

The Deinstitutionalization of Japanese Marriage?

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Abstract

In the past few decades Japan has experienced changes in its marital institution. Japanese men and women have started to postpone marriage and childbearing or remain unmarried, and the number of divorces have increased. Exactly the changes in marriage trends have been the point of departure of this study. The purpose of this study was to focus attention on Japanese marriage. Specifically, this thesis has explored in what way the institution of marriage has changed and whether it has deinstitutionalized in Japan since the 1970s. By following the historical development of the marital institution in Japan from the 1970s until today and using the theory of deinstitutionalization of marriage the main conclusion of this study is that despite changes, Japanese marriage has not been deinstitutionalized. Strong attitudinal changes have taken place in favour of a less gendered division of labour. However, Japan has experienced few cohabiting relationships, extramarital childbirths, and the rules for same-sex partnerships have changed gradually. Characteristic for Japanese marriage has been its distinctive development since the 1970s with a coexistence of change and persistence of legal rules as well as social norms.

Keywords: Japan, marriage, institution, deinstitutionalization

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1. Introduction

The institution of marriage has been changing in Japan since the 1970s (Fukuda 2013: 107; Tokuhiro 2009: 4). To an increasing extent Japanese men and women delay marriage or decide not to marry at all. From 1970 to 2013 the mean age for first marriage increased from 26.9 to 30.9 for men and 24.2 to 29.3 for women (Raymo et al. 2015: 474, 476; Statistics Bureau Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Japan 2015: 18-19). Likewise the proportion of never-married people at age 50 increased between 1980 and 2010 from 2.6 percent to 20.2 percent for men and from 4.5 to 10.7 percent for women. The postponement of marriage and the rise of never-married people have had consequences for the fertility in Japan due to the tight link between marriage and childbearing (Rindfuss et al. 2009: 218; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2010). Few children are born outside marriage and extramarital childbearing is not accepted in society. The fertility rate in Japan has been low for many years and below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman since 1971. The low fertility is estimated to result in a substantial population shrinkage during the next decades. It has increasingly become a concern in society, and politically it has been recognized as a compelling problem since the 1990s (Suzuki 2008: 161-162).

Not only has the institution of marriage changed as a result of a delay and opting out of marriage. Attitudes regarding the purpose of marriage have also changed. Marriage used to be of practical importance as it was considered the right way to start life with a family (Raymo 1998: 1023; Tsuya and Bumpass 2004: 39; Tokuhiro 2009: 17-18; Yang and Yen 2011: 752-753). Moreover, marriage ensured a continuation of family lines and it preserved traditional gender roles within the family. Today attitudes have changed, especially among the young Japanese men and women. The vast majority of marriages are now based on mutual consent, romance, and love. Despite these changes in the marital institution, marriage is still the norm in Japan (Tokuhiro 2009: 2). Furthermore, most single Japanese men and women express a desire to marry and the majority of people would also like to have children (Raymo et al. 2015: 479). To married women the ideal number of children has only changed slightly since the late 1970s. In 1977 the ideal number of children was 2.6 and it decreased to 2.4 in 2010.

The demographic changes in the marital institution have not only happened in Japan. Japan has experienced delay in marriage, increase in divorces, people who remain unmarried, and female employment (Raymo et al. 2004: 396-397). These demographic changes as well as a notable growth

of cohabitation and childbirths outside marriage have also taken place in western industrialized countries. The developments have been termed the “second demographic transition”. The “first demographic transition” refers to the decline in fertility and mortality the western countries started to experience in the 18th and 19th century. (Lesthaeghe 2010a: 211-212; Lesthaeghe 2010b: 3). The first signs of the developments of the second demographic transition began in the U.S. and Scandinavia in the 1950s with an increasing number of divorces. In the late 1960s fertility started to decline in the western countries together with a rising age at first marriage and never-married people. It was followed by a rise in cohabitation and childbirths outside marriage. Despite similarities, Japanese marriage trends have features which sets Japan apart from western countries. The marriage trends are shared with the two other East Asian countries Taiwan and South Korea (Raymo et al. 2015: 472). Characteristic for the three East Asian countries are strong family ties, family lineage, and the continued gender division of labour in the home.

Exactly the changes in the Japanese marital institution which have already taken place and the apparent similarity of marriage trends Japan shares with the two East Asian countries, Taiwan and South Korea, as well as the U.S. and countries in Western Europe have been the motivation behind the topic of this thesis. The main aim of this thesis is to look deeper into changes of Japan’s marital institution. Particularly, I want to explore in what way the institution of marriage has changed and whether it has deinstitutionalized since the 1970s. Previous literature on deinstitutionalization has mainly focused on the U.S. and Europe and rarely included East Asian countries (Davis and Friedman 2014: 3; Yang and Yen 2011: 753, 757). Therefore, with this study I seek to broaden the knowledge and the scope of the existing literature on deinstitutionalization by analysing the deinstitutionalization of Japanese marriage. The main conclusion in this thesis is that Japanese marriage has changed but it has not been deinstitutionalized since the 1970s. The country has experienced a strong attitudinal change in favour of a more gender equal division of labour in the home. However, regarding the three other distinctive developments of the deinstitutionalization process, growth of cohabitation, emergence of same-sex marriage, and increase of extramarital childbearing they are either relatively recent developments or not significant phenomena in the Japanese society. The changes Japan have experienced in the marital institution seem to have been influenced by both cultural and material trends. Especially the cultural ideas and values of emotional fulfilment and individualism and the material trends of advancement to higher education, which have resulted in better occupational opportunities for mainly women, seem to have been

influential factors behind the changed institution of marriage. Despite changes in the Japanese marital institution, Japanese marriage has developed in a distinctive way characterized by institutional rigidity, both in terms of legal rules and social norms, which do not seem likely to change at the present moment. The rigidity of the marital institution may be consequence of the relative absence of certain developments in Japan, namely an early female-dominant contraceptive method, equal responsibility between husband and wife of domestic tasks, and a value change diminishing traditional beliefs. Furthermore, persistent family and childbearing norms are likely obstacles to extramarital childbearing.

The thesis is structured as follows: First, a historical background of the Japanese marriage is outlined to give an overview of the development of the marital institution before the changes in the 1970s. Subsequently, the literature review is touched upon. Next, the thesis' theoretical framework of deinstitutionalization is explained. The following two sections describe the research question and the research design. Afterwards the analysis is presented. The analysis is divided into three main parts where the first part focuses on the change of Japanese marriage since the 1970s, the second part points out influential causes for these changes, and the third part emphasizes factors which have resulted in the rigidity of the Japanese marital institution. The thesis ends with a concluding section.

2. Historical overview of the Japanese marriage

In this section a historical background of the Japanese marriage will be presented from the Edo period to the post-war years. The section will give an overview of the marital institution before the changes in the 1970s.

2.1. Arranged marriage from the Edo period to World War II

To understand the development of the marital institution in Japan it is important to look at the historical background. In the pre-war years marriage was considered the decent way to start life with a partner, and marriage was a way to secure continuation of the family lineage (Kumagai 2008: 33; Tokuhiko 2009: 17-18, 93). For the most part, marriages were arranged by family members (Tokuhiko 2009: 93-95). Together with relatives, parents took part in the selection of prospective partners for their children. Subsequently, the marriage was typically arranged by matchmakers. In

the search to find a suitable partner for their child parents thought of the interests of their family. Arranged marriages were a consequence of the structure of the *ie* family system in Japan. *Ie* was established in the Edo or Tokugawa period (1603-1867) and can be translated to stem family. *Ie* has both a co-residential and functional meaning (Kumagai 1995:138). Where the co-residential meaning signifies the succession of the stem family with a vertical ordering of nuclear families from each generation, the functional meaning refers to the household where everyone performs a given role to maintain the *ie* unit. As the head of the family was responsible for the selection of eligible partners for the family members, a suitable partner was selected based on background and social status since these qualifications would determine later contacts, social status, and future opportunities for the couple (Tokuhiro 2009: 93-95). Marriage also involved bringing a daughter-in-law or a son-in-law into the house to continue family lines. If a family did not have a son, the son-in-law would take over family responsibilities. A daughter-in-law who was brought into the husband's family would get instructions from her mother-in-law about the ways of her in-laws' family. Thus, match-making was not only important to the individual but also to the family. In the Edo period, the unit of social organization was composed of the lineal family (Yoshino 1992: 65).

During the Edo era the *ie* system mainly existed for the upper class of warriors and aristocrats, and it was especially people in the upper class who married through the arranged marriages (Kumagai 2010: 587; Kumagai 1995: 138; Tokuhiro 2009: 94). The control of the head of the family was stricter in these families compared to the lower classes of peasants, artisans, merchants, and eta (outcasts). It was a result of the moral code of Confucianism which primarily applied to people of higher ranks. Parental control was less pronounced among the peasants and an egalitarian familial relationship existed to some extent in these families. Consequently, when it came to matchmaking, the opinion of the children of peasants was valued. In the Edo period, peasants constituted about 80 to 90 percent of the population and warriors 7 to 10 percent. Another reason for the arranged marriages were the segregation of young unmarried men and women in Japan at that time (Tokuhiro 2009: 93, 95). It resulted in lack of confidence and experience with the opposite sex. As a result young men and women would rely on parents and matchmakers to find suitable partners. However, among peasants the segregation of men and women was less strict and mostly applied in public. For instance, it was accepted to have contact with the other sex in hidden places. Villages had lodges where young people could meet and form unions which were based on personal choice of the young men and women.

After the Edo period, the Meiji period (1868-1912) followed (Kumagai 1995: 135, 137-139, 159; Kumagai 2010: 587; Tokuhiko 2009: 95-96, 97). In this period Japan was modernized as the first country in East Asia through social, political, and economic reforms. Confucian norms were strengthened and spread in society from warriors to peasants. The moral code of Confucianism stressed the importance of justice, personal virtue, and devotion to the family. Also, the ideas of the integrated family were expanded to the state-level as part of the nation-building process in the country (Yoshino 1992: 65-66). To unify the country, the Meiji government adopted the conception of the state as a family. The Emperor was head of the family-state and values of filial piety and loyalty to the Emperor were implemented in the school system. During the Meiji period interaction between men and women were restrained even further as it came to apply to all social classes (Kumagai 1995: 138-139; Kumagai 2010: 587; Kumagai 2015: 47; Tokuhiko 2009: 95-96). Segregation of men and women was considered virtuous in society. With the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the feudal era and class system were brought to an end and promulgated in the 1898 Civil Code. The *ie* system came to characterize the lower classes as well as the upper class and all social strata became part of a hierarchical organization. Under the Civil Code, marriage required permission from the head of the house and from the parents of the man and woman when they were under 30 and 25 respectively. It meant that marital match-making was controlled by the parents and it was not possible to have a say in the matter of selecting one's future husband or wife. It was unusual for a couple to express a desire to marry for love because it was challenging the objective decision of an arranged marriage made by their parents. Therefore, instead of modernizing the family, the Meiji Restoration ended up strengthening the hierarchical structure of the Japanese family. The *ie* system lasted until the Civil Code was revised in 1947 with the new constitution after World War II.

2.2. From arranged marriage to love marriage in post-war Japan

After World War II, the Meiji Civil Code was revised. With the American occupation following the war a new constitution was signed in 1946 and it came into effect in 1947 (Tokuhiko 2009: 18, 97; Kumagai 1995: 139). The occupation induced legal changes to the institution of marriage and a modernization of the Japanese family. The revised Civil Code abolished the *ie* system and the idea of the nuclear family was introduced. Subsequently, the family unit only included husband, wife, and children. Generations in a family such as the son's family and his parents' family became

separate units and they received an equal position in the family. The constitution from 1947 made it possible for both men and women to marry without their parents' consent and it included equal rights for women. Moreover, one of the aims of the constitution was to safeguard the dignity of the individual and equality of men and women in the family. Yet, the ideals of equality and independence in the family were never entirely met and arranged marriages continued to be the norm and accepted way of forming a union in the Japanese society for years after the legal change. Until the late 1960s, arranged marriages exceeded the number of love marriages. However, with modernization and the import of western and particularly American culture after World War II, rules for interaction between sexes and matchmaking loosened gradually (Kumagai 1995: 135, 145-146, 152, 158-159; Tokuhiko 2009: 97). Relationships based on love and values of individualism and egalitarianism spread to Japan, especially to the younger generations. It resulted in a change of the reasons and the purpose for marrying. The primary purpose was no longer exclusively a concern about family matters and the continuation of the *ie* system. Instead marriage was to an increasing extent based on love and mutual consent.

Despite these changes, there continues to be a coexistence of modern and traditional elements of marriage and the family in Japan (Kumagai 1995: 135, 152, 158-159; Tokuhiko 2009: 97). Modern elements have been brought to Japan from the West with ideas of the nuclear family and romance. Still, traditional elements are to be found in marriage as well as family life. Separate gender roles persist in Japanese marriage, and the Japanese family is characterized by vertical generational ties from the *ie* system. Additionally, values of filial piety and subordination to the Emperor or one's superior continue to influence social interaction. Subordination to a superior is reflected by the hierarchical Japanese society and the seniority system at work places. Thus, Japanese marriage and family structures have been influenced by western ideals of modernization but at the same time the country has kept traditional elements.

3. Literature review

This section presents the review of the literature on Japanese marriage. Marriage is a topic many scholars have written about. In the marriage literature the topic has mainly been addressed from either a sociological, economic, or demographic perspective.

Sociologist Arland Thornton has developed the theoretical framework of developmental idealism, and the framework has been used to analyse family patterns in Japan (Raymo et al. 2015: 473). After World War II a modernization process and family change took place in the country which were highly influenced by the West (Kumagai 1995: 135, 158; Tokuhiko 2009: 97). Particularly, Japan was influenced by western policies, culture, and ideals regarding modernization and economic development (Raymo et al. 2015: 473; Thornton et al. 2012: 679). Also, in its modernization process, Japan seemed influenced by the cultural model of developmental idealism. Developmental idealism is developed in a Western European context and has been an important framework for evaluating modern family patterns and change regarding living arrangement, marriage, divorce, and gender relations around the world (Thornton 2001: 449, 454). To Thornton, developmental idealism is a grouping of “the main ideals, beliefs, and propositions concerning family life” (Thornton 2001: 454-455, 457). Thornton argues that developmental idealism has been an influential way to think about modern societies and family patterns, and he suggests that developmental idealism has brought changes in family attitudes and behaviour. Many constituting parts of developmental idealism originate from western societies, and western cultures and family patterns have been considered superior to other countries’ cultures as they have been regarded modern and developed. Developmental idealism consists of four normative propositions (ibid.: 454-455). First, modern society is considered good and attainable. Modern society refers to social and economic development such as industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and educational progress. Second, modern family is good and attainable. A modern family refers to the existence of individualism, high valuation of women, nuclear households, and an absence of arranged marriages. Third, modern family is a cause and an effect of modern society. Thus, the transformation from a traditional to a modern society will create and cause a modern family system, and the effect of a modern society is that one has to accept the modern family system. Fourth, individuals are free and equal and social relationships are based on consent. Thornton argues that the ideas or propositions, separately or together, can be influential if people believe them and are motivated by them. In this way they can potentially guide ideas, behaviour and relationships. Moreover, the link between ideas and development gives people outside of Western Europe a motivation to adopt western family trends as the ideas imply a dynamic world with a movement from traditional to modern societies (Thornton 2001: 460-461; Thornton et al. 2012: 680). Therefore, the ideas can potentially homogenize the way we think about development in a society (Thornton 2001: 460-461). For instance, societies are linguistically divided into developing and developed societies or described as

consisting of developmental stages such as the first demographic transition and the second demographic transition. Still, Thornton stresses that developmental idealism does not provide the full explanation for these changes in the different countries around the world. Furthermore, even though developmental idealism makes family patterns susceptible to change, many cross-country indigenous family patterns still persist. This is also the case for Japan and other East Asian societies (Raymo et al. 2015: 471, 473).

Like developmental idealism, the sociological exposure-based explanation suggests that individuals can change and develop their understanding of gender relations and attitudes toward feminist issues by being exposed to similar ideas (Bolzendahl and Myers 2004: 761-762; Yang and Yen 2011: 756). The exposure-based explanation has been included in the analysis of marital dissolution and changes in marital attitudes in the East Asian countries, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. It predicts that if an individual is exposed to ideas that are supportive of gender equality, he or she will be more likely to adopt liberal attitudes. Exposure can for example be encouraged through education. Education can present ideas and alternative perspectives about women's roles in society. The role of education in shaping attitudes is an essential element in East Asia (Yang and Yen 2011: 756). Together with Taiwan and South Korea, Japan has experienced increasing educational advancement for women in recent years. Besides education, personal experience can be a source of changing attitudes for women (Bolzendahl and Myers 2004: 762). It can take place in the labour market where women can be exposed to inequality between men and women at work, dismiss myths about women's capabilities at work, and engage in social networks with other women. For a long time Japanese women have experienced gender bias at the work place as the Japanese labour market has been unfavourable to women in general and to married women with children in particular (Brinton 2001: 24, 130; Raymo and Iwasawa 2005: 805).

Another theoretical approach used to analyse the change of the Japanese marital institution is sociologist Anthony Giddens' postmodern perspective about individualism (Cherlin 2004: 853; Giddens 1992: 58, 63; Yang and Yen 2011: 757). In the individualist perspective, the marital institution has undergone change as a result of the increasing individualization of personal life. Individualization and personal choice are growing as a result of the decreasing power of the social norms and laws which are regulating family life. Since the influence of previous sources of identity of class, community, and religion have been reduced it has opened up for the intimate relationships

to become an essential part of the self-identity. Consequently, Giddens stresses that marriage for a lot of people has moved toward the “pure relationship” where “the social relation is entered for its own sake... and which is continued only in so far as it is thought by both parties to deliver enough satisfactions for each individual to stay within it” (Giddens 1992: 58). However, the pure relationship is not tied to the marital institution or childrearing and it is not regulated by law (Cherlin 2004: 853, 858; Giddens 1992: 63). It is held together by the mutual benefits each partner receives from the relationship and it will last until one or both of the parties’ benefits are viewed as insufficient to stay in the relationship. The pure relationship can be considered an extension of the individualization and change of the marital institution that have taken place in many western countries in the 20th century. It can bring equality to the relationship and intimacy and love to both partners. At the same time each partner has the opportunity for personal development. With this development, marriage has become one out of many ways in which an individual can be in a relationship. Likewise, Japan has experienced a similar development (Yang and Yen 2011: 757-758). To an increasing extent Japanese men and women express that emotional satisfaction and individual development are important in a relationship.

Other studies have included economic theory by Gary Becker in the analyses of marriage, and the economic theory by Becker is based on a traditional gender role division with the man as breadwinner and the woman as responsible for the household (Becker 1991: 108, 110, 113; Cherlin 2004: 854; Tokuhiro 2009: 22; Raymo and Iwasawa 2005: 801). In the economic theory of marriage, men and women are relatively more productive in each of their work area which makes marriage beneficial to both men and women if one is specialised in the labour market and the other in domestic labour. Men and women have something different to offer which gives them an incentive to marry. In this way men and women pool their individual gains and can achieve maximum benefits from marriage. One of the main reasons for the postponement of marriage and fewer marriages in the developed countries today is the rise in women’s economic independence. The increase of women’s advancement in higher education and participation in the labour market will decrease the gains men and women get from marriage. Consequently, it will become less desirable to marry. The theory is interesting in a Japanese context where traditional gender roles persist (Raymo and Iwasawa 2005: 801, 805-806; Tokuhiro 2009: 22). At the same time, Japanese women have greater access to well-paid jobs today. Moreover, educational patterns have changed. Women have experienced a remarkable increase in advancement in higher education since the first

Fundamental Law of 1947 which entailed “Equal opportunities of education and equality of the sexes” (OECD 2011: 149). Contributing to the change has been the increase in women’s university enrolment and the fact that university degrees are linked to significantly higher salaries. However, Becker’s theory can also be less fruitful in the analysis of Japanese marriage patterns because it leaves out factors such as norms and culture (Tokuhiro 2009: 22-23). It is possible that cultural variation will produce different values, norms, and beliefs in different countries. As a result, it will lead to cross cultural differences in values and the way people view marriage.

Besides the sociological and economic approaches, demographic studies have also analysed Japanese marriage. Some studies have focused on the “package” women face when entering marriage (Raymo et al. 2015: 473; Rindfuss et al. 2004: 841; Rindfuss et al. 2009: 215, 217-218, 220; Piotrowski et al. 2015: 1042-1043). They argue that this has influenced the changes in marriage patterns that have happened in Japan. Rindfuss et al. (2009) point out that Japan continues to be a highly gender segregated society. Also, when marrying especially women face a package of family expectations and obligations in the family. In the marriage package marriage, childbearing, childrearing, and care for the elderly are interlinked where women are expected to commit themselves to these responsibilities. Especially the link between marriage and childbearing is related to a strong obligation to having children after a couple marries. Non-marital childbirths are disapproved and stigmatized in society and today only 2 percent of children are born outside marriage. This is also evident from the increasing amount of pregnant brides where the couple’s first child is born shortly after they marry. Moreover, part of the decline in fertility Japan is experiencing is a result of the postponement of marriage. After having children, obligations of childrearing also persist. It is the woman’s responsibility that the children achieve educational success. Because of the competitive educational system in Japan, this becomes a demanding task for mothers as it requires help with homework and preparation for cram schools and entrance exams. Therefore, the marriage package can be unattractive for young and particularly well-educated women. For women, who carry out most of the household tasks, it becomes difficult to have a job while the children are young. Consequently, many women withdraw from the labour market when they have children. The M-shaped curve of women’s labour market participation exemplifies this. After leaving their jobs when they have children, women tend to enter the labour market again when the children are older. At the same time, it can be difficult to find regular employment again when they re-enter the labour market.

Demographic research has also analysed the changes in marriage and the emergence of alternatives to marriage as part of broader family changes that have happened in Japan. The changes have been described as being similar to the developments of the “second demographic transition” (Raymo et al. 2004: 396-397; Raymo et al. 2015: 472, 479; Lesthaeghe 2010a: 211-212). The second demographic transition describes significant changes in family behaviour that have occurred in industrial countries in the 1950s. Characteristic for the changes in this transition is delayed marriage and childbearing, a rise in female employment, cohabitation, divorces, and non-marital childbearing. While some of the family changes are already prevalent in Japan such as postponement of marriage, low fertility, and an increasing number of divorces, the rest of the characteristics are either not prevalent or have only been developing slowly. Compared with other industrialized countries, female labour force participation is lower, cohabiting unions are fewer, and non-marital childbearing has been almost absent in Japan.

Of the demographic changes in Japan, not much research has been conducted about the topic of divorce until recently (Raymo et al. 2004: 397, 399; Raymo et al. 2015: 478; Rindfuss et al. 2009: 223; Yang and Yen 2011: 752). This is also a result of limited available data. Divorce in Japan has become an interesting topic due to the recent changes in divorce patterns. Traditional marriage provided stability for both parties. Divorce was unlikely as it was associated with bringing dishonour to the family and social stigma for women. Even though a marriage did not necessarily bring happiness, the wife was able to expect economic security and the husband could expect that the household and children were taken care of. For a large part of the 20th century the amount of divorces in Japan were low. This has started to change in the 1960s and the number increased steadily after 1990. Together with the development of the Japanese society, social norms have also changed and divorce is no longer a taboo. Today, about one-third of marriages are projected to end in divorce. Previous studies have focused on the relationship between educational level and divorce in Japan. Although divorces have been increasing for all educational groups, there is an outspoken tendency for divorce to occur more often for people with less education and fewer socioeconomic resources (Raymo et al. 2015: 478; Raymo et al. 2004: 405-406). This is similar to divorce trends and findings of studies about experiences of the second demographic transition in other industrialized countries. The effect of educational differences on likelihood of divorce was marginal in 1980 but it has increased substantially since then. Japan’s marital dissolution has also been

compared with neighbouring countries of Taiwan and South Korea (Yang and Yen 2011: 768; Statistics Bureau Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Japan 2015: 19). Before the late 1980s, Japan's divorce rate (per 1,000 population), was higher than the divorce rates in Taiwan and South Korea. Possibly it was a consequence of Japan's more liberal attitudes that occurred with its earlier industrialization and social and economic development. However, since then the divorce rate has been the lowest of the three countries. In all three countries divorce is now a valid option and it indicates the individualization of divorce. This points toward a change in gender relations between married men and women.

4. Theory

In the previous section the literature review about Japanese marriage has been outlined. The literature review has highlighted three general approaches to the analysis of marriage in Japan: a sociological, economic, and demographic approach. This thesis will have a sociological approach in the analysis of the institution of marriage and include the theory of deinstitutionalization. Before the theoretical framework is presented, important concepts will be explained.

4.1. The concepts of institution and marriage

As this paper focuses on the changing marital institution in Japan, two concepts are important to define before the theoretical framework is explained: institution and marriage. An institution is commonly defined as "rules" which can refer to both formal rules and informal rules such as social norms (Steinmo 2008: 123-124; Thelen 1999: 377). An institution can structure and have effects on outcomes and individual behaviour (Steinmo 2008: 125-126). For instance, formal institutions have the capacity to legally restrict behaviour (Pierson 2000: 256, 259). Moreover, once established, institutions can be difficult to change because individuals invest and adapt to already existing institutional arrangements. With individual investment in an institutional arrangement, the institution can become rigid because the existing institution is favoured over alternative institutions. There has been more disagreement about a proper definition of marriage (Tokuhiro 2009: 6-7). The concept of marriage can be difficult to define because different arrangements are made around relationships in industrialized societies. One definition of marriage is that it is "an institution that governs the organization of household production through two adults assumed to be permanently living together in the same house, pooling resources, managing housework, and market work,

reproducing, and socializing children” (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 60). However, by mainly stressing the intimate relationship, cohabitation also seems to be included in this definition of marriage. Therefore, besides stressing the private and intimate relationship between two people, a definition of marriage should also consider the fact that marriage is a public institution as it needs public recognition. “To *be* marriage, the institution requires public affirmation... More definitely, legal marriage requires state sanction in the licence and ceremony” (Cott 2000: 1-2). Furthermore, marriage is public in the sense that it “allocates and legitimates societal privileges, rights, resources, and obligations” (Davis and Friedman 2014: 4).

4.2. Deinstitutionalization and marriage as an informal institution

Andrew Cherlin is one of the leading scholars within the marriage literature, and he has developed a sociological theory of marriage (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 58) The theory has been developed in an American context but it provides insights to some of the important factors that can result in a deinstitutionalization of the marital institution. Cherlin defines deinstitutionalization as “the weakening of social norms that define people’s behavior in a social institution such as marriage” (Cherlin 2004: 848). Cherlin analyses the change of the marital institution in the U.S. He points out that certain developments have contributed to the deinstitutionalization after the 1970s in the U.S. and they have changed the meaning of marriage in the 20th century (ibid.: 848-851). First, the growth of cohabitation where cohabitation or unmarried-couple households increasingly have become an alternative to marriage even though there are regional differences. Second, the emergence of same-sex marriage. Third, the change in the division of labour which is not strictly related to gender, but instead every couple has to figure out the division of labour which works for them. Fourth, the increase of births outside marriage and the acceptance of non-marital childbirths in society.

The four developments have been a result of cultural and material trends which have changed the meaning of marriage in the U.S. (Cherlin 2004: 851-852). Cultural trends revolve around the importance of romantic love and individualism. Material trends include the increase in wage labour, rising standard of living, and women entering the paid labour force. Together with historical events of the Depression and World War II, the cultural and material developments have changed the meaning of marriage in a distinct way during the 20th century. Between the 1950s and 1970s marriage changed from an institutional to a companionate marriage and later to an individualized

marriage. In the institutional marriage, marriage was the predominant way to live with a partner, children were born within marriage, divorces were few, traditional gender roles prevailed, and family values were important (ibid.: 857). It changed with the companionate marriage where husband and wife were considered lovers and friends, and emotional satisfaction became important in a marriage (ibid.: 851). In the beginning of the 1960s, marriage patterns started to change in the U.S. More people married later or remained single and divorce, cohabitation, extramarital childbearing, and same-sex partnerships gained greater acceptance. Furthermore, the household division of labour was altered as both men and women started to work outside the home. For women, the increasing economic independence meant that marriage became less important for economic security (Cherlin 1981: 75). With these changes, marriage became more individualized during the 1960s and especially the 1970s (Cherlin 2004: 852). In the individualized marriage, self-development, individualism, and to a greater extent emotional satisfaction became essential.

Despite the changes, marriage has remained an important institution in the U.S. and most people still choose to marry (Cherlin 1981: 74; Cherlin 2004: 853-854; Cherlin 2013). According to Cherlin it is due to the symbolic significance of marriage. Couples continue to value the institution of marriage when they decide how to live their lives with a partner. Also, marriage is the norm in the light of an increasing acceptance of cohabiting unions. Previously, marriage has been a marker of conventionality for couples, but today it can be looked upon as a marker of prestige.

Increasingly, couples who wish to marry would like to wait until they are settled and financially secure. Marriage is strived for but it is not the obvious consequence of a relationship if they are not able to maintain a stable life and economy. Thus, marriage has to a large extent become a status symbol.

4.3. Deinstitutionalization and marriage as a formal institution

Like Cherlin, Sean Lauer and Carrie Yodanis have an institutional approach to marriage in the U.S., but they do not only focus on informal rules of behaviour of the institution of marriage. Instead the authors also stress the importance of formal rules in the analysis of the marital institution and deinstitutionalization (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 59). To Lauer and Yodanis “Marriage as an institution is a set of rules and assumption that govern social behaviors” (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 60) and the rules can be both formal and informal. Formal rules are developed in the polity, the bureaucracy, or other organizations, and informal rules develop outside formal organizations when

people form a shared sense of behaviour. The formal, legal rights are tied to marriage, and unmarried people do not have these rights (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 62, 65; Cherlin 2004: 853). Informal rules such as norms support the legal rules. In terms of marriage, informal rules persist in the sense that the majority of married couples live together, raise children together, pool their incomes, and live in monogamous relationships. Thus, people want to marry, they know what the marital institution entails and what it means to be married. Lauer and Yodanis' definition is a supplement to Cherlin's in which marriage is considered both an informal and formal institution.

This thesis uses the theoretical framework from Cherlin about deinstitutionalization and the conception of marriage as an institution. Furthermore, the conceptual understanding of institution from Lauer and Yodanis will be included as a supplement to Cherlin's theory where an institution consists of formal rules as well as informal rules.

4.4. Deinstitutionalization and alternatives to marriage

In the Oxford Dictionary the word deinstitutionalize is defined as either to "remove from an institution or from the effects of institutional life" or "make less institutional: reorganize on more individual lines" (Barber 2004). Thus, substantial changes have to take place for the institution of marriage to deinstitutionalize. Cherlin and Lauer and Yodanis have different understandings of what the concept of deinstitutionalization entails. Each of the definitions are important in the analysis of deinstitutionalization of Japanese marriage as they can lead to different understandings of the changes that have happened in Japan. Cherlin emphasizes the four development as part of the deinstitutionalization process (Cherlin 2004: 849). Each development contributes to the weakening of the institutional foundation of marriage. On the other hand, Lauer and Yodanis argue that the American institution of marriage has not undergone a process of deinstitutionalization (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 59). Instead they stress that the emergence of alternatives to marriage do not imply that it has been deinstitutionalized. To them deinstitutionalization involves "a weakening of the rules, both formal and informal, of how to behave in marriage as well as the assumption of what marriage involves" (Lauer and Yodanis 2010: 61). Moreover, the institution of marriage has never covered alternative arrangements to marriage. Consequently, same-sex marriage, cohabitation, and childbirths outside marriage are not the right focus when considering and analysing deinstitutionalization (ibid.: 61-63). Cohabitation, childbirths outside marriage, and same-sex marriage do not necessarily imply a weakening of the rules of the marital institution because they

do not change the behaviour of people in a marriage. Lauer and Yodanis agree that an indicator of deinstitutionalization is the change of gendered roles in a marriage, which has taken place in Japan, as it revolves around roles within the marital institution (ibid: 61-62). However, opposite Lauer and Yodanis' position, the three developments of cohabitation, extramarital childbirths, and same-sex marriage, have all made changes to the understanding of marriage and what it entails. Previously, living with a partner and having children were practised exclusively in a marriage, and same-sex marriages challenge conventional marriage because gay couples would like to be part of the marital institution on an equal footing with heterosexual couples. For same-sex marriage to be fully accepted in Japan it will require a change in both social norms and legal rules of marriage. Also, the acceptance and legalization of same-sex marriage entail a change in the current Japanese constitutional understanding of marriage (Chisaki 2015; McCurry 2015). Thus, one can argue that the assumptions of what marriage involves also change with this development. The two conceptions of deinstitutionalization presented by Cherlin and Lauer and Yodanis respectively sharpen the focus on the conceptual meaning of deinstitutionalization. Alternatives, as Lauer and Yodanis stress, may not be indicators of a deinstitutionalization. This would imply that of the four developments, only a changing gender division of labour in the home is an indicator of deinstitutionalization and not cohabitation, same-sex marriage, and extramarital childbirths. However, following Cherlin one can argue that both informal and formal rules of marriage as well as assumptions about marriage change with the four developments. The four developments have opened up for an acceptance of new living arrangements which previously have been reserved to marriage and a broadening of the conception of the marital institution itself. Therefore, Cherlin's definition of deinstitutionalization will be used in the analysis, and the four developments are all considered part of the deinstitutionalization of marriage.

5. Research question

With incorporation of the theoretical framework, this thesis aims at answering the following research question:

In what way has the institution of marriage changed in Japan since the 1970s?

To answer the research question, two sub questions have been chosen:

- 1) What is characteristic for the change and possible deinstitutionalization of the Japanese marital institution, and are the developments distinctively Japanese or similar to developments in the West and other East Asian countries?
- 2) What has made the change in the Japanese marital institution possible?

6. Research design

A research design “provides the framework for the collection and analysis of data” in order to be able to answer one’s research question (Bryman 2012: 46). This section will present the ontological and epistemological position, method of historical institutionalism, data collection, criteria for social research, reliability and validity, reflections on ethical integrity of the research, and limitations in this thesis.

6.1. Ontology and epistemology

Ontology revolves around the nature of social phenomena (Bryman 2012: 32-33). This thesis takes a constructionist stance as social phenomena in this paper are not considered pre-given categories which are beyond the influence of social actors. Instead research will be highly influenced by the individual researcher’s perspective and approach. It has also been the case with the research conducted for this thesis. In constructionism social phenomena are susceptible to change because they are constantly being revised, and social actors produce categories through interaction. As a result, social reality is not definitive. Epistemology is about the nature of knowledge and the knowledge which is considered acceptable (ibid.: 27-30). This thesis follows the epistemology of interpretivism. The interpretivist epistemological position focuses on the interpretation of social action and its subjective meaning. Instead of finding explanations it is important to understand social behaviour and human action. It is central in this thesis as it focuses on marriage and the way social behaviour and the attitudes regarding marriage have developed among Japanese men and women.

6.2. Method of historical institutionalism

As this thesis focuses on the marital institution in Japan and its historical development since the 1970s, historical institutionalism is the chosen method.

Historical institutionalism puts an emphasis on contextualization and historical process of the emergence, reproduction, and development of institutions over time (Fioretos 2011: 372; Thelen 1999: 369-370, 376, 382). Thus, factors such as time, place, norms, and culture are of interest in a historical institutionalist analysis. Together with rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, historical institutionalism constitutes one of the three main schools of institutionalism. Like the two other approaches to institutionalism, historical institutionalism contains much internal diversity. Historical institutionalism is a broad term which covers research on different social science concerns but generally it can be understood as an approach to the study of politics and social change (Pierson 1996: 131; Steinmo 2008: 118, 125). The approach focuses on real-world empirical questions and historical institutionalists seek to answer their questions through empirical investigation. In historical institutionalism the importance of institutions is also emphasized (Steinmo 2008: 123-124, 126; Thelen 1999: 378-379). Particularly, historical institutionalists are interested in the way institutions influence individuals' behaviour. Historical institutionalists investigate this by looking at historical documentation.

Besides a shared focus on real-world questions and institutions' structuring influence on behaviour, historical institutionalists also agree on the importance of the temporal and historical dimension of a social phenomenon (Pierson 1996: 131). In historical institutionalism, history matters in three important ways (Steinmo 2008: 127-128). First, the historical context of events will have a direct influence on following decisions and events. Second, actors learn from experience because behaviour happens in a certain social, political, economic, and cultural context. Third, expectations are shaped by the past. In this way history consists of events that are linked to each other and can influence one another. Therefore, temporality is important in a historical institutionalist analysis as the timing of events matter to a social process (Fioretos 2011: 371; Pierson 1996: 131). By analysing the temporal order of events, variables which might have an effect on later developments can be identified (Fioretos 2011: 381-382). Consequently, tracing the historical development can highlight different conditions, when they are present, and how they matter to a social process. History matters exemplifies why institutional arrangements persist but institutions also change over time (Steinmo 2008: 129; Thelen 1999: 396). Factors leading to institutional change are also important as institutions do change over time because "Institutions rest on a set of ideational and material foundations that, if shaken, open possibilities for change" (Thelen 1999: 397). Ideas are important in the analysis of institutional change (Steinmo 2008: 130). When actors have the will

and their ideas change, institutional change is likely to happen. Ideas can be understood as “creative solutions to collective action problems” (Steinmo 2008: 131). In this way institutions are involved in a dynamic process where their interplay with ideas and the environment facilitate an evolving process (Steinmo 2008: 133).

With the method of historical institutionalism, the analysis of the change and possible deinstitutionalization of the marital institution in Japan will follow the historical development and opportunity of change. I will try to identify the marital changes, deinstitutionalization process, and developments which have led to changes in the Japanese marriage. Moreover, I wish to show that despite change in some areas of the Japanese marital institution, the institution is rigid and seems unlikely to change in other areas at the present moment.

6.3. Data collection

The collected data are secondary sources and consist primarily of survey data. Written documents which mainly contain statistical data have also been included. The surveys have been conducted by The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (NIPSSR). NIPSSR is a Japanese research institute which is affiliated to Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. It specialises in population and household trends and research regarding domestic and international social security policies and systems (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2014). The survey from NIPSSR is the Fourteenth Japanese National Fertility Survey and carried out in 2010. It revolves around the current situation and background to marriage and fertility among married couples and singles (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a; 1; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b). The first National Fertility Survey was conducted in 1940 and since 1952 it has been conducted every five years. From 1982 a survey with unmarried respondents has been conducted together with the survey on married couples. The samples from the 2010 survey are based on stratified random sampling and consist of 6,705 wives from first-marriage couples, where the current marriage is the first for one or both husband and wife, and a total of 10,581 single and never-married men and women.

Besides survey data, documents have been collected and they consist of reports, journal articles, books, and newspaper articles. Primarily statistical data have been used from the documents and in some cases examples have been included from the documents to strengthen the arguments about

existing statistical data. The reports are two world fertility reports. They are produced by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). One of DESA's main tasks is to compile, generate, and analyse economic, social, and environmental data and information the member nations can review (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2014: 2). The data on Japan is collected by United Nations Statistics Division. The journal articles and books have been included to complement the report and survey data from NIPSSR. In some cases, surveys and other the statistical data have only been available in Japanese where the journal articles and books have presented data in English. Newspaper articles have been collected about same-sex marriage in Japan because of the very recent developments and the limited literature about the topic.

6.4. Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are important criteria for evaluating social research. For research to be reliable it has to have “consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions” (Silverman 2010: 275). Therefore, reliable research requires consistency in the measurement (Bryman 2012: 46). To meet the reliability criterion, the historical development of the marital institution has been followed chronologically. However, as reliability can be a concern in quantitative research it is important to consider the reliability of the statistical material in this thesis. In surveys respondents can only choose a response to a question among few categories. In this case it can be problematic if the listed categories reduce or do not capture the variation in the respondents' answers. Also, most of the statistical data have been collected with intervals over the past 30 to 40 years. It is possible that during these years definitions of concepts or wording of questions in the surveys have changed slightly which can potentially result in less stable measurements.

Reliability is also related to the validity of the research as reliability is a prerequisite for validity (Bryman 2012: 173). Validity can be understood as “truth: interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers” (Silverman 2010: 275). It refers to the integrity of the conclusions drawn based on the research (Bryman 2012: 47). To meet the validity criterion, the analysis of the Japanese marital institution is focusing on timing and tracing the historical development of the institution. By including mainly quantitative data, the four types of validity, measurement validity, internal validity, external validity, and ecological validity

are also important to consider (ibid.: 47-48). Measurement validity is relevant for surveys because it is important that the questions reflect the concepts which are meant to be investigated. Internal validity concerns causality. Internal validity is central for this thesis. By looking at the temporal order of the events, factors which might have led to change in the marital institution can be identified. External validity concerns the possibility for generalization of a survey beyond the research subjects. Likewise it is of interest in this thesis to be able to generalize the trends in Japanese marriage patterns beyond the sample of respondents in the surveys. Ecological validity is important to consider when using quantitative data as it revolves around how well the findings of the study applies to natural social settings. Ecological validity can end up being limited as the survey might not capture respondents' values and attitudes because the questionnaire creates an unnatural setting.

6.5. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations and integrity are essential in social research regardless of the topic under investigation (Bryman 2012: 130). Bryman highlights four main ethical issue areas: harm to the participant, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception (ibid.: 135, 138, 143). Consequently, research participants should not be harmed physically or mentally, they should be given sufficient information about the research to be able to make an informed decision about whether or not to participate, participants should decide the degree to which his or her privacy can be invaded, and participants should be informed about the researcher's work and what it entails. Especially, ethical considerations are important when the research involves interaction between the researcher and human subjects. The research conducted for this thesis does not involve interaction with human subjects. Primarily, the data in this thesis consist of documents and survey data collected by different researchers. To some extent it can be easier for survey researchers to meet the ethical requirements because questions are made in advance and delineate the topic (Silverman 2010: 175). Still, ethical integrity applies to all social research and should be taken into consideration when carrying out one's own research.

6.6. Limitations

When conducting research, it is important to consider one's own role in process. The topic of this thesis is the change of the marital institution in Japan. It is a country specific topic, and unfortunately I do not understand or speak Japanese and I have only been in Japan for a relatively

short period of time as an exchange student. As a graduate student and foreigner from Denmark, I have only acquired knowledge about the topic of Japanese marriage and relationships from conversations with young Japanese men and women, general observation of couples' interaction, lectures, and through English documents and statistical data. Like with a lot of other topics which are country specific, there is a substantial literature about Japanese marriage in the original language which I have not had the opportunity to explore. I am sure Japanese sources would have enriched this thesis substantially. Moreover, in the data collection process I discovered that statistical data from the 1970s regarding certain aspects of marriage and family in Japan is only available in Japanese. Thus, in some cases I have had to rely on statistical data from the 1980s. I have tried to meet the challenges and nuance the analysis by including both documents and statistical data. The sources and documents have been written by both foreign and Japanese scholars. Furthermore, pointing toward factors which have had an influence on both the change of the marital institution as well as its persistence can prove to be a difficult task. I do not claim to be able to cover all factors, but by consulting previous literature and research, I aim at highlighting important changes, possible deinstitutionalization process in the Japanese marital institution since the 1970s, and pointing out plausible and influential factors for the developments, changes, and continuities.

7. Analysis

In this section Cherlin's theoretical framework will be used to analyse the change and possible deinstitutionalization of the Japanese marital institution. The section also includes an analysis of the rigid nature of Japanese marriage. The first part of the analysis focuses on the four developments of deinstitutionalization. The second part touches upon the cultural and material trends which are likely influential causes for the change in the Japanese marriage. The analysis of the four developments and cultural and material trends will follow their historical development. If available, data will be included from the 1970s. The third part highlights plausible explanations for the distinctive and rigid development of Japanese marriage.

7.1. The four developments in the deinstitutionalization of Japanese marriage

Cherlin points out that the prevalence of cohabitation is a contributing factor to the change and deinstitutionalization of marriage (Cherlin 2004: 849). In Japan cohabitation is still not a living

arrangement many men and women choose but cohabitation experience has been rising (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a: 12). The 2010 National Fertility Study shows that from 1987 to 2002 for women and from 1987 to 2005 for men the percentage for cohabitation experience has been rising for never-married Japanese men and women aged 19 to 34. For women the total percentage has increased from 2.8 percent to 7.6 percent and for men from 3.2 percent to 7.9 percent. The lowest degree of experience with cohabitation is in the age group of 18 to 19 years for both men and women. The low percentage of people who are 18 or 19 years old and have experience with cohabitation is most likely a result of their young age. At that age most young adults still live at home and do not have the financial resources to live alone with a partner. For men and women cohabitation experience increases throughout the years. Furthermore, men and women aged 25 to 29 become the cohort with most cohabitation experience after 1997 for men and 2002 for women. Together with the general rise in cohabitation for all age groups throughout the years, this suggests that cohabitation becomes a more common trend and at the same time men and women have started to cohabit earlier in life. The upward trend of experience with cohabitation changes to a slight decrease in cohabitation experience after 2002 for women and 2005 for men¹. However, the data does not include married people. Following Raymo et al., people who are already married could also have had cohabitation experience (Raymo et al. 2009: 787, 792-793). Without including them in the data it can underestimate the prevalence of cohabitation. Including married men and women, 21 percent of men and women aged 25 to 34 had cohabitation experience in 2004. It is less frequent for the other age groups and lowest among the youngest aged 20 to 24 and the oldest cohorts aged 44 to 50 where cohabitation experience is 10 percent. Compared with The 2010 National Fertility Study, the percentage is substantially higher when including married people's cohabitation experience.

Despite the general rise in cohabitation experience, the emergence of cohabitation has not emerged as an alternative union among Japanese men and women (Raymo et al. 2009: 786-787). In Cherlin's argument about deinstitutionalization of marriage, he stresses that since cohabitation emerged in the U.S. and other western countries in the 1970s it has become an accepted alternative to marriage (Cherlin 2004: 849). It is also true for Western European countries like France and Sweden (Cherlin 2004: 849; Raymo et al. 2009: 787). Cohabiting unions can provide many of the benefits

¹ See Appendix, table 1 and figure 1 and 2.

individuals can get from marriage such as shared residence, sexual access, companionship, and love (Raymo et al. 2009: 790; Tokuhiro 2009: 92). At the same time cohabitation does not entail a legal commitment and most likely there is not the same pressure to have children and subsequently provide for a family. Despite the benefits of cohabitation, following the historical development of experience with cohabitation from 1987 to 2005 it becomes apparent that cohabitation is not an outspoken phenomenon in Japan (Raymo et al. 2009: 785, 793, 799). Moreover, the cohabiting relationships typically last a short period of time of on average less than two years and are as likely to end as to lead to marriage. On average 58 percent of cohabiting unions end in marriage today. Instead of being an alternative to marriage, cohabitation is better understood as a precursor to marriage in Japan.

The second development in the deinstitutionalization of marriage is the emergence of legalized same-sex marriage (Cherlin 2004: 850-851). Legalization and acceptance of same-sex marriage open up to a reinterpretation of the formal rules as well as social norms of marriage. Consequently, by accepting same-sex marriage, marriage becomes a union which is no longer exclusively for partners of the opposite sex. Also, traditional and gendered division of labour in a household no longer apply. So far only small steps have been taken toward legalization of same-sex marriage in Japan. In March 2015 the Shibuya ward began recognizing same-sex-partnerships and it was followed by the Setagaya ward in July 2015. The 5th of November 2015 the first same-sex marriage certificates were issued to seven couples in the two Tokyo wards (Shusuke 2016; McCurry 2015). The certificate recognizes same-sex partnerships as equivalent to marriage. The ordinance is not legally binding, but it gives couples an opportunity to rent apartments together and hospital visitation rights to the same degree as family members. Rights which homosexual couples did not have before in Japan. The tentative steps toward equal marriage rights for same-sex couples may also reflect the divided opinion in the population. Following the the recognition of same-sex partnerships in March, NIPSS conducted a survey where 1,259 men and women aged 20 to 79 were asked about their attitudes toward gay marriage (Chisaki 2015; Koide 2015). According to the survey slightly more than half of the respondents, 51.1 percent, were supportive of gay marriage. When asked if the country's law should be changed to allow same-sex unions the youngest Japanese men and women showed the highest support. More than 70 percent aged 20 to 39 supported it. The support dropped notably to 38 percent for men and women aged 60 to 69 and to 24 percent for people aged 70 to 79. The reserved attitudes toward gay marriage were also

cemented in other questions in the survey. A bit more than half of the respondents would not be supportive if they found out that either their male or female friend was gay. Moreover, 72 percent of the respondents would feel reluctant to accept it if their child was gay.

Japan has experienced limited liberalization of pro-gay rights and same-sex marriage has not been legalized throughout the country. Thus, it shows that the issue of granting legal rights to same-sex couples is a recent phenomenon and has not been as pronounced as Cherlin highlights about the American case. In Japan this is partly a result of the sensitivity of the issue. The question of an individual's right to marriage revolves around deeper issues about social and cultural ideologies of gender and family (Maree 2004: 542). Furthermore, political support has been limited. At the national level there has not been political will to grant equal marital rights to gay people (Chisaki 2015; McCurry 2015). According to current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the constitution states that marriages involves mutual consent of both sexes and is consequently not referring to people of the same sex. Officials from the Shibuya ward have also stated that same-sex partnerships are notably different from the conventional marriage. So far same-sex partnerships are not considered equivalent to heterosexual marriages in Japan. The recent developments, the reluctant attitudes, and limited legal rights gay people have been granted, suggest that the emergence of same-sex marriage has not been an element of the deinstitutionalization process in Japan.

The third development Cherlin points out is the changing division of labour (Cherlin 2004: 849). Cherlin stresses that where the man used to be the breadwinner and the woman was responsible for domestic tasks, traditional division of labour in the home has become less common today. It is to a greater extent up the individual couple to negotiate and find a suitable work arrangement. The same changes are likely to happen in Japan where a strong attitudinal change has taken place. The 2010 Fertility Study among Japanese singles aged 18 to 34 shows that attitudes toward women's life course have changed (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a: 15-16, 30). In 1987 33.6 percent of never-married women thought that the ideal life course was to become a full-time housewife. Since then the amount of women in favour of this life course has been decreasing and in 2010 it was only 19.7 percent who had this opinion. Additionally, there has been an increase throughout the years in women who think that managing both work and family is the ideal life course. In 1987 18.5 percent of single women chose it as the ideal life course and 2010 it had increased to 30.6 percent. The decrease in the desire to become a full-time housewife is also

evident when never-married women are asked about their expected or intended life course. In 1987 23.9 percent expected that they would become full-time housewives whereas the percentage dropped to 9.1 percent in 2010. Likewise, there has been an increase in women who expect to be single and working or manage both family and work and the amount has increased from 7.1 to 17.7 percent and 15.3 to 24.7 percent respectively between 1987 and 2010. For men a similar development in attitudes has taken place. When asked about what type of life they want their partner or wife to lead, in 1987 37.9 percent of single men preferred that women became full-time housewives. This decreased to 10.9 percent in 2010. Similarly, men's preference of women managing both work and family increased from 10.5 percent in 1987 to 32.7 percent in 2010². Moreover, when asked today about the idea that husbands should work and the wives should take care of the home after marriage, the majority of married women in their first marriage under the age of 35 and never-married men and women aged 18 to 34 favour a gender equal division of labour (ibid.: 23). 60.1 percent of never-married men, 64.7 percent of never-married women and 66.2 percent of married women disagreed with with the idea of a traditional division of labour in 2010³.

Even though men and women voice a disagreement with traditional gender divided tasks in the home, the actual experiences of married women is not entirely supportive of the stated attitudes (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b: 19). There has been a steady rise in women who continue working after marriage from 60.3 percent to 70.5 percent between 1985 to 2009. Still, a substantial amount of women tends to leave the labour market after they have children. It has not changed much from 1985 to 2009. In this time period it has remained just under 40 percent for the first child and around 70 to 80 percent for the second and third child⁴.

Additionally, the actual experience is supported by present attitudes. When presented to the idea that it is desirable that mothers should not work and should stay home at least when their children are young, the large majority of never-married men and women aged 19 to 34 and married women under the age of 35 years and in their first marriage agreed with this in 2010 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a: 23). 73.3 percent of never-married men, 75.4 percent of never-married women, and 66.2 percent of married women supported this view⁵.

² See Appendix, table 2 and figure 3, 4 and 5.

³ See Appendix, table 3.

⁴ See Appendix, table 4 and figure 6.

⁵ See Appendix, table 5.

Like Cherlin highlights about the division of household labour in the American marriage, Japan has also experienced a significant change in attitudes toward the division of labour in the household in the time period between 1987 and 2010. When asked about their attitudes regarding the division of labour in the household, single Japanese men and women appear to be more in favour of a division where the couple can figure out the arrangements which work for them. It also seems to be the case when looking at the actual experiences of married women, where an increasing proportion of women tend to keep their jobs after marriage. Nevertheless, between 1985 and 2009 not much has changed in regard to the percentage of women who stay in the labour market after childbirth. Therefore, when a couple start a family women carry most of the responsibility for childrearing. Even though data is not available from the the 1970s and until the late 1980s and the experience of married women after childbirth resembles the traditional division of labour, the strong change in attitudes opposing traditional gender roles and household tasks is likely to be an indicator of a deinstitutionalization process of Japanese marriage.

The fourth development facilitating deinstitutionalization of marriage is the rise in extramarital childbirths (Cherlin 2004: 849). Since the late 1970s one sixth of childbirths in the U.S. happened outside marriage, and in the early 2000s it had increased to one third. Based on this development Cherlin argues that today marriage is not a prerequisite for having children like it was fifty years ago. However, as mentioned above, Japan has experienced very few extramarital births since the 1970s (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2014: 16-17, 65). In 1970 the percentage of extramarital childbirths among all births was 0.9 percent. In 1995 it had increased to 1.2 percent, in 2004 to 2.0 percent and in 2010 to 2.1 percent⁶. Even though Japan has experienced a small rise in extramarital childbirths in forty years, the percentage of childbirths outside marriage remains a limited proportion of total births in the country. The slow development is also reflected in the attitudes toward childbearing outside marriage (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a: 23). When asked if it is all right to have children without getting married, 39.1 percent of wives from first-marriage couples under the age of 35 supported this view in 2010. On the other hand the majority of 57.9 percent disagreed. Likeminded attitudes exist for single and

⁶ See Appendix, table 6.

never-married men and women aged 19 to 34 when they are asked the same question. In 2010 31.6 percent of men and 33.7 percent of women supported extramarital childbirths. 64.7 percent of men and 62.9 percent of women were against it⁷.

The proportion of extramarital births has slightly increased since 1970 but continues to be negligible today. Moreover, it does not seem likely to change drastically anytime soon. The trend of extramarital childbirths has not been as outspoken in Japan as it has in the U.S. This may reflect the way in which traditional social norms persist alongside modern developments in marriage and family life. Besides a low percentage of extramarital births, childbearing outside marriage continues to be disapproved and stigmatized in society and children who are born to an unmarried mother are considered illegitimate (Rindfuss et al. 2009: 218-219). Furthermore, there has been a substantial increase of bridal pregnancies. The developments seem to support the persistence of social norms regarding childbearing in Japan. The low prevalence of extramarital births indicates, together with the late developments and mixed attitudes toward same-sex marriage and the characteristics of cohabitating unions, that Japanese marriage has not been deinstitutionalized.

7.1.5. Formal and informal rules and marriage as a status symbol

The institution of marriage has changed in Japan since the 1970s which is expressed in the delay of marriage and increase in divorces and people opting out of marriage. Based on Cherlin's theory and the concept of deinstitutionalization, social norms about the Japanese marriage have also changed to some extent but Japanese marriage has not been deinstitutionalized. Japan has experienced a significant attitudinal changes in favour of a more gender equal division of household labour among Japanese men and women from the late 1980s to 2010 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010a: 15-16, 23, 30; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b: 19). Furthermore, an actual change in women's continued work participation after marriage has taken place. However, strong social norms regarding cohabitation, extramarital childbirths, and same-sex marriage continue to exist in Japan. Cohabitation is a more common living arrangement for Japanese couples today than it was in the late 1980s and increasingly younger men and women have cohabitation experience. Nevertheless, cohabitating relationships are relatively few, cohabitation is not an alternative to marriage like it is in many other industrialized

⁷ See Appendix, table 7.

countries, and it is not a union in which childbearing is accepted. Extramarital childbirths continue to be stigmatized in society and the increase of childbirths outside marriage has been negligible since 1970. Recent acknowledgement of same-sex partnerships and strong support of same-sex marriage among younger generations of men and women point toward a slow liberalization of both formal and informal rules about the institution of Japanese marriage. In order to make a substantial and actual change in favour of same-sex couples, attitudinal changes have to be converted to a change in the existing law which currently exclude same-sex couples from legally recognized partnerships in most of Japan. Also, marriage has to be recognized on an equal footing with the conventional, heterosexual marriage. Thus, both informal and formal rules about the institution of marriage are important when considering its deinstitutionalization. Yet, the change of the marital institution in Japan has far from shared all of the same characteristics as the deinstitutionalization process in the U.S. It is due to the limited and relatively late development of pro-gay rights and low prevalence of alternative living arrangements and extramarital childbirths. Therefore, by following the historical development of Japan's marital institution it is clear that it has changed since the 1970s, but Japanese marriage has not been deinstitutionalized.

Despite changes in Japan's marital institution since the 1970s, marriage continues to be the norm in the country and the majority of Japanese men and women express that they could like to marry some day (Tokuhiko 2009: 2; Raymo et al. 2015: 479). Cherlin argues that marriage in the U.S. has become a status symbol (Cherlin 2004: 855). People would like to marry when they feel that their life with the partner is stable and they are financially secure. However, in Japan the reasons for marrying today appear to be predominantly a result of conformity and practical considerations (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b: 4). When asked what the direct reason was that ultimately led to their decision to get married, 48.3 percent of wives from first-marriage couples answered that it was because they felt it was the appropriate age to get married. It is followed by 23.9 percent who answered that it was because they wanted to live together as soon as possible, and 20.2 percent answered that it was because of pregnancy. For respondents younger than 25 years old, 50 percent expressed that pregnancy was the reason for marrying. The high frequency of pregnant brides also seems to exemplify the stigma of having children outside marriage. 11.4 percent and 10.2 percent answered "Established economic base for married life" and "Work circumstances of either spouse" as the motive for marrying and less than 10 percent chose the following options "Wanted to have children as soon as possible",

“Recommended by parents or others”, “Saved enough money to get married” or “Friends or people the same age got married”. Even though marriage in the U.S. has become a status symbol and something couples postpone until they are in a stable relationship and have sufficient financial means they do not seem to be compelling reasons for marrying in Japan⁸.

7.2. Causes for the change of the marital institution: Cultural and material trends

The first part of the analysis has explored the historical development of the change and possible deinstitutionalization process of Japanese marriage. In the second part, possible causes for the change of the marital institution are touched upon. Cherlin argues that the four developments have been a result of material and cultural trends that have taken place in the U.S. during the 20th century and prior to the deinstitutionalization process (Cherlin 2004: 851). This has led to a change the meaning of marriage from an institutional to a companionate and later an individualized marriage. However, pinpointing causes leading to changes and possibly deinstitutionalization can be difficult because marriage is a complex institution “embedded within a larger system of gendered family and kinship relationships that in turn are embedded within a socially specific economy and polity” (Davis and Friedman 2014: 4). Therefore, marital changes can be a result of multiple causes. In Japan the cultural trends of emotional satisfaction and individualism in a marriage and the material trend of the remarkable increase in educational advancement for women are likely factors behind the change in the marital institution in the 1970s. Closely related to women’s educational advancement is the increased participation in the labour market.

7.2.1. Emotional satisfaction and individualism

The growth of the ideas and values of emotional satisfaction and individualism are cultural trends which have increasingly gained acceptance in the Japanese society (Raymo et al. 2015: 479-480; Tokuhiro 2009: 18). Earlier Japanese men and women were not able to marry without the parents’ permission. In the post-war years romance increasingly became the reason for marrying and since the late 1960s love marriages have exceeded the proportion of arranged marriages in Japan. Marriage is now based on mutual consent and the purpose is to a large extent emotional satisfaction and individual development (Tsuya and Bumpass 2004: 39; Yang and Yen 2011: 753; Rindfuss et al. 2009: 221). The proportion of arranged marriages have continued to drop throughout the years

⁸ See Appendix, table 8 and figure 7.

(National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b: 4). In 1982 29.4 percent of marriages were either arranged through a marriage matchmaking agency or arranged introduction. The proportion decreased to 9.7 percent in 1997 and 5.2 percent in 2010. This is equivalent to the increase of romantic marriages. In 1935 only 13,4 percent of marriages were based on love (Kumagai 2008: 33). Additionally, the proportion of love marriages experienced a steady increase to 68.1 percent in 1982, 87.1 percent in 1997, and 88.1 percent in 2010⁹ (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2010b: 4).

Besides emotional fulfilment and romantic love, Japan was also influenced by the West in terms of the growing importance of egalitarianism and individualism in its post-war years (Tokuhiko 2009: 8-9, 97). The values of egalitarianism and individualism have been cultural trends influencing the changing meaning of marriage in Japan. Individualistic values are central to the idea of romantic love, and the growth of individualism is an important factor when explaining changes in marriage and family. The developments of individualism and personal fulfilment have influenced growing acceptance of the separation of sex from marriage. Furthermore, the changing norms toward individualistic values have opened up for a revision of traditional gender roles in the Japanese marriage in which collectivist goals have been challenged by individual development (Yang and Yen 2011: 753, 758). Still, it does not seem like individualism has grown to an extent that is comparable to the West (Raymo et al. 2015: 480). The limited rise of individualist ideas and values might also be a result of the clash between the changing attitudes of women and their role in society and expectations of childbearing and responsibility for domestic tasks.

7.2.2. Educational and occupational advancement

A notable material development in the Japanese society and an important factor behind the delay of marriage and childbearing in Japan is increased access to education and especially higher education for women (Rindfuss et al. 2009: 227; Yang and Yen 2011: 752, 756-757). It is a consequence of expectations which follow from educational advancement. Educational advancement can heighten expectations to a spouse in terms of income potential. Moreover, more time is spent on finishing one's education. The greater access to education can influence especially women's marital decisions (Yang and Yen 2011: 752, 756). Through education women gain agency and self-

⁹ See Appendix, table 9 and figure 8.

determination. Education also exposes people to egalitarian values by presenting different views on family and society.

With advancement to higher education, income improvement and other job opportunities become available (Rindfuss et al. 2009: 227). Educational advancement can provide social mobility of promotion which challenges the traditional division of labour in the household (Yang and Yen 2011: 156-157). The trends of increasing occupational opportunities and delay of marriage are consistent with Becker's economic theory of marriage, where the relationship between women's earnings and marriage is negative as a consequence of women's occupational and earning opportunities in Japan where traditional gender roles persist (Fukuda 2013: 120-21, 123-124). However, for cohorts born after 1970 a change has taken place in Japan. The relationship between women's earnings and marriage was negative for the 1960 cohort in which women with higher earnings were less likely to marry than women with lower earnings. It has changed as the relationship for the 1970 cohort is positive. It suggests that women's incomes are not considered an obstacle to marriage to the same extent as earlier. It is also supported by younger generations' view on gender role division in the family. Like the above section on the changing division of labour in the Japanese home shows, attitudes supporting traditional gender roles have been less outspoken in recent years.

To explore the influence of education on the change of the marital institution in Japan, data prior to the 1970s has been included. The increase in both men and women's high school enrolment have increased substantially since 1960 where slightly under 60 percent advanced to upper secondary schools, including high schools and technical colleges (Brinton 2001: 128-129; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2012). Since the mid 1990s upper secondary school education has become nearly universal. In higher education, including junior college, four-year college and university, the expansion has been pronounced from 1955 to 2010. For women there has been a significant rise in advancement to junior college from 2.6 percent to over 20 percent from 1955 to 1995. From 1995 the percentage has dropped and in 2010 only 10.8 percent of women advanced to junior college. At the same time, women's university advancement has experienced a significant increase from 1955 to 1995, and in 1995 it was at the same level as junior college advancement at slightly over 20 percent. Since then the increase has been substantial and in 2010 women's four-year college and university advancement had nearly doubled to 45.2 percent. For

men the increase in higher education advancement has been in four-year college and university education. The vast majority of men has chosen four-year college and university advancement between 1955 and 2010. From 1955 to 2010 four-year college and university advancement has increased from 13.1 to 56.4 percent. In the same time period less than 3 percent of men has chosen junior college education¹⁰.

With the increase of women's educational advancement, women also experienced a rise in the participation in the labour market at the end of the 20th century (Brinton 2001: 31, 35, 135). However, the greater labour market participation has mostly been in part-time work. Women have been in a disadvantaged position in large firms where men have been preferred for permanent employment. In 1985 an the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was implemented in Japan to alleviate the inequalities in the labour market (ibid.: 27-28, 100-101). Before the passing of the law, women were mostly assigned to a non-career track because it was assumed that women would retire when they married or had children. As a result of the law women could now choose between a career track or a "mommy track" (ibid: 31-32, 35). Still, 15 years after the law was implemented it had a limited effect and the percentage of women working in administrative and managerial work had only increased from 0.9 to 1 percent. The preference for men over women to recruit for the managerial track was strengthened after the Asian economic crisis in the late 1990s. A decade earlier Japan had a labour shortage which provided an opening for women to participate in paid employment but the favourable conditions turned with the recession where Japan came to experience the highest unemployment since World War II. The low demand for labour has kept women with higher education and married women in an unfavourable position in the labour market after the economic recession. Thus, together with the tendency of women who leave the labour market after childrearing the cost of marriage might be too high for educated women with a well-paid job. The consequences for women if they withdraw from the labour market are loss of wages and a limited opportunity for regular employment when they re-enter the work force (Rindfuss et al. 2009: 227). Consequently it can be more appealing to women with higher education, well-paid job, and long-term occupational ambitions to postpone marriage or not to marry at all.

¹⁰ See Appendix, table 10 and figure 9.

By focusing on the historical development of Japan's marital institution, plausible cultural and material trends leading to the changes and deinstitutionalization have been identified. Crucial to the changes seem to be cultural and ideational influences from the West of individualism, egalitarianism, and romantic love in the post-war years as well as the material trends of a notable advancement to higher education for especially women leading to better occupational opportunities.

7.3 Few cohabiting couples and extramarital childbirths

In Japan, cultural and material trends are likely to have facilitated changes in the marital institution. Even though changes have taken place, Japanese marriage is still a rigid institution. Like in the previous section, pointing out causes for institutional persistence and stability is a difficult task and most likely a result of several factors. In the third part of the analysis plausible explanations for the distinct development of Japanese marriage are touched upon.

In Japan, widespread acceptance of same-sex marriage has been gradual like in the U.S. where gay marriage became legal across the country in June 2015 (Roberts and Siddiqui 2015). Likewise, Japan has experienced many of the same demographic developments taking place in the U.S. and Western Europe such as decline in childbirths, increase in divorce rate and single people, and delay of marriage and childbearing. Despite the similarities, developments such as a notable rise in cohabiting couples and increase in childbirths outside marriage have been almost absent in Japan (Atoh 2001: 1-2). Makoto Atoh highlights three explanations for the increase in cohabitation and extramarital childbirths in the western countries (ibid. 2001: 2-4). The first is the technological explanation. With the availability and prevalence of the oral contraceptive pill in the mid 1960s, women were independently able to control their own pregnancies. Also, it is likely to have promoted the "sex-revolution". Young people engaged to an increasing extent in pre-marital sex and cohabitation because the pill reduced the risks of unwanted pregnancies. Extramarital childbirths followed as a consequence of the acceptance and increase of cohabiting relationships. The second explanation is women's emancipation. In the 1960s more women started to experience an increase in educational advancement, participation in the labour market, and continued work after marriage and childbirth. The emancipation led women to enter cohabiting relationships where they desired a more equal partnership with men. The third explanation is value change. Younger people started to experience a weakening of religious beliefs. Instead values of individual freedom of choice including the freedom to choose to cohabit or have children outside marriage were

emphasized. The absence of the three developments might also contribute to the explanation of why the trends of cohabitation and extramarital childbirths are not as outspoken in Japan compared with the U.S. and Western Europe. First, the oral contraceptive pill was authorized for clinical purpose in the 1960s in Japan, but not legally authorized before 1999 (ibid.: 4-5, 16). Still, Japan experienced a “sexual revolution” where sexual intercourse increased during the 1980s and 1990s among students in junior high schools, high schools, and universities even though it continued to be less pronounced than in the western societies. Without a female-dominant contraceptive method before the late 1990s it is possible that the unavailability of contraceptive pills has resulted in low prevalence of cohabitation and extramarital childbirths. Second, as mentioned above, women have experienced a substantial increase in advancement to higher education and attitudes toward traditional gender roles have started to change among Japanese men and women. Yet, women tend to leave the labour market during childrearing and in a marriage women are likely to carry the main responsibility of domestic tasks (ibid.: 5-6, 8). The general expectation of gender divided tasks in the home might have made it less attractive for women to cohabit with a partner in Japan. Third, secularism and individualism have developed gradually in post-war Japan but the developments are not as outspoken as in the western countries (ibid.: 6-8). Traditional familism continues to be valued where parent-children relationships are important and can challenge the husband-wife relationship. Moreover, self-reliance and independence from parents appear to be weak among unmarried working women aged 20 to 34 where over 80 percent cohabit with their parents.

Atoh (2001) stresses the link between the rise in cohabitation and a corresponding rise in childbearing outside marriage. However, Japan has experienced a slow increase in cohabitation the past few decades and at the same time extramarital childbirths have remained stable around 2 percent (Hertog 2009: 7; Hertog and Iwasawa 2011: 1676). If cohabitation induces extramarital childbirths it has most likely resulted in an increase in shotgun weddings or abortions. Ekateriana Hertog has analysed the reason behind the reluctance to have children outside marriage among never-married mothers. Previously economic and legal discrimination have been pointed out as obstacles to childbearing among never-married women (Hertog 2008: 196-197). Yet, economic discrimination has been reduced with the improvement of women’s employment, reduced earning gap between men and women, and narrowing of welfare provisions between divorced women and never-married women in recent decades. Also, less legal discrimination has taken place due to the abolition of the different way legitimate and illegitimate children used to be recorded in the

household registry. As a result, economic and legal discrimination are not sufficient to explain the low prevalence of extramarital childbearing. Instead Hertog argues that the low proportion of extramarital childbearing in Japan is a consequence of prevailing childbearing norms about a two-parent nuclear family (ibid.: 199, 201, 212). The way the child develops is reflected in the parental care where the child learns through imitation and effort. Since there is a belief in a strong difference between the roles of male and female in the Japanese family, there is a need for a father who can be a role model. A child without a masculine role model can be considered worse off than children who grow up in a two-parent family. The belief in the effect different family constellations have on the child constitutes a problem for single and never-married mothers.

8. Conclusion

Since the 1970s Japan has experienced changes in its marital institution which has been evident from the delay of marriage and childbearing. Also, divorces have become more frequent and an increasing proportion of Japanese men and women decide not to marry at all. The tight link between marriage and childbearing has resulted in fertility below the replacement level which has become a concern politically and in society. Moreover, some of the changes in Japanese marriage are similar to marital changes in western countries as well as other East Asian countries. The changes which have already happened in the Japanese marriage, the societal concern, and the similarities of marital changes in the West and East Asia have been the motivation behind this thesis. It has led to the research question of in what way the institution of marriage has changed in Japan since the 1970s. By using Cherlin's theory of deinstitutionalization of marriage it becomes evident that Japanese marriage has changed but it has not been deinstitutionalized. A clear attitudinal change among Japanese men and women has taken place in favour of more egalitarian gender roles and division of labour in the home, but Japan has experienced relatively few cohabiting unions, recent acceptance of same-sex partnerships, and marginal proportion of extramarital childbearing. Even though Japanese marriage has not been deinstitutionalized some of the same cultural and material trends seem to be key mechanisms behind the changes in Japanese marriage as in the U.S. Ideas and values such as the growth of emotional fulfilment and individualism and women's advancement in higher education leading to better occupational opportunities are likely to have facilitated the marital changes in Japan. The rigidity and distinctiveness of Japanese marriage are reflected in the gradual rise in cohabitation and few extramarital childbirths. The rigidity of the marital institution

might be a consequence of the relative absence of certain developments in Japan, namely an early female-dominant contraceptive method, equal responsibility between husband and wife of domestic tasks, and a value change diminishing the importance of traditional beliefs. Furthermore, persistent childbearing and family norms seem to be a hindrance for extramarital childbearing. Therefore, the main characteristics of Japanese marriage since the 1970s have been the coexistence of institutional change and persistence regarding legal rules as well as social norms in the institution of marriage.

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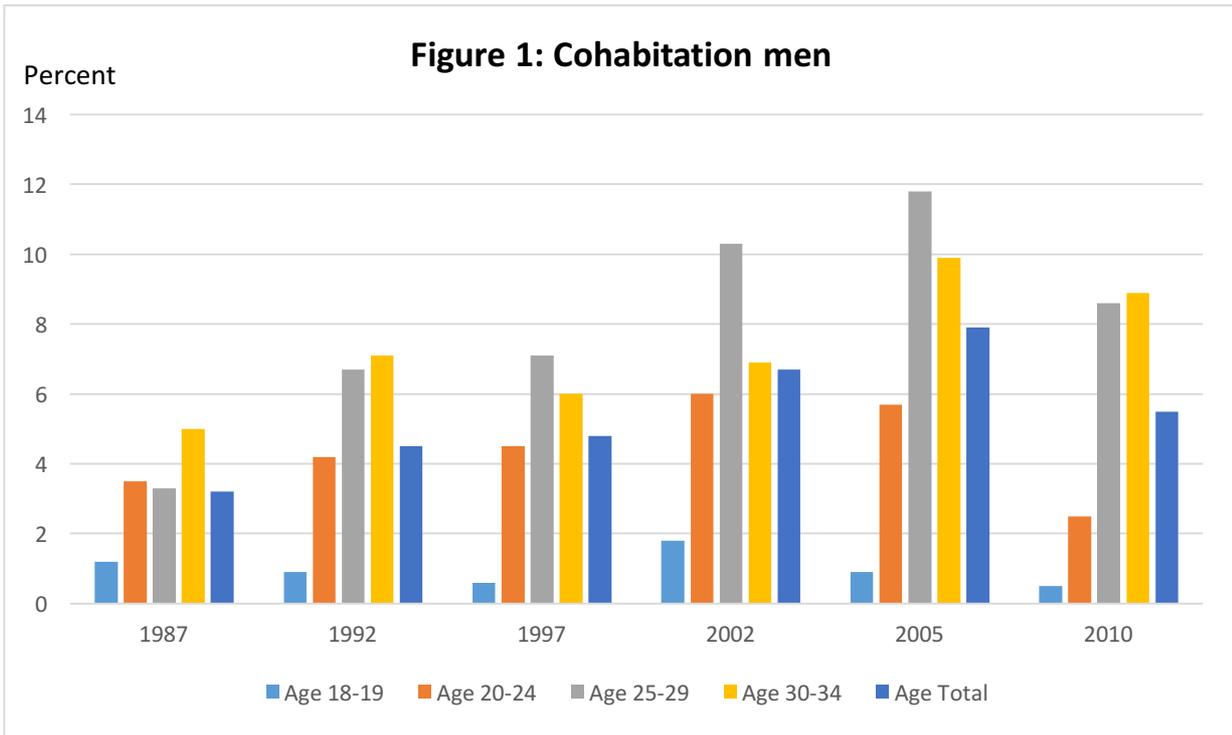
10. Appendix

Table 1: Cohabitation

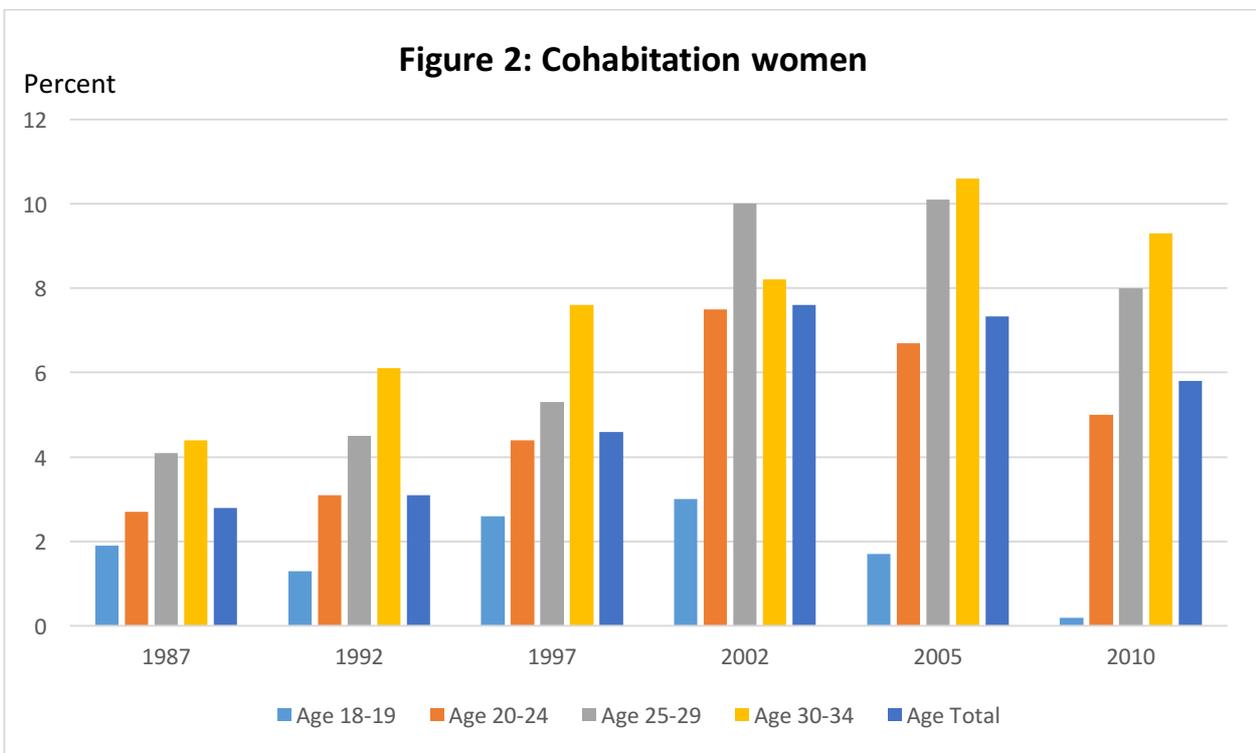
	Age	1987	1992	1997	2002	2005	2010
Men	18-19 years	1.2%	0.9%	0.6%	1.8%	0.9%	0.5%
	20-24 years	3.5%	4.2%	4.5%	6.0%	5.7%	2.5%
	25-29 years	3.3%	6.7%	7.1%	10.3%	11.8%	8.6%
	30-34 years	5.0%	7.1%	6.0%	6.9%	9.9%	8.9%
	Total	3.2%	4.5%	4.8%	6.7%	7.9%	5.5%
	Total number of cases		3,299	4,215	3,982	3,897	3,139
Women	18-19 years	1.9%	1.3%	2.6%	3.0%	1.7%	0.2%
	20-24 years	2.7%	3.1%	4.4%	7.5%	6.7%	5.0%
	25-29 years	4.1%	4.5%	5.3%	10.0%	10.1%	8.0%
	30-34 years	4.4%	6.1%	7.6%	8.2%	10.6%	9.3%
	Total	2.8%	3.1%	4.6%	7.6%	7.3%	5.8%
	Total number of cases		2,605	3,647	3,612	3,494	3,064

Source: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Question: "Have you ever cohabited (lived with a partner without legally registering for marriage)?" 1. No, 2. Yes, in the past, but not now, 3. Yes I am (cohabiting) currently.



Note: Same as table 1



Note: Same as table 1

Table 2: Women’s ideal and intended life course and men’s preferences for wives

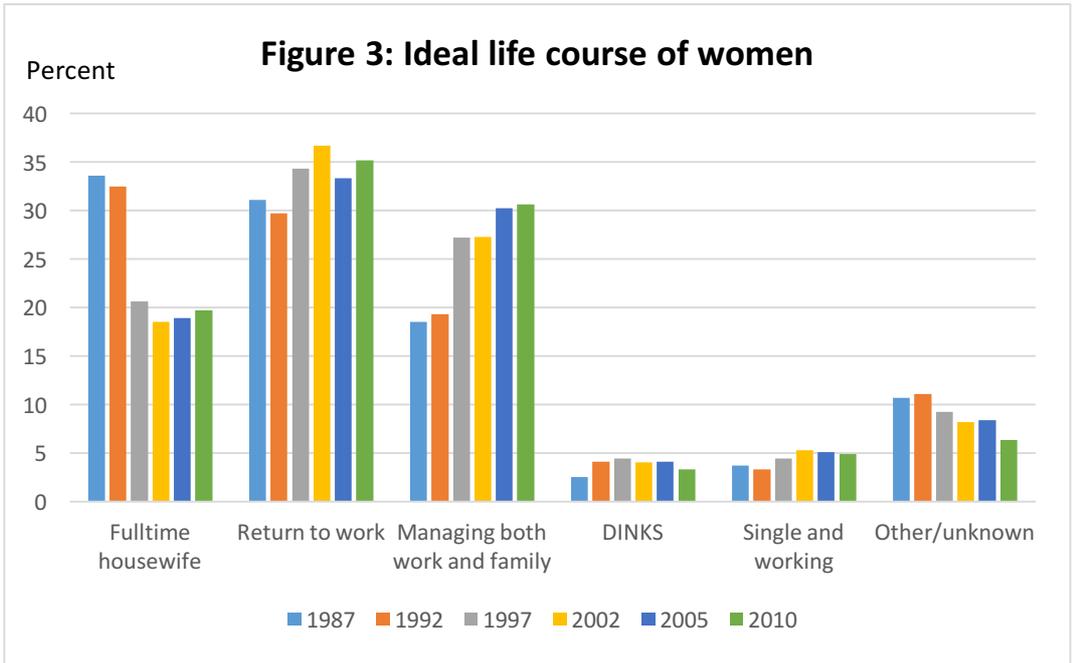
	Survey year	Fulltime housewife *	Return to work **	Managing both work and family ***	DINKS ****	Single and working *****	Other/ unknown	Total
Ideal life course of women	1987	33.6%	31.1%	18.5%	2.5%	3.7%	10.7%	100%
	1992	32.5%	29.7%	19.3%	4.1%	3.3%	11.1%	100%
	1997	20.6%	34.3%	27.2%	4.4%	4.4%	9.2%	100%
	2002	18.5%	36.7%	27.3%	4.0%	5.3%	8.2%	100%
	2005	18.9%	33.3%	30.2%	4.1%	5.1%	8.4%	100%
	2010	19.7%	35.2%	30.6%	3.3%	4.9%	6.3%	100%
Intended life course of women	1987	23.9%	42.2%	15.3%	1.4%	7.1%	10.1%	100%
	1992	19.2%	45.8%	14.7%	2.6%	9.5%	8.2%	100%
	1997	17.7%	42.9%	15.5%	3.0%	9.3%	11.6%	100%
	2002	13.6%	41.8%	17.5%	4.0%	12.5%	10.6%	100%
	2005	11.7%	37.1%	20.8%	3.2%	15.6%	11.7%	100%
	2010	9.1%	36.1%	24.7%	2.9%	17.7%	9.5%	100%
Men: life course expected of their partner	1987	37.9%	38.3%	10.5%	0.7%	0.8%	11.9%	100%
	1992	30.4%	44.2%	10.8%	0.9%	0.6%	13.0%	100%
	1997	20.7%	43.4%	17.0%	1.5%	1.0%	16.4%	100%
	2002	18.1%	46.8%	18.7%	1.4%	1.6%	13.4%	100%
	2005	12.5%	38.7%	28.2%	2.8%	3.0%	14.7%	100%
	2010	10.9%	39.1%	32.7%	2.6%	3.7%	11.0%	100%

Source: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

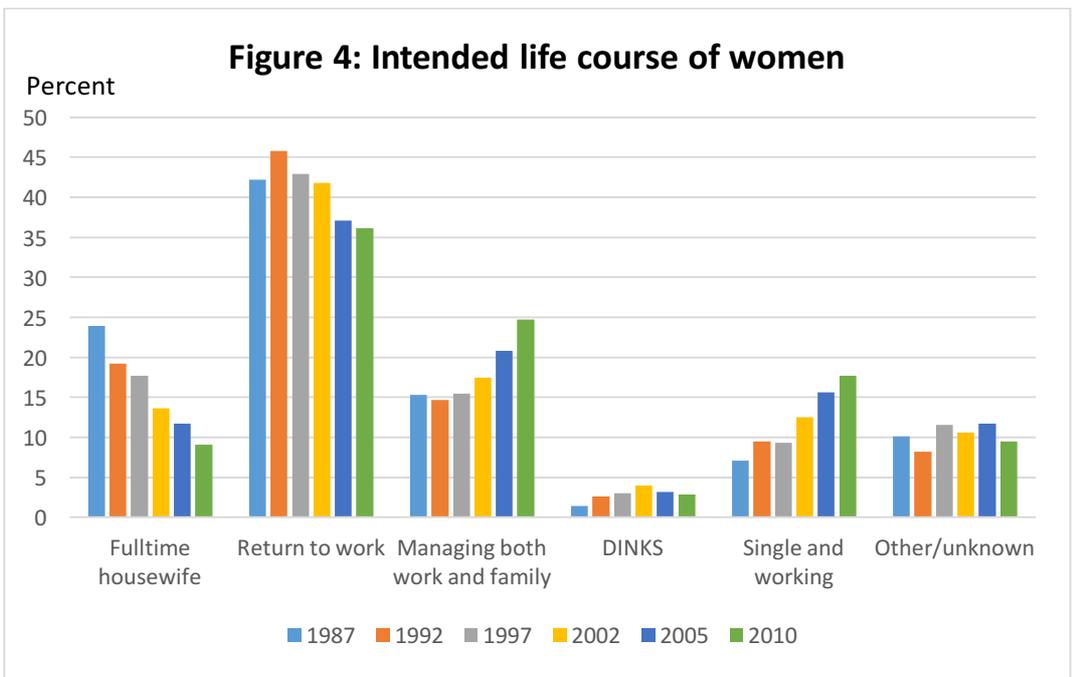
Note: the figures are for never-married men and women aged 18 to 34.

Question: Ideal life course of women: “Regardless of your actual life, what type of life do you consider to be ideal for you?” (1987, 1992) “What type of life is your ideal life?” (1997, 2002, 2005, 2010). Intended life course of women: “Considering your life up till now, what type of life do you think you will likely lead in the future?” (1987, 1992) “What type of life do you think you will likely lead, regardless of your ideal life?” (1997, 2002, 2005, 2010). Men: Life course expected of their partner: “What type of life do you want women to lead?” (1987, 1992) “What type of life do you want your partner (or wife) to lead?” (1997, 2002, 2005, 2010).

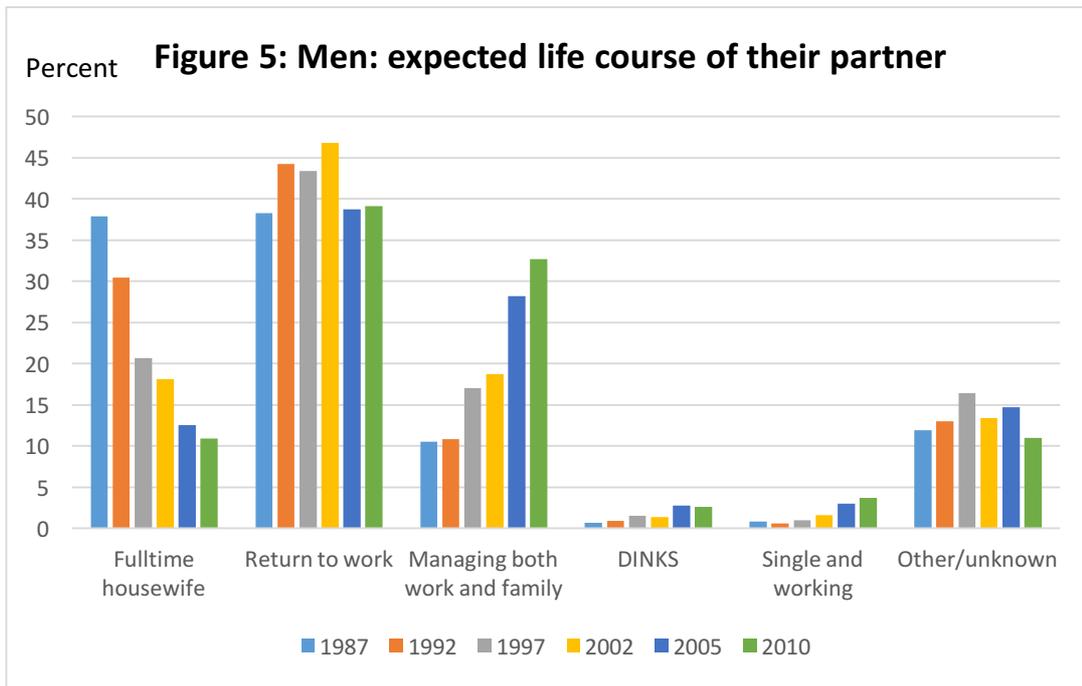
*Full time housewife: get married and have children, leave work upon marriage or childbirth, and not to be employed afterwards. ** Return to work: get married and have children, leave work upon marriage or childbirth, return to employment after finishing with child rearing. *** Managing both work and family: get married and have children, continue working throughout one’s life. ****DINKS: get married but don’t have children, continue working throughout one’s life.



Note: Same as table 2



Note: Same as table 2



Note: Same as table 2

Table 3: Husbands should work and wives should take care of the home after marriage

	Agree	Disagree
Never-married men	36.0%	60.1%
Never-married women	31.9%	64.7%
Married women	30.9%	66.2%

Source: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: Figures for never-married persons aged 18 to 34 and wives in their first marriage under 35 years old. The number of cases is 3,667 for never-married men, 3,406 for never-married women, and 1,776 for married women.

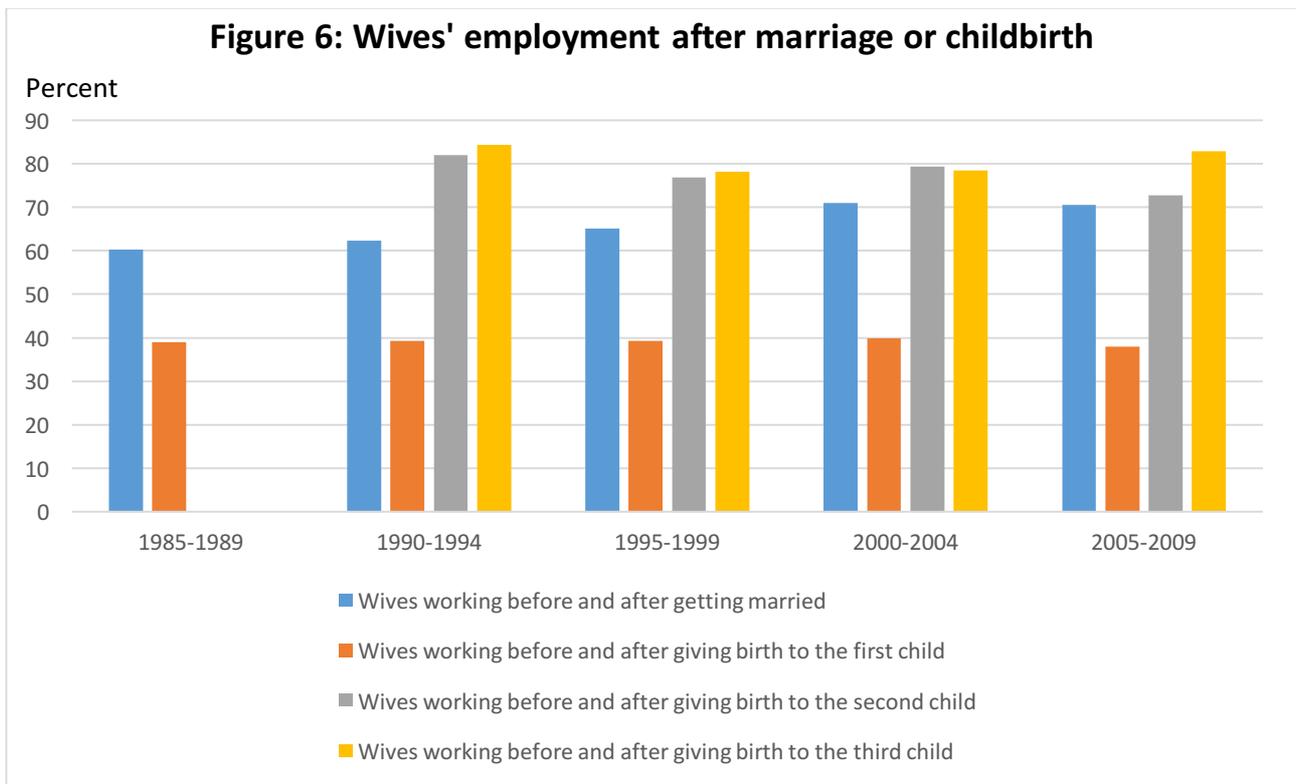
Question: "Husbands should work and wives should take care of the home after marriage".

Table 4: Wives' employment after marriage or childbirth

Year of marriage or childbirth	Wives working before and after getting married	Wives working before and after giving birth to the first child	Wives working before and after giving birth to the second child	Wives working before and after giving birth to the third child
1985-1989	60.3%	39.0%	-	-
1990-1994	62.3%	39.3%	81.9%	84.3%
1995-1999	65.1%	39.3%	76.8%	78.1%
2000-2004	70.9%	39.8%	79.4%	78.4%
2005-2009	70.5%	38.0%	72.8%	82.9%

Source: Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: The proportion of wives who continued working after getting married or giving birth among wives who had jobs at the time of marriage or pregnancy.



Note: Same as table 4

Table 5: Mothers should stay at home during childrearing

	Agree	Disagree
Never-married men	73.3%	22.9%
Never-married women	75.4%	21.5%
Married women	66.2%	30.7%

Source: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: Figures for never-married persons aged 18 to 34 and wives in their first marriage under 35 years old. The number of cases is 3,667 for never-married men, 3,406 for never-married women, and 1,776 for married women.

Question: "It is desirable that mothers should not work and should stay at home at least when their children are young".

Table 6: Percentage of extramarital births among all births

Year	Extramarital births
1970	0.9%
1995	1.2%
2004	2.0%
2010	2.1%

Source: Country Profiles: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2007; World Fertility Report 2013: Fertility at the Extremes: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2014.

Table 7: Attitudes toward extramarital childbirth

	Agree	Disagree
Never-married men	31.6%	64.7%
Never-married women	33.7%	62.9%
Married women	39.1%	57.9%

Source: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: Figures for never-married persons aged 18 to 34 and wives in their first marriage under 35 years old. The number of cases is 3,667 for never-married men, 3,406 for never-married women, and 1,776 for married women.

Question: "It is all right to have children even if one is not married".

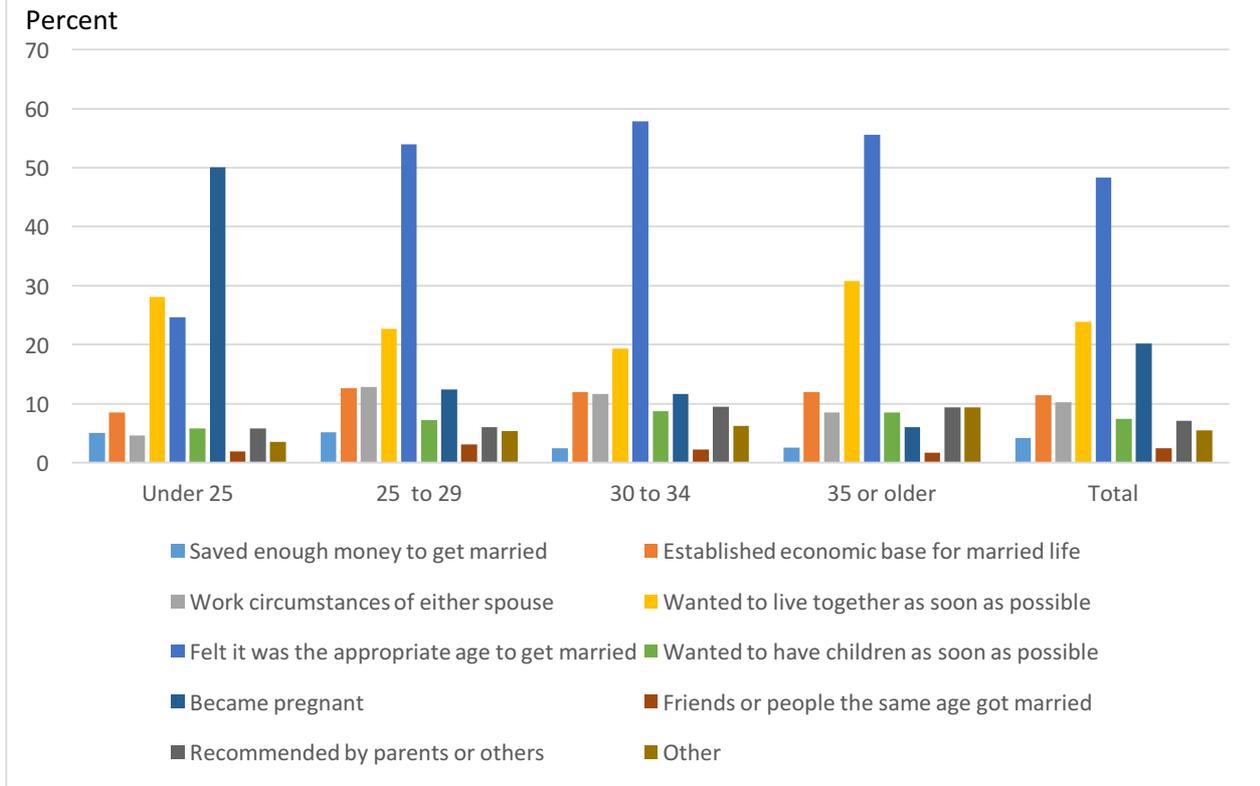
Table 8: Motives for decision to get married

Motives for marrying	Under 25	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 or older	Total
Saved enough money to get married	5.0%	5.2%	2.5%	2.6%	4.2%
Established economic base for married life	8.5%	12.6%	12.0%	12.0%	11.4%
Work circumstances of either spouse	4.6%	12.8%	11.6%	8.5%	10.2%
Wanted to live together as soon as possible	28.1%	22.7%	19.3%	30.8%	23.9%
Felt it was the appropriate age to get married	24.6%	53.9%	57.8%	55.6%	48.3%
Wanted to have children as soon as possible	5.8%	7.2%	8.7%	8.5%	7.4%
Became pregnant	50.0%	12.4%	11.6%	6.0%	20.2%
Friends or people the same age got married	1.9%	3.1%	2.2%	1.7%	2.5%
Recommended by parents or others	5.8%	6.0%	9.5%	9.4%	7.1%
Other	3.5%	5.4%	6.2%	9.4%	5.5%

Source: Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: Figures for first-married couples who got married within five years prior to the survey in 2010. Question: "What are the direct reasons that ultimately led to your decision to get married? Please choose up to 2 responses from the options below and circle the numbers."

Figure 7: Motives for decision to get married



Note: Same as table 8.

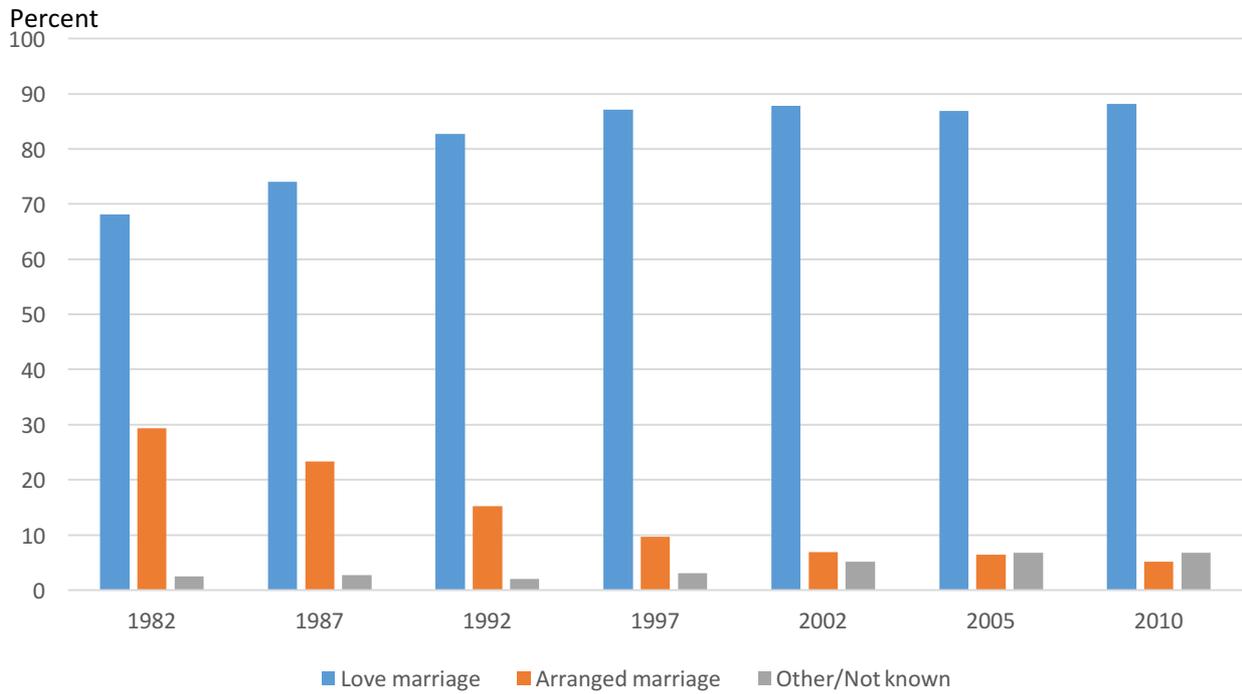
Table 9: Love marriage and arranged marriage

Survey year	Love marriage	Arranged marriage	Other/Not known	Total
1982	68.1%	29.4%	2.5%	100%
1987	74.0%	23.3%	2.7%	100%
1992	82.7%	15.2%	2.0%	100%
1997	87.1%	9.7%	3.1%	100%
2002	87.8%	6.9%	5.2%	100%
2005	86.9%	6.4%	6.8%	100%
2010	88.1%	5.2%	6.8%	100%

Source: Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2011.

Note: Figures for first-married couples who got married within five years prior to each survey. “Arranged married” means “through an arranged introduction” or “through a marriage match-making agency.” “Love marriage” include meeting the following ways or places: “At the work place or through work”, “Through friends or siblings”, “At school”, “Around town or during a trip”, “Through various activities (hobbies, etc.) or an adult education class”, “Through a part-time job”, or “Childhood friend/neighbor” Number of cases: 1,298 (1982), 1,421 (1987), 1,525 (1992), 1,304 (1997), 1,488 (2002), 1,076 (2005), 1,136 (2010).

Figure 8: Love marriage and arranged marriage



Note: Same as table 9.

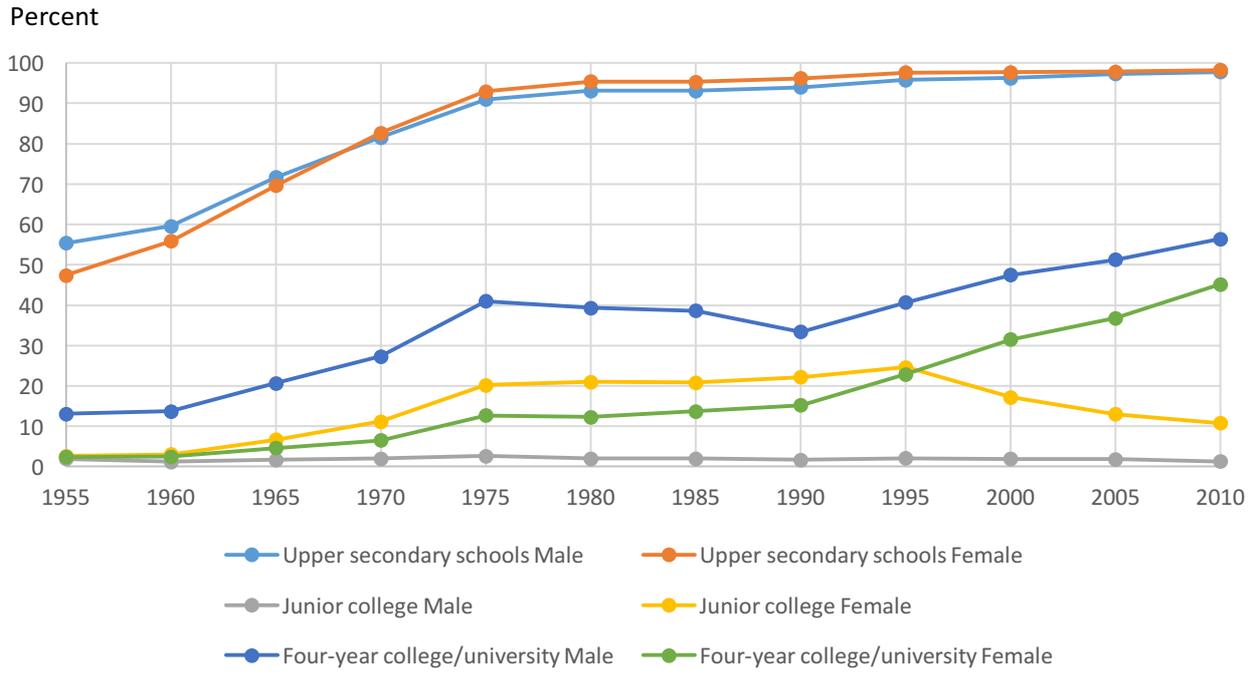
Table 10: Educational advancement

Year	Upper secondary schools		Junior college		Four-year college/university	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1955	55.4%	47.4%	1.9%	2.6%	13.1%	2.4%
1960	59.6%	55.9%	1.2%	3.0%	13.7%	2.5%
1965	71.7%	69.6%	1.7%	6.7%	20.7%	4.6%
1970	81.6%	82.7%	2.0%	11.2%	27.3%	6.5%
1975	91.0%	93.0%	2.6%	20.2%	41.0%	12.7%
1980	93.1%	95.4%	2.0%	21.0%	39.3%	12.3%
1985	93.1%	95.3%	2.0%	20.8%	38.6%	13.7%
1990	94.0%	96.2%	1.7%	22.2%	33.4%	15.2%
1995	95.8%	97.6%	2.1%	24.6%	40.7%	22.9%
2000	96.3%	97.7%	1.9%	17.2%	47.5%	31.5%
2005	97.3%	97.9%	1.8%	13.0%	51.3%	36.8%
2010	97.8%	98.3%	1.3%	10.8%	56.4%	45.2%

Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2012; Akiyoshi 2007: 17.

Note: "Upper secondary schools" include those who advanced to high schools and technical colleges.

Figure 9: Educational advancement



Note: Same as table 10.