way of C-R out of many informations. In addition, it is clear that (C) depend far more on child-rearing books for information than (A) and (B) did. (see Table (3)).

(2) Mother's vocational status and division of C-R work during the C-R period: The number of those who had a job during the C-R periods in (A) and (B) is much larger than that in (C). (see Table (3)). Three factors that can be thought of for this generation difference are as follows:

The first factor is the difference of the kind of job they had after their graduation. In the case of (A) and (B), most of them became teachers. Those who continued their work as a teacher during the C-R period commonly stated that the job of teacher was easy to be compatible with house work, and that her working condition was orderly arranged as compared with other jobs. On the other hand, the jobs of (C) were diversified, and the number of those who got job with private sector had increased. The contents of job, however, was mostly routine office work, which was only a temporary job and did not need any special knowledge. This is one of the reasons why mothers made it easy for them to quit their jobs.

The second factor is the difference in economic conditions. Concerning the reason for continuing their work even during the C-R period, 61.3% of (A) and 55.5% of (B) answered it was because of economic reasons. Most of those mothers admirably bore their husband's illness, unemployment or his death in the war. Only 25.0% of (C) put forth economic reasons for continuing their jobs and most of them got married when they were still in University, so that they could not help working in order to get enough money for their living.

The third factor is the problem of division of C-R work. The main reason of those who quit their job in (C) is that there were none whom they could depend upon for their C-R. The number of those whom they can depend upon for their C-R in (C) is far less than those in (A) and (B). (see Table (3).) Concerning family structure during the C-R period, we find 38.0% of (A), 57.0% of (B), and 10.2% of (C) lived together with their parents or brothers and sisters. In the case of (A), the rate of living with a

family is not so high, so that many of them employed maids or babysitters to help their C-R. 64.0% of those who answered that there was someone to depend upon for their C-R in (A) had maids or babysitters. On the other hand, in the case of (B), only 14.0% of those who answered that there was someone to depend upon for their C-R employed maids or babysitters. Most of them relied upon their family members or relatives. Consequently, both (A) and (B) had someone with whom they could share their C-R work, but there is much difference in kinds of people whom they could depend on. As for (C), a little less than 90% of them are what is called, "nuclear families", that is to say there are only parents and children in a family. Moreover, it is rather difficult to employ maids nowadays. There is such facilities as a nursery school and the like, but the number of them is not large enough so that only a few of (C) actually depend upon such a facility.

(3) Father's co-operation in C-R: The change of a family structure and decrease in the number of maids lead to the problem of father's co-operation in C-R. Answers to the question, "What kind of father is your husband?" are as follows. The younger the generation is, the more increases the number of co-operative fathers. These young fathers take care of their children and show interests in their children's education. More than a half of fathers in (C) help a day-to-day C-R work such as changing diapers, put children into bath, take them out for a walk and so on. (see Table (3).) In the matter of father's co-operation in C-R, there is a clear difference between (A) and (C).

Incidentally, most of mothers in each generation accept the opinion that "The husband should share C-R work with his wife as much as possible." However, it is clear that the number of wives who actually share C-R work with their husbands is far more in (C) than that in (A) and (B). In the case of (A), there were so many women in a family that the husband's co-operation was not necessary, and men at that time had a firm belief that it is women's job to do house work and C-R, so that wives could not ask their husbands to co-operate. Even in (C), a little more than 10% of husbands never co-operated in C-R both mentally and concretely. In this case, the wives of those husbands were discontented with their husbands' attitude rather than they felt resigned. It was also common for them to complain that C-R work was too much a burden to them.

With regard to the decision of the way of discipline and education, about a half of (A) and (B) answered that a mother decided it. Nevertheless, more than half of (C) answered that they talked with their husbands about it. (see Table (3).) Consequently, we can observe a considerable generation difference in a father's co-operation in C-R — fathers today play an important role in C-R.

3. *Generation difference in the evaluation of significance of C-R*

Table (4) shows the main generation difference in the evaluation of significance of C-R.

There is no generation difference in aspect of pleasure and weariness brought by C-R.

Table 4. Generation difference concerning the evaluation of child-rearing (C-R)†

	A generation n=50	B generation n=35	C generation n=49	††		
				A-C	B-C	A-B
1. C-R is my pleasure. C-R is mentally tiresome. C-R is physically tiresome. C-R presents a feeling of satisfaction.	44.0 40.0 62.0 74.0	37.1 42.9 65.7 60.0	42.9 38.8 63.3 40.8	**	*	
2. C-R is a significant work.	74.0	60.0	55.1	*		
3. C-R is a duty of a woman.	56.0	51.4	18.4	**	**	
4. C-R is my worth living.	78.0	65.7	34.7	**	**	
5. I have other worth living than C-R.	20.0	20.0	61.2	**	**	

† The figures in the Table 4. show the percentages of those who were affirmative about the content of each item in the valid data of each generation.

†† The significant difference; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

(A) and (B) had already finished their C-R, but they still had a strong feeling that C-R was a tiresome work both mentally and physically. The percentage of those who had this kind of feeling in (A) and (B) is almost the same as that in (C).

On the other hand, we can observe a remarkable generation difference in the matter of the evaluation of the significance of C-R, and in the matter of where they should locate C-R in the life. (A) put the highest evaluation on C-R of the three generations. Most of (A) regard C-R as a significant job and as a reason for living. Accordingly, the number of answers saying that C-R is a satisfactory work is far larger in (A) than in (B) and (C). (see Table (4).) (C) generally put low evaluation on C-R. Above all, the number of answers saying C-R is not mother's reason for living in (C) is three times as large as that in (A). (see Table (4).) (C) don't completely deny the significance of C-R, but they evaluate the significance of their own life at the same time. This is characteristic of (C). 60% of those who answered that they had other things that they felt worth living than C-R, regarded C-R as a significance work. At the same time, (C) are not satisfied with only doing C-R. They have a desire to get other things worth living than C-R. Moreover, the author could confirm at the time of interviews that their desires was rather strong.

4. Generation difference in the psychological situation of mothers during the C-R period

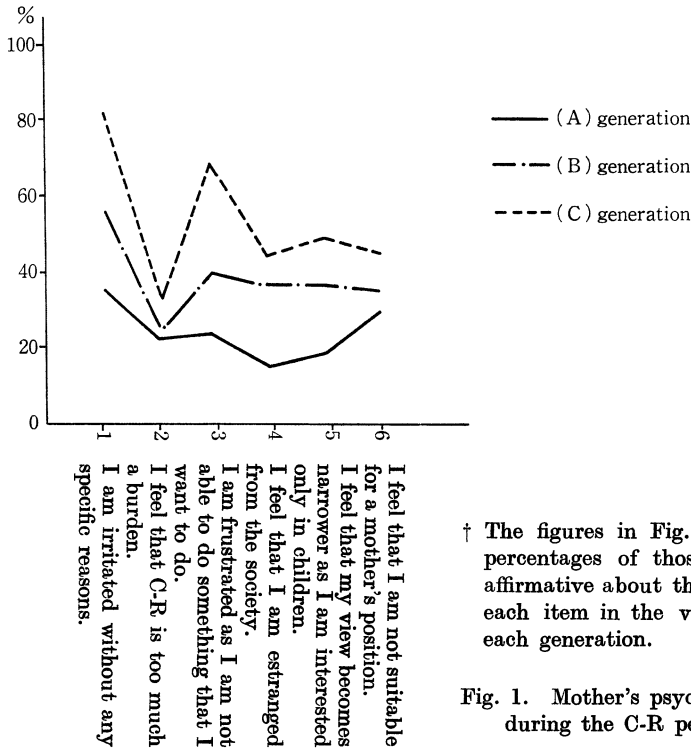
a) A mother's psychological stability

First of all, the authors examined, the mother's psychological stability during the C-R period. Answers were given to 8 articles including irritation, anxiety, and impatience, and so on. Each article was made of quadruple-choice: to feel it often,

sometimes, rare, and never. As a result of G-P analysis, 6 following articles were chosen:

1. to be irritated without any specific reason
2. to feel that C-R is too much a burden
3. to be frustrated on account of not being able to do something that I want to
4. to feel that I am estranged from the society
5. to feel that my view becomes narrower as I am interested only in children
6. to feel that I am not suitable for a mother's position

On the basis of the answers given to the above 6 articles, we calculated individual marks by the Likert's method: 4 points to the answer "feel it often", 3 points to "sometimes", 2 points to "rare", and 1 point of "never"; we added up the points of the 6 articles of each subject. The higher the mark is, the more unstable is her psychological situation. The average mark of each generation is: (A) 12.96, (B) 14.61, (C) 17.21. As we realize from the result, (C)'s average mark is much higher than (A)'s and (B)'s, and the difference in the mark between (C) and (A) and (B) is statistically significant. ($A < C: t=4.94, p < 0.01, B < C: t=3.20, p < 0.01$). Fig. 1 shows the generation difference in each article. With regard to the articles 1,3,4 and 5, (C) shows more anxiety or psychological instability than (A) and (B).



† The figures in Fig. 1 show the percentages of those who were affirmative about the content of each item in the valid date of each generation.

Fig. 1. Mother's psychological stability during the C-R period†

b) Sympathy to neurosis caused by C-R

In connection with a psychological instability shown by (C), there is what is called "C-R neurosis". "C-R neurosis" is a psychological condition that mothers feel irritated and think C-R work as too much a burden because of mental and physical weariness, or care too much about her children's growth or illness. Sometimes it leads a mother to punish or even kill her child. 80.0% of (A) answered that they could never sympathize with C-R neurosis. Only 4.0% answered that they felt sympathy with it. Even if we include the answer, "Only in such a special case as children are physically or mentally handicapped or have fatal disease, I can sympathize," still less than 20.0% sympathized with it. Most of the answers in (A) are, "Mother can live firmly for children." or "Once a mother has children, she has to rear them with responsibility."

The tendency of (B) is almost the same as that of (A). Only 11.4% answered that they could sympathize, and 65.7% answered they could not. The dominant opinion of (B) is, "I know young mothers are really helpless nowadays, but conditions were even worse during World War II. Mothers should have a sound thinking." 64.0% of (A), 42.9% of (B) pointed out that the cause of C-R neurosis is mainly in the mother herself: she is lacking in self-consciousness, responsibility and patience as a mother; she has mental weakness; self-centered mind; and so on.

On the other hand, 59.2% of (C) answered that they could sympathize with C-R neurosis. By including the answers of partial sympathy or compassion, the percentage will be 67.3%, and this is significantly different from the percentage of (A) and (B). ($p < 0.01$). Those who answered that they could sympathize also illustrated their own experiences of C-R neurosis. Examples of illustrations are as follows: "I was troubled and sometimes had a twinge of conscience. When my child didn't act as I expected, I was irritated and sometimes punished her." "C-R is a physically tiresome work and it leads to weakening me mentally. If a mother can not get any co-operation from others, she might kill her child." "After I had my second delivery, I was very tired both mentally and physically. One day when I was on the bridge with my baby in my arms, I felt an impulse to kill myself by diving into the river." As for the causes of C-R neurosis, (C) answered in a different way from (A) and (B). Few answers said that the causes are in the mother herself. 71.4% of (C) pointed out that the cause of C-R neurosis is: it is difficult to have someone to talk with or to depend upon about C-R, and there being the mother has still a strong tendency to think that C-R is a woman's work so that husbands and others don't show any understanding of it.

5. *Causes for generation difference in the evaluation of C-R and in the psychological condition of mothers during the C-R period*

The factors which brought generation differences mentioned in 3. and 4. are considered to be as follows:

a) The way of female education

One of the factors which brought the generation differences in the evaluation of

C-R is the difference in the way of education given to them. 80.0% of (A) answered that they were taught the significance of C-R and house work. On the contrary, only 36.7% of (C) gave the same answer. Here we can find a significant difference between (A) and (C). ($p < 0.01$).

As for the answers to the question of by whom they were taught so, (A) were taught by their mothers and their teachers at school, and most of (C) by their mothers. The influence of school education is negligible in (C). Most of those among (A) who answered that they were not taught by anybody understood the significance of C-R naturally from their surroundings.

b) Mother's life-consciousness

As a result of 3., we observed that (A) and (B) put high evaluation upon C-R in connection with their own reason for living. On the other hand, (C) strongly tended to find their own life worth living in other things than C-R. In actually life, however, the number of those who continued a job during the C-R period were far more in (A) and (B) than in (C). The vocational status of mothers in each generation was mentioned in 2.-(2).

Concerning the thoughts about the vocation of those who continued their job during the C-R period in (A) and (B), 45.2% of (A) and 45.0% of (B) answered that they liked their job as a teacher very much. On the other hand, (C) have a variety in their jobs, and we can observe their positive attitude towards their jobs in order to develop themselves. So the reason why they continue their job is not such a simple one as "it is pleasant", but 58.3% of them regard it as a chance, for they answered, "I would like to have some chance to improve myself." or "I assume that women should be a mother and worker at the same time"; or as a place where "I would like to avoid a negative effect on children which may occur by mother's too much care about them."

On the other hand, the answers of those who devoted themselves to C-R are as follows: The number of those who had no other job than C-R (house wife) are: 19 in (A), 15 in (B), and 36 in (C). All the 19 in (A) positively affirmed their having devoted themselves to C-R. For example, "C-R is a significant work, and although it was hard to do it in an ideal way, I was glad that I could devote myself to it." In the case of (B), a half of them positively affirmed their attitude, but the rest of them answered in a different way, such as, "I couldn't help devoting myself to C-R because of the social disorder after World War II, but I still wanted to continue my work as a teacher." Only 5 out of 36 in (C) were affirmative. The main reason for the affirmation is, "From the satisfaction with which I myself have reared my children, I don't have any anxiety about my children's independence." Nevertheless, the rest 31 of (C) were passive or negative about their having devoted themselves only to C-R. They had strong anxiety or frustration and said, "I would like to resume my work as far as circumstances permit." or "I am worried about the influence of my not having a job for a certain period upon the resumption of work." or "I can not stand it if I live like this till I die." 8 of (C) were visited for interviews. 6 out of them were what is

called "housewives (who does only house work)", and these housewives commonly said that they were not satisfied with their everyday life. 3 of 6 housewives were now looking for some jobs — 1 of them resumed her study, 2 of them had strong complaints about their husbands because of husbands' strong opposition to their desire to start working or studying again. Before, there was a strong tendency to believe that it was natural for wives to devote themselves to C-R, so that it was easy for mothers to confine themselves to C-R. But nowadays, the educational standard of women has become higher, and a social demand for female workers has been increasing. In addition to that, women are having various ways of living. Under these circumstances, it is understandable that women have strong frustration about their devotion only to C-R. That is the strong characteristics of (C).

As for the psychological instability marks mentioned in 4.-a in connection with the vocational status and the thoughts on a reason for living, the result is as follows: In the case of (A), the mark of the psychological instability is rather low compared with (C), and there is no significant relation between the mark and vocational status or the thoughts about a reason for living. Both housewives and working mothers in (A) put high evaluation upon C-R, and they were psychologically stable when they were doing C-R work. In the case of (C), on the other hand, the mark of housewives are higher than that of working mothers, and there is a significant difference between the two marks. (housewife: 17.90, working mother: 14.10, $t=4.55$, $p<0.001$). Above all, the average mark of 22 housewives who are seeking for their reason for living besides C-R is 19.00, which is the highest. This is the psychological instability caused by the discrepancy between their ideal and real life.

c) Self-assessment as a mother

In the matter of self-assessment as a mother, 70.0% of (A) answered that they entertained their primary concern for their children and they devoted themselves to the care of their children. In the answers, the expression of "devotion" or "sacrifice" and such kinds of words were used many times. The number of answers of this kind in (B), however, decreases to 31.4%. 28.6% of (B) answered that children were their primary concern, but they did not sacrifice everything. We can see a transitional tendency to the next generation in answers of (B). (B) were busy with finding the way to live right after World War II, so that there were few women who were at a loss to decide whether they should devote themselves to C-R or should have their own reason for living other than C-R. In the case of (C), only 8.0% of them regarded children as a primary concern. 36.7% of them always thought about their own way of living. For example, "Now there is no time to do other things than C-R, but when children have grown old enough to be able to take care of themselves, I would like to do something else," or "I am always at a loss to decide whether I should put primary concern on children or myself," or "I myself have a conservative view that children are the primary concern, however, because of the pride that I have in high standard of education, I sometimes think that I have to do something else, and I can't make up my mind," and so on. 8.0%

of (C) answered, "I think myself first then children." There are a few who answered, "I make it my principle to put some distance between children as a successor and I as a predecessor of the human life." We can observe that there are various ways of self-assessment in (C).

The generation difference in self-assessment as a mother has, to some extent, connection with the general assessment of a mother. 70.0% of (A) were affirmative to the proposition, that "Natural mother's love is the best for children," but only 46.9% of (C) were affirmative to the same proposition. ($p < 0.01$). 40.8% of (C) answered, "A real mother is not necessarily the best one to take care of children. The improvement of facilities such as a nursery school is necessary."

With regards to the responsibility and duty of C-R, 56.0% of (A) answered, "it is the role of women." but only 18.4% of (C) answered in the same way. ($p < 0.01$). In the answers of (C), we can find a common opinion that C-R is not only the role of women but the role of parents and society.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the research, in (A) we can observe a large number of children and long duration of C-R. They put fairly high evaluation on C-R in connection with their own reason for living, and they had a psychological stability during the C-R period. Many of them continued to work as a teacher with someone helping their C-R work. Consequently, (A) had their own job and at the same time they were satisfied with C-R work when they were at home.

We can also observe a striking contrast between (A) and (C). (C) do not necessarily deny the significance of C-R, but they put rather low evaluation upon it. They have a strong desire to find their own life and reason for living other than C-R. Under the circumstances of today, when the fields open for women are broadened and women's status are becoming higher, they have a strong desire to make the most of their ability outside their home. In actual life, however, many of them are obliged to devote themselves only to C-R work, because of the lack of those who can take care of children in their place. That discrepancy between their ideal and reality causes a kind of frustration in their life of C-R. Furthermore, there is a variety in the way of C-R nowadays, and that helps to cause the mother's psychological instability.

On the other hand, (B) showed the transitional trend to (C) in the thoughts about C-R. Because of the difficult situation after World War II, they showed different characteristics in their daily C-R behaviour from (A) and (C).

As the authors mentioned above, the subjects in this research have a high level of academic career, so that it is wrong to assume that the results of this research can be applied generally. In addition, (A) and (B) have already finished their C-R work, so that (A) and (B) and (C) might not be compared in the same dimension.

However, as the authors mentioned above, questionnaires were mostly composed of free- description, and the answers from the three generations were very minute and

clear. The authors would like to emphasize that the answers of (A) and (B), who were reminded of the C-R period, were as detailed and clear as those of (C). Furthermore, it was very impressive to find that the memories on C-R of (A) were very vivid at the time of the interviews, which lasted one to several hours.

As for the tendency of (C), it can not be dealt only as a special case of this research. It is easy to assume that desire to have mother's own life or reason for living other than C-R will increase from now on in connection with the rise of women's educational standard and social status. Some people criticize those who have that kind of desire as "a disqualified mother". Certainly in Japan nowadays, although most families are what is called "nuclear families", the system of sharing C-R work has not developed yet. Under these circumstances, mothers strongly hope to make the most of their ability and that leads to the discrepancy between the ideal and real life, and psychological instability. On the other hand, the traditional mothers of older generation tended to devote themselves to only children, so that even after children came of age, there remained too much of interdependent relationship between mother and children. It is frequently pointed out that a mother who can not leave children, and children who can not leave parents are the bottleneck to the ideal mother-children relationship. Consequently, emergence of mothers who hope to have their own reason for living besides C-R indicates the potential possibility of establishing a new mother-children relationship. It depends on the mother's attitude and improvement of conditions which support her C-R work whether that potential possibility will come to an independent mother-children relationship, or will go to the undesirable direction of a mother's irritation and renouncement of C-R.

This research aimed at examining the transition of the way of thinking about C-R in connection with a social situation and background of each period, and through comparison of the three generations, we can say that the change of the way of thinking about C-R and C-R behaviour immensely reflect social and cultural factors of the period.

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