The Survey of Japanese Value Orientations:
Analysis of Trends over Thirty-Five Years

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Since 1973, NHK has been conducting the Survey of Japanese Value Orientations every five years in order to monitor long-term changes in Japanese attitudes and opinions regarding society, politics, economy, and their daily lives. With the completion of the eighth survey in June 2008, we were able to analyze the changes and constants in Japanese values over 35 years. This article reports on Japanese attitudes regarding gender relations, image of ideal family, husband-wife and parent-child relations, international mindedness, work and leisure, interpersonal relationships, and basic values.

DESIGN AND HISTORY OF THE SURVEY

The aim of this survey is to monitor long-term changes in basic Japanese values and attitudes concerning life and society by conducting the survey every five years using the same questions and format.

Five guidelines were established to shape the composition of the survey questionnaire:
1. It should cover the most important areas (topics) of value orientation;
2. It should make possible a systematic understanding of attitudinal characteristics;
3. It should target attitudes considered likely to change over the long term;
4. It should target attitudes with significant social impact;
5. It should target attitudes measurable by statistical survey methods.

Using these guidelines, seven topic areas were established for the questionnaire. (Items (a) to (d) will be covered in detail later.)

(1) Basic values
   • Life credos
   • Means of achieving fulfillment in life
   • Authority vs. equality
   • Efficiency vs. empathy
   • Image of ideal person
(2) Economy, society, and culture
   • Spending and saving
   • Interpersonal relationships (relatives, neighbors, work colleagues, close friends (a))
   • Ideal job
   • Work and leisure
   • Leisure (present, future)
   • Beliefs, religion
(3) Family and gender relations
   • Image of ideal family
   • Husband-wife and parent-child relations
   • Old age
   • Gender equality in education
   • Attitudes toward sex
   • Views on marriage (b)
(4) Communication
   • Important media (c)
(5) Politics
   • Knowledge of rights
   • Sense of political efficacy (elections, direct action, public opinion)
   • Association and activism (in the workplace, in the community, in politics)
   • Political activities
   • Support for political party
   • Political issues
   • Feelings toward the emperor
   • Nationalism (emotional attachment to Japan and Japanese, sense of national superiority)
(6) International-mindedness (d)
   • Preferred foreign countries and reasons for preference
   • Experience with foreigners
   • Exchange/contact with other countries
(7) Attributes, miscellaneous
   • Degree of satisfaction with life
   • Current stage of life
   • Educational background
   • Occupation
   • Field conditions (duration of interview)
Items (a) to (d) were introduced to the questionnaire either from Survey 3 or later surveys. (Some questions, not discussed in this essay, were deleted.)

(a) Interpersonal relationships (close friends): Added with Survey 7. (Question and response choices modified with Survey 8.)
(b) Views on marriage: Added with Survey 5.
(c) Important media: Added with Survey 3. (Introduced additional response choices with Survey 7.)
(d) International-mindedness: Added with Survey 5. (Added “exchange/contact with other countries” in Survey 7.)

Surveys 1 and 2 were thus conducted with 66 questions, Surveys 3 and 4 with 60 questions, Surveys 5 and 6 with 68 questions, and Surveys 7 and 8 with 69 questions.

Making Survey Conditions Uniform
Furthermore, to facilitate comparisons from one survey to the next, the basic policy and a number of “points to remember” were identified at the time of the first survey in 1973 and continue to be observed today.

(1) Basic policy
   To trace long-term changes in Japanese attitudes, the survey is conducted every five years with the survey conditions as uniform as possible.

(2) Points to remember
   1) Sample: For each round of the survey, select a new sample of 5,400 people aged 16 and older (12 people × 450 spots, selected by stratified two-stage sampling).
   2) Survey period: Conduct the survey sometime between May to July (changed to either September or October for the third, fifth, and sixth surveys due to national elections held in these survey years).
   3) Instructions to implementing staff: Through briefings or meetings, ensure that all implementing staff receive the same instructions on conducting the survey.
   4) Survey materials: Do not alter the content of the questionnaire, the response item list, the request-for-cooperation form, or the implementation manual unless there is a major flaw or impediment in it.
   5) Survey method: Conduct the survey by face-to-face interview.
   6) Other: (a) In order to fulfill the above conditions as thoroughly as possible, implement the survey through NHK offices nationwide. (b) Do not change the method for correcting response errors when collecting, checking, or tabulating the questionnaires. (c) Record reasons for
problems in implementing the survey such as failure to get enough valid responses, and refer to that record when comparing the results of each survey with the others in the series.

In this way, by establishing the conditions of the survey as uniformly as possible, we can minimize the impact of any changed conditions in the implementation of the survey, and focus on the changed results as evidence in the alteration of Japanese values over time.

The Meaning of Change in Value Orientation
The term “Japanese value orientation” used in this article refers to variations in the distribution of attitudes among Japanese as a whole. More specifically, they are variations in the distribution of various opinions, ways of thinking, and attitudes among Japanese men and women aged 16 and over, as extrapolated from the findings of a scientific public opinion survey. These variations in distribution represent a collection of personal views. However, the distribution may change even if people’s views don’t change over time. Conversely, the distribution may remain the same even if individuals’ opinions have changed. Several patterns may be observed:

(1) A pattern in which individuals’ opinions change over time, but the overall variation does not change: Even if individuals change their opinions as they grow older, the overall distribution of opinions will not change if the distribution ratio of each age bracket remains the same.

(2) A pattern in which individuals’ opinions remain the same, but the overall distribution changes: Even if individuals’ opinions remain the same, if different age groups support different values (for example, if a certain opinion appealed to younger generations), the overall distribution of opinions can change because of the emergence of new generations with different values (generational shift);

(3) A pattern in which individuals’ opinions change: Individuals’ opinions may change not only as a result of age and lifestage but also due to changing times. Changes in the economy and society, new technology, and information from abroad also affect individuals’ opinions, and in this case the overall distribution of opinions tends to change.

Aging and new emerging generations are inevitable phenomena. When analyzing data, it is important to first determine whether changes in the distribution of results were caused by individuals’ aging or the changing generations, and then determine whether there was any influence of changing times.

Figure 1 uses the results of the national census to show how the age distri-
bution of the population has changed over the 35 years, and how a generational shift has occurred. We can see that the number of 15–19 year olds is reduced to nearly half and the share of people aged 50 and older has increased in the last 35 years. As a result, the overall share of views that change with age and are supported by the older generation should increase. Conversely, the overall share of views not supported by the older generation should decrease.

Also, Figure 2 is a list of major events that took place between 1970 and 2008. A variety of events, including some not listed here, have played an important role in shaping people’s values and views.

Impact of Invalid Responses
According to previous research, it has been determined that as long as the validity rate of a nationwide survey is approximately 75 percent and the survey consists of basic questions on society and economy, there is no need to consider the effects of invalid responses. In the case of Survey 8, where the validity rate sank to 57.5 percent, we must take the impact of that figure into consideration. However, since this effect is not quantifiable, we followed the example of previous surveys and conducted a test for statistical significance using the simple random sampling error. We analyzed the result carefully, keeping in mind that there is a margin of error that cannot be calculated.

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1 Sugiyama Meiko, “Chosa funo no bunseki (3)” [Analysis of Low Response Rates and Other Survey Problems], Bunken geppo (now Hoso kenkyu to chosa), December 1973.
**Figure 2. Major Events 1970–Present**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Expo 1970, Osaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Nixon shock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1972 | Asama-Sanso Incident  
Okinawa reversion to Japanese sovereignty  
Tanaka Kakuei’s plan to remodel the Japanese archipelago |
| 1973 | 1st survey conducted |
| 1974 | First oil crisis  
Soaring commodity prices  
First negative growth in the postwar period |
| 1975 | International Women’s Year  
Postwar-born citizens make up half of the population |
| 1976 | Lockheed bribery scandal revealed |
| 1977 | Narita International Airport opened  
2nd survey conducted |
| 1978 | Second oil crisis  
Publication of *Japan as Number One* by Ezra F. Vogel |
| 1979 | LDP’s landslide victory in simultaneous upper and lower house elections  
Japan becomes world’s top producer of automobiles |
| 1980 | Overseas travel boom |
| 1981 | Totsuka Yacht School Incident |
| 1982 | 3rd survey conducted |
| 1983 | Former Prime Minister Tanaka found guilty (Lockheed bribery scandal)  
“Ron-Yasu” Summit (Japan-U.S. summit between President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro) |
| 1984 | Controversy over official visits to Yasukuni Shrine |
| 1986 | 4th survey conducted |
| 1987 | Black Monday |
| 1988 | Recruit bribery scandal |
| 1989 | Death of Emperor Hirohito (end of the Showa era)  
Consumption Tax implemented  
Fall of the Berlin Wall  
End of the Cold War |
| 1991 | Gulf War  
Collapse of the Soviet Union |
| 1993 | Inaugural season of Japan Football League  
Marriage of Crown Prince Naruhito  
Collapse of the “1955 political system”; non-LDP coalition government |
| 1994 | 5th survey conducted |
| 1995 | Coalition government of LDP, JSP, and Sakigake Party |
| 1996 | Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake  
Aum Shinrikyo cult subway sarin attack |
| 1997 | Kobe serial child-murder case |
FAMILY AND GENDER RELATIONS

The largest number of respondents gave “communicating with family” as the most important form of communication (question introduced in 1983), as has been the case in the previous five surveys. In the Survey of Japanese National Character conducted by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics, which has been conducted every five years since 1953, 45 percent of respondents in 2003 said “family” was the most important thing in their lives.\(^2\) This is the highest result yet, and a significant increase from 18 percent in 1973, the year of the first Japanese Value Orientation Survey. Various public opinion surveys indicate that family is an important part of life for a large share of Japanese.

People’s views on family and gender relations have changed significantly. Here, we will observe how Japanese attitudes toward marriage and family have changed over the last 35 years and what is behind this shift.

**Weaker Uniformity in Views on Sex, Marriage, and Having Children**

**Marriage not necessary**

The survey asks whether the respondents think that people should marry as a matter of course (“marriage as matter of course”) or if they consider marriage not a necessity (“marriage not necessary”). The results are presented in Figure 3. When this question was introduced in 1993, the share of responses for “marriage not necessary” was already higher than for “marriage as matter of course.” The gap between the two views widened through the 1998 survey, but the figures have not changed significantly thereafter.

Looking at the breakdown of the 1993 and 2008 results by gender and age, we see that the share of people who responded that marriage is not necessary is greater among women than men, and among younger age groups than older age groups. In almost all age groups and for both men and women, the share of people who responded “marriage as matter of course” decreased, and “marriage not necessary” increased. In 2008, approximately 90 percent of women in their 20s responded “marriage not necessary” (Figure 4).

**Having children not necessary: Seventy percent of young women**

Similarly, for the question of whether respondents advocate that married couples should have children as a matter of course (“children as matter of course”) or that married couples don’t necessarily need to have children (“children not necessary”), we saw that the share for “children as matter of course”...
Sex unrelated to marriage

Looking at the 1993 and 2008 responses by gender and age, we see that more women than men, and younger than older respondents think that married couples don’t necessarily need to have children. The share of female respondents who selected “children not necessary” has increased in almost all of the age groups, whereas responses vary among male age groups. In 2008, more than 70 percent of women under 40 responded “children not necessary” (Figure 6).

Sex unrelated to marriage

Figure 7 is a summary of results of respondents’ feelings on premarital sex, given four choices. This question was introduced to the survey based on Inoue Teruko’s observation that, while relatively tolerant attitudes had traditionally prevailed regarding premarital affairs, the introduction of Christian marriage practices in the Meiji era (1868–1912) resulted in strict sexual taboos and the
importance of preserving female virginity until marriage, and her prediction that Japanese views on sex would once again undergo change.\textsuperscript{3}

As predicted, Japanese views on sex are undergoing significant change. We have found that the share of people who find the notion that couples should wait to have sex until they are married (“unacceptable”) has decreased since its peak of nearly 60 percent in 1973. The share of those who thought

that couples may have sex if they are in love ("OK if in love"), which had been increasing with every survey, was the top-ranking response in 1993, and further increased to 43 percent in 1998. The share of those who felt sex is permissible by a couple if they are engaged ("OK if engaged"), which had been the third largest response in 1973 at 15 percent, grew to 20 percent in 1978 and has remained stable through the 2008 survey.

Although strict views on sex have waned and tolerant attitudes increased, there has not been much variation in the last 10 years. This tendency applies to both men and women, but the share of "unacceptable," which had been large among women from the outset, decreased significantly among them, shrinking the gap between the male and female views on premarital sex (Figure 8).

Figure 9 charts the trends in views on "unacceptable" and "OK if couple is in love" responses over the last 35 years by year of birth. Support for the view in favor of "OK if couple is in love" steadily decreases going back in time (with age of respondent), which shows that this response is popular among younger respondents and unpopular among the older generation. Conversely, support for "unacceptable" rises with the age of the respondents, showing more choice of this response among the older generations and fewer among the younger generations. Furthermore, the lines in the graphs overlap, which indicates that the trend does not change according to the year of the survey. Views on marriage differ greatly between generations, indicating that year of birth (era) has a significant effect on such views. In other words, even if the general view of each generation does not change, as the number of older people with stricter views decreases and the number of more tolerant, young people increases, the overall view will shift from strict to tolerant. The changes in attitudes toward premarital sex are thus a result of generational shift.

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**Figure 8. Views on Premarital Sex, by Gender**

- **Men**
  - "Unacceptable": 50, 43, 40, 34, 40, 46, 46, 48
  - "OK if engaged": 23, 27, 29, 27, 23, 22, 21, 20
  - "OK if in love": 19, 22, 23, 23, 22, 21, 20, 18
  - "Acceptable": 0, 5, 5, 6, 5, 7, 7, 6

- **Women**
  - "Unacceptable": 65, 57, 52, 43, 36, 40, 41, 41
  - "OK if engaged": 16, 20, 22, 28, 31, 28, 28, 26
  - "OK if in love": 12, 18, 20, 23, 24, 24, 23, 24
  - "Acceptable": 0, 2, 3, 3, 2, 4, 3, 3

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The total fertility rate among women between the ages of 15 and 49 in 2007 stood at 1.34. This is a slight increase from the previous year, but fertility rate is on the decline in the long term. The reasons for the declining number of children in Japan (shoshika) are the decrease in people getting married and the decrease in married couples that have children.4 Behind this phenomenon is the increasing number of people who feel that marriage is not necessary and that married couples do not need to have children. Also, more people are beginning to consider marriage and sex as independent of each other. The traditional values surrounding marriage—that people must get married, have sex only after marriage, and will have children once they are married—are waning in today’s society.

Views on married name same as ten years ago
Generally speaking, Japanese views on whether or not a woman will take her husband’s name upon marriage changed little between 1973 and 1983. For 15 to 20 years after 1983, there was a decrease in acceptance of the traditional

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view that a woman should change her name upon marriage, but this trend seems to have ended in recent years. The share of respondents who said that the wife should adopt her husband’s surname as a matter of course (“husband’s name as matter of course”), which was 47 percent in 1983, decreased significantly to 29 percent in 2003, but increased 4 percent in the last five years, resulting in the same figure as in 1998. The share of respondents who said that it is expedient for the wife to adopt her husband’s surname under current circumstances (“husband’s name given current circumstances”) is little changed. Meanwhile, the share of respondents who feel that wives can choose to adopt her husband’s surname or retain her own surname (combination of responses “same surname, either husband’s or wife’s” and “separate surnames”) increased between 1983 and 1998, indicating the decline in people giving precedence to husbands’ surnames. However, there has not been much change in the last ten years (Figure 10).
Figure 11. Views on Married Name, by Gender

- “Husband’s name as matter of course”
- “Husband’s name given current circumstances”
- “Same surname, either husband’s or wife’s”
- “Separate surnames”

Figure 12. Views on Married Name: “Husband’s name,” by Gender and Year of Birth

“Husband’s name” = Husband’s name as matter of course + Husband’s name given current circumstances

Figure 11 charts the breakdown of views on married name for women and men, but we do not see a significant shift in views over the last 35 years. Figure 12 shows the breakdown of respondents who said that a wife should adopt her husband’s name (combination of “husband’s name as matter of
course” and “husband’s name given current circumstances”) by gender and year of birth. Both graphs for both men and women show an increase with the age of respondents, indicating that basically age is the deciding factor in people’s views in general on this point. Through the 2003 survey, the curve had been shifting downward among younger people, showing how the share of “husband’s name” is decreasing with the changing times. Furthermore, the gaps among the trend lines are wider for the graph for female respondents, indicating that women’s views are more significantly affected by changing times. Also, we see that among young women the proportion of “husband’s name” has increased in the last five years.

**Less Distinction between Male and Female Roles in the Family**

Fixed gender roles—with men assumed to be the breadwinners and women assumed to be housewives—and the idea of the “modern family,” in which women are expected to emphasize their role as mother, spread during the post-war period of rapid economic growth. During this period, the number of people working in the primary sector of the economy—such as in agriculture—decreased and the number of people working as company employees increased. With the increasing income of salaried workers, it became possible for a husband to support his family on his own.

The first Survey of Japanese Value Orientations was conducted in June 1973. It was in October of the same year that the first oil crisis triggered a shift in the Japanese economy from rapid economic growth to a period of economic downturn. Looking at the results of the Survey of Japanese Value Orientation in 1973, the share of women in their 30s to 50s who said that they were full-time homemakers was 58 percent, whereas this share has decreased to 31 percent in 2008. In addition, even though an increasing number of women have been entering the workforce, their employment statuses remain unstable. The survey results from 2008 shows that 59 percent of working women are part-time or temporary employees, as opposed to 19 percent among working men. Given this situation, views on family life, such as the image of an ideal home and women remaining in the workforce after marriage, have changed significantly over the last 35 years.

5 In social history terms, a “modern family” is a product of a shift from feudal to capitalist society (modern society). It is a family that has adapted to the changes of modernization. *Shakaigaku shojiten* [Glossary of Sociology] (Yuhikaku, 2005).

“Balance between employment and home life”

The survey asks respondents which of the following three choices best describes their view on women working after marriage:

1. When a woman marries, she should concentrate on taking care of the home (“Devotion to home life”);
2. Even after a woman has married, she should continue working until she has children (“Priority on child-rearing”);
3. Even after a woman has married and had children, she should, as far as possible, continue working (“Balance between employment and home life”).

Looking at the trend for the last 35 years, we see that “priority on child-rearing” was the highest at 42 percent and “balance between employment and home life” was lowest at 20 percent in 1973. However, “priority on child-rearing” declined and “balance” continued to increase, and 25 years later (1998), “balance” rose to the top at nearly 50 percent. Although it showed a small increase in 2003, there has not been much movement in the last five years (Figure 13).

When we look at the breakdown of results by gender, we see that among women, “balance between employment and home life” overtook “devotion to home life” in 1978 and “priority on child-rearing” in 1993. On the other hand, among men, “balance” overtook “devotion to home life” only in 1993 and “priority on child-rearing” in 2003. This shows that attitudinal change on this issue among men is approximately 10 years slower than among women (Figure 14).

Looking at Figure 15, a breakdown of the share of people who selected “balance between employment and home life” in the last 35 years by gender and age, we see that there has been a great increase among all age groups, for both men and women. The age brackets that show the greatest increase in the early 40s and early 50s for men, and in the early 20s and 40s to early 50s for women. The employment rate is known to fluctuate in an M curve following the different stages of their lives: single, married before children, child-rearing period (the lowest point), and after children become independent. Many women in their late 20s and 30s leave their jobs to become full-time homemakers, and hence are at the lowest point of the M curve. As a result, we do not see a significant increase of “balance between employment and home life” among this age group.
### Figure 13. Employment and Home Life for Women (Overall Sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Devotion to home life</th>
<th>Priority on child-rearing</th>
<th>Balance between employment and home life</th>
<th>Don’t know/No response</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Devotion to home life”: When a woman marries, she should concentrate on taking care of the home.

“Priority on child-rearing”: Even after a woman has married, she should continue working until she has children.

“Balance between employment and home life”: Even after a woman has married and had children, she should, as far as possible, continue working.

### Figure 14. Employment and Home Life for Women, by Gender

- **Devotion to home life**
- **Priority on child-rearing**
- **Balance between employment and home life**

#### Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Devotion to home life</th>
<th>Priority on child-rearing</th>
<th>Balance between employment and home life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Devotion to home life</th>
<th>Priority on child-rearing</th>
<th>Balance between employment and home life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Increasing cooperation in the household

Regarding the image of ideal home, respondents were asked to choose the “most favorable” of the following four home lifestyles:

1. “Dominant husband, supportive wife”: The father has full authority as head of the household, while the mother supports him with total devotion.
2. “Independent husband and wife”: Both father and mother devote themselves to their own jobs and interests.
3. “Division of roles”: The father devotes himself to his work, while the mother devotes herself to her household duties.
4. “Cooperation at home”: The father pays some attention to home life as well as work, while the mother concentrates on creating and maintaining a comfortable home environment.

Trends for the last 35 years indicate that the proportion for “division of roles,” which had been the top-ranking response at 39 percent in 1973, decreased by more than half (16 percent) in 2008. Traditional views—“division of roles” combined with “dominant husband, supportive wife”—dominated with more
than 60 percent of responses in 1973, but have declined to 30 percent in 1998 and continued to shrink. On the other hand, the share for “cooperation at home,” which was at 21 percent in 1973, rose to the top position at 35 percent in 1988, and further increased to 48 percent in 2008. The share for “independent husband and wife,” which had gradually increased, decreased between 2003 and 2008 (Figure 16).

In Figure 17, comparing the results for men and women, we can see that the share for “division of roles” has decreased and “cooperation at home” increased among both men and women. The share for “cooperation at home,” which had not seen much gender difference until 1983, has been showing a greater increase among women than among men. Today there is a significant difference between the results for men and for women.

Figure 18 shows trends over 35 years by year of birth. The share for “division of roles” is larger among the older generation, and conversely, the share for “cooperation at home” is larger among the younger generation. We also
see that “division of roles” has been moving steadily downward with time until 1998, but the trend lines of subsequent years begin overlapping. In other words, the ratio of those who support the division of roles at home had even-
ly decreased among each age bracket. Meanwhile, although support for “cooperation at home” has increased with time, there is an uneven distribution among age brackets. This indicates a variation in the way in which views are changing among different generations.

Japanese views on the image of the ideal home as a whole have changed significantly as a result of changes in society and the emergence of new generations with different ways of thinking (generational shift).

Next, the survey asks respondents’ view about husbands helping with household duties such as cooking or taking care of children. We saw that the ratio of people who feel that “husbands should help as a matter of course,” which was 53 percent in 1973, has steadily increased and surpassed 80 percent in 1998 (Figure 19).

Figure 20 is the result of data collected by NHK National Survey on Time Use that shows the amount of time that working people actually spend on household chores. The length of time that men spend on household chores is on the rise, but the difference between men and women remains significant. In 2005, the number of hours that women spent on household duties on a weekday was 3 hours 18 minutes, compared to 28 minutes for men. In addition, when we compare total working hours—at work and at home—by gender, we find that women work longer hours (9 hours 34 minutes) than men (8 hours 58 minutes).
The situation observed earlier, where there was little growth in the ratio of young women who wanted a “balance” between work and home life, may be partly attributed to the short amount of time that men spend on household duties.

*Old age with spouse or pursuit of hobbies long-term increase*

The share of people who responded that they want to “live peacefully with their children and grandchildren ("children and grandchildren"),” which was the top-ranking response at 38 percent in 1973, decreased to 24 percent in 1998. Similarly, those who want to “keep working as much as possible ("work"),” which stayed at 20–22 percent until 1983, also decreased to 12 percent in 2008. On the other hand, the share of respondents who said that they plan to “live harmoniously with their spouses ("spouse"),” which was around 10 percent until 1983, gradually doubled over the 35-year period and reached 20 percent in 2008. Also, the share for “live a leisurely life, pursuing hobbies ("hobbies")” had also remained at about 20 percent until 1983, but gradually increased and reached 32 percent by 1998, becoming the top response. Until 2003, there had been a shift from “children and grandchildren” and “work” to “spouse” and “hobbies.” However, in the last five years, “children and grandchildren” increased and “hobbies” decreased. As a result, their ratios were approximately the same in 2008 (Figure 21).

Looking at the breakdown of the results for men and women, we see that the top response among both was “children and grandchildren” in 1973. “Children and grandchildren” decreased and “hobbies” increased among women between 1973 and 1998, but in the last five years, “hobbies” decreased and “children and grandchildren” increased once again. Among men, both “children and grandchildren” and “work” have been decreasing in the last 35 years, and “spouse” and “hobbies” have been increasing, but there
have not been any significant changes since 1993. As a result, the top responses in 2008 were “children and grandchildren” and “hobbies” for women and “hobbies” for men (Figure 22).

When we look at the breakdown by gender and year of birth of respondents who selected “children and grandchildren,” we see that the trend lines in the male graph decrease with decreasing age and overlap each other. In other words, the overall result is influenced by generational shift. In the graph for women, the trend lines are farther apart from each other, indicating that both generational shift and changing times have led to variations in the results. Also, we see that this view has been increasing especially among women born in the 1950s who are about to reach retirement, and the generation of their children (Figure 23).

Aspirations for girls’ higher education continue to rise
Respondents are asked to what level of formal education they would like to educate their children if they had children currently of junior high school age. The question was asked separately regarding male children and female chil-
The results for male children show little change (Figure 24); the share for “senior high school” decreased from 17 to 11 percent between 1973 and 1988, but there have not been any significant changes since then. The share for “vocational/junior college” has seen little variation in the last 35 years, and “university” has remained at approximately 70 percent since 1978. Also,
the proportion for “graduate school” has not changed much since 1973, when it stood at 6 percent.

For girls, “senior high school” was the top response in 1973 at 42 percent, but continued to decline until it reached 13 percent in 2008. Meanwhile, the share for “vocational/junior college,” which had been increasing steadily until 1988, was the top-ranking response until 1993. Finally, “university,” whose share of respondents was the smallest among the three categories in 1973 at 22 percent, began to increase in 1988 and became the top-ranking response in 1998. The combined share of respondents who chose “university” and “graduate school” for girls was 56 percent in 2008, indicating a growing desire to provide girls with higher education. However, compared to 75 percent for boys, there is still a significant difference between the genders (Figure 25).

Looking at the figures from respondents who advocated “higher education” by age group, we see that this view has increased for each age group in the last 35 years. People of all ages have been influenced by the changing times and the tendency to discriminate between the level of education they would provide for boys and girls has receded (Figure 26).

Furthermore, looking at the relationship between the responses and the educational background of the respondents, we see that the share for “higher education” for both girls and boys increases among respondents with higher levels of education. We also see that there is a difference between the ratio of

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### Figure 24. Preferred Level of Education for Boys (Overall Sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Senior high school</th>
<th>Vocational/junior college</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Graduate school</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“higher education” for boys and girls, even among people with the same level of education. However, in 2008, this difference between girls and boys becomes smaller among respondents with higher levels of education; among university or graduate school graduates, the share for “higher education” for girls is 84 percent, closing in on 92 percent for boys (Figure 27).

Changing views concerning the home and gender relations leading up to 2003 showed a movement away from the traditional family system and toward
respect for people as individuals and gender equality. There was a significant increase in new values toward having children, employment and home life, the ideal home, and married names leading up to 1998, and these opinions continued to increase until 2003. However, the results from the 2008 survey do not show continued growth in these new views and there has even been a decline in some topic areas.

VIEWS ON POLITICS

Regarding attitudes relating to politics, the most notable trend observed in the five years beginning 2003 was the increase in the proportion of respondents who felt that citizen action has an impact on Japanese politics.

Signs of Change

The survey asked respondents about the extent to which they think the citizen’s views are reflected in political affairs in regard to three forms of political influence: voting in elections, direct action (protest demonstrations, petitions, etc.), and public opinion (views and aspirations of the general public).

Respondents were given the following four choices to indicate how much efficacy they thought direct action and voting in elections have on politics:
1. Has very great political efficacy (Strong)
2. Has significant political efficacy (Fairly strong)
3. Has some efficacy (Fairly weak)
4. Has no efficacy (Weak)

Respondents were also given the following four choices to indicate how well they thought public opinion is reflected in politics:

1. Very well reflected (Strong)
2. Rather well reflected (Fairly strong)
3. Somewhat reflected (Fairly weak)
4. Not reflected at all (Weak)

The results showed that while there was little change in responses regarding public opinion, the proportion of those who thought that elections and direct action have “strong” or “fairly strong” political efficacy increased from 41 to 48 percent and 23 to 27 percent respectively (Figure 28). The increase did not, however, change the ranking that has characterized attitudes for the last 35 years, namely that respondents feel elections have the greatest political efficacy, followed by direct action, and finally public opinion, in that order.

According to the 2008 survey results, only less than half of respondents felt that voting in elections has strong political efficacy, despite its top spot as having the greatest political efficacy of the three options. Also, the proportion of respondents who felt that public opinion is “somewhat reflected” in politics
was 58 percent, and “not reflected at all” was 28 percent. A total 86 percent of respondents felt that the efficacy of public opinion is weak.

The survey also asked what political activities respondents were involved in over the previous year. There has been no increase for any of the responses in the last five years: the proportion of “signed a petition” went from 22 percent to 19 percent, “participated in a petition or protest campaign” from 2 percent to 1 percent, and “participated in a demonstration” remained at 1 percent. The only increase was in the share of people who responded that they “did not do anything in particular.”

Although the results showed that people’s sense of political efficacy has risen, there has been no increase in political participation. While it is possible that respondents felt “strong” political efficacy based on others’ political activities, there is no substantive evidence for political participation as an actual phenomenon.

In the 44th lower house election in September 2005, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) won by a landslide, but in the 21st upper house election in July 2007, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) became the largest party in the upper house, creating a “twisted Diet” (nejire kokkai), where the two chambers of the Japanese parliament are controlled by different parties. The effects of the nejire kokkai can be seen in many areas in politics, and it can be speculated that they were behind the growing sense of the political efficacy of voting in elections.

Political Score Increases among the Younger Generation

Using the scoring system seen below, we can evaluate the overall result of respondents’ sense of political efficacy. We can see that respondents with high scores have a “strong” tendency to feel that people’s actions have an impact on political affairs.

“Strong”: 3 points
“Fairly strong”: 2 points
“Fairly weak”: 1 point
“Weak”: 0 point
(“Don’t know, no response” also receive 0 point)

Figure 29 shows the average score of each survey, using the total of respondents’ scores divided by the number of valid responses. We see very little change between 1998 and 2003, but there is a slight recovery in 2008. This shows that there is an increase in the number of people who feel that citizen action has an impact on political affairs.
Figure 30 is a breakdown of the average scores by year of birth. The overlapping of the trend lines indicate that year of birth is a strong determinant in respondents’ sense of political efficacy. Hence, the views on political efficacy that people form in their youth—“effective” or “ineffective”—tend to remain unchanged throughout life. Also, noting the overall parallel descent of the trend lines, we can see that the proportion of people who feel a strong sense of political efficacy has been on the decrease for each age bracket over the period charted in these surveys.

The responses to the 1973 survey showed that the younger generations and the older generations felt their political efficacy was weak, resulting in a low bell-shaped distribution curve, with respondents who felt the strongest political efficacy born between 1924 and 1928. These people were aged 18 to 22 in 1946, the year of the first lower house election under the full universal suf-
frage system including women. After 1973, this age bracket remained the peak and the overall trend lines slant upward to the right, charting the decreasing sense among younger generations that their actions have political efficacy.

We can observe another distinctive pattern emerging to the left-hand side of the figure. Looking at the 1993 results, the trend line hits the lowest point at the second plot from the left (respondents who were 20 to 24 years old at the time of the survey), and then rises (respondents who were 16 to 19 years old at the time). This result can be considered a reflection of the age of the respondents rather than a generational characteristic.

However, this pattern was broken in the 2003 survey, and in 2008 we see a U-shaped curve, with the age bracket of those born in 1974 to 1978 as the lowest point. This shows that among people of the younger generations, a larger proportion feel that citizen action can have an influence on politics than do people of the preceding generation.

The change in average scores of the overall sample that we saw earlier is the result of the combination of generational characteristics, generational shift, and changing times.

**Knowledge of Rights Continues Low**

The survey gives respondents six options, and asks them to decide which are citizens’ rights (not obligations) according to the Constitution. The respondents are allowed to choose as many of the following options as they like:

a. Present one’s opinions to the public (Freedom of speech)
b. Pay taxes
c. Obey one’s elders and superiors
d. Walk on the right side of the road
e. Live a decent life with basic human needs (Right to life)
f. Form labor unions (Right of association)

The three options with the abbreviated forms in parentheses are the correct answers, but the results have remained fairly unchanged over the last five years (Figure 31). Although the share of people who are aware that the Constitution guarantees the “right to life” increased from 70 to 77 percent in the last 35 years, the shares for “freedom of speech” and “right of association” decreased from 49 to 35 percent and 39 to 22 percent, respectively.

The number of people who only selected the correct options (those who chose the three correct answers and did not choose any of the incorrect answers) was already fairly low in 1973 at 18 percent, but further decreased to 9 percent in 2008—only one out of ten citizens knows the correct answers.
The fact that people are not, or have no pressing need to be aware of these valuable constitutional rights is perhaps an indication of the level of contentment in society. However, the worldwide financial crisis that began last autumn (2008) has resulted in layoffs of regular employees, “haken-giri” (layoff of employees hired through temporary staff agencies), and other issues that directly affect citizens’ survival and right of association.

**Economic Conditions and Political Issues**

The survey asks respondents to select one of seven issues they feel is the most important that government should address. Past results indicate that most respondents feel that improving public welfare and developing the economy are key issues (Figure 32).

However, the economic situation at the time of the survey appears to play a crucial role in deciding which of these two issues takes precedence. The share of people who select “economic development” increases during economic downturns, and “improvement in public welfare” increases in other times.

The year 1973, towards the end of the postwar period of rapid economic growth, was declared *fukushi gan’nen* (the first year of welfare), since the national budget was expanded to promote not only economic growth but also public welfare-related projects. Similarly, the results of the Survey of Japanese Value Orientation for 1973 showed a large share of respondents who chose “improve public welfare” (nearly 50 percent). However, the first oil cri-
sis occurred toward the end of the year, resulting in the first postwar phase of negative growth and the end of the economic boom. Consequently, the share of people who thought economic development should take precedence nearly doubled in the 1978 survey, while the share for improvement of public welfare decreased sharply. Later, stimulated by the bubble economy that began in late 1986, the 1988 survey indicates an increased concern with the “improve public welfare” issue.

After the collapse of the bubble came the Heisei recession, also known as the Lost Decade (1990s). In the 1993 survey, the share for “improve public welfare” remained the same, whereas “develop the economy” increased. In 1998, during the second half of the Lost Decade, the proportion of respondents who felt that developing the economy was an urgent issue increased by as much as 27 percent from the previous 21 percent, accounting for nearly half of the respondents (48 percent).

According to statistics, the Izanami boom period, the longest postwar period of continuous economic growth, began in 2002, but because it was slow to
gain momentum, the results from the 2003 survey showed that the share for “develop the economy” remained fairly high at 48 percent. In 2008, however, the share of respondents who selected “develop the economy” had dropped almost by half to 25 percent, while “improve public welfare” increased to 28 percent, the largest share among the seven issues. (The 2008 survey was conducted before the worldwide financial crisis triggered by events in the United States.) In addition, the share for “maintain order,” which had been on the decline in the 1990s, has been showing an increase since 2000.

Looking at the breakdown of results by gender and age, there was a large share of men in the older generation who selected “maintain order” from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. However, after this period, there have been a large share of both men and women in many age brackets who select “develop the economy” and “improve public welfare.”

Decline of Nonpartisanship and Rise of DPJ Support
People support different parties depending on the issues and policies that are prevalent at the time, so it is difficult to achieve a detailed monitoring of political party preference in a survey that is conducted only every five years. Hence, the Survey of Japanese Value Orientations acts as a tool for identifying rather general trends of people’s preferred political parties. Looking at the results over the last 35 years, we see that the share for nonpartisanship, which had risen to more than 50 percent, decreased significantly for the first time in the 2008 survey (Figure 33). The fluctuations in political party support rates can be broken down into four stages:

![Figure 33. Political Party Support Rates (Overall Sample)](image)
The support rate of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), which had been 20 percent at the time of the first survey in 1973, decreased to as low as 8 percent by 1993. The party then became briefly part of the ruling coalition in 1994 and changed its name to Social Democratic Party in 1996, but its current support rate is down to 1 percent. There emerged many new parties in the meantime, but none claimed more than a 10 percent support rate. Over the course of 35 years, the only party, besides LDP and JSP, to have received a two-digit support rate was the DPJ, at 15 percent in the latest survey.

Although support for non-LDP parties increased briefly between 1988 and 1993, it decreased once again between 1993 and 1998, and continued to decrease as nonpartisanship increased. Similarly, this increase in DPJ support may be temporary, but considering the rising sense of political efficacy that we saw earlier, it is possible that the support rate for the DPJ and other parties will increase, and nonpartisanship will cease to rise.

**BASIC VALUES**

Here let us look at people’s purposes in life as well as interpersonal relationships with neighbors and relatives and at the workplace.
“Affection-oriented” Trend Continues

People may be at loss for an answer when suddenly asked what their purpose in life or life credo is. However, even the individual who does not consciously articulate his or her purpose does have some kind of goal in mind.

For this survey, we identified two axes of value choice in order to determine people’s life credos. One is the axis of temporal outlook, which determines whether they lead a present-oriented lifestyle or a future-oriented lifestyle. The other is the axis of social outlook, which identifies if they live to satisfy their own interests or the collective needs of society (Figure 34).

In the actual questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate which of the following four credos most closely describes their ideal approach to life.7

1. Enjoying life freely one day at a time (Enjoyment)
2. Gradually building an abundant life in accordance with a clear-cut plan (Advantage)
3. Spending each day in a happy atmosphere with the people closest to me (Affection)
4. Cooperating with others to make the world a better place (Justice)

7 The terms in parentheses are borrowed from Mita Munesuke’s four value types. *Kachi ishiki no riron* [Theory of Value Orientation] (Kobundo Shinsha, 1976).
As a result, we saw that while the proportion for “advantage” and “affection” had been approximately equal in 1973, “affection” steadily increased and rose to the top position in 2008. As the share for “advantage” gradually decreased and “enjoyment” increased, the shares for “enjoyment” and “advantage” become approximately the same after 1998. Meanwhile, the share for “justice,” which had been small to start with, continued to decrease after around 1980 and is currently at 6 percent.

Looking at the breakdown of the results by gender and age, we see that the shares for “affection” and “enjoyment” were large among males 16–19 and in their 60s and older, while the share for “advantage” was large among men in their 20s to 50s in 1973. In the 1970s, we also see a large number of men between the ages of 55 and 69 who chose “justice.”

After the 1970s, the share for “affection” increased among men of all ages. In 2008, we saw that men in their early 20s and 60s and older chose “enjoyment,” but “affection” prevailed among men in all other age brackets.

Meanwhile, in 1973, the share for “affection” was largest among women in their early 20s and younger and 50s to early 70s, “advantage” was largest among women in their 30s and 40s, and “enjoyment” was largest among women aged 75 and older. After that survey, “affection” continued to grow among women as it did among men. By 2008, it had become largest in every age bracket except among the 16–19 group (though “enjoyment” is also high among women 75 and over). “Enjoyment” claimed the largest share among those 16–19.

Until the 1980s for women and early 2000s for men, people’s life credos changed according to their stage in life (entering the job market, marriage and childrearing, children’s independence, retirement). Today, we find that people’s life credos tend to remain constant throughout their lives, and most men and women at different stages of their lives select “affection” as best expressing their purpose in life.

In addition, when we look at the breakdown of results by occupation, educational background, and city of residence, “affection” is on the rise among every group except among senior high school students and the unemployed. The desire to spend each day in a happy atmosphere with colleagues, family, and other people one is close to (mijika na hito) is spreading in all strata of society.

Furthermore, people who selected “justice” have a tendency to live by this creed, throughout the different stages of their lives. In other words, people who are inclined to cooperate with others to make the world a better place during their youth will hold onto this goal throughout their lives. This also shows that the overall decrease in the share for “justice” credo is a result of a
generational shift, in which the people who live by this creed are dying out and being replaced by new people who live by other creeds. However, we note that people who had chosen “justice” were beginning to change their life credo between 1978 and 1983. Combined with the generational shift, this resulted in a 4 percent decrease in the overall share for “justice.”

Looking at Figure 35, a breakdown of results by social and temporal outlook, we see that although the gap between the share of self-oriented and other-oriented respondents (indicated by triangles) shrank slightly in 1978, the share of self-oriented people was generally larger until the early 1990s. There has not been much of a gap thereafter.

Looking at the trend line of temporal outlook (indicated by circles), we see that although there was a slightly larger share of present-oriented respondents than future-oriented respondents in 1973, the gap between the two widened with each survey. By 2008, there was an overwhelming difference between the shares of present-oriented (69 percent) and future-oriented (29 percent) respondents.

Preference for “Open” Kinship Relationships
Since the period of rapid economic growth that began in the mid-1950s, people’s social environment has changed considerably with dramatic demographic shifts accompanied by consequent depopulation and overpopulation problems and the spread of new residential developments and high-rise housing complexes. In this environment, preference for close interpersonal relation-
ships has decreased and preference for casual relationships has increased. In the 30 years leading up to 2003, we had seen this change in relationships with neighbors, relatives, and at the workplace.

However, in the last five years, we saw a variation in preference according to the context of relationships. In regard to relationships with neighbors, we see that more than half of the respondents prefer a “limited relationship” (Figure 36). In the workplace, we noted that there was a continued increase in the share of people who desire “formal” relationships; the share for “limited” relationships decreased for the first time (Figure 37). In the context of relations with relatives, while preference for “limited” relationships decreased for the first time, the percentage for “open” relationships increased also for the first time, returning to the same level as it was ten years earlier (Figure 38).

Although we are beginning to see a variation in preferences according to the context of relationships, the ratio for “open” relationship preference was highest in the “workplace,” followed by the “relatives” and “neighbors,” in that order. This ranking has remained unchanged in the last 35 years. In the workplace, where functionality and rationality are given precedence, the survey suggests that people consider it very important to maintain a positive atmosphere among employees.
Figure 37. Preferences Regarding Interpersonal Relationships: Workplace (Overall Sample)
- • “Formal”: Relationships confined to matters directly related to work
- ○ “Limited”: Relationships that include social contact beyond working hours
- △ “Open”: Relationships in which co-workers consult and help each other regarding a wide range of matters, including personal affairs

Figure 38. Preferences Regarding Interpersonal Relationships: Relatives (Overall Sample)
- • “Formal”: Relationships confined to observing the formalities of family custom
- ○ “Limited”: Relationships in which relatives drop in on one another casually
- △ “Open”: Relationships in which relatives consult and help each other regarding a wide range of matters, including personal affairs
This is also related to the results found when respondents were asked about their preferred image of coworkers. Throughout the 35 years, far more respondents preferred to work with someone who is “not so competent but agreeable” (68 percent in both 1973 and 2008) than someone who is “competent but not very agreeable” (27 percent in 1973 and 28 percent in 2008).

People’s views on interpersonal relationships in all three contexts are more or less determined by their year of birth. For example, looking at Figure 39, we can see that a larger share of people prefer “open” relationships with relatives among the older generations than among younger generations.

Furthermore, we see that preference for “open” relationships has been decreasing within each generation with each subsequent survey. This can be said for almost all of the age brackets. In other words, generational shift and changing times have led to a decrease in the proportion of people who prefer close relationships.

However, looking at the results from the last five years, we see that there was a 3 percent increase in the overall preference for “open” relationships. This was the result of a significant increase (from 24 percent to 36 percent) in the share of this view among people born between 1969 and 1973. There was also no decline in the share in any age bracket.

As we will discuss later in the section “Overall Features,” there was a continual decrease in tradition-oriented responses in many areas of the survey until 2003. However, in the last five years, we have seen an increase in tradition-oriented responses in several topic areas. Also, as discussed in the second section “Family and Gender Relations,” it was for the first time that we saw a decrease (from 13 percent to 11 percent) in the share of respondents who felt that couples do not need to use the same surname after marriage.

We also saw that the share of opinions that “women should continue working after they have married and had children” and “husbands should help with
household duties as a matter of course,” which had been rising steadily for 30 years, stopped increasing in the last five years.

It was for the first time that there was a decline or a halt in increase of what are considered “modern” views in regard to relationships with relatives, marriage, and image of the home.

NATIONALISM

The Survey of Japanese Value Orientations asks respondents six questions focusing on their confidence in and emotional attachment to Japan in order to gauge the variation in people’s pride and feelings toward the country.

National Confidence Rebound

The questions concerning national confidence require the respondent to indicate whether he/she agrees or disagrees with the following statements:

1. Japan is a leading nation in the world;
2. the essential character of the Japanese is superior to that of people of other countries (“National character of Japanese superior”);
3. Japan has much to learn from other countries.

The share of respondents who agree (or disagree, in the case of number 3) with these statements had been on a decline since its peak in the late 1970s to the early 1980s, when Japan was recovering from the oil crisis and becoming one of the major economic powers in the world. However, in the last five years, the share has been on the rise again (Figure 40).

Despite the recovery in national confidence, the share for “national character of Japanese superior,” currently the top-ranking response at 57 percent, is still quite far below its peak at 71 percent in 1983. Observing the trend over the last 35 years, confidence in their nation among respondents is consistently low.

Figure 41 shows the breakdown of results from 2008 by age. More than 60 percent of respondents in their late 50s and older feel that the “essential character of the Japanese people is superior,” but less than 40 percent of people in their 20s and younger share this view. The figure charts the larger responses for people in older age brackets.

Looking at the trends in responses for “national character of Japanese superior” over the last 35 years by age (Figure 42), we see that the share of people who agreed with this view increased from 50 to 55 percent among the middle-aged group in the last five years. Among the younger generation, there
Figure 40. Confidence in Japan (Overall Sample)

- Japan is a leading country in the world
- National character of Japanese superior
- Don’t think Japan has much to learn from other countries

Figure 41. Confidence in Japan in 2008, by Age

- Japan is a leading country in the world
- National character of Japanese superior
- Don’t think Japan has much to learn from other countries
had been a great decline in the 1990s (from 43 to 25 percent), but the figure recovered to 39 percent by 2008. In this article we refer to the younger generation as people aged 16 to 29, middle-aged generation as 30 to 59, and the older generation as 60 and older (same for below).

In order to identify the level of overall confidence in the nation, we assigned three points each to the three statements mentioned earlier. Agreement (or disagreement, in the case of number 3) with all three statements received three points, two statements received two points, one statement receives one point, and all other responses received 0 points (Figure 43). Tallied by this means, respondents with the higher scores displayed stronger confidence in the nation. In the 1980s and 1990s, the percentage of people who received two or three points declined. The 1980s was a period during which, amid the rapid appreciation of yen following the Plaza Accord, corporate investments were booming and trade friction was growing serious, while the 1990s coincided with the Lost Decade, or a period of economic stagnation when financial institutions were failing one after another following the collapse of the bubble. However, between 2003 and 2008, the surveys showed an increase in the proportion of 2-point recipients from 25 percent to 30 percent, and conversely, a decrease in the proportion of 0-point recipients from 33 percent to 28 percent. We can say that the level of overall confidence of Japanese in their country was also on the rise.
The proportion of 3-point recipients, people with the strongest confidence in Japan, was 5 percent in 2008, and has not changed in the last 10 years. Looking at the breakdown of results by age, the older generation tends to have a higher score—while the proportion of people in their early 40s and younger is less than 2 percent, that of people aged 75 and over is 12 percent.

We have also divided the score by the number of respondents to calculate the average score for each survey (Figure 44). The average score peaked in the 1983 survey.

In addition, Figure 45 gives the breakdown of these average scores by year of birth. The eight trend lines, although there is slight variation among them (for example, the 1983 line is slightly higher than others), generally overlap each other. From this, we know that confidence in Japan, in general, is determined more or less by the respondent’s year of birth. Factors responsible for these slight vertical shifts between surveys include domestic economic,
political and social change, and issues surrounding international relations in the given year. We can also see that the confidence score decreases with the respondent’s age.

### Consistent in Emotional Attachment

For the three questions gauging emotional attachment to Japan, respondents were asked to indicate whether they did or did not feel . . . .

1. proud to be born Japanese;
2. a strong affinity for Japanese traditions (e.g., at the sight of old temples or traditional-style houses);
3. a desire to serve Japan’s national interest in some way.
There is no significant variation in the share of respondents who agreed with these statements in the last 35 years (Figure 46). Also, the share of people who said that they were “proud to be born Japanese” is more than 90 percent and the share of people who “felt a strong affinity for Japanese traditions” is more than 80 percent in any given period, indicating that these are views shared among a large majority of people. Also, the ratio of respondents who have a desire “to serve Japan’s national interest in some way” is usually more or less 70 percent, showing that people’s emotional attachment to Japan is stronger than their confidence in it.

Research conducted under the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) in which the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute participates, has revealed similar results, that a large number of people “feel close to” (or “feel emotionally attached to”) Japan. The percentage of people who said that they “feel close to” Japan (combined responses of “very close” and “close”) was 95 percent in 1995 and 90 percent in 2003.8

Looking at the 2008 survey results by age (Figure 47), we see that while the responses “proud to be born Japanese” and “feel strong affinity for Japanese traditions” are lower among those 16–19 than among other age groups, there is no other significant variation among the different age groups.

Patriotism is strongly related to these survey questions regarding one’s “confidence in Japan” and “emotional attachment to Japan.” In recent years, there has been much debate about the definition of Japanese patriotism. In the educational realm, the Fundamental Law of Education was revised in 2006, and a new goal to foster “respect for Japan’s traditions and culture, love for our homeland and country, as well as the consciousness of being a member of the international community” was added. Paying attention to social changes such as this, we must look more closely at the results in order to further study the factors that might have contributed to the slight but certain increase in national confidence observed in this survey. The nurturing of emotional attachment to Japan and confidence in their country among children attending schools administered under the revised Fundamental Law of Education would also be a subject of analysis over the long term.

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ATTITUDES TOWARD THE EMPEROR

Shifts in the attitudes toward the emperor in the last 35 years has two distinctive features, as seen in Figure 48:

1. Changes resulting from the accession of Emperor Akihito after Emperor Showa’s (Hirohito) death in 1989.
2. Increase and decrease in “favorable feelings” and “indifference” since the beginning of the Heisei era (1989–).

Trends in “Favorable Feelings” and “Indifference” since 1989

In the four Showa-era surveys, to the left of the dotted line on the graph, “indifference” is the largest response, receiving over 40 percent in any given period. The ratio of responses from largest to smallest also remains consistent: indifference, respect, favorable, and antipathy, in that order. We can conclude that the overall attitude toward the emperor was relatively stable.

However, from the beginning of the Heisei era, “favorable feelings,” which had previously been the third largest response, doubled from 22 percent in 1988 to 43 percent in 1993, claiming the top-ranking spot. Conversely, “indifference” decreased significantly. Since 1993, “favorable feelings” and “indifference” have been zigzagging, showing an instability in attitudes.
toward the emperor. Also, the proportion for “respect,” which had been approximately 30 percent during the Showa era and declined to around 20 percent since advent of the Heisei era (1989), in the last five years increased for the first time to 25 percent.

The sharp increase in “favorable feelings” in 1993 was not simply a result of the fact that the emperor had changed, but was also probably significantly influenced by the marriage of Crown Prince Naruhito in June of the same year (the survey was conducted in October). Even after 1993, the media has been reporting events related to the Imperial Family every now and then, such as the birth of Princess Aiko and the parenting of the Crown Prince and Princess. The shift in “favorable feelings” and “indifference” since the onset of the Heisei era is thought to reflect a combination of people’s attitudes toward the emperor and the public’s interest in the events surrounding the imperial family at the time.

**Gender and Age-Related Attitudes**

Figure 49 is the breakdown of attitudes toward the emperor and how they differ by gender. During the Showa era, we see almost no difference between the attitudes of men and women. However, once we enter the Heisei era, there is a clear difference between the attitudes of men and women. “Indifference” is the largest response among men in any given period. Meanwhile, the response pattern among women is similar to that observed in the overall results shown in Figure 48. “Favorable feelings” overtake “indifference” after the beginning of the Heisei era, and each of these two responses zigzagged considerably
thereafter. We see that women's attitudes toward the emperor are less stable than men's.

Figure 50 shows people's attitudes toward the emperor by generation. Among people of the younger generations, "indifference" is by far the largest response for any given period; we see a wide gap between "indifference" and the second largest response, "favorable feelings." In addition, there is an increase in "respect" in the last five years. Among people of the middle-aged generations, "indifference," which was the largest response during the Showa era, repeatedly switches in ranking with "favorable feelings." There was an increase in "respect" also among the middle-aged group in the last five years. Among the older generations, the share for "respect" had claimed a significant majority at 75 percent in 1973; once the Heisei era began, the gap between "respect" and "favorable feelings" shrank, and since 1998, both responses hovered around the 40 percent mark. Hence, we can see that responses tend to be centered on "indifference" among the younger generations, "favorable feelings" and "indifference" among the middle generations, and "respect" and "favorable feelings" among the older generations.

"Favorable feelings" and "indifference" have been the two major attitudes toward the emperor since the Heisei era began, especially among women and people in the middle-aged generations. Also, the share for "respect" increased for the first time in the last five years. This change was also seen among the younger generations, whose share for "respect" had not been very high previously, showing signs of a new shift in attitudes.
Figure 50. Attitudes toward the Emperor, by Age Group

- **Respect**
- **Favorable**
- **Indifference**
- **Antipathy**

**Younger generation**

- 1973: 69%
- 1978: 69%
- 1983: 77%
- 1988: 75%
- 1993: 58%
- 1998: 78%
- 2003: 70%
- 2008: 71%

**Middle-aged generation**

- 1973: 37%
- 1978: 40%
- 1983: 45%
- 1988: 47%
- 1993: 50%
- 1998: 47%
- 2003: 45%
- 2008: 45%

**Older generation**

- 1973: 75%
- 1978: 70%
- 1983: 68%
- 1988: 61%
- 1993: 46%
- 1998: 42%
- 2003: 44%
- 2008: 41%
OVERALL FEATURES

Above we have looked at the changes in value orientations over the past 35 years by topic area. Let us now summarize the overall features and consider them in terms of when and which topic areas have changed, and to what degree they have shifted. We will also analyze the results of Survey 8 using Quantification Theory Type 3 and break the results down by generation. In this way, we will see how generational shifts and differences affect the overall variations in value orientation.

Degree of Variation in Value Orientations

A total of 54 questions are common to all eight rounds of the Survey of Japanese Value Orientations conducted so far. Excluding responses such as “other,” “don’t know/no response,” and “not applicable,” these questions are accompanied by a total of 212 response items.

To determine the degree of variation of value orientations, we calculated the difference in absolute figures for each response item between one survey and the next and between the first (1973) and last (2008) surveys, then averaged those differences for each topic area and for the survey overall. Shown in Figure 51, these averages represent the degree of variation of value orientations over the course of the survey series so far.

Figure 51. Average Variation (Overall Sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>'73–78</th>
<th>'78–83</th>
<th>'83–88</th>
<th>'88–93</th>
<th>'93–98</th>
<th>'98–03</th>
<th>'03–08</th>
<th>'73–08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic values</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy, society, culture</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-gender relations</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For supported (or potentially supported) party, some party grouping was used. For questions where the respondent was asked to give their top two choices, the totals of first and second choices were used. Overall denominators were used for questions that are related to each other.

The variations seen over the last 35 years can be summarized as follows:

1. The figures for overall degree of variation for each five-year period show that the greatest change occurred in the 1973–1978 and 1993–1998 periods, at 2.3 percent in either case. Both of these periods correspond to periods of economic downturn in Japan, which suggests that prevailing economic conditions influence attitudinal change in some way.
2. In the 1973–1978 period, while the degree of variation was fairly even over all topic areas, it was notably higher than in the other five-year periods in the areas “basic values” and “economy, society, and culture.” When the 1973 oil crisis hit just as economic growth was at its peak, business turned sharply downward, apparently with a significant effect on people’s attitudes and values. In contrast to the 1973–1978 period, the greatest variation in the 1993–1998 period was seen in the topic area of “politics,” at 3.8 percent. The Hosokawa Cabinet emerged in 1993 in the wake of the collapse of the “1955 system,” dominated by the LDP and JSP, that had characterized Japanese politics since 1955—but the non-LDP regime did not survive for long. As economic conditions worsened, cabinets changed five times during the 1993–1998 period, but none was able to come up with effective policy measures. Repeated realignments among the political parties around the same time also presumably had a great impact on popular political views and attitudes as a whole.

3. At 1.8 percent, the overall average variation for the 2003–2008 period represents the second lowest change in the five-year interval after the 1998–2003 period. However, there was a 2.9 percent variation in the topic area of “politics,” which is the largest change after that of the 1993–1998 period.

4. The greatest variation observed over the 35-year span was in the topic area “family and gender relations,” at 11.5 percent. This topic area had shown either the highest or second-highest variation in any given five-year period between 1973 and 2003, indicating that views in this area have been changing constantly. Variation within this topic was particularly high in the 1983–1988 period, at 3.0 percent. This may be attributed to the various movements for the improvement of women’s social status that took place between 1976–1985, such as the activities during the United Nations Decade for Women and promulgation of the Japan Law on Equal Employment Opportunity for Men and Women in 1986 to end discrimination against women in hiring. However, the variation rate of this topic area in the last five years was 1.4 percent, the lowest overall change in all eight surveys. Opinions on family and gender relations, which had been undergoing significant change until now, are changing at a slower pace.

Figures 52 and 53 list the 10 responses showing the most marked increase and decrease. With regard to the items with the most marked increase, the years of the lowest and highest shares were 1973 and 2003 or 2008 respectively. Conversely, the years of the highest and lowest shares for the items with the most marked decrease were 1973 and 2003 or 2008 respectively. The
Figure 52. Ten Increased Orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Variation 2008 minus 1973</th>
<th>Overall result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husbands and housework</td>
<td>“Should help as matter of course”</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education for girls</td>
<td>“University”</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and home life</td>
<td>“Balance between employment and home life”</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of ideal home</td>
<td>“Cooperation at home”</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>“OK if in love”</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with living environment</td>
<td>“Satisfied”</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life credos</td>
<td>“Affection”</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy: Direct action</td>
<td>“Fairly weak”</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy: Elections</td>
<td>“Fairly weak”</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work and leisure</td>
<td>“Work-leisure balance”</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 53. Ten Decreased Orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Variation 2008 minus 1973</th>
<th>Overall result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex</td>
<td>“Unacceptable”</td>
<td>-36%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education for girls</td>
<td>“Senior high school”</td>
<td>-29</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands and housework</td>
<td>“Shouldn’t help”</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of ideal home</td>
<td>“Division of roles”</td>
<td>-24</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and home life</td>
<td>“Devotion to home life”</td>
<td>-23</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with living environment</td>
<td>“Dissatisfied”</td>
<td>-21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relationships: Workplace</td>
<td>“Open”</td>
<td>-21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current political issue</td>
<td>“Improve public welfare”</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy: Elections</td>
<td>“Strong”</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of rights</td>
<td>“Right of association”</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
responses that showed the greatest increase and decrease were both in the topic area of “family and gender relations”: the responses “should help as matter of course” (husbands and housework) and “university” (level of education for girls) showed the most increase, and the responses “unacceptable” (premarital sex) and “senior high school” (level of education for girls) showed the most decrease. Until 2003, items with large variations had been increasing or decreasing steadily in one direction, but in 2008, some items have gone back to previous figures.

As these findings show, although Japanese value orientations have changed significantly over the 35-year period, the change in the last five years found in this survey is distinctive compared to previous surveys.

**Value Structure and Axes of Change**

Using the results of the questions common to all eight rounds of the Survey of Japanese Value Orientations, we performed an analysis using Quantification Theory Type 3. As a result, we recognized the same two axes supporting the Japanese value structure that were identified by Kojima Kazuto in his analysis of the 1978 survey: Axis I (horizontal), which represents tradition-orient ed and anti-tradition-oriented values, and Axis II (vertical), which represents consummatory or instrumental orientation (Figure 54).

**Axes of value orientation**

Let us explain briefly about the interpretation of Axis I. With the establishment of the new Constitution, the traditional value system upon which the Meiji Constitution and Imperial Rescript on Education were premised was scrapped, and postwar democracy and American culture started to quickly permeate Japanese society. The prewar value system was based on the emperor system (tenno-sei), patriarchal rights, and lord-vassal (feudal) values. The values contrasting to these are realization of popular sovereignty, freedom of association, and gender equality. We refer to ideas that correspond to the prewar values as “traditional” and to postwar values as “modern.” Examples of “traditional” responses are those that advocate respect for the emperor, authority, traditional norms, and “husband’s surname” for married names.

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9 Hayashi Chikio, *Suryoka: Riron to hoho* [Quantification: Theory and Methods] (Asakura Shoten, 1993). This can be applied to qualitative data. We indicate if the respondent reacted to certain categories using 1 or 0. Studying the pattern of the respondent’s reactions, we give weight to each category.

Figure 54. Japanese Value Orientations (Quantification Theory Type 3) (1973–2008, 8 Surveys, 20,529 Total Respondents)
The Survey of Japanese Value Orientations

- **Note 1:** The items used here were 22 questions (total of 81 response choices) used in all 8 surveys. For topics such as sense of political efficacy or political association and activism, for which there are several questions, the results are represented as a total score. Major orientations that are pertinent to the axes are connected by lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>⊗ Satisfaction with life</th>
<th>□ Life credos</th>
<th>⊗ Married name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>⊗ Employment and home life</td>
<td>★ Father’s role</td>
<td>□ Efficiency and empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>△ Interpersonal relationships</td>
<td>□ Ideal job (1st choice)</td>
<td>⊗ Use of leisure time (1st choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⊕ Work and leisure</td>
<td>▲ Level of education for girls</td>
<td>⊗ Religious activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⊗ Premarital sex</td>
<td>⊗ Political association and activism</td>
<td>○ Japan as a leading country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⊗ Want to serve Japan’s interests</td>
<td>▲ There is much to be learned from other countries</td>
<td>⊗ Attitudes toward the Emperor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Knowledge on rights</td>
<td>□ Sense of political efficacy</td>
<td>□ Current political issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>△ Supported political parties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note 2:** The sample used respondents who did not answer “Other” or “No response” to any of the 22 questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents by survey</th>
<th>No. 1</th>
<th>No. 2</th>
<th>No. 3</th>
<th>No. 4</th>
<th>No. 5</th>
<th>No. 6</th>
<th>No. 7</th>
<th>No. 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,751</td>
<td>2,747</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>2,620</td>
<td>2,647</td>
<td>2,531</td>
<td>2,265</td>
<td>2,093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Note 3:** Correlation coefficient: axis I (horizontal) 0.373, axis II (vertical) 0.291
Examples of “modern” responses are those with a strong sense of political efficacy, association, and equality.

However, these values are not plotted on the axes in perfect symmetry. For instance, we see “sense of political efficacy,” which is an example of a “modern” response, plotted in reverse order, i.e., in the order of weakening political efficacy. In order to avoid confusion, we have called the opposite side of the “tradition” axis “anti-tradition” instead of “modern.”

Looking towards the lower half of Axis II, we see the responses such as “ideal job: meaningful, specialist, responsibility”; “how leisure time is spent: knowledge”; and “life credo: justice.” On the upper half of Axis II, we see listed “premarital sex: acceptable”; “life credo: enjoyment”; “ideal job: working hours, income”; “weak political efficacy”; “leisure-oriented”; “father’s role: non-intervening”; and “religious activity: none.”

While the lower half of the vertical axis represents future- and other-oriented responses with a strong desire to pursue goals, the upper half of the axis shows present- and self-oriented responses with a preference for pleasure. In this way, we have interpreted this vertical axis as one that represents social
values, or “instrumental” values, and values of personal freedom, or “consummatory” values. Hence, Axis II was called the “instrumental-consummatory” axis.

Characteristics by generation

To identify the characteristics of each generation, we used the two axes and grouped together the age brackets that shared similar values. First, we listed the age groups in five-year intervals\(^{11}\) and their average scores from each axis (Figure 55). Then we combined the age groups whose average scores were close to each other to create six larger groups. As a result, we ended up with six generations of approximately 15-year intervals, beginning with the wartime generation to the shinjinrui junior (second generation of the shinjinrui, or “new-type Japanese”) generation. As our division of generations matched the one that Watanuki Joji developed during his voting behavior research, we used the same terms.\(^{12}\)

How did the values of people in these generations change over the eight surveys in the last 35 years? We identified the groups’ average scores of Axes I and II for each survey and plotted them on Figure 56 to observe the variation in values among each group. From this graph, we can see the following:

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\(^{11}\) Since we require a substantial number of people in each group to statistically organize the survey data, we grouped the birth years into five-year age brackets to create the generational divisions. Hence, the “First Postwar Baby Boomer” generation is given a ten-year age bracket. We first attempted to break down the generations after the 2003 survey, and we used the same method for the generations after the 2003 survey, as well as for the 2008 data. However, we saw no need to alter the divisions that we had had for the first seven surveys prior to 2003.

\(^{12}\) Watanuki Joji, “‘Shussei kohoto’ to Nihon yukensha” [“The Birth Cohort” and Japan’s Eligible Voters], Revalasan 15 (Bokutakusha, 1994). We decided to call the newest generation that does not appear in Watanuki’s division of generations “shinjinrui junior” (second generation of the new-type Japanese).
1. The position (value orientation) of each generational group is far away from each other, and despite the 35-year lapse, there is no significant shift in the positions. Generally speaking, we can see that values of each generation are determined by the period of one’s birth.

2. The generation gap in value orientation is smaller among younger generations.

3. The values have been moving back toward the “tradition-oriented” side in the last five years.

Regarding the first two points, we found that the new data from the 2008 survey further confirmed the analysis that we had found with the data leading up to the 2003 survey. We see that the overall value orientation shifts from the tradition-oriented to the anti-tradition side as a result of the generational shift, even if individuals’ opinions remain the same. Also, the narrow gap in value orientations among the younger generations shows that the overall shifts in value orientations will begin to slow down as generational shift progresses.

Return to tradition-oriented values

However, the final point is the outstanding feature of this survey. Looking at the coordinates for each generation on the horizontal axis, we see that the coordinates for all generational groups moved to the left in the 2003–2008 period. Although there was a similar movement during the 1998–2003 period, there is a greater shift toward the tradition-oriented side this time. When we look at the overall movement in value orientation by survey (Figure 57), we observe a steady movement away from “tradition-oriented” values and toward
“anti-tradition” until 2003. In 2008, however, there is a movement in the opposite direction, toward “tradition-oriented” values.

To see which specific attitudes changed to bring about this return to “tradition-oriented” values, we selected 20 answer choices that contribute most to the movement in the Axis I from both the “tradition-oriented” and “anti-tradition” side. We then calculated their degrees of variation in the last five years and created a list of items that showed a more than 3-percent variation. These responses would be the ones that had the most effect on the generational values (Figure 58).

Of the tradition-oriented items, the response that showed the most variation was “respect for the emperor,” the proportion of which had increased

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Category</th>
<th>Question Answer</th>
<th>Category score</th>
<th>Variation (2008–2003) %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradition-oriented</td>
<td>Attitude toward the Emperor “Respect”</td>
<td>– 2.85</td>
<td>Overall Shinjinrui Dankai Shinjinrui Dankai Shinjinrui Dankai Immediate Postwar Wartime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married name “Husband’s surname as matter of course”</td>
<td>– 1.43</td>
<td>5 3 5 4 9 9 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current political issue “Maintenance of order”</td>
<td>– 1.16</td>
<td>4 4 5 4 4 6 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with life overall “Satisfied” (including “Fairly satisfied”)</td>
<td>– 1.15</td>
<td>4 – 1 6 4 6 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan as a leading country “Agree”</td>
<td>– 1.06</td>
<td>3 3 5 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Anti-Tradition | Question Category | Question Answer | Category score | Variation (2008–2003) % |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| | Political party “Nonpartisan” | 1.63 | Overall Shinjinrui Dankai Shinjinrui Dankai Shinjinrui Dankai Immediate Postwar Wartime |
| | Want to serve Japan’s interests “Disagree” | 1.58 | – 11 – 17 – 17 – 13 – 13 – 11 0 |
| | Attitude toward the Emperor “Indifference” | 1.45 | – 3 – 9 – 9 – 6 – 2 – 2 3 |
| | Political efficacy score 3, 2 points “Fairly weak” | 1.18 | 3 5 – 4 1 – 2 1 2 |
| | Work and leisure “Balance between work and leisure” | 1.14 | – 6 1 – 6 – 10 – 5 – 7 – 1 |
| | Japan as a leading country “Disagree” | 1.00 | – 3 – 11 – 5 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 1 |
| | Level of education for girls “University or Graduate school” | 0.88 | 4 7 3 7 2 2 1 |
with every generation. This was followed by an increase by more than 3 percent in the views that the wife should take her “husband’s name as a matter of course” and that “maintenance of order” is the most important current issue to be addressed in politics, “satisfaction” with life overall, and the opinion that “Japan is a leading nation in the world.” Although not listed here, the combination of “strong” and “fairly strong” sense of political efficacy also showed a 3 percent increase. We saw that more items showed an increase than a decrease.

Meanwhile, the anti-tradition responses that showed an increase were preference for “university or graduate school” education for girls and “indifference” toward the emperor. We noted a significant decline in “nonpartisanship” followed by a “fairly weak” sense of political efficacy. We also observed a decline in anti-traditional responses such as the lack of desire to serve Japan’s interest, the view that Japan is not a leading country in the world, and the preference for “work-leisure balance.” There is a general decrease in anti-tradition responses among each generation.

The return to traditional values can be attributed to shifts in vectors on both sides: a decline in political nonpartisanship and a recovery of “modern” seen in the increasingly “strong” and “fairly strong” sense of political efficacy on the one hand, and a return to tradition-oriented opinions regarding the emperor, family and gender relations, and nationalism, on the other.

CONCLUSION

As we see in Figure 58, although the figures vary, these shifts in value orientation are present among every generation. From this, we can deduce that these changes reflect changes in the times. With the LDP’s overwhelming victory in the 2005 lower house elections and DPJ’s victory in the 2007 upper house elections, voter behavior has brought about changes in Diet deliberations. In the August 2009 lower house elections, the DPJ won a sweeping victory, ending 55 years of nearly-unbroken LDP rule.

Also, issues surrounding pensions, a growing disparity between permanent and non-permanent employees, and so forth were new sources of anxiety for many people. They are not temporary problems, but fundamental problems related to Japan’s aging population and decreasing number of children (shoshi koreika) and economic globalization. Furthermore, the economy has been hit by what is said to be a once-in-a-century financial crisis. In the same way that economic conditions have affected people’s value orientations in the past, it is possible that the way in which the government will deal with this harsh economic and social situation will be a major factor that will affect the way people form their values.

(Translated by Horibe Nozomi)