

# **Japanese General Social Surveys\***

## **Beginning and Development**

IWAI, Noriko

Faculty of Business Administration  
Osaka University of Commerce

January 2004

4<sup>th</sup> edition

**\* The first edition of this paper was presented at the JGSS International Symposium  
June 21-22, 2003, Osaka University of Commerce, Higashi-Osaka, Japan.  
The second edition was presented at the Thematic Lecture Series “Survey Researches in  
East Asia,” Nov. 21-22, 2003 at Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea.  
The third edition was presented at the Thematic Lecture on Japanese and Korean  
Social Surveys, Dec. 24, 2003 at Institute of Sociology, Academic Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.**

## **1. Introduction**

The Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) Project is the first attempt in Japan to conduct a nationwide general social survey on a regular basis and to provide its data for secondary analyses without delay for use by social scientists in Japan and overseas. This innovative project has been undertaken by the Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo.

The JGSS project endeavors to supply survey data which makes time-series analyses and international comparisons possible, as does the U.S. GSS. It aims to collect information essential for understanding Japanese society: values, attitudes and behavioral patterns of the Japanese people. To make analyses in various fields of study possible, JGSS surveys cover a wide range of topics: the respondents' family structure, working conditions, income, occupations of respondents, those of parents and spouses, political affiliations, family life, life/death, religion, leisure, experience of trauma, criminal victimization, etc.

Like GSS data, JGSS survey data does not always give detailed information in a specific area; rather, JGSS data aims to provide non-specific and general information that can be utilized by scholars in various fields of the social sciences. JGSS data thus promotes studies and discussions of many different themes. In order to obtain high quality data, the JGSS project team thoroughly scrutinizes its survey methods. Two pilot surveys were conducted prior to JGSS-2000, the first full-scale survey. JGSS data is open to academia and is accessible through the Social Science Japan (SSJ) Data Archive of the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo.

This paper consists of five parts: 1) circumstances in which the JGSS project started; 2) the research organization of the project team; 3) JGSS timetable; 4) utilization of the JGSS data sets; and 5) characteristics of the research designs for the JGSS. Many of these characteristics are unique to Japanese survey situations.

## **2. Beginning of the JGSS Project**

Hundreds of surveys are conducted every year by the Japanese government, local governments, the mass media, non-profit/profit organizations, and/or academics in Japan. While they publish distributions of responses and results of analyses, their data are seldom available for secondary analyses, even for research purposes. It has been the custom of Japanese researchers or groups of researchers to keep their data to themselves and limit its usage. Therefore, being able to analyze the data of a nationwide survey has been the privilege of a limited number of scholars and their graduate students.

Looking at the rapid development of databases and data archives in U.S. and European academic circles, there has been a growing request among Japanese researchers for archiving data as common property. This request was especially urged by scholars who had studied at U.S. universities and had the experience of using survey data sets available through data

archives. Prof. KABASHIMA, Ikuo of the University of Tokyo released data sets of voting and political opinions to academic circles; it is called Leviathan Databank. Prof. MIYAKE, Ichiro of Kansai University also released data sets of political opinions.

Then, the Faculty of Social Information of Sapporo Gakuin University founded an archive of information on surveys conducted by members of the Japanese Sociological Association. This archive, which is called the Social and Opinion Research Database, also provides 16 data sets for secondary analyses. In 1998 the aforementioned SSJ Data Archive of the University of Tokyo was founded, which stores data sets deposited not only by individual researchers but also by research institutes of private firms. However, compared with data archives in Europe and the U.S., Japanese archives lacked comprehensive data from general social surveys on Japanese society for time-series analyses by social science researchers.

To this end, a joint project was launched by the Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, with the following objectives:

- (1) To collect and build cumulative data on general social surveys in Japan in a regular and consistent manner, thus enabling a time-series analysis;
- (2) To provide data for secondary analyses to researchers and university students in social science fields; and,
- (3) To provide data in a format useful for international comparative studies, research, and reports.

The joint project team commenced the preliminary study for the JGSS project in the autumn of 1998. In March 1999, the JGSS project obtained five years of financial support from the Japanese government. The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) at Osaka University of Commerce was designated as a "Gakujutsu-Frontier Suishinkyoten" (a key institute on the frontiers of academic projects) by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, which subsidizes the project. The JGSS project became a 5-year (1999-2003) academic project in which the Japanese General Social Surveys are designed and carried out at IRS in collaboration with the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo. Its data sets are distributed by SSJ Data Archive, Information Center for Social Science Research on Japan, Institute of Social Science, the University of Tokyo.

### **3. Research Organization**

The project is headed by Prof. TANIOKA, Ichiro (Osaka University of Commerce) and Prof. NITTA, Michio (University of Tokyo). It is directed by Prof. IWAI, Noriko (Osaka University of Commerce) and Prof. SATO, Hiroki (University of Tokyo) with Ms. OSAWA, Minae (Osaka University of Commerce) as Project Manager. The JGSS project office is located at Osaka University of Commerce in Higashi-Osaka City, Japan.

Although the core team members remain the same, members vary from survey to survey. The team consists of scholars from Osaka University of Commerce and the University of Tokyo as well as researchers from both public and private educational/research institutions to cover various fields of study of sociology, social psychology, economics, management, marketing, education, laws, communication, linguistics, demography, statistics, and information science. Table 1 shows the current members of the JGSS project team.

**Table 1 Project Members of JGSS-2003**

Directors	TANIOKA, Ichiro	Criminology, Sociological Methodology	Osaka University of Commerce
	NITTA, Michio	Human Resources Management	Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo
Principal Investigators	IWAI, Noriko	Social Psychology, Family Sociology	Osaka University of Commerce
	SATO, Hiroki	Human Resources Management	Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo
Project Members	KIMURA, Masafumi	Sociology	Osaka University of Commerce
	SUGITA, Hizuru	Communication	
	OHASHI, Masahiko	Marketing	
	OKUNO, Hisao	Laws	
	KOISO, Kaoru	Linguistics	
	SANO, Shigeru	Sociology of Education	
	TASAKI, Kimitsukasa	Economic History	
	SHINOHARA, Kenichi	Management	
	TOYOYAMA, Munehiro	Economic Policy	
	YAN, Heping	Community Development	
	LIN, Miauh-Yin	Economic History	
	ISHIDA, Hiroshi	Stratification	Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo
	MAKITA, Naoki	Statistics	
	SATO, Kaori	Sociology of Education	
	SHINOZAKI, Takehisa	Labor Economics	
	IKEDA, Kenichi	Social Psychology	University of Tokyo
	HONDA, Yuki	Sociology of Education	
	ANZO, Shinji	Demography	Meiji University
	INABA, Taichi	Statistics	Kobe University
	IWAI, Hachiro	Sociology of Education	Kyoto University
	KOJIMA, Hiroshi	Demography	National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
	NISHIMURA, Yukimitsu	Sociology of Education	
NAKAO, Keiko	Stratification	Tokyo Metropolitan University	
TAKAHASI, Kazuko	Information Science	Keiai University	
YASUNO, Tomoko	Social Psychology	Chuo University	
YASUDA, Tokio	Mathematical Sociology	Koshien University	
Project Administration Office	JGSS Executive Secretary and Project Manager	OSAWA, Minae	Osaka University of Commerce
	Office Staff	NAKAO, Rie	
		HIGUCHI, Tamaki	
		NISHIO, Hitomi	
		KONO, Tomomi	

#### 4. JGSS Schedule

The JGSS schedule is shown in Table 2. In 1999 two pilot surveys were conducted to scrutinize the survey methods to be employed in the full-scale survey. The first full-scale survey, JGSS-2000, was conducted from the end of October to the end of November 2000. In the autumn of 2001, the second survey, JGSS-2001, was conducted. JGSS-2002 was conducted in 2002 and its data is now being processed. The data sets of the two pilot surveys, JGSS-2000, and JGSS-2001 have already been released from the SSJ Data Archive. The field operation of JGSS-2003 has been completed and the contents of the returned questionnaires are now being checked.

In June 2003 JGSS International Symposium was held at Osaka University of Commerce. A new challenging stage for JGSS project is now developing from the symposium, the details of which I will discuss in the last section of this paper.

**Table 2 JGSS Schedule**

<b>March 1999</b>	<b>1st Pilot Survey conducted</b>	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Osaka Prefecture and Tokyo Metropolitan area (20 survey points each)</p> <p><b>Sample population:</b> Males and females aged 20-69</p> <p><b>Sampling method</b> Osaka Prefecture: Two-stage stratified random sampling Tokyo Metropolitan area: Two-stage random sampling</p> <p><b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method</p> <p><b>Valid responses (Rates):</b> Osaka Prefecture: 151 (43.3%) Tokyo Metropolitan Area: 159 (43.8%)</p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> By split-balloting, 1) Examined survey contents using two forms of self-administered questionnaires. 2) Examined order of administration: interview and placement</p>
<b>November 1999</b>	<b>1st Pilot Survey data released</b>	From <b>SSJ Data Archive</b> <a href="http://www.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ssjda/">http://www.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ssjda/</a>
	<b>2nd Pilot Survey conducted</b>	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide (81 points)</p> <p><b>Sample population:</b> 1,200 males and females over 18 years old</p> <p><b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling</p> <p><b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method</p> <p><b>Valid responses (Rates):</b> 790 (65.0%)</p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> By split-balloting, 1) Examined survey contents using two forms of self-administered questionnaires. 2) Examined effects on the response rate of the timing of the incentive (book coupons); whether it was prepaid, or promised.</p>
<b>March</b>	<b>1st Pilot Survey Codebook published</b>	
<b>November 2000</b>	<b>JGSS-2000 survey conducted</b>	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide (300 points)</p> <p><b>Sample population:</b> 4,500 males and females 20-89 years of age</p> <p><b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling *</p> <p><b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method</p> <p><b>Valid responses (Rates):</b> 2,893 (64.9%)</p>
<b>March 2001</b>	<b>2nd Pilot Survey data released</b>	From <b>SSJ Data Archive</b>
	<b>2nd Pilot Survey Codebook published</b>	
	<b>JGSS Website opened</b>	<a href="http://jgss.daishodai.ac.jp">http://jgss.daishodai.ac.jp</a>

\* Described in detail in Appendix.

November 2001	JGSS-2001 survey conducted	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide (300 points)  <b>Sample population:</b> 4,500 males and females 20-89 years of age  <b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling  <b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method  <b>Survey contents:</b> similar to JGSS-2000 with some alteration  <b>Valid responses (Rates):</b> 2,790 (62.4%)</p>
March 2002	JGSS-2000 data released	From SSJ Data Archive
	JGSS-2000 Codebook published JGSS-Monographs published	
April 2002	JGSS-2000 book published	<i>Japanese Values and Behavioral Patterns Seen in the Japanese General Social Survey</i> , Iwai, N. and Sato, H. (eds.), Yuhikaku.
November 2002	JGSS-2002 survey conducted	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide (341 points)  <b>Sample population:</b> 5,000 males and females 20-89 years of age  <b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling  <b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method  <b>Survey contents:</b> Except for replicating core questions, contents altered  <b>Valid responses (Rates):</b> 2,953 (62.2%)</p>
March 2003	JGSS-2001 data released	From SSJ Data Archive
	JGSS-2001 Codebook published	
	JGSS Monographs published	
	JGSS Paper Competition	
June 21-22	JGSS International Symposium	At Osaka University of Commerce
November 2003	JGSS-2003 survey conducted	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide (489 points)  <b>Sample population:</b> 7,200 males and females 20-89 years of age  <b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling  <b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method  <b>Survey contents:</b> Two forms of self-administered questionnaire  1) Replicating core questions and topical modules  2) Some core questions and those on social network</p>
	Thematic Lecture Series: Survey Researches in East Asia	At Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea
	Statistical Activity Encouraging Award received	From Japanese Statistical Association
December 2003	Thematic Lecture on Japanese and Korean Social Surveys	At Institute of Sociology, Academic Sinica, Taiwan
March 2004	JGSS-2002 data released	From SSJ Data Archive
	JGSS-2002 Codebook published	
	JGSS Monographs published	
	Report on JGSS International Symposium published JGSS Paper Competition	
March 2005 (planned)	JGSS-2003 data released	From SSJ Data Archive
	JGSS-2003 Codebook published	
	JGSS Monographs published	
	JGSS Paper Competition	
November 2005 (planned)	JGSS-2005 survey conducted	<p><b>Survey area:</b> Nationwide  <b>Sample population:</b> Males and females 20-89 years of age  <b>Sample size:</b> Undecided  <b>Sampling method:</b> Two-stage stratified random sampling  <b>Survey administration:</b> Both face-to-face interview and placement (self-administered) method  <b>Survey contents:</b> Undecided</p>
March 2006 (planned)	JGSS data (Cumulative) released	From SSJ Data Archive
	Cumulative Codebook released	

## **5. Use of Data**

### **Data Availability and Documentation**

The JGSS project is planned so that its survey data is released without delay for educational and academic purposes. The data set is released in March each year, approximately 18 months after each survey. Information on survey administration, which is essential to secondary analysis, can easily be obtained on the website (<http://jgss.daishodai.ac.jp>) or from the published Codebook.

### **JGSS Website**

The JGSS website provides such information as project summary, survey schedule, survey questions, sampling and administration methods, responses, and how to obtain information such as survey data in both Japanese and English. The website also has a subject index: by selecting a topic of interest, a visitor is led to the relevant JGSS variables, corresponding survey question(s) and data (frequency distribution of responses). The site is updated in March every year when a new data set is released.

### **JGSS Codebook**

The JGSS Codebook is published in March each year when the data set is released (edited by Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo).

### **Distribution of JGSS Data**

Frequency distribution of the JGSS data can be seen on the JGSS website. Data sets can be obtained for academic purposes by researchers at universities and research institutes, graduate students, and college students guided by professors, from the SSJ Data Archive of the Japan Sociological Information Center, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo (<http://www.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ssjda/>). Users are obliged to observe a written oath on confidentiality of data, rules on usage, publication, etc.

### **Users**

An increasing number of researchers and students are using JGSS data for educational and research purposes. Table 3 shows the names of data sets released each year and the number of users. As of December 24 2003, the total number of data sets used amounts to 1,185 which include 53 used in classes or seminars. The data sets are used not only in Japan but also overseas (the U.S., Germany, Hong Kong and Australia). Japanese or other Asian graduate students who study abroad intend to use JGSS for their Ph.D. theses and foreign students who study in Japan intend to use JGSS for their Master's or Ph.D. theses. JGSS data sets are utilized in courses or seminars in several fields of study, such as sociology, psychology, education, economics, political science and information science. Some of the

courses and seminars which have made use of data sets include economics, education, journalism, political opinions, statistics, data analyses, psychostatistics, behaviormetrics, sociological methodology, applied sociological methodology, information system, economic information system, micro data analyses, applied micro economics and so on.

Data files of JGSS-2000 and 2001 will be soon available from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICSPR) in the U.S., and Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung (ZA) in Germany. JGSS data sets are now being processed for release. It is expected that a substantial number of research papers will be produced using the JGSS data sets, and the project thereby will contribute to deeper understanding of Japanese society.

**Table 3 Total Number of JGSS Data Sets Used in Academic Years**

Academic Year: April-March	2000	2001	2002	2003.4.1-12.24	Total
Available JGSS Data Sets	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot JGSS-2000	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot JGSS-2000 JGSS-2001	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot JGSS-2000 JGSS-2001
Total No. of Data Sets	11	284	376	514	1185
No. of Class/Seminar* (no. of students in class/seminar*)	2 (4)	9 (239)	20 (316)	22 (252)	53 (811)
No. of Foreign Users	1	3	11	7	22
No. of Foreign Users in Japan**	0	5	2	9	16

\* Excluding classes whose instructors have not submitted a list of students with their signatures yet.

\*\* Foreign graduate students or researchers studying in Japan.

### JGSS Monograph and Book

A collection of monographs written by the JGSS project members was published in March 2002 and 2003. Its publication is also scheduled for March 2004 and 2005. In exchange for cleaning the data set, project members have the privilege of analyzing JGSS data sets prior to their release.

In the spring of 2002, JGSS co-principal investigators edited a book in which every member of the project team wrote a short monograph for their own field of study based on the analyses of JGSS-2000. As a whole, the book portrays values and behavioral patterns of Japanese people from a variety of perspectives: family, gender, work situations, social stratification, voting behavior and political opinions, victimization of crimes and social norms, environment of information technology, enjoying life, and attitudes toward life and death. The title of the book is Japanese Values and Behavioral Patterns Seen in the Japanese General Social Survey (Iwai and Sato [eds.], 2002).

### Publications and Presentations by the User Community

The results of analyses of JGSS data are also reported at various academic societies and overseas conferences, such as the Japan Sociological Society, Japan Society of Family



Sociology, the Japanese Society of Social Psychology, Japanese Association of Sociological Criminology, Population Association of Japan, Communication Association of Japan, Society for the Study of Human Animal Relations, the Behaviormetric Society of Japan, Information Processing Society of Japan, Association for Natural Language Processing, the American Sociological Association, International Conference on Improving Surveys, Asian Studies Conference Japan, the Academy of Korean Studies Colloquium and so on.

Some instructors who had led a seminar on sociological methodology edited and published a collection of student papers written for the seminar (Nishimura, 2002; Takenoshita, 2002; Fujimoto, 2002).

Although only a short time has passed since the release of data sets, a number of papers written by JGSS project members and other users have appeared in peer-refereed professional journals. A list of publications and presentations which made use of JGSS data sets is reported on the JGSS website and in an appendix of codebooks and monographs.

### **JGSS Paper Competition**

Getting a hint from the GSS student paper competition, the JGSS project team decided to hold the JGSS paper competition for the purpose of increasing active users of the JGSS data sets. The steering committee of the JGSS project (co-directors and co-principal investigators) acted as judges. Winners of the JGSS Paper Competition 2003 were honored with at the JGSS International Symposium held in June this year. Winning papers will be printed in the JGSS monographs published in March 2004. On the success of the first trial, the project team decided to hold the JGSS Paper Competition annually from now on.

## **6. Characteristics of the Research Designs for the JGSS**

### **1) Combination of Interview and Placement**

It is unusual to combine interview and placement for a survey in Japan. The nationwide and repeated surveys mostly adopt only one method, either interview or placement. The interview method has been adopted in the Study on the Japanese National Character (1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998) conducted by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics, the Social Stratification and Social Mobility Survey (SSM1955, SSM1965, SSM1975, SSM1985, SSM1995) conducted by a group of sociologists, and the Attitude Surveys on Japanese (1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998) conducted by the Research Institute of Broadcasting Culture, Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK). On the other hand, the placement method has been adopted in some of the governmental surveys including the Japanese National Fertility Survey (1940, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002; excluding 1952 which was conducted by interview) conducted by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and the National Family Research (NFRJ98) conducted by the National Family Research Committee of Japan Society of Family Sociology.

Taking a hint from the General Social Survey and the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), both of which incorporate the self-administered questionnaire in the interview session, we planned to combine both methods for JGSS. But in our case, the self-administered questionnaire is regarded not as a part but as the equivalent to the interview session. Considering the survey conditions in Japan, which I will discuss in the next section, we planned to set the average time for the interview session and for the self-administered questionnaire as 20 minutes respectively, so that the total time would be around 40 minutes. We allocated questions which are complicated or have many branch questions such as a respondent's work situations, household composition, or marital history, to be asked in the interview. On the other hand, questions on opinions and attitudes to which respondents tend to make socially desirable responses if they are asked in a face-to-face situation were included in the self-administered questionnaire.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> pilot survey, we examined whether a subject would agree both to be interviewed and to do a self-administered questionnaire. We also examined the order of administration of these two methods by split-balloting. In half of the sample, a subject was asked to have an interview session first and to complete a self-administered questionnaire later. The interviewer would visit the subject again on a promised date to pick it up. In the other half of the sample, a subject was asked to answer the self-administered questionnaire first and the interviewer would visit the subject on a promised date to pick it up and conduct the interview session then. We gave instructions to interviewers that they could change the order, if the subject showed a preference.

We found that people seldom stopped their cooperation in the middle of the survey, so that it is possible to combine two methods. In addition, it was found that respondents tended to prefer to be interviewed first; in 58.7% of the completed cases, respondents had the interview first.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey, we left the order of administration to interviewers. They decided the order based upon their preferences and the subject's request. In 3 out of 4 cases, the interview was conducted first.

Based on these results, we decided to combine an interview and a self-administered questionnaire and to leave the order to interviewers.

## **2) Length of Time for Interview and Self-administered Questionnaire**

Japanese people in general do not have a strong motivation to assert their opinions or attitudes in interviews, so obtaining their cooperation for a survey is relatively difficult. People are also concerned about the amount of time the survey will take. It is difficult to get cooperation from a subject if the subject is informed that the interview session would take over half an hour. In reality, some respondents, especially elderly respondents, continue to answer the interview for well over forty minutes without reluctance, once they agree to

cooperate. But it is important to incline subjects to cooperate with the survey in the first place.

Considering these situations, we planned to combine a 20 minutes interview and a self-administered questionnaire which would also take around 20 minutes. We thought it likely that subjects could be persuaded with these figures if they ask about the time the survey would take. Having a pretest with people who varied in educational background, the project team completed questionnaires for interview and for placement, both of which took about 20 minutes.

Table 4 shows the average time for the interview for each survey. You may notice that the mean time of the interview increased from 23.3 minutes to 28.6 minutes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey. Although the number of questions asked in the interview increased only slightly from the 1<sup>st</sup> pilot survey to the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey (Table 5), the construction of some questions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey was more complex and took more time. The number of questions in the interview session further increased to 108 in JGSS-2000 and to 111 in JGSS-2001. At the time of conducting JGSS-2002, we noticed that the project team crammed too many questions into the questionnaire and extended the interview time. It is no longer possible to announce that the interview will take around 20 minutes.

**Table 4 Average Time of the Interview for JGSS**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot	2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot	JGSS-2000	JGSS-2001	JGSS-2002	JGSS-2003*
Medium	20	25	27	26	29	---
Mode	20	20	30	30	30	---
Mean	23.3	28.6	28.3	28.4	29.0	17.8
Minimum	10	13	10	10	10	9
Maximum	50 (7)	99 (2)	99 (3)	120 (3)	107 (1)	30 (1)

Number in parentheses is the number of respondents.

\*Figures for JGSS-2003 are obtained from a pre-test with 15 people with various educational background and age.

**Table 5 Number of Question Items and Variables in the Interview**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot	2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot	JGSS-2000	JGSS-2001	JGSS-2002	JGSS-2003
No. of items	101	104	108	111	110	56
No. of variables	216	341	371	363	357	237

**Table 6 Number of Items and Variables in Self-administered Questionnaire**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot		2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot		JGSS-2000	JGSS-2001	JGSS-2002	JGSS-2003	
	A	B	A	B				A	B
No. of items	144	140	152	152	153	155	160	153	251*
No. of variables	165	161	180	180	186	189	260	250	505

\*For respondents whose social network includes 4 different persons for each of 3 different spheres.

Considering also the fact that the response rate has decreased from 64.9% in JGSS-2000 to 62.4% in JGSS-2001, the project team decided to decrease the number of questions asked in the interview for JGSS-2002. In conducting JGSS-2002, we wrote in a letter of requesting cooperation to subjects stating that it would take 20 to 30 minutes for the interview and about 20 minutes for the self-administered portion. The inclusion of this information might have a negative effect on cooperation.

The field operation of JGSS-2003 has just been completed. Although we used only one form of self-administered questionnaire for JGSS-2000, 2001 and 2002, we used two forms in JGSS-2003. The structure of the Form B questionnaire which focuses on the respondent's social network and political opinions is complicated. Therefore, its first part is done through an interview and the interviewer instructs the respondent which questions should be answered depending on the respondent's social network. Because of this complication and the extended time necessary for completing Form B, the project team decided to shorten the interview session substantially. In a pretest of JGSS-2003, the average time for the interview session was 18 minutes. The average time for completing Form A was 20 minutes.

In sum, the length of time for interview and placement sets a very severe limit to the number of questions included in each questionnaire.

### **3) Response Rates and Incentives**

One of the characteristics of the JGSS is that the incentive for respondents is prepaid. Two book coupons worth 1,000 yen are enclosed with a letter of request for cooperation which is sent to respondents several days before an interviewer will come. By providing incentives in advance, we attempt to activate the norms of reciprocity in a respondent.

Providing a reasonable amount of monetary incentive to a respondent in advance has been reported to be effective in Europe and U.S. studies most of which examined results for postal surveys (Iwai and Inaba, 2001). Although there are only a few studies of this kind in Japan, the director of the JGSS, Prof. TANIOKA conducted an experiment with postal surveys in 1991. His results showed that enclosing a book coupon worth 300 yen was much more effective than providing a chance for entering a lottery. KOJIMA, Hideo of Ibaraki University also showed that a response rate for a condition in which a 100 yen stamp had been enclosed was higher by 9% than the response rate for a condition with no stamp enclosed.

In order to examine whether response rates really differ according to the timing of providing incentives in Japan, we conducted an experiment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey by using a split-ballot method. At half of the survey points (40 points), we enclosed book coupons worth 1,000 yen with a letter of request for cooperation (pre-paid condition). At the rest of the survey points (41 points), we only promised in a letter of request for cooperation to provide book coupons worth 1,000 yen on completion of the interview and the self-administered questionnaire (promised condition).

**Table 7 Timing of Providing Incentives and Response Rates for the First Targets**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot		2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot		2000	2001	2002
	Tokyo	Osaka					
Book Coupon	Promised	Promised	Promised	Pre-paid	Pre-paid	Pre-paid	Pre-paid
Pen Set	---	---	---	---	---	---	Anytime
Response Rate	46.4%*	49.5%*	60.5%	73.0%	64.9%	63.1%	62.3%**

\* Procedures of sampling for the 1<sup>st</sup> pilot survey are different from those for other surveys.

\*\* A formula of calculation for JGSS-2002 is different from the one for other surveys.

**Table 8 Proportion of Refusal, Temporary Absence or Other Reasons for Non-response for the First Targets**

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot		2000	2001	2002
	Promised	Pre-paid			
Refusal	22.6	14.8	21.1	20.9	24.4
Temporary Absence	11.0	7.1	7.1	9.4	9.2
Change/Missing of Address, Decease	5.1	4.4	5.2	7.0	6.7
Other Reasons for Non-response	3.9	3.9	5.1	4.0	4.1

The response rate for the promised condition was 60.5%, while the rate for the pre-paid condition was 73.0%. The timing of providing incentives did show a substantial effect on a respondent's cooperation. The response rate of people living in 13 major cities increased from 42% in a promised condition to 61% in a pre-paid condition. Those for people living in other cities increased from 58% to 73%, and from 67% to 70% for people living in towns and villages. It should be noted that the difference in response rates between the two conditions might be amplified, since the allocation of conditions was skewed unintentionally. Pre-paid conditions happened to be allocated significantly more in survey points of other cities and significantly less in those of towns and villages. After controlling effects of such unexpected factors, we found that pre-paid incentives tend to somewhat increase response rates of certain groups of people: those who were politically conservative and those who had their spouse pass away.

In analyzing the effects of the timing of providing incentives, we also examined whether the timing had any influence on the quality of responses and their distributions. There are not many studies on these points even in Europe and the U.S. Although the results of those few studies are not always consistent, it is pointed out that the number of "no answer" tends to decrease and respondents tend to write more for open-ended questions when monetary incentives are provided (not necessarily in advance). In the above-mentioned study, KOJIMA pointed out that there was no tendency for respondents to make socially desirable responses by being provided with a 100 yen stamp.

Our analyses showed that pre-paid incentives tend to increase somewhat the proportion

of the “don’t know answer” for several questions, but with no increase in the proportion of “no answer.”

Based on the above results, we decided to provide incentives in advance to all respondents from JGSS-2000. The response rate for JGSS-2000 was 64.9% and 63.1% in JGSS-2001. Although these figures are higher than the response rate for the promised condition in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey, the effect of providing incentives in advance was not remarkable and there seems to be a decreasing trend of response rates. In conducting JGSS-2002, we decided to give respondents an additional gift to express our gratitude for his/her cooperation. A set of three pens of different colors was provided. The timing of giving the pen set was determined by the interviewer depending on the circumstances of each case. The response rate of JGSS-2002 further decreased somewhat. This down trend of the response rates of JGSS might be in accordance with a down trend of response rates of face-to-face interview surveys observed in the past twenty years in Japan (Tamano, 2003). For example, the response rates of the surveys even by the government which have been conducted annually decreased from 77.4% in 1980 to 69.3% in 2000 (“Shakai Ishiki nikansuru Yoron Chosa [Opinion Survey on Social Attitudes]”).

Table 8 shows the proportion of refusal, temporary absence, change/missing of address or decease, or other reasons for non-response among the first target group in each survey. Between JGSS-2001 and 2002, the proportion of refusal increased by 3.5%. This steep climb of refusals is suspected to correspond to the construction of the nation-wide network of the register of names and addresses by the government in summer of 2002, just before the survey of JGSS-2002 started. The introduction of this system raised a number of arguments regarding the risk of leaking one’s privacy. Although we promised to safeguard the privacy of respondents in the letter of request, people might become more concerned with protecting their privacy then.

In conducting JGSS-2003, we made a decision not to provide incentives in advance. This change was caused mainly by strong requests from interviewers of the survey company. Although interviewers were informed of the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot survey which indicated a clear effect of the pre-paid incentives on a respondent’s cooperation, they have felt that some respondents are offended by the pre-paid incentives and little room has been left for interviewers to persuade respondents to cooperate with the survey. Interviewers want to make an effort to persuade respondents in a promised condition of incentives.

In the JGSS project, interviewers are asked to record the circumstances of each of the non-response cases in detail by filling out a questionnaire themselves. By analyzing these data of JGSS-2002, 6 people got angry with the pre-paid incentive and 14 people complained about it. Although the proportion of these people among the non-respondents is less than 1%, we made a decision not to provide book coupons in advance for JGSS-2003 so as to maintain interviewers’ motivation to persuade interviewees for their cooperation. Presently we are in a process of checking the contents of the returned questionnaires of JGSS-2003.

#### 4) Replications vs. Innovation

##### Selection of Questions

At the outset of the 1<sup>st</sup> Pilot Survey, the project team selected questions for the JGSS questionnaire based on the following criteria.

- (1) Questions which have been asked frequently in GSS and in other well-known surveys in Japan.
- (2) Questions which are deemed useful for analyzing Japanese society.
- (3) Questions which are deemed necessary for time-series analyses or future sociological studies.

The 1996 GSS Cumulative Codebook was used as a base. After examining all the questions used in the GSS, we selected questions which are especially important and have appeared frequently in the five GSS surveys since 1990. Reflecting the differences between the U.S. and Japanese societies, JGSS includes far fewer questions relating to religion and race.

We also examined thoroughly questions asked in Japanese surveys which were repeatedly conducted nationwide by the government, private firms or groups of researchers. Especially, the following surveys provided us valuable information: The Study on the Japanese National Character (1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998; Hayashi, 1999) conducted by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, the Social Stratification and Social Mobility Survey (SSM;1955, 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995) conducted by a group of sociologists, the Attitude Surveys on Japanese (1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998; NHK,2000) and the ISSP(the International Social Survey Programme) International Comparative Survey (annually from 1993) conducted by the Research Institute of Broadcasting Culture, Nihon Hoso Kyokai, the World Values Survey (1981-84,1989-93,1995-98;1999) conducted by Dentsu Communication Institute and the Leisure Development Center, and the National Fertility Survey in Japan (1940, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997) and the National Survey on Family in Japan (1993,1998) conducted by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Consequently, the JGSS questionnaire involved various question fields including but not limited to: working environments, family, political opinions, social network, social stratification, religion, leisure activities, and experiences of victimization. Table 9 shows batteries of core replicating questions and topical modules which were asked in JGSS-2000 to 2002 and to be asked in JGSS-2003. In the codebook of each survey, we make a list of references for each question; we list the name of the survey which uses an identical or a similar question to the JGSS question.

Some questions are repeated every year, some several times, and some only once. This is determined according to necessity, circumstance, and the future prospects as viewed by all researchers in the JGSS project team, which is comprised of sociologists, social

psychologists, economists, demographers, and statisticians from various public and private universities and institutions.

### **Questionnaire of JGSS-2000**

In addition to the core questions, the questionnaire of JGSS-2000 included the following topical questions or modules: attitudes toward the death penalty, the revision of the Juveniles Act, adolescent prostitution, life after death, one's own grave, organ donation, and the presence and meanings of pets in a household.

### **Questionnaire of JGSS-2001**

The questions contained in JGSS-2001 were basically identical to those in JGSS-2000. There was only a minor change. The question on the revision of the Juveniles Act was omitted, since the Act had been revised before the enforcement of JGSS-2001. On the other hand, a question on Japan Sports Advancement Lottery (toto) and those on experiences caring for family members or relatives by the respondent and his/her spouse were included. Because of the identical features of JGSS-2000 and 2001, students and researchers can easily merge these two data files for their analyses.

### **Questionnaire of JGSS-2002**

Topical questions and modules included in questionnaires of JGSS-2000 and 2001 were replaced by new questions in JGSS-2002. More than a year before the enforcement of JGSS-2002, co-principal investigators called for batteries of questions and modules to members of the JGSS project. Members who wanted to include questions or modules were asked to submit questions themselves, the rationale for their inclusion, and references. The steering committee of the JGSS project (co-directors and co-principal investigators) made the final decision on the replacement of questions. New topical questions and modules are as follows: allergy disease of the respondent and family members, names of the newspapers to which the respondent subscribes, kinds of volunteer activities done by the respondent and time spent for it, habits of gambling, habits in purchasing goods in relation to ecology, past experiences of studying English and the respondent's proficiency, and attitudes toward educational qualifications and the legalization of casinos.

Some questions which had been asked in the interview session were also replaced. Questions on the respondent's detailed educational background and the household's expenses for housing and for school were included.

Interesting modules on social networks and political opinions were submitted by three members of the project team. The steering committee made a decision to include these modules not in JGSS-2002 but in JGSS-2003, since the structure of the questionnaire would



**Table 9 Core Replicating Questions and Topical Modules\***

		JGSS-2000	2001	JGSS-2002	JGSS-2003	
					Form A	Form B
I N T E R V I E W	Present job	x	x	x	x	
	Side job	x	x	x	x	
	First job	x	+channels	+channels	---	
	Last job	x	x	x	---	
	Education	x	x	x	x	
	Income	x	x	x	x	
	Marital status	x	x	x	x	
	Spouse's job/education/income	x	x	x	x	
	Father's/mother's education	x	x	x	x	
	Household composition	x	x	x	x	
	Sibling composition	x	+spouse's siblings	+spouse's siblings	---	
	Political opinions	x	x	x	---	
	Marital history	x	x	x	---	
	Year of children's birth	x	x	x	---	
	Parents' jobs at age 15	x	x	x	x	
	Place of residence at age 15	x	x	x	x	
	Housing: area, ownership	x	x	x	ownership	
	Social status	x	x	x	x	
	Labor union	x	x	x	membership	
	Job training	x	x	---	---	
Topical Modules			Major, Housing costs School expenses	Time/means for commuting Holidays, Local characteristics		
S E L F A D M I N I S T E R E D	Happiness/satisfaction	x	x	x	x	x
	Marital happiness	x	x	x	---	---
	Health condition/trauma	x	x	x	x	health only
	State of finances	x	x	x	x	x
	Social Stratification	x	x	x	x	x
	Religion	x	x	x	x	---
	Gender role attitudes	xx	xx	xx	xx	x
	Ideal no./sex of children	x	x	x	x	---
	Spouse's health/housework	x	x	x	---	---
	Last name of husband & wife	x	x	x	x	---
	Political opinions	x	x	x	x	x
	Group membership	x	x	x	x	x
	Trust in people/organizations	x	x	x	x	x
	Leisure activities	x	x	x	x	---
	Violence	x	x	x	x	---
	Drinking/smoking	x	x	x	x	---
	Reading books/newspaper	x	x	+which paper	+which paper	---
	Use of information technology	x	x	x	x	---
	Morality: sex behavior, porno	x	x	---	---	---
	Euthanasia	x	x	x	x	---
Nonnative	x	x	x	xx	---	
Ecology	x	x	xx	xx	x	
Aging/social security	x	x	x	x	---	
Topical Modules	Attitudes to grave, Pets Death penalty, Adolescent prostitution, Juveniles Act Female governor, Donator of organ, Victimization of violence, Life after death	JGSS-2000 plus Care experiences (self/spouse), Japan Sports Ad- vancement Lot- tery (toto)	Allergy disease Volunteer activity Ecology & consuming Meaning of schooling English study Gamble/casino	Allergy disease English study Consuming, Bul- lying, Community Surrogate mom Casino	Social network (talk over trou- bles, work mat- ters, politics), Political opin- ions	

\* x: related questions, xx: many questions, +: in addition to x, ---: not asked.

become more complicated by including these modules. It was also decided that a sample size of the JGSS-2003 would be increased and two different forms of questionnaires would be used for placement by split-balloting the sample of JGSS-2003. The three members who had submitted modules on social networks and political opinions were assigned to a project team which is responsible for making the questionnaire which contains social network modules and conducting a pilot survey in advance of the full-scale survey. The pilot survey was conducted October 2002.

### Questionnaire of JGSS-2003

JGSS co-principal investigators called for batteries of questions and modules again to members of the JGSS project in the summer of 2002. By this time, some members of the project team were replaced and the project team expanded to include new members whose major fields are marketing, linguistics, law, human rights, and area studies. These members submitted questions or modules with their rationale and references. The steering committee made a final decision on which questions to be included in the form A questionnaire by placement for the JGSS-2003.

On the other hand, the form B questionnaire includes the modules on social networks and political opinions. Respondents are asked about his/her social network in three different spheres of life separately; to whom he/she talks over troubles of life, matters of work, and politics. To accommodate this module, the number of not so essential core questions included in questionnaires for the JGSS-2003 was further reduced for both placement and interview.

### 5) Wording and Scales

In the first and second pilot surveys, the project team examined the effects of wording, the forms of scales, and the number of choices to be presented on responses. Even if the JGSS questionnaires models those of the GSS, we should have considered possible differences in response patterns between the U.S. and Japan. Therefore, we prepared two different forms of questionnaires to be used in the placement method. Table 10 shows the number of questions common to Form A and B, those specific to Form A and those specific to Form B in each of the two pilot surveys. The questionnaire for the interview method is

**Table 10 Number of Questions in Forms A and B of the Self-administered Questionnaire**

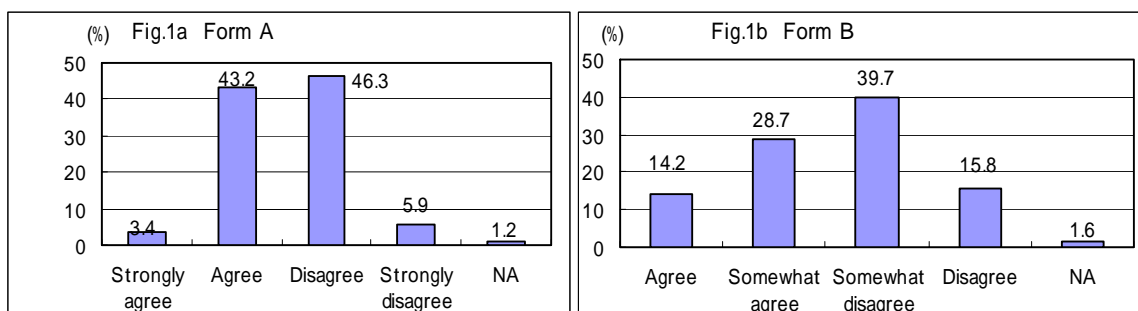
	1 <sup>st</sup> Pilot Survey		2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot Survey	
	A	B	A	B
No. of questions common to A and B	89	89	104	104
No. of questions specific to A	55	---	48	---
No. of questions specific to B	---	51	---	48
Total No. of questions	144	140	152	152
No. of valid responses	147	163	410	380

only one form. Form A contained questions whose wording or scales are observed frequently in the GSS questionnaires. On the other hand, Form B contained questions whose wording or scales are used frequently in surveys conducted in Japan. By using a split-ballot method, Form A was distributed to a half of the sample, and Form B was distributed to the rest of the sample. The survey questions for JGSS-2000, the first full-scale survey, were constructed taking into consideration the following findings (Iwai, 2000; Iwai, 2001; Sugita and Iwai, 2001).

### Wording of Categories

In the GSS questionnaires, the following scale has been often used for asking respondent's opinions; a scale whose categories are "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." However, in questionnaires used in Japanese surveys, this scale seldom appears; instead, a scale with categories are "agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree," and "disagree" is used.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of responses for Form A and Form B. While responses for Form A concentrate on the central two categories, the distribution of Form B spreads normally. The scale used in Form B seems proper for the JGSS self-administered questionnaire.

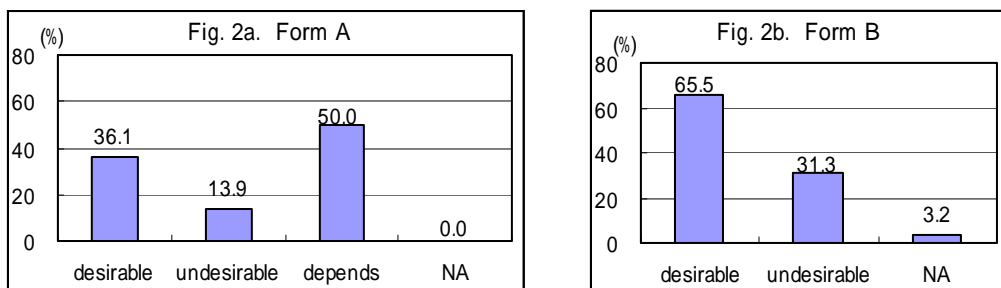


“When a marriage is troubled and unhappy, it is generally better for the children if the couple gets divorced.”

### Inclusion/Exclusion of a Choice of “Depends”

In making a questionnaire, Japanese researchers tend not to include a choice of “depends” in a list of choices, since this choice attracts a large proportion of responses. GSS avoids this problem by not showing this choice to a respondent at the interview; but if respondents say “depends” or “don’t know,” these answers are given codes afterward respectively in a coding process.

In the JGSS, most questions on opinions and attitudes are planned to be included in a self-administered questionnaire not in an interview questionnaire. In order to examine the effects of the inclusion of the choice “depends,” we included “depends” in Form A and excluded it from Form B. The question itself is “Do you think it desirable for three generations (older people, their married children, and grandchildren) to share a home?”



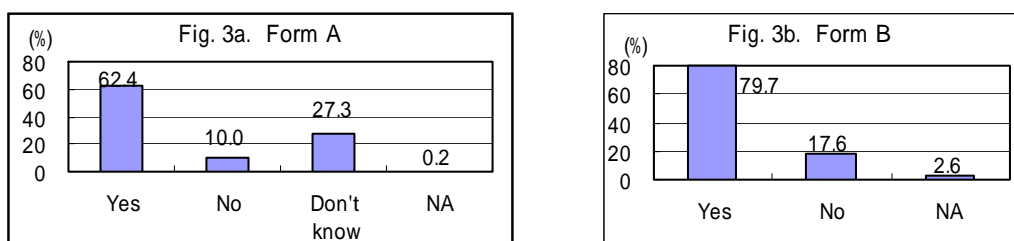
"Do you think it desirable for three generations (older people, their married children, and grandchildren) to share a home?"

Figure 2 shows the distribution of responses for Form A and for Form B. While a ratio of "desirable" responses to "undesirable" ones does not significantly differ between Form A and B, half of the responses concentrate on a category of "depends" in Form A.

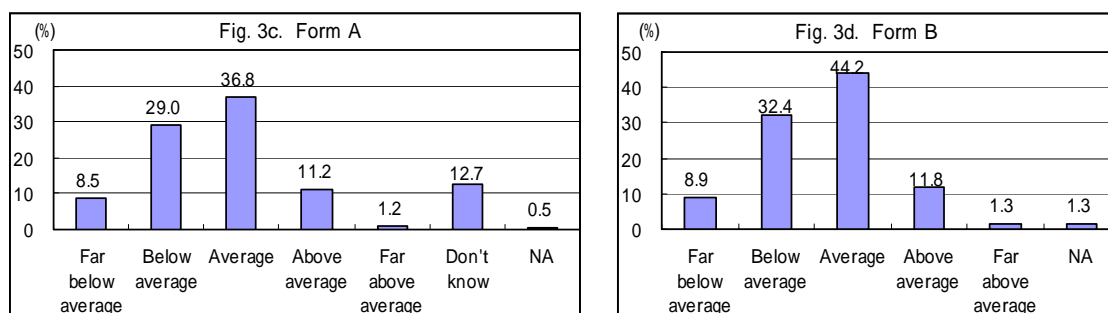
A similar question has been asked in GSS: "As you know, many older people share a home with their grown children. Do you think this is generally a good idea or a bad idea?" The proportion of "depends" is 19.4% and that of "don't know" is 1.2% in the 1998 GSS. The scale used in Form B seems proper for the JGSS self-administered questionnaire.

### Inclusion/Exclusion of a Choice of "Don't Know"

A choice of "don't know" also attracts a large proportion of responses. For examining this point, we included "don't know" in Form A and excluded it from Form B. The effect of this inclusion differs depending of the topic of questions.



"When a person has a fatal disease (that cannot be cured), do you think doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient's life by some painless means if the patient and his/her family request it?"



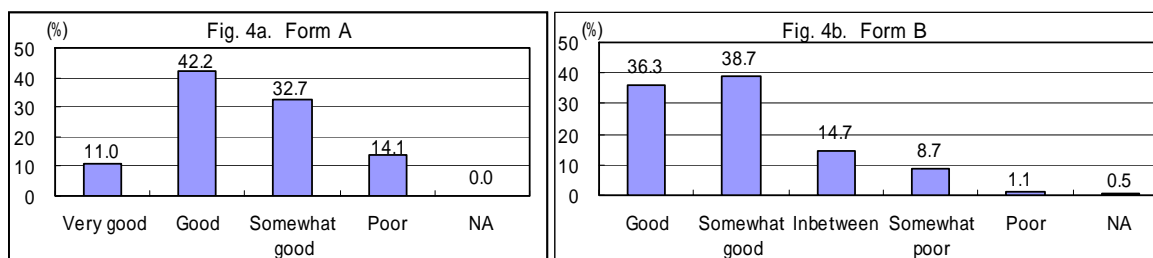
"Compared with Japanese families in general, what would you say about your family income?"

The proportion of “don’t know” accounts for about 30% for questions which calls for some knowledge on the law: the revision of Juveniles Act, the death penalty, euthanasia, and pornography (Figure 3a). On the other hand, the proportion of “don’t know” decreases for questions on respondent’s subjective evaluations of the household’s income and household’s income when the respondent was 15 years old (15%; Figure 3c). However, in both cases, the shape of the distribution of responses for other categories does not differ regardless of inclusion/exclusion of “don’t know.” As a result, we decided to include a choice of “don’t know” for questions relating to the law and exclude it for other questions in the questionnaire of JGSS-2000.

### Use of Symmetrical or Unsymmetrical scales

In the GSS questionnaires, unsymmetrical scales have been used for questions on the respondent’s health condition or degree of happiness or satisfaction. Those scales are contrived to have more categories on the positive side. On the other hand, most Japanese studies use symmetrical scales for these questions with equal number of categories on the positive and on the negative sides.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of responses for Form A (unsymmetrical) and for Form B (symmetrical). The distribution for an unsymmetrical scale tends to be better balanced than the distribution for a symmetrical scale. The conclusion to use this scale will be discussed in the following section.



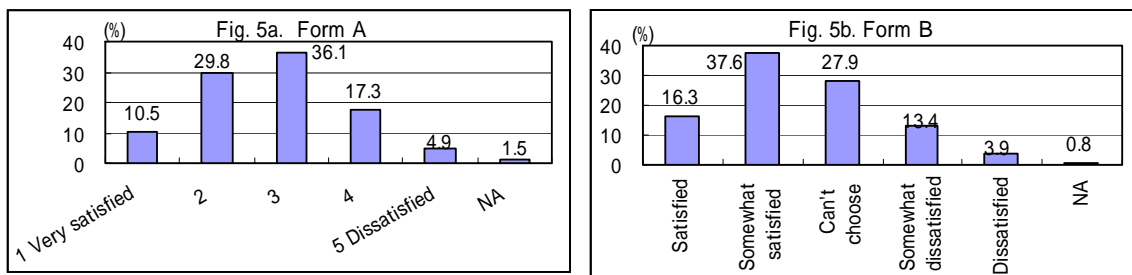
“How would you rate your health condition?”

### Spelling out Categories: every category or only both ends

In the GSS questionnaires, choices for questions are not always spelled out. There are some questions for which respondents are asked to choose one point from a scale whose categories are spelled-out only on both ends.

Figure 5 shows the distribution of responses for Form A (scale) and for Form B (spelled-out). The distribution for a question with a scale tends to be better balanced than the distribution for a question with spelled-out choices.

Considering the results of comparisons between symmetrical and unsymmetrical scales and between a scale and spelled-out choices, the JGSS project team decided to use a symmetrical scale whose categories are spelled-out only on both ends for JGSS-2000.

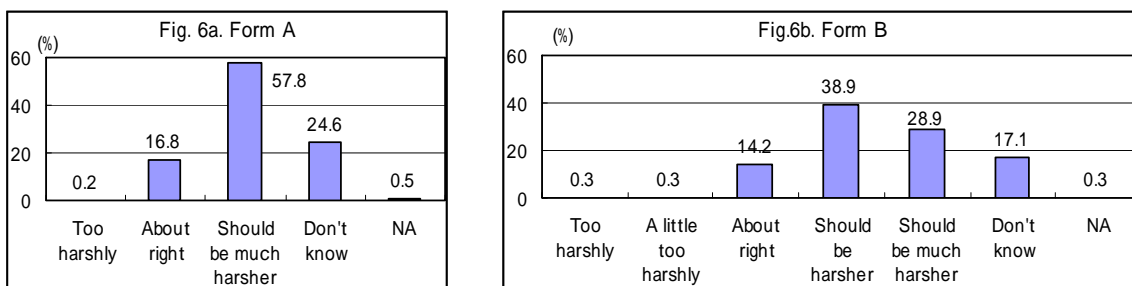


“How much satisfaction do you get from the following areas of life? Your non-work activities.”

Although unsymmetrical scales tended to show a better-balanced distribution, the distribution for symmetrical scales was not especially skewed. In addition, symmetrical scales are easier to handle for statistical analyses than unsymmetrical scales.

### Number of Choices: 3 choices or 5 choices

Figure 6 shows the distribution of responses for a question with three choices and for a question with five choices. The shapes of these two distributions are similar to each other. However, the proportion of “don’t know” is smaller for a question with five choices than for one with three choices (17.1% < 24.6%). Questions with five choices seem proper for the JGSS self-administered questionnaire.

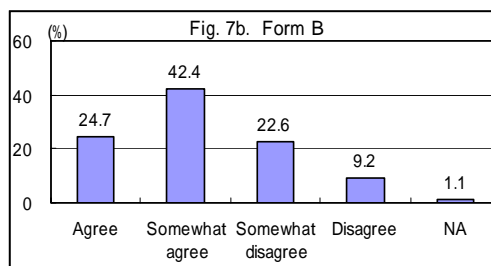
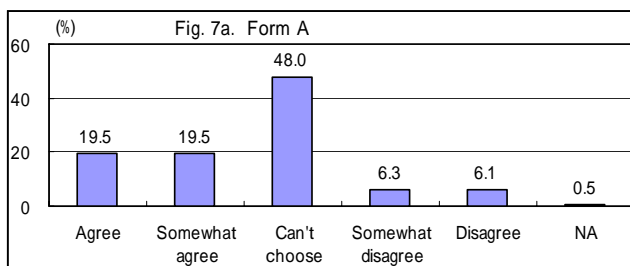


“Do you think the courts have dealt too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals in the past few years?”

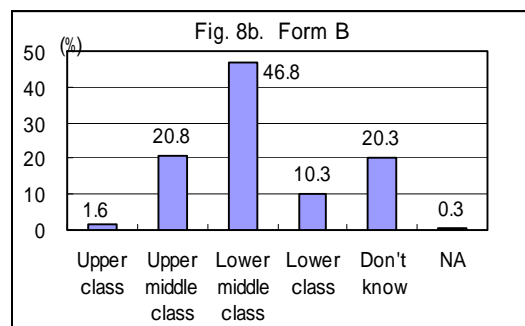
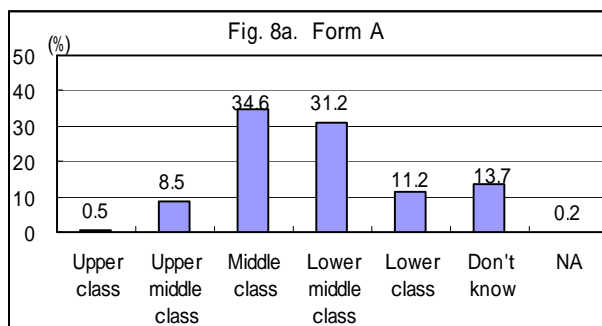
### Inclusion of a Middle-choice: 4 choices or 5 choices

In the GSS questionnaire, questions on opinions or attitudes are sometimes asked with four choices and sometimes asked with five choices including a middle choice (“cannot choose” or “undecided”). Figure 7 shows the distribution of responses for a question with five choices and for a question with four choices.

Being presented with five choices, a large proportion of respondents has chosen the middle choice. While the proportion of non-responses does not differ by the inclusion of the middle choice, the proportion of the pros and cons differ substantially in some questions. Examining responses to questions regarding division of gender roles, the proportion of the approval to the disapproval tends to be larger for a question with five choices than one with



“Without a doubt, a woman’s happiness lies in a marriage.”



“If the following five categories are used to describe the Japanese society of today, which would you say you belong to?”

four choices. Being presented with five choices, the proportion of the disapproval tends to be very small. Concerning questions on opinions or attitudes, presenting four choices without a middle choice seems proper for the JGSS self-administered questionnaire.

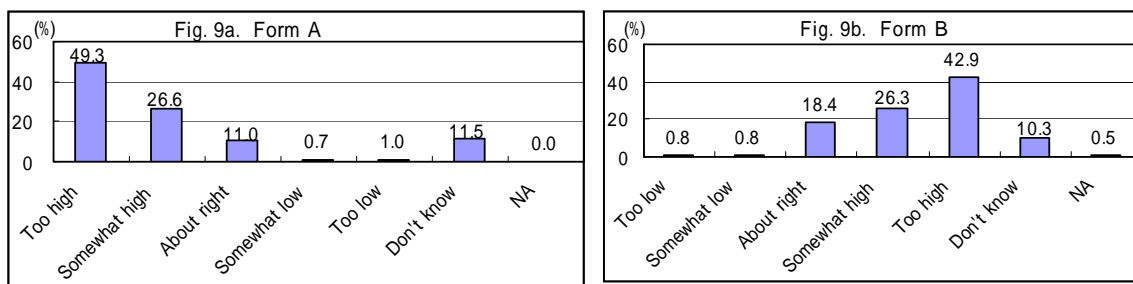
Figure 8 shows the distribution of responses for a question on a respondent’s identification with a certain social stratum. Without a middle choice (“middle of the middle”), the proportion of “don’t know” increases (20.3% > 13.7%). With the question of social stratum identification, five choices including “middle of the middle” seems proper for the JGSS self-administered questionnaire.

### Order of Presenting Choices

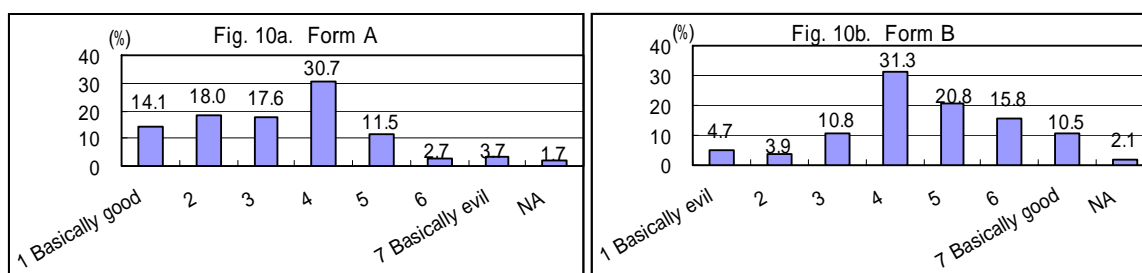
In the GSS questionnaires, choices are presented in decreasing order, such as from “heavy” to “light” or from “good” to “evil.” In order to examine the effect of ordering choices, we presented choices in decreasing order for Form A and in increasing order for Form B.

Figure 9 shows the distribution of responses for a question on the respondent’s subjective feeling of the tax burden. The proportion of the dominant response is further expanded when the dominant category comes first.

Figure 10 shows the distribution of responses for a question on the true character of the human being. The distribution of responses for a scale with decreasing order is skewed to the “good” side to a greater extent than the distribution for a scale with increasing order. It seems proper to present choices in increasing order (a dominant category comes last or in the



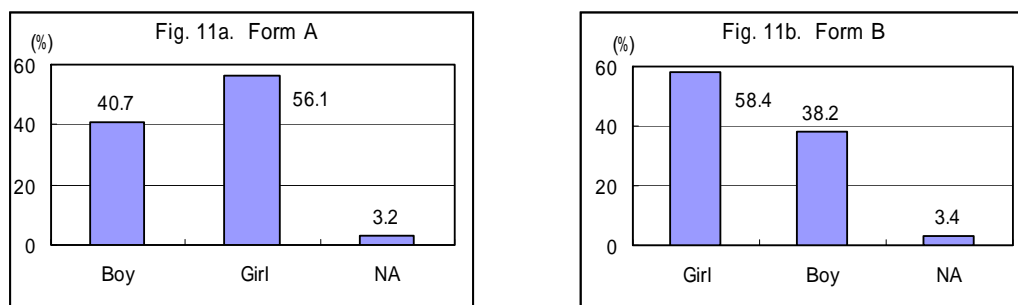
“Do you think the amount of income tax you have to pay is high?”



“What do you think of human nature?”

rear) for the JGSS questionnaire.

Figure 11 shows the distribution of responses for a question on the ideal sex of a child, provided that one has only one child. The proportion of preferring a girl does not differ significantly by the order of presenting choices. In this case, considering the naturalness of the order, we decided to present “boy” first for JGSS-2000.



“If you were to have only one child, would you prefer a boy or a girl (a girl or a boy)?”

### Multiple-choice or Open-ended

Religion is one of the central topics asked in the GSS questionnaires. Considering the much smaller impact of religion on society and everyday life of the Japanese, we planned to include only a few questions regarding religion in the JGSS questionnaire. Previous studies show that a considerable number of Japanese people have a religion of the family even though they do not practice it at all. Therefore, it is necessary to ask respondents not only whether they have a religion or not, but also whether they have a religion of the family or not even if



they do not practice it.

In the first and second pilot surveys, we examined the effect of the form of the question on responses. Both in Form A and Form B, we first asked the following question: “Do you follow a religion?” with choices of “Yes,” “Although not practiced, I have a family religion,” or “No.” For those people who follow a religion or have a family religion, we asked respondents to circle the religion in a list in Form A. In Form B we asked respondents to name the religion. Whether the second question is a multiple-choice or an open-ended question did show a significant effect on the responses for the first question. While the proportion of “having a family religion” is smaller in Form B (open-ended) than in Form A (multiple-choice), that of “no” is larger in Form B than in Form A. This kind of effect might not appear if we ask this question in interview. However, asking one’s religion is a delicate question, so that it should be included in the self-administered questionnaire.

We decided to use an open-ended question for one’s religion. It is because the proportion of “no” in the JGSS pilot surveys was not necessarily smaller compared with results of other surveys and we can obtain more information with an open-ended question.

### **Use of a Frequency or a Relative Scale**

The division of housework between spouses has been measured in many different ways, such as asking the amount time spent doing housework by each spouse, asking the frequency of housework done by each spouse, or asking the proportion of sharing between spouses directly. The last scale was used in the GSS questionnaire.

In the two pilot surveys, we examined the difference in results between measuring with a frequency scale and measuring with a relative scale. In both Form A and B, we asked respondents about their frequency of doing housework (cooking evening meals, doing laundry, shopping for groceries and cleaning the house respectively). Then in Form A, we asked the respondent about the frequency of housework done by the respondent’s spouse. In Form B, we asked the respondent about the proportion of sharing with six categories (exclusively by wife, mostly by wife but sometimes by husband, sharing equally, mostly by husband but sometimes by wife, exclusively by husband, by others).

There was no difference in a respondent’s frequency of doing housework between two forms. Results from frequency scales and from a relative scale are roughly equivalent to each other. For the JGSS-2000, we decided to use a frequency scale for the respondent and for the respondent’s spouse, since this scale is more informative than a relative scale.

In conclusion, we made the following decisions for the JGSS-2000.

- a) Not to use the word “strongly,” but use the word “somewhat” if necessary.
- b) Not to include “depends” in a list of choices.
- c) For questions regarding the laws, the choice of “don’t know” is included in a list of choices; for other questions, “don’t know” is excluded.

- d) Use a symmetrical scale whose ends categories are spelled-out.
- e) Use a five-point scale rather than a three-point scale.
- f) For questions on opinions and attitudes, use a four-point scale without a middle choice; for a question on social stratum identification, include a middle choice (“middle of the middle.”)
- g) Present a dominant category last or in the rear.
- h) Use an open-ended question (not a multiple-choice question) for asking religion.
- i) Use a frequency scale for asking about the respondent’s and spouse’s performance of housework, rather than a relative scale.

Therefore, the scales we use in the JGSS are not always comparable with those used in the GSS.

## **7. Conclusion and Coming Development**

Thus far, the JGSS project team has conducted two pilot surveys and four full-scale national surveys during the last five years. The team has been cleaning the data from these surveys and has already released four data sets to academic circles for the purpose of education and research. The team has edited and published four volumes of codebooks, two monographs, and one book. The total number of data sets used amounts to more than eleven hundreds. Users have written course papers, master’s or doctor’s theses and papers for professional journals by analyzing the data sets both in Japan and overseas. Members of the project team feel that we have produced a certain effect on education and research in the field of social sciences in Japan. Now there is an atmosphere among social scientists that survey data should be scheduled to be released to academic circles for the use of secondary analyses. Japan has become a nation which not only uses data sets collected by social scientists in other countries, but also provides Japanese data sets for users in other countries. The JGSS project undoubtedly contributes to the advancement of this process.

As mentioned earlier, from the JGSS International Symposium held in June 2003, a new challenge for JGSS has arisen. In November 2003, principal investigators of East Asian social surveys from China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea gathered at Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul for the Thematic Lecture Series, “Survey Researches in East Asia,” and the Workshop on East Asian Studies organized by Sociology Department and Survey Research Center of the university. At the workshop all parties expressed mutual interest in carrying out a comparative study in East Asia by incorporating a set of common modules of questions into the regular surveys of each existing survey. The specifically Asian effort was felt necessary as similar attempts of international comparisons have often been dominated by the western countries in respect with the choice of topics, administration techniques and so on. Out of the workshop a steering committee of East Asian Social Surveys was formed.

In December 2003, principal investigators of KGSS, JGSS and Taiwan Social Change

Survey (TSCS) again met in Taipei for the Thematic Lecture on Japanese and Korean Social Surveys organized by Institute of Sociology and Center for Survey Research, Academia Sinica. The committee agreed upon the summary of schedules for the collaborative study, and the survey year was set to be 2006.

Thus, a new perspective has developed for the JGSS Project during the final year of the first 5-year period of the project. The project team will continue to devote themselves to the survey data collection and analyses, while actively participating in the comparative studies with our East Asian counterparts.

## [Appendix]

### Sampling Design of JGSS-2000

**Survey Area:** Nationwide

**Population:** Males and Females 20-89 years of age

**Sample Size:** 4,500

**Number of Sampling Spots:** 300 points

**Sampling Method:** Two-stage stratified random sampling

**Form of Register:** Register of electors

1. Stratify the population

By Region (6) and

By Population size of cities/districts (3)

1 ) 13 Big Cities : Sapporo, Sendai, Chiba, Tokyo Metropolitan Area, Yokohama, Kawasaki, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima, Kitakyushu, Fukuoka

2 ) Other Cities

3 ) Suburban Districts

2. Allocate 4,500 samples to each stratum according to the size of the population aged 20-89.

3. Sampling of Spots

Primary Sampling Unit: Primary Unit (about 50 households) used for the 1995 Census

The number of sampling spots for each stratum is adjusted so that the number of the sampling individuals in each spot would be around 15.

The interval of sampling the spot is computed for each stratum based on the following formula:

$(\text{No. of primary units}) / (\text{No. of sampling spots})$

From a list of primary units for each stratum (units are ordered according to the code of cities/wards/towns and villages made by the Ministry of Home Affairs), sample the necessary number of spots starting from a random starting point.

#### 4. Sampling of Individuals

Using a register of electors, sample 15 individuals as the first targets and sample another 5 individuals as supplementary targets for each spot starting from a random starting point.

Sampling Interval: 21 for a city whose population is over 40,000

11 for a city/suburban district whose population is less than 40,000

#### 5. Use of the Supplementary Targets

When the first targeted individual has passed away, changed address or whose address is unidentifiable, use a supplementary target starting from the top of the list of supplements.

6. Interviewers fill out a question sheet for every non-response case.

### The Number of Population, Target Sample Size and the Number Sampling Spots for Each Stratum

By population size By Region	13 big cities	Other cities	Suburban districts	Total
Hokkaido/Tohoku	2,102,960 90 ( 6 )	6,020,350 285 ( 19 )	3,739,209 180 ( 12 )	11,862,519 555 ( 37 )
Kanto	10,700,400 495 ( 33 )	16,508,164 765 ( 51 )	3,740,719 180 ( 12 )	30,949,283 1,440 ( 96 )
Chubu	1,634,257 75 ( 5 )	11,290,158 525 ( 35 )	4,906,146 225 ( 15 )	17,830,561 825 ( 55 )
Kinki	4,195,429 195 ( 13 )	9,523,335 450 ( 30 )	2,110,274 105 ( 7 )	15,829,038 750 ( 50 )
Chugoku/Shikoku	834,684 45 ( 3 )	5,528,151 255 ( 17 )	2,824,111 135 ( 9 )	9,186,946 435 ( 29 )
Kyushu	1,742,678 75 ( 5 )	5,407,678 255 ( 17 )	3,611,327 165 ( 11 )	10,761,683 495 ( 33 )
Total Population No.of samples (spots)	21,210,408 975 ( 65 )	54,277,836 2,535 ( 169 )	20,931,786 990 ( 66 )	96,420,030 4,500 ( 300 )

**Number of Valid Responses:** 2,893

**Response Rate:** 64.9%

### [References]

Barnes, Bob, 1992, "Studies of Non-respondents in OPCS Household Surveys, Using Census Data: Past Studies and Future Plans," *Survey Methodology Bulletin*, 30, pp.21-25.

Brennan, Mike, Janet Hoek, and Craig Astridge, 1991, "The Effect of Monetary Incentives on the Response Rate and Cost-effectiveness of a Mail Survey," *Journal of Market Research Society*, Vol. 33, No.3, pp.229-241.

Brennan, Mike, 1992, "The Effect of a Monetary Incentive on Mail Survey Response Rates: New Data," *Journal of Market Research Society*, Vol. 34, No.2, pp.173-177.

Brennan, Mike, and Janet Hoek, 1992, "The Behavior of Respondents, Nonrespondents, and Refusers across Mail

- Surveys," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 56, pp.530-535.
- Church, Allan H., 1993, "Estimating the Effect of Incentives on Mail Survey Response Rates: a Meta-analysis," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 57, pp.62-79.
- Davis, James A. and Smith, Tom W., and Marsden, Peter V., 2001, *General Social Surveys, 1972-2000: Cumulative Codebook*, Chicago: NORC.
- Dentsu Communication Institute and the Leisure Development Center (eds.), 1999, *Sekai 23 kakoku Kachikan Databook* (Databook of Values in 23 Countries), Doyukan.
- Goyder, John, 1994, "An Experiment with Cash Incentives on a Personal Interview Survey," *Journal of Market Research Society*, Vol. 36, No.4, pp.360-366.
- Harkness, Janet and Peter Mohler, 1998, "Two Experiments with Incentives on Mail Surveys in Germany," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* (Social & Community Planning Research), Vol.18, No.2, pp.15-20.
- Hayashi, Chikio, 2001, *Nihonjin no Kokuminsei Kenkyu* (Studies on Japanese National Character), Nansosya.
- Hayashi, Hideo, 1980, "A Review of Mail Surveys conducted in Japan and the U.S.," *Marketing Researcher*, No.17, pp.16-34.
- Hopkins, Kenneth D., and Arlen R. Gullickson, 1992, "Response Rates in Survey Research: a Meta-analysis of the Effects of Monetary Gratuities," *Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol.61, No.1, pp.52-62.
- Inaba, Akihide, 2000, "Sampling and Characteristics of Data", *National Family Research (NFR98)*, No.1, pp.10-17.
- Iwai, Noriko, 2000, "Examining Forms of Question by a Split-ballot Method," in the Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo (eds.), *JGSS 1<sup>st</sup> Pilot Survey Codebook*, pp.15-36.
- Iwai, Noriko, 2001, "Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) and Measurements of Family and Gender Attitudes: Results of the 1<sup>st</sup> Preliminary Survey," *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology*, 12(2) pp.261-270.
- Iwai, Noriko and Inaba, Taichi, 2001, "Response Rate of the JGSS 2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Survey and Analyses of Non-respondents," in the Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo (eds.), *JGSS 2nd Pilot Survey Codebook*, pp.13-22.
- Kojima, Hideo, 1992, "On a Mail Survey in Educational Research," *Studies in Teaching Strategies, Ibaraki University*, 11, pp.29-38.
- Kojima, Hideo, 1993, "A Practice of a Mail Survey Based on TDM," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education: Humanities and Social Sciences Edition, Ibaraki University*, 42, pp.185-194.
- Kojima, Hideo and Shinohara, Sugao, 1998, "Characteristics and Response Bias of Early, Middle, and Late Respondents in a Mail Survey," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education: Humanities and Social Sciences Edition, Ibaraki University*, 47, pp.195-205.
- Kojima, Hideo and Shinohara, Sugao, 2000, "A Study on Mail Survey Methodology," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education: Humanities and Social Sciences Edition, Ibaraki University*, 49, pp.171-184.
- Kojima, Hideo, Nakamura, Tomoko and Shinohara, Sugao, 2000, "A Study on Factors Affecting Response Rates in Mail Surveys," *Studies in Teaching Strategies, Ibaraki University*, 19.
- Lincoln, J. and Kalleberg, A., "Work Organization and Workforce Commitment: A Study of Plants and

- Employees in the U.S. and Japan," *American Sociological Review*, vol.50, pp. 738-760.
- Lynn, Peter, Bridget Taylor and Lindsay Brook, 1997, "Incentives, Information and Number of Contacts: Testing the Effects of These Factors on Response to a Panel Survey," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* ( Social & Community Planning Research ) , Vol.17, No.3, pp.7-12.
- Lynn, Peter, and Patrick Sturgis, 1997, "Boosting Survey Response through a Monetary Incentive and Fieldwork Procedures: an Experiment," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* ( Social & Community Planning Research ) , Vol.17, No.3, pp.18-22.
- Lynn, Peter, Katarina Thomson and Lindsay Brook, 1998, "An Experiment with Incentives on the British Social Attitudes Surveys," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* ( Social & Community Planning Research ) , Vol.18, No.2, pp.12-14.
- Mangione, Thomas W., 1995, *Mail Surveys: Improving the Quality*, Sage Publications, Inc. (Translated into Japanese by Hayashi, Hideo and Murata Harumichi, *Yuso Chosaho no Jissai: Chosa niokeru Hinshitsukanri no Know-how*, 1999, Doyukan).
- Nakao, Keiko, 1999, "Methodological Issues on Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) ( 4 ) Issues in comparative studies in comparison with GSS," Proceedings of the 72th Annual Meeting of the Japan Sociological Society, p.22.
- Nomura Research Institute, 1998, *Kawariyuku Nihonjin: Seikatsusha Imannin nimiru Nihonjin no Ishiki to Kodo* (Changing Japanese: Values and Behavioral Patterns Seen in 10,000 People), Nomura Research Institute.
- Nomura Research Institute, 2001, *Zoku: Kawariyuku Nihonjin : Seikatsusha Imannin nimiru Nihonjin no Kachikan/Shohikodo* (Changing Japanese: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Values and Behavioral Patterns of Consumers Seen in 10,000 People), Nomura Research Institute.
- Nicolaas, Gerry and Peter Lynn, 1998, "The Use of Respondent Incentives in Surveys," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* ( Social & Community Planning Research ) , Vol.18, No.2, pp.3-8.
- Rasinski, K. A., 1989, "The Effort of Question Wording on Public Support for Government Spending," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol.53, pp.388-394.
- Research Institute of Broadcasting Culture, Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK), 2000, *Gendai Nihonjin no Ishiki Kozo: dai 5 han* (Structures of Attitudes of Contemporary Japanese: the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition), Nihon Hoso Syuppan Kyokai.
- Schuman, H. and Scott, J., 1989, "Response Effect Over Time : Two Experiments," *Sociological Method & Research*, vol.17, No.4, pp.398-408.
- Singer, Eleanor, John Van Hoewyk, Nancy Gebler, Trivellore Raghunathan and Katherine McGonagle, 1999, "The Effect of Incentives on Response Rates in Interviewer-Mediated Surveys," *Journal of Official Statistics*, Vol.15, No.2, pp.217-230.
- Singer, Eleanor, 1998, "The Effect of Incentives on Response Rates in Interviewer-Mediated Surveys," *Survey Methods Centre Newsletter* ( Social & Community Planning Research ) , Vol.18, No.2, pp.9-11.
- Smith, Tom W., 1983, "The Hidden 25 Percent: An Analysis of Nonresponse on the 1980 General Social Survey," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 47, pp.386-404.
- Smith, Tom W., 1984, "Recalling Attitudes : An Analysis of Retrospective Questions on the 1982 GSS," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol.48, pp.639-649.

- Smith, Tom W., 1987, "That Which We Call Welfare by Any Other Name Would Smell Sweeter : An Analysis of the Impact of Question Wording on Response Patterns," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol.51, pp.75-83.
- Smith, Tom W., 1990, "Timely Artifacts: A Review of Measurement Variation in the 1972-1989 GSS," *GSS Methodological Report*, No.56, National Opinion Research Center.
- Smith, Tom W., 1993, "Little Things Matter: A Sampler of How Differences in Questionnaire Format Can Affect Survey Responses," *GSS Methodological Report*, No.78, National Opinion Research Center.
- Sugita, Hizuru and Iwai, Noriko, 2001, "Examining Forms of Questions by a Split-ballot Method," in the Institute of Regional Studies, Osaka University of Commerce, and the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo (eds.), *JGSS 2nd Pilot Survey Codebook*, pp.23-43.
- Sweet, James, Bumpass, Larry, and Call, Vaughn, 1988, "The Design and Content of the National Survey of Families and Households," *NSFH Working Paper 1*, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Sweet, James and Bumpass, Larry, 1989, "Conducting a Comprehensive Survey of American Family Life: The Experience of the National Survey of Families and Households," *NSFH Working Paper 12*, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Sweet, James, 1990, "Differentials in the Length of the NSFH Interview," *NSFH Working Paper 21*, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Sweet, James, 1990, "NSFH Experience with the Use of Self-Administered Questionnaires," *NSFH Working Paper 22*, Center for Demography and Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Tamano, Kazushi, 2003, "Difficulties in Social Survey and the Task for Sociologists," *Japanese Sociological Review*, 53 (4) pp.537-551.
- Tanioka, Ichiro, 1993, "Study of New Technique to Raise the Responding Rate of Social Research by Mail" *The Review of Osaka University of Commerce*, 95, pp.99-118.
- Yamaguchi, Kazuo, 2002, "The Difficulty of Social Research from an American Research Perspective," *Japanese Sociological Review*, 53 (4) pp.552-565.
- Yu, Julie and Harris Cooper, 1983, "A Quantitative Review of Research Design Effects on Response Rates to Questionnaires," *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol.20, pp.36-44.