

This paper was originally appeared in *Advances in Social Research No. 14* (March, 2015) Special Edition: World Congress of Sociology (WCS) 2014 in Yokohama, Japan (pp. 50-51) in Japanese. It was reprinted in *Japan Society of Family Sociology Newsletter No.14* (November, 2015) with the consent of the Editing Committee of *Advances in Social Research* at the Japan Association for Social Research.

Data and Methods: RC06 Family Research at WCS 2014 in Yokohama  
—The Advent of the Large-scale Multi-actor Panel Surveys and International Collaboration Research Era —

Noriko Iwai (Director of the JGSS Research Center at Osaka University of Commerce)

There were 14 RC06 sessions and 11 joint sessions with 285 applicants being selected out of a total of 374 (selection rate was 76%). The largest areas applied to were, Father-hood in Transition at 42 and Global Changes in Families at 29; these 2 sessions were carried out in a round table format with 1 computer stationed at each of the 5 round tables. The number of poster session presentations was 19.

Joint sessions were combined with the following Thematic Groups and Research Committees: TG03 Human Rights and Global Justice, RC 39 Sociology of Disasters, RC53 Sociology of Childhood (2 sessions for each of the above), RC11 Sociology of Aging, RC13 Sociology of Leisure, RC31 Sociology of Migration, RC32 Women in Society, and RC33 Logic and Methodology.

The subject matter of the sessions were spread over a broad range of topics including ICT and household lifestyle, people with disabilities and their family, gender roles and social equality, work and home, ethnicity in international marriages, natural disasters and families/children, changes in fatherhood, cultural capital and raising children, families who deal with financial crises, families who have members working overseas, long-term care for the elderly (elderly immigrants; foreign caregivers; male caregivers), childbirth/child raising policies and gender roles, couple formation, household budget management, families of developing nations (marriage and divorce in Kyrgyzstan; female headed household in Burkina Faso; favoritism towards boys in Nepal, etc), new types of families (married couples without children in South Korea; single person households in China; couples who live together after getting divorced in the United States and France, etc), social capital in an unbalanced world and families as well as trends in the market economy and the well-being of families/children (work schedule and cognitive development; working on weekends and leisure time with family, etc.).

The following observations were made according to the summary and memos on presentations (204 papers excluding cancels).

**【53% of presentations were based on the analysis of quantitative data】**

Approximately 40 % presented the results from large-scale public data or original survey data, another 30 % presented the analysis on the qualitative data such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, and approximately 10% used both quantitative and qualitative data. .

**【70% of quantitative presentations used public and governmental data】**

70% of the presentations that was based on quantitative data including the mixed method used large-scale probability sampling data from research institutions or governments. Of these, 30%

(27 reports) were based on large-scale panel survey.

**【Popularization of large-scale multi-actor panel survey】**

As for the number of presentations, the host country Japan lead the way (32 presentations) followed by the USA (20), Taiwan (15), Germany (13) and India (12), which is in line with the development and availability of large-scale survey data. Cross-sectional surveys included Taiwan Social Change Survey (3) and Japanese General Social Survey (2). The American National Survey of Families and Households has been a pioneer in large-scale multi-actor panel survey in the field of family studies. This congress included presentations based on a variety of panel data (including the retrospective method): several different panel surveys from the USA (5), the Youth Project from Taiwan (8), the National Family Research Japan from Japan (7), the Family Panel from Germany (6) in addition to panel surveys from countries such as England, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden, Hungary and France.

**【Collaborations among EU countries for large-scale survey research】**

Countries from the EU started the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions and Gender Programme from 2004 in order to collect data (on poverty, gender gap, etc.) for promoting collaboration. These data are used by researchers in Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Romania.

**【Analysis enabled by large-scale data】**

There were a number of presentations, which combined quantitative analysis on large-scale data sets and semi-structured interviews; for example, comparisons of child's stress levels by the living patterns (living with one parent only, living mainly with one parent, living with both parents equally) after their parents get divorced (Sweden) and the impact of certain characteristics of fathers on fatherhood roles after the birth of a child, including being an immigrant or having a same sex partner (France).

**【Large-scale survey data in developing countries】**

There were a number of presentation on large-scale data including panels from countries in which probability sampling research appeared to be difficult due to expanding populations and costs. There were statistics from India in Building Knowledge Base on Population Ageing in India (with assistance from the United Nations Population Fund) and Human Development Survey, Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health (SAGE; carried out by WHO). From China, there was a presentation based on SAGE and also based on the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study, which has a base in Peking University.

**【Mixed method designs】**

There were designs which combined multiple methods for both quantitative and qualitative data. In Growing Up in Ireland, time use survey and a reading/writing test were incorporated in a

multi-actor panel survey, which asked questions to 9-year olds, their parents and teachers. Research in Italy, which focused on the relationship between a child's independence and restrictions by adults on how time and space is used, combined research on time use survey, space use survey and interviews/group discussions with their parents and teachers. There was also a study about Japanese men's work-life balance; whether the experience of working abroad (the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden have influence on their work-life balance. Preliminary survey results and local interview results collected attention from international researchers regarding whether or not there are changes in the balance between work and lifestyle of Japanese males.

**【Combinations of different data sets】**

There has been an increase in analysis which combines information from different data sets following the spread of multi-level analysis. For example, researchers from Switzerland and Taiwan combined panel data on parent's discipline and resources with children's academic grades.

**【Designing research which targets children】**

There were creative designs such as action research (a process in which children who have experienced a tornado or large-scale fire recover vitality through joint creative activities) and projective techniques (having children who live in Brasilia create an image of Brasilia using wooden blocks) in research which targets children.

**【Analysis methods are evolving in each country】**

The usage of statistics which incorporate multiple relationships between a time axis and variables has been rapidly expanding from Europe and the United States following the expansion of public usage of large-scale survey data.

Acknowledgments: I would like to express my gratitude to presenters who provided me with their papers and PPTs at the Congress as well as the members of the Japan Society of Family Sociology who provided me with memos about presentations.

