

Bulletin

International Survey Research on Home Education in Early Childhood

Parents in Four Countries:

Japan, China, Indonesia, and Finland



In 2017, the Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute (BERD) conducted a survey of parents with young children in the metropolitan areas of four countries, each with a different sociocultural background, which elicited responses from a total of 4,900 subjects. The aim of the survey was to shed light on the state of “attitudes of learning to learn (social and emotional skills)” and parents’ awareness of and involvement in home education and parenting. Data from the survey worthy of note are introduced on the following pages.

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

About the Survey

Background and Objectives

Amid accelerating globalization, the spread of IT and other changes in social environments, it is no longer considered sufficient to simply master conventional knowledge, but is considered necessary to acquire attitudes and skills that will enable us to respond to our environment flexibly and to continue to learn and solve problems. Worldwide focus is now turning to the importance of cultivating such attitudes and capabilities from early childhood. BERD identified these attitudes and skills as “attitudes of learning to learn (social and emotional skills)” and has been conducting longitudinal annual surveys targeting children in their early childhood. In these surveys, we have elucidated the reciprocal effects of the “attitudes of learning to learn (social and emotional skills)” formation process and elements such as “daily habits” and “letters, numeracy and logical thinking (cognitive skills)” and the effects of parental involvement. (“Research on Home Education from Early Childhood to First Grade of Elementary School” has been conducted since 2012.)

For the research described here, the scope of the survey was extended to include countries other than Japan, targeting metropolitan areas in Japan, China, Indonesia and Finland to gain an understanding of the state of development and parental involvement in “attitudes of learning to learn,” “daily habits” and “letters, numeracy and logical thinking” of young children living in different sociocultural environments. Research was conducted on such factors as the degree of home education during early childhood and the awareness of parents to shed light on the significance of background environment, differences and similarities in awareness, etc.

Overview of Survey

Subjects	Mothers with preschool children between the ages of four and six			
Survey items	Basic daily life schedule of children/involvement with media/learning activities/views of the mother on education and parenting/expectations of the child’s future/daily habits, attitudes of learning to learn (social and emotional skills), letters, numeracy, logical thinking (cognitive skills)/maternal parenting attitude and activities/sources of information on education and discipline/persons responsible for parenting/involvement of the father and grandparents in housework and parenting/time spent with the child, etc.			
Survey-target countries	Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland
Survey-target areas	Tokyo metropolitan area (within 40 kilometers of Tokyo station)	Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu	Jakarta and four other nearby cities	Espoo and three other cities
Period	March 2017	June 2017	May–July 2017	June–July 2017
Method	Internet survey	Self-administered questionnaire distributed through kindergartens	Door-to-door interviews by surveyors	Internet survey distributed through daycare centers and preschools
Number of valid responses	1,086	2,778	900	180

*Because the judgment sampling method was adopted, it should be considered that the data are not a strict representation of specific areas.

*In China, targeted facilities were selected from class-2 to exemplary kindergartens.

*In Indonesia, surveyors made door-to-door visits and asked questions to ascertain the economic class of each household, after which households in the middle class or higher were targeted for the survey.

*In Finland, requests for cooperation with the survey were mailed to households with children in municipal daycare centers and preschools that agreed to cooperate with the survey and subjects responded from a URL set up for responses.

*In all countries, the survey was conducted one to three months before the children entered elementary school.

Points to consider regarding the data

- Although country names are shown in figures and tables, since the survey was implemented in metropolitan areas of each country, the data do not show average nationwide values for the countries surveyed.
- Due to the factors such as regional characteristics and sampling, household income and the academic background of the mothers tend to be above average in China, Indonesia and Finland.
- The survey in China took the form of a self-administered questionnaire, causing “missing responses.” Upon analysis, to ensure comparison under the same conditions as those of the other countries, “missing responses” were excluded for each question as missing values when calculated.
- Percentages used in this report are values that have been calculated in accordance with the method of calculation for each item, rounded up or down to two decimal places. As a result, the sum of values in some cases may not add up to 100.
- Figures in parentheses show the number of samples.

Japan

Preschool institutions in Japan include kindergartens, nurseries and certified children's centers. Kindergartens accept children from the age of three and nurseries and children's centers accept infants from before the age of one. (However, this differs from institution to institution.) Guidelines set by the government for early childhood education and care were revised in 2017, including the Course of Study for Kindergarten, National Guidelines for Care and Education at Day Nursery, and Course of Study and Guideline for Childcare for ECEC Center. This revision sets out "foundations for knowledge and skills," "foundations for skills in intellection, decision-making self-expression" and "attitudes of learning to learn, humanity, etc." as attributes and skills that should be nurtured during early childhood. "Attitudes of learning to learn, humanity, etc." include social and emotional skills. The percentage of enrollment in childcare and educational institutions as of 2017 is as follows: kindergartens (3–5 years of age) 41.4% and nurseries (3–5 years of age) 49.3%.¹ Children reaching the age of six by April 1 are enrolled in elementary school from April 1 of the same year.

China

Preschool institutions in China mainly consist of daycare centers and kindergartens. Daycare centers are childcare facilities that accept infants from zero to three years old and kindergartens are educational facilities that accept children from the age of three up to under six years old. Kindergartens fall into two categories; public and private. Annual audits on management and education are conducted to classify the kindergartens into one of four categories ranging from role-model grade to third-class. In recent years, preschool education has also focused on the cultivation of social and emotional skills, and the Ministry of Education published "Guidelines for Learning and Development for Children Aged 3-6" in September 2012. According to the "2016 Statistical Bulletin of China's National Educational Development" (mainland China), the approximate percentage² of enrollment in preschool institutions nationwide was 77.4% (2016)³. Children who have reached the age of six by August 31 enter elementary school from September 1 the same year.



Indonesia

Preschool education in Indonesia consists of formal education at kindergartens (general kindergartens and Islamic kindergartens) or at various other equivalent institutions, and informal education in "play groups" and at "childcare centers" and other equivalent institutions⁴. Kindergartens have two academic years. Based on levels of development, the objective of the kindergarten curriculum is to cultivate (1) ethics and religious values, (2) sociality, sensitivity and autonomy, (3) language skills, (4) cognitive skills, (5) physical capabilities, and (6) artistic qualities. Social and emotional skills are implemented in educational planning and assessment standards in an integrated way. The percentage of preschool enrollment (between the ages of three and six) is 68% (2014).⁵ Children who have reached the age of six by July 1 enter elementary school from the third week of July the same year.



Finland

In Finland, no distinctions exist such as that between kindergartens and daycare centers, and daycare centers are the main preschool institution. Daycare centers accept children between the ages of ten months and six years, while children reaching the age of six between January and December the year before entering elementary school must attend "preschool (*esikoulu*)." (Attendance of 20 hours a week became compulsory in August 2015, free of charge.) In 2013, the administration of daycare centers as institutions for preschool education was transferred from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to the Ministry of Education and Culture and a national curriculum was introduced for the first time in autumn 2017 with the aim of enriching and standardizing the content of preschool education. According to statistics for 2016, 68% of children between the ages of one and six were receiving preschool education⁶. Children reaching the age of seven between January 1 and December 31 enter elementary school. Since the first semester begins in August, children who are still six years old start school together with those who have reached the age of seven.



Notes and References

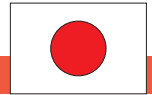
- 1 "School Basic Survey," Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology-Japan. "Summary of Information related to Childcare Facilities" Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
- 2 The approximate percentage of enrollment in preschool education is the percentage of all children in preschool education (including children with a year-delayed enrollment under the parents' decision, and those younger than 3 years old) out of the total number of children in the age group eligible under the system to enter such institutions (3 to 5 years old).
- 3 Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China "2016 Statistical Bulletin of China's National Educational Development" http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_sjzl/sjzl_fztjgb/201707/t20170710_309042.html

- 4 Mina Hattori (2006) "Chapter 8: Indonesia - Balance of Moral Values and Learning." In "Early Childhood Education in Asia (Systems, Curricula and Practices)," authored and edited by Mitsuhiro Ikeda and Chiaki Yamada. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten Ltd. Co.
- 5 Kemendikbud (2015) "Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2015-2019" (<https://luk.staff.ugm.ac.id/atur/RenstraKemdikbud2015-2019.pdf>)
- 6 National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland (THL) Statistical Report 29/2017 Early Childhood Education, from 2016 http://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/135183/Tr29_17_vuosittilasto.pdf?sequence=5

Basic Attributes

Child Age and Gender

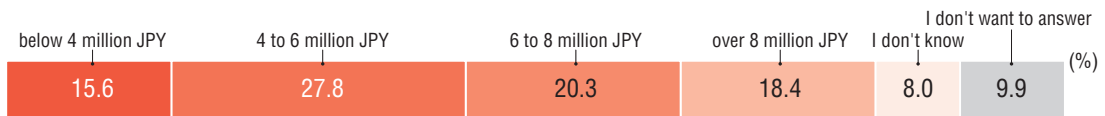
	Age (%)			Gender (%)	
	4 years old	5 years old	6 years old	Boys	Girls
Japan (1,086)	33.3	33.3	33.3	53.5	46.5
China(2,778)	38.9	37.3	23.8	52.9	47.1
Indonesia(900)	33.3	33.3	33.3	50.0	50.0
Finland (180)	38.9	33.3	27.8	50.0	50.0



Japan

Survey area : Tokyo metropolitan area(cities and towns within 40 km of Tokyo Station)

- Mothers**
- Age : Under 20s 9.5% 30s 65.2% over 40s 25.3%
 - Academic background : Four-year university graduate and above 39.9%
 - Employment status : In employment 34.3%(Full-time 16.1%), Unemployed 62.2%
- Households**
- Marital status : Married 95.6%
 - Household income (Annual pre-tax income)



- Children** 6. Preschool enrollment



China

Survey area : Shanghai(34.1%) • Beijing(39.5%) • Chengdu(26.3%)

- Mothers**
- Age : Under 20s 4.6% 30s 83.0% over 40s 12.4%
*23.3% were missing responses which were omitted upon calculation.
 - Academic background : Four-year university graduate and above 74.3%
 - Employment status : In employment 90.0%(Full-time 70.3%), Unemployed 6.9%
- Households**
- Marital status : Married 98.8%
 - Household income (Annual pre-tax income)



- Children** 6. Preschool enrollment Kindertans 100% *Survey was fully requested through kindertans.

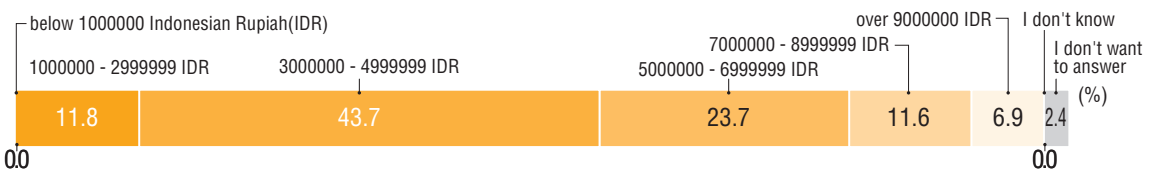


Indonesia

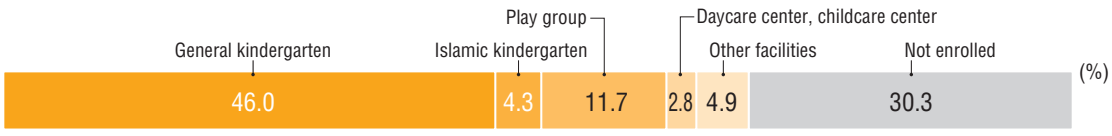
Survey area : Jakarta(42.3%) • Tangerang(14.6%) • Depok(15.1%) • Bekasi(13.8%) • Bogor(14.3%)

- Mothers**
1. Age : Under 20s 28.7% 30s 57.2% over 40s 14.1%
 2. Academic background : Four-year university graduate and above 6.3%
 3. Employment status : In employment 19.2% (Full-time 5.9%), Unemployed 78.7%

- Households**
4. Marital status : Married 97.7%
 5. Household income (Monthly pre-tax income)



- Children**
6. Preschool enrollment



Finland

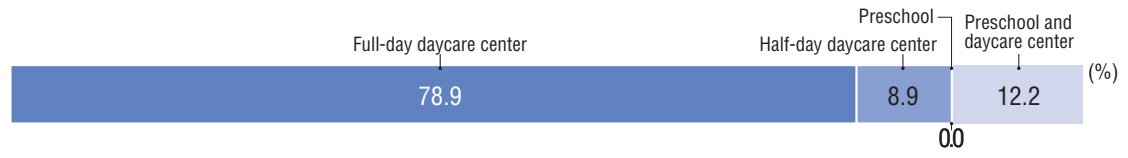
Survey area : Espoo(51.1%) • Kouvola(24.4%) • Seinäjoki(14.4%) • Lappeenranta(10.0%)

- Mothers**
1. Age : Under 20s 7.2% 30s 68.3% over 40s 24.5%
 2. Academic background : Four-year university graduate and above 71.1%
 3. Employment status : In employment 84.5%(Full-time 75.0%), Unemployed 5.6%

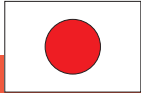
- Households**
4. Marital status : Married 88.3%
 5. Household income (Annual pre-tax income)



- Children**
6. Preschool enrollment



Japan (Tokyo metropolitan area)



● Daily Life of Children :

On weekdays, approximately 40% of children wake up around 7 am and around 30%, which was the majority, go to bed at 9 pm. Regarding the time spent at preschool institutions, because kindergarteners account for a large portion of the data, overall, approximately 40% of preschoolers spend “about five hours” at preschool educational institutions. However, time spent at kindergarten and nursery school differs, with kindergarteners spending “about five hours” at kindergarten and nursery school children “about eight to nine hours” at nursery school in many cases. Picture books, television, and videos/DVDs/hard disk recorders are available in more or less all households and are used “three or more times a week” at more than half. Almost 70% of the respondents' children take enrichment programs and lessons such as swimming or gymnastics, in descending order.

● Maternal Awareness of Parenting :

Regarding parenting, mothers emphasize self-reliance, daily habits, collaborative skills and self-assertion. As for future education, the majority of mothers expect their child to graduate from a 4-year university. Regarding their children's future, the percentage of mothers hoping that their child will develop into “a person with firm opinions” and “a person causing no trouble to others” is higher than in other countries. For 66.6% of the mothers, the meaning of their child's existence was perceived as “enrichment of my life,” the highest percentage among the countries surveyed. The percentage of mothers selecting “connection between my spouse/partner and me” was higher than in other countries, while the percentage of those selecting “person who will play a part in future society” was lower. In response to the question “Which do you focus on more: parenting or your own lifestyle?,” compared to other countries, responses were divided more or less evenly between the two choices.

Indonesia (Jakarta and other Areas)



● Daily Life of Children :

Wake-up time in Indonesia is the earliest among the four countries as more than 40% of respondents indicated that their children wake up by 6 am. This may owe to the fact that people are active early in the morning when the temperature is lower due to the tropical climate, and that the Muslims' prayer time is in the early hours. Because education at kindergarten ends in the morning, the time children spend in such institutions is short, with 90% attending for less than four hours. The availability of items such as picture books and educational toys is the lowest of all four countries surveyed, indicating 20% of the households have no picture books, and about 50% of them have no educational toys at home. The frequency of reading picture books was the lowest of all four countries, accounting for a little over 20% (50%-70% in the other countries) for those who read three times or more a week. On the other hand, the frequency of smartphone use is higher than in the other countries with 60% using such devices three or more times a week (10%-20% in the other countries). More than 40% of the children take enrichment lessons, the lowest percentage of the four countries. A little under 40% of the children take lessons in “reading and writing the Qur'an.”

● Maternal Awareness of Parenting :

Regarding expectations for their children, a high percentage of respondents answered that they hoped their child would grow up to be “a person caring about his/her own family” or “a person with leadership skills,” 75.8% and 53.1%, respectively. When asked what their child's existence means to them, many respondents selected “successor of my ancestors/family” or “future caregiver of mine,” 64.3% and 57.9% respectively, showing a marked awareness of family and family lineage succession compared with the other target countries. Expectations of higher education for their children were high with approximately 90% of mothers hoping that they would advance as far as university or graduate school. When asked which they emphasized more, parenting or their own lifestyle, more than 90% of respondents answered “I need to prioritize my child's needs over myself.”

China (Shanghai, Beijing, and Chengdu)



● Daily Life of Children :

Of the four countries, more children in China tend to go to bed and get up late (On average, they get up at 7:12 and go to bed at 21:41). Ninety percent of children took enrichment programs and lessons, the highest percentage among the four countries, and what they learned was diverse, including sports, arts and studies. “Language lessons” scored the highest with more than 50% of children taking lessons.

● Maternal Awareness of Parenting :

Regarding the question of what their child's existence means to them, 81.4%, the highest percentage, selected “an individual entity from me.” Regarding the perspective of parenting, respondents placed more emphasis on helping the child “learn foreign languages,” “foster the artistic talent of the child (music, painting etc.),” and “play in the nature” more than in the other countries. Regarding expectations for higher education, 60% responded that they hoped that their child would complete “graduate school,” the highest percentage among the four target countries. When asked which they focus on, parenting or their own lifestyle, almost 80% answered “parenting is important but so is my own life,” while more than 80% answered “a mother should always stay with her child until s/he becomes around 3 years old,” suggesting a certain ambivalence.



Finland (The Espoo region)



● Daily Life of Children :

On weekdays, more than 40% of the subject children in Finland get up at around seven in the morning, spend approximately eight hours at daycare center and go to bed between eight and nine o'clock in the evening on average. There is little difference in daily schedule between weekdays and holidays in Finland (according to the survey supervisors). Items such as picture books, encyclopedias for kids, and educational toys are available in 90% or more of the surveyed households. The percentage of picture book and tablet device use three or more days a week is 77.2% and 46.6%, respectively, the highest among the target countries. The percentage of subject children taking enrichment lessons is high, at less than 80% after China. Sports and arts-related lessons outside of school such as swimming, soccer and music are popular.

● Maternal Awareness of Parenting :

Regarding parenting, mothers consider it important “to encourage the child to care about others” and “to help the child acquire social manners/follow rules.” More than 80% of respondents indicated that they wanted their child to become “a person who cares about his/her own family” in the future. Regarding what their children's existence means to them, almost all respondents answered with “enrichment of my life.” This was followed by “an individual entity from me” (66.7%). In answer to the question asking which they emphasized more, parenting or their own lifestyles, more than 80% responded with “Parenting is important but so is my own life” or “It is OK if a mother is not always around her child as long as she raises him/her with love.”



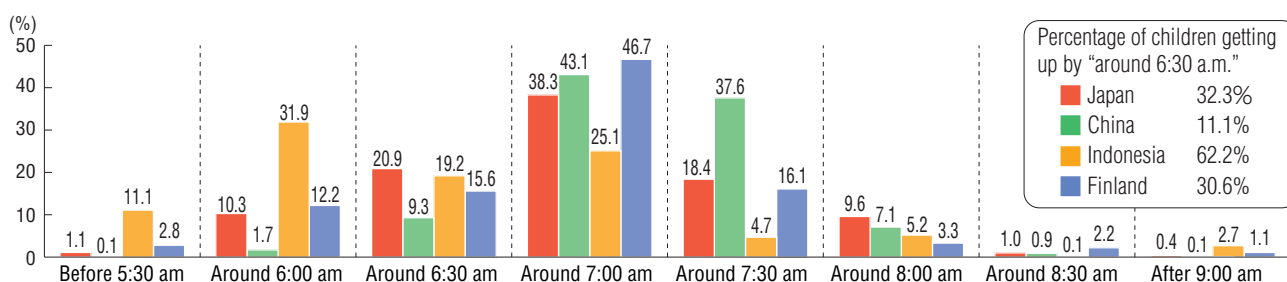
1 Life of Preschool Children

1-1 Living Time

Of the countries surveyed, children get up the earliest on weekdays in Indonesia, with 62.2% rising by “around 6:30 a.m.” Children in China tend to go to bed and get up the latest in the four countries.

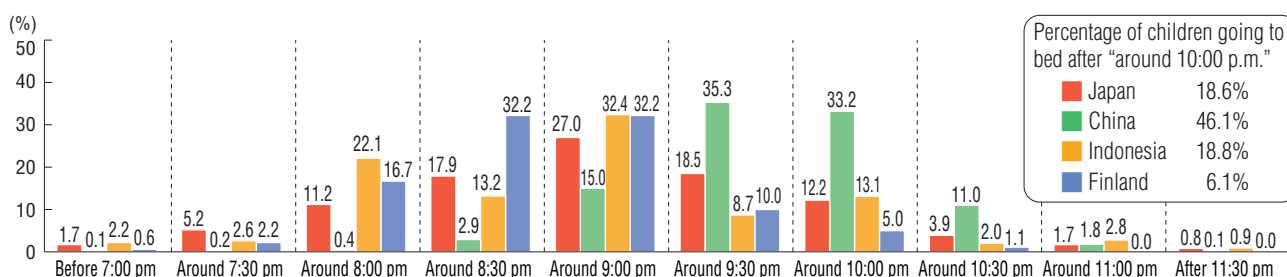
Q What time does the subject child get up in the morning on weekdays?

Figure 1-1-1 Wakeup time on Weekdays



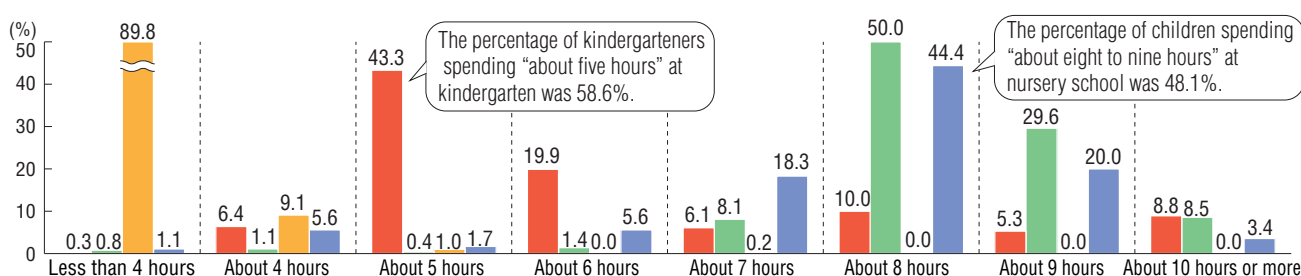
Q What time does the subject child go to bed on weekdays?

Figure 1-1-2 Bedtime on Weekdays



Q How many hours a day does the subject child spend in the child care program?

Figure 1-1-3 Time spent at preschool institutions



* Only mothers of children enrolled in childcare programs answered this question.

* The combined responses of Indonesia for “less than three hours” (37.0%) and “about three hours” (52.8%) are shown as “less than four hours.” None responded longer than “about eight hours.”

* “About 10 hours or more” shows the responses combined for “about ten hours,” “about eleven hours” and “more than twelve hours.”

The percentage of children getting up by “around 6:30 a.m.” is highest in Indonesia at 62.2%, followed by Japan at 32.3%, Finland at 30.6%, and China with the lowest percentage of 11.1% (Fig.1-1-1). It is likely that the early rising time of children in Indonesia is due to such factors as the influence of the lifestyle of their parents who pray before sunrise if they are Muslims and the tropical climate. Moreover, the percentage of children going to bed after “around 10:00 p.m.” is highest in China at 46.1%, followed by Indonesia at 18.8%, Japan at 18.6%, and Finland with the lowest ratio of 6.1% (Fig.1-1-2). Compared to the other

countries, children in China tend to go to bed and get up late. In Indonesia, 89.9% of children surveyed spend “less than 4 hours” at preschool educational institutions, the shortest time of all the target countries (Fig.1-1-3). On the other hand, 88.1% of children in China spend “about 8 hours” or more at preschool institutions. A large percentage of children in Japan spend “about 5 hours” or “about 6 hours” at such institutions, totaling 63.2%. Time spent at preschool educational institutions varies widely from country to country.

1-2 Frequency of Use or Viewing at Home by Children

More than 90% of children in the surveyed countries other than China watch TV three times or more a week. Fifty percent or more of children look at picture books in Japan, China and Finland. The percentage of smartphone use in Indonesia is higher than in the other countries surveyed at 60%. The survey asked about items available and used at home.

Q Please tell us about the activities at home. How often a week does s/he use/read the items listed below?

Table 1-2-1 Items at Home

		Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland
Picture book	Three days or more a week	57.2 ^②	66.1 ^①	22.3	77.2 ^②
	Not available at home	1.1	0.3	20.9	0.0
Study workbook	Three days or more a week	31.7	27.4	38.7 ^③	28.4
	Not available at home	10.5	12.6	17.1	0.0
Encyclopedia for kids	Three days or more a week	13.1	17.1	24.0	15.6
	Not available at home	27.4	11.7	24.1	3.3
Educational toys such as blocks	Three days or more a week	41.6	47.5 ^③	10.8	46.7 ^③
	Not available at home	2.4	0.1	51.2	2.2
TV	Three days or more a week	93.3 ^①	57.4 ^②	96.3 ^①	90.0 ^①
	Not available at home	0.5	1.7	0.7	2.8
Video, DVD, Hard disk recorder	Three days or more a week	51.2 ^③	6.7	38.4	33.9
	Not available at home	2.9	35.2	25.0	8.3
Smartphone	Three days or more a week	20.1	19.2	63.7 ^②	29.4
	Not available at home	5.1	1.8	12.9	1.7
Tablet such as iPad	Three days or more a week	15.4	21.5	27.3	46.6
	Not available at home	49.0	7.6	57.7	10.6
TV game including Nintendo Wii	Three days or more a week	3.6	2.4	4.0	6.1
	Not available at home	54.3	41.3	90.0	33.3
Electronic device for study (e.g. device for intellectual development focusing on alphabet)	Three days or more a week	5.5	16.6	2.1	13.9
	Not available at home	72.4	23.6	90.7	11.1

* "Three days or more a week" is the combined percentage of "almost every day" and "3-4 days per week."

* Responses of "one or two days per week," "occasionally" and "not at all" are not shown.

* Top three responses for "three days or more a week" for each country are shown as ①-③.

When asked about various items and media available in the children's homes, many of the items were not available at home in Indonesia, with more than 50% giving this response regarding "educational toys such as blocks," "tablet such as iPad," "TV games" and "electronic devices for study." In Japan, more than 50% of respondents answered that "electronic devices for study" and "TV games" were not available at home, and a high percentage of 49.0% was also shown for "tablet such as iPad."

Looking at the frequency of use/viewing (three times or more a week), with the exception of China, a high percentage of 90% or more of respondents answered "TV," followed by "picture books," which are used by approximately 60% to 70% in the countries surveyed except in Indonesia, indicating that "TV" and

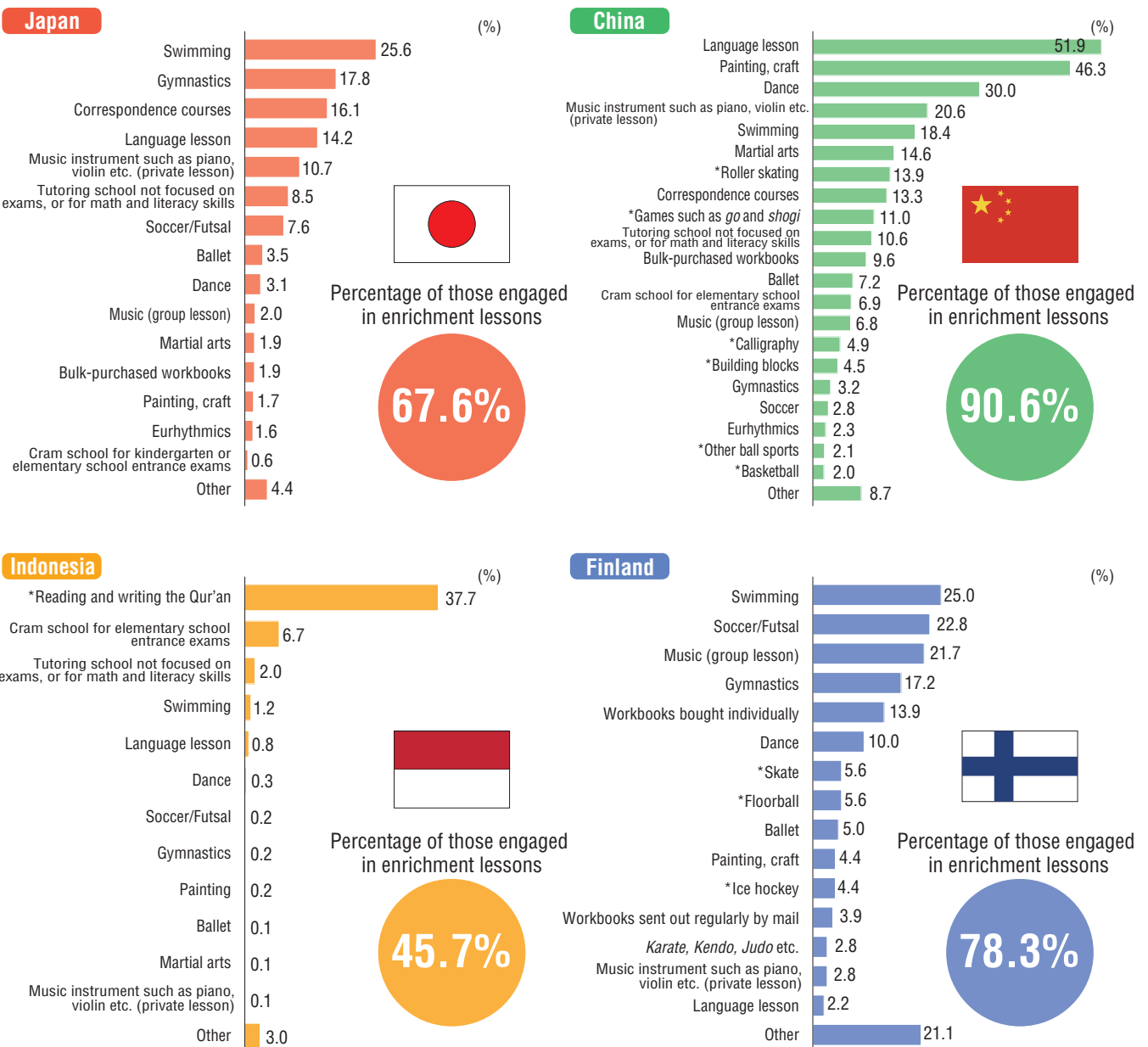
"picture books" are readily available to children. In Japan, following "TV" and "picture books," a high percentage of respondents watch or use "videos, DVDs, and hard disk recorders" (hereinafter referred to as "videos"). In China, the highest number of respondents selected "picture books," followed in order by "TV" and "educational toys." In Indonesia, "TV," "smartphones" and "study workbooks" received the highest percentages in descending order, with the frequency of smartphone use at 63.7%, higher than in the other countries. In Finland, respondents selected "TV" and "picture books," followed by "educational toys" and "tablet such as iPad," with the highest frequency of picture book use among the four countries surveyed.

1-3 Enrichment Programs/Lessons Outside of School

The percentage of children taking enrichment programs/lessons is highest in China at 90.6% and lowest in Indonesia at 45.7%. Regarding the type of lessons, “swimming” was among the top five in all countries.

Q What kind of enrichment programs and lessons does the subject child take? Please select all that apply including those offered by child care facilities for an extra fee.

Figure 1-3-1 Enrichment Programs/Lessons Outside of School



* Multiple answers
 * Asterisks (*) indicate information entered against items specific to each country and under "Other" that exceeded a certain percentage.
 * Items eliciting the response "None" are not shown.

The percentage of children taking enrichment programs/lessons in descending order is 90.6% in China, 78.3% in Finland, 67.6% in Japan and 45.7% in Indonesia. Regarding the type of lessons, while there are probably differences arising from the influence of factors such as the prevalence, cultures, religions and views on education, “swimming” was among the top five places in all countries (top place in Japan and Finland). Moreover, 51.9% of children in China take “language lessons.” This is

probably related to the high percentage of mothers in China answering they put “very much” emphasis on helping “the child learn foreign language” regarding parenting policies (P.10). In Indonesia, the highest percentage of enrichment programs/lessons taken by respondents was “reading and writing the Qur’an” at 37.7%. Volunteers from the local community give lessons in most cases.

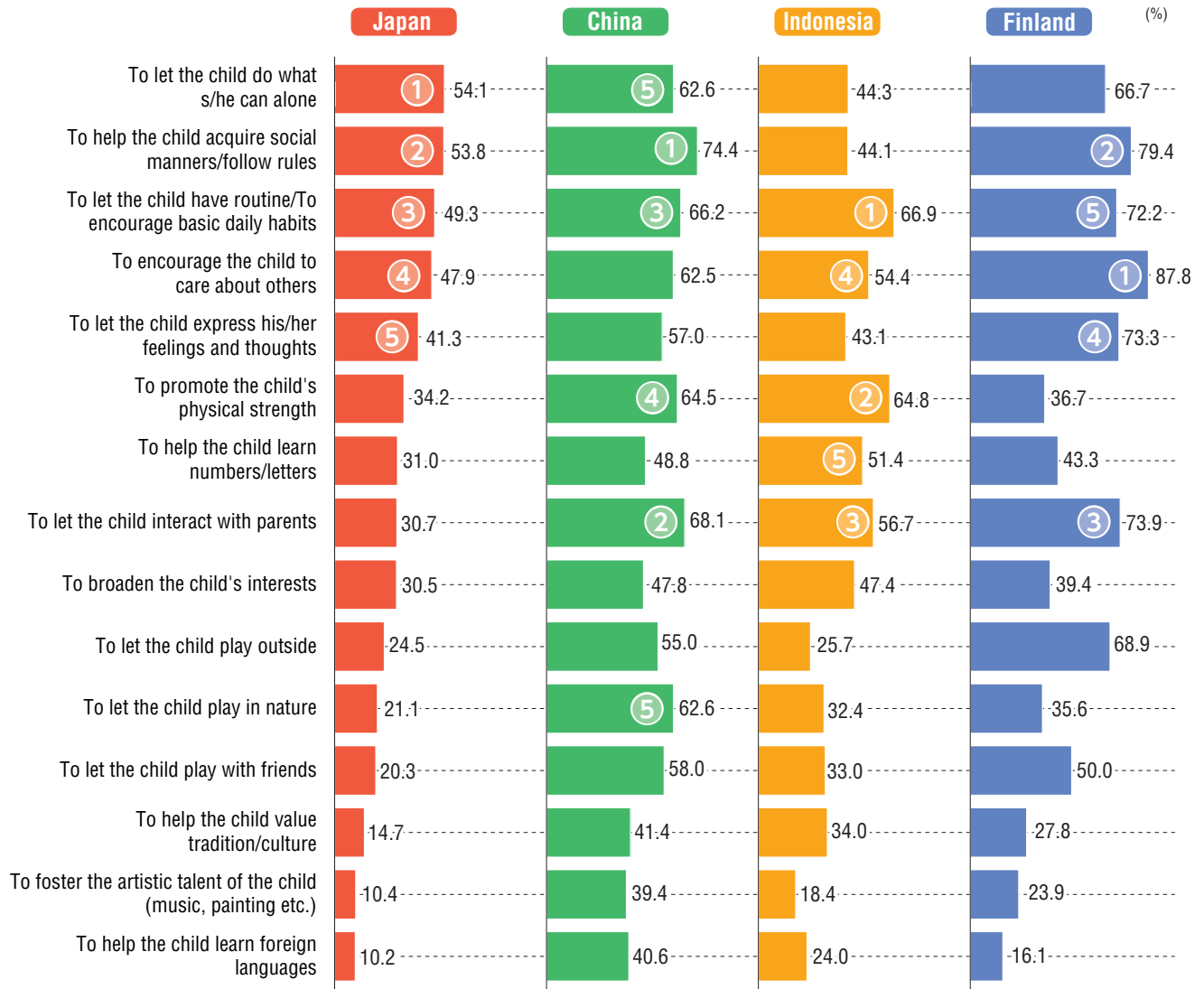
2 Mothers' Awareness of Education and Parenting

2-1 Parenting Policies

“To encourage basic daily habits” was selected by the highest number of respondents in all four countries. In Japan, “To encourage the child to do what s/he can alone” and “To help the child acquire social manners/follow rules” were rated the highest in descending order, selected by more than 50% of the respondents.

Q How much emphasis do you put on the following aspects of parenting?

Figure 2-1-1 Parenting Policies



* Percentage of “very much”
 * Results from Japan are shown in descending order.
 * Top five answers in each country are shown as ① - ⑤.

When asked what they focused on in raising their children, “to encourage basic daily habits” was among the top five responses in all four countries. In Japan, respondents answered with “to encourage the child to do what s/he can alone,” “to help the child acquire social manners/follow rules,” and “to encourage basic daily habits” in descending order. In the countries except Japan, “to let the child interact with parents” was ranked in second and third place.

In China, the greatest emphasis was placed on “to help the

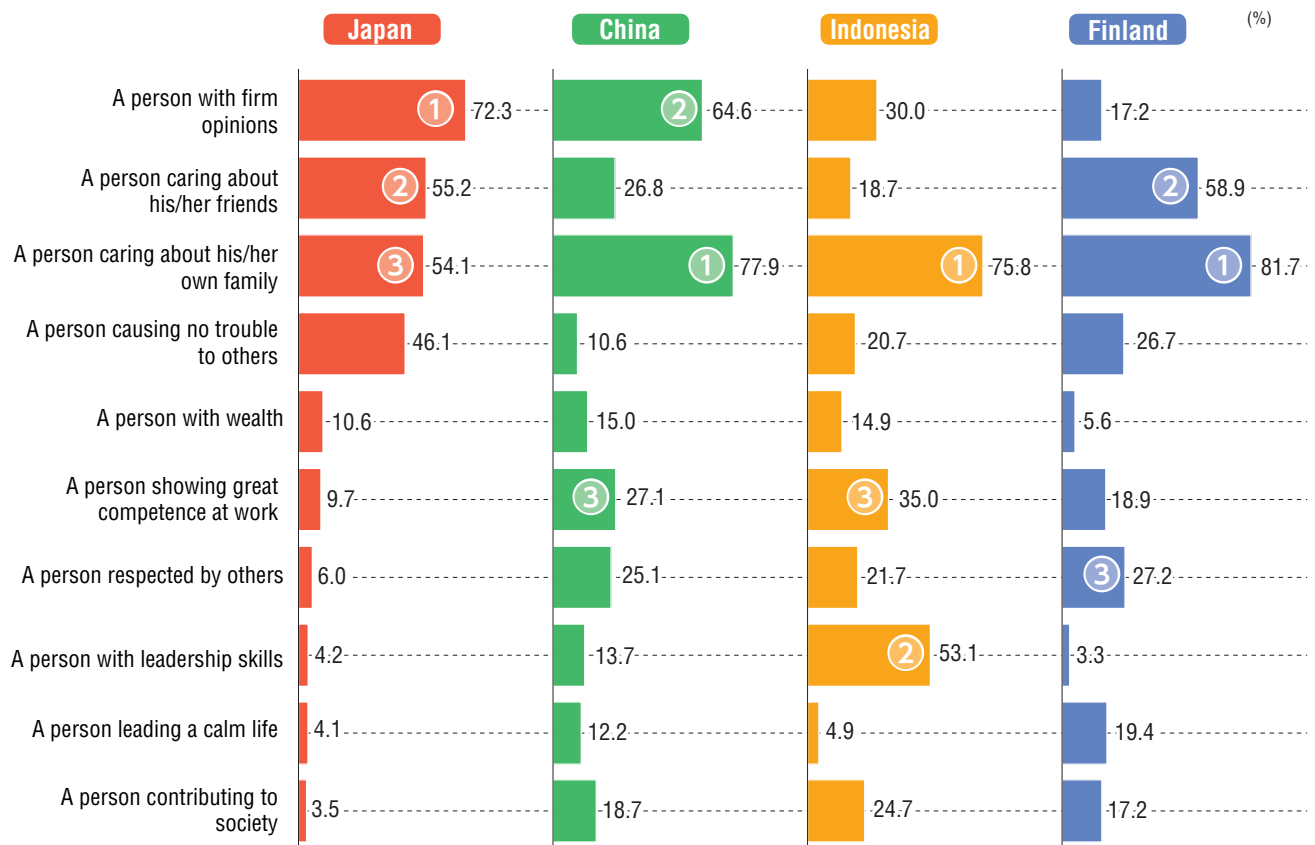
child acquire social manners/follow rules.” In Indonesia, “to encourage basic daily habits” was ranked in top place, followed by “to promote the child's physical strength” in second place. In Finland, “to encourage the child to care about others” was ranked in top place. “To foster the artistic talent of the child (music, painting, etc.)” and “to help the child learn foreign languages” was selected by approximately 40% of respondents in China, but by only 10–20% of respondents in the other three target countries.

2-2 Expectations for the Child's Future

Regarding parental expectations for the child in the future, “a person with firm opinions” was ranked highest in Japan, by 72.3% of respondents. Regarding expectations for advanced education, the percentage of respondents selecting “4-year college/university” was high in Japan, while the percentage of those in countries such as China and Indonesia hoping that their children would advance to graduate school was higher than that in Japan.

Q What kind of person do you want the subject child to be in the future? Please select up to 3 answers.

Figure 2-2-1 Expectations for the child's future



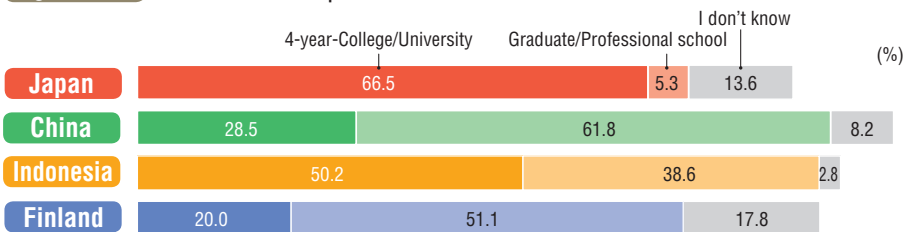
* Up to 3 out of 11 items including “not applicable” selected

* Results from Japan are shown in descending order.

* Top three responses in each country are shown as ①, ② and ③.

Q What educational level do you want the subject child to attain?

Figure 2-2-2 Educational expectations



* Only “4-year-College/University,” “Graduate/Professional school” and “Unknown” are shown in this figure.

* Questions regarding “Graduate/Professional school” used the terms “Graduate/Professional school (including 6-year college/university)” in Japan, “Graduate/Professional school (including 6-year college/university)” and “Postgraduate doctoral course” in China, and “Graduate/Professional school (Master’s/PhD)” in Indonesia. In Finland, because “Junior College/Community College” is on par with the “4-year-College/University level” and “4-year-College/University” and “Graduate/Professional school” is on par with “Graduate/Professional school level,” terms were matched to those used in the other countries.

In answer to the question of what kind of person they wanted their children to become, respondents were asked to select up to three answers out of 11 items, including “none of the above.” A high percentage of respondents selected “a person caring about his/her own family” in all countries, making it the most popular choice in all the countries with the exception of Japan (Fig.2-2-1). In Japan, the majority of respondents, 72.3%, selected “a person with firm opinions,” a higher percentage than in the other countries in the survey. In addition, while “a person causing no trouble to others” was selected by 26.7% in Finland, 20.7% in Indonesia and

10.6% in China, this answer was selected by 46.1% in Japan, a higher percentage than in the other countries.

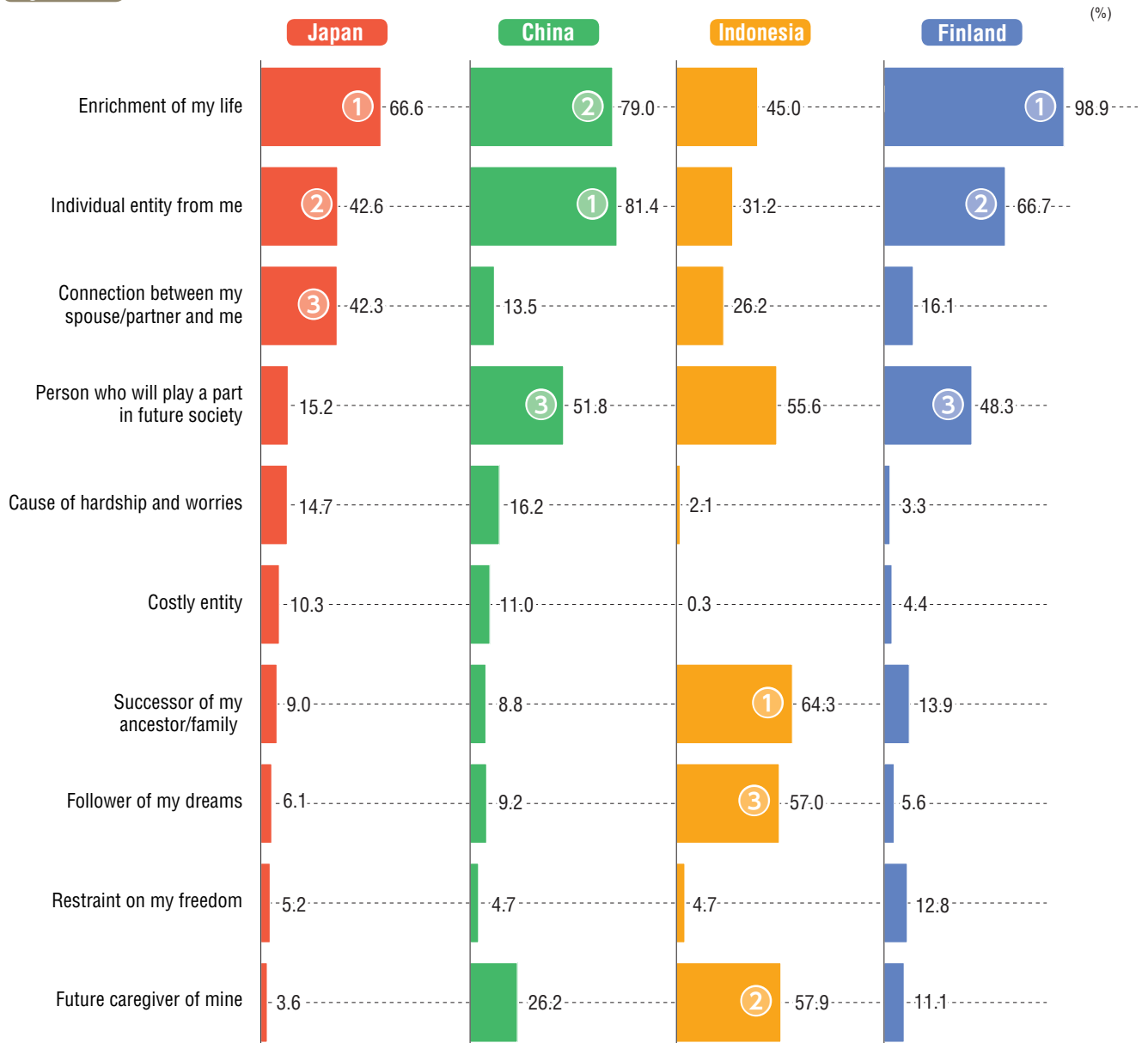
Regarding expectations for advanced education for their children, 66.5% in Japan selected “4-year-college/university” with only 5.3% selecting “graduate/professional school” (Fig.2-2-2). On the other hand, 61.8% of mothers in China and 38.6% of mothers in Indonesia selected “graduate/professional school.” This is probably due to the importance given to academic background in the society of those countries.

2-3 What Children Mean to their Mothers

The survey indicated that mothers in all the surveyed countries see the meaning of their children's existence in a positive light. "Enrichment of my life" and "an individual entity from me" occupied the top two places in three of the four countries.

Q What does the subject child mean to you? Please select all that apply.

Figure 2-3-1 What children mean to their mothers



* Multiple Answers

* Results from Japan are shown in descending order.

* Items in the top three places in each country are shown as ①, ② and ③.

How do mothers view the existence of their children? In a multiple-answer format, "enrichment of my life" and "person who will play a part in future society" were ranked among the top five answers in all countries. Negative responses such as "cause of hardship and worries" and "restraint on my freedom" were selected by fewer than 20% of respondents in all the countries surveyed. The results gave the impression that mothers in all four countries viewed the meaning of the existence of their children in a positive light.

While the top answers in Japan, China, and Finland are similar,

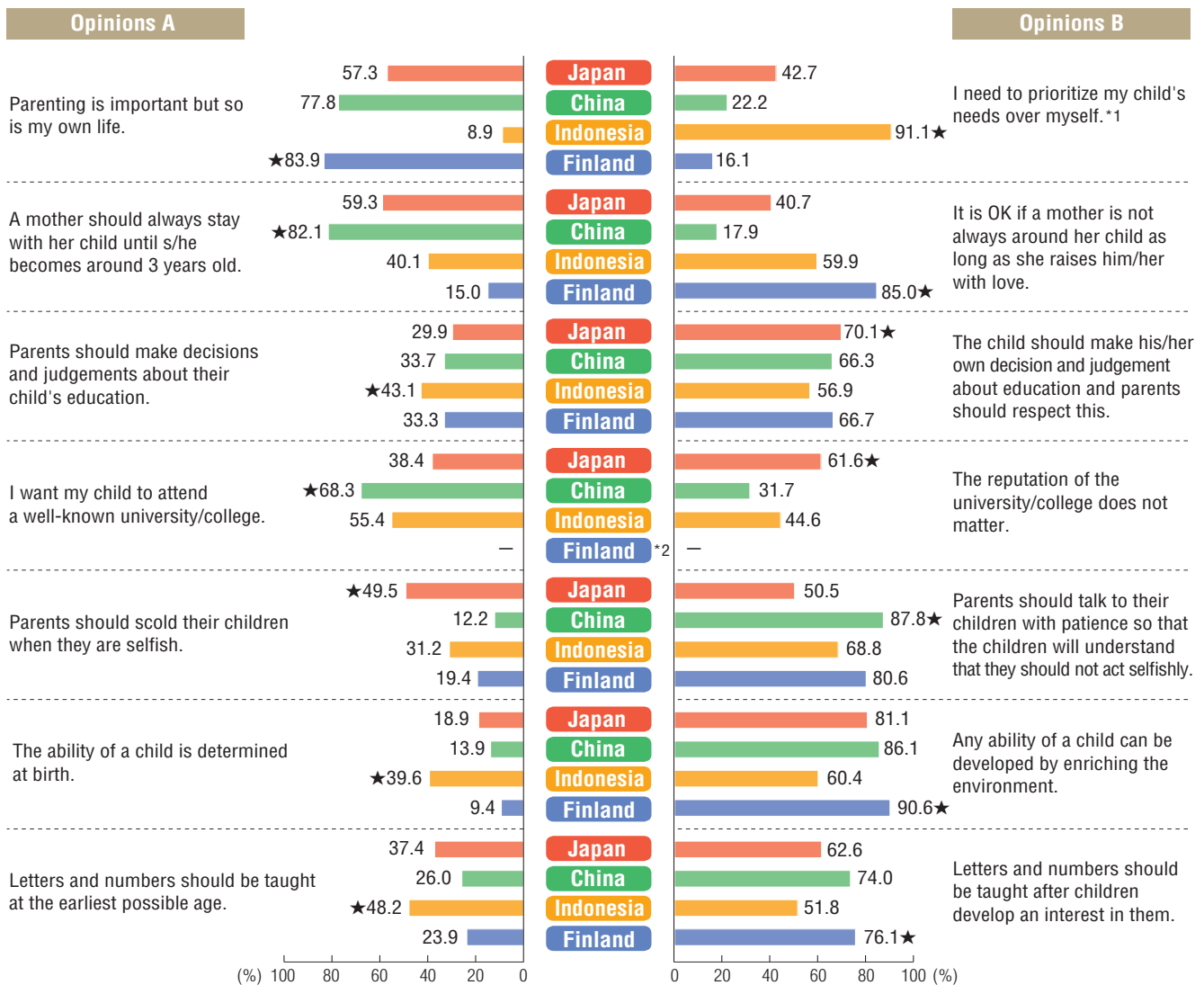
slight differences can be observed in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the top answers in descending order were "successor of my ancestors/family" (64.3%), "future caregiver of mine" (57.9%) and "follower of my dreams" (57.0%), 30 points higher than in the other countries. In Japan, the percentage of respondents selecting "connection between my spouse/partner and me" (42.3%) was higher than in the other countries, while the percentage of those who selected "person who will play a part in future society" (15.2%) was lower than in the other countries.

2-4 Mothers' Views on Parenting

Views on matters such as the balance between parenting and lifestyle of the parent or children's education differ widely between countries. Compared with the other countries, more respondents in Japan selected "The child should make his/her own decision and judgement about education and parents should respect this" and "The reputation of the university/college does not matter."

Q Which of the following opinions, "A" or "B," represents your feelings better?

Figure 2-4-1 Expectations for the child's future



* ★ Indicates the highest value for each item among the four countries.

*1 Translated differently to match circumstances in Indonesia

*2 Not asked in Finland

Regarding advancement to university, when asked to choose between "A. I want my child to attend a well-known university/college" and "B. The reputation of the university/college does not matter," among the three countries other than Finland, the percentage of respondents selecting A was highest in China at 68.3% and lowest in Japan at 38.4%. Regarding the way parents should handle their children when they are acting selfishly, respondents were asked to select "A. Parents should scold their children when they are selfish" or "B. Parents should talk to their children with patience so that the children will understand that they should not act selfishly." The percentage of respondents selecting

A was highest in Japan at 49.5% but lower in the other three countries at approximately 10–30%. While this demonstrates that many aspects of parenting differ from one country to another, the percentages choosing "B. The child should make his/her own decision and judgment about education and parents should respect this," "B. Parents should scold their children when they are selfish," "B. Parents should talk to their children with patience so that the children will understand that they should not act selfishly" and "B. Any ability of a child can be developed by enriching the environment" accounted for more than 50% in all four countries.

2-5 Sources of Information on Discipline and Education

“Spouse/partner” and “Teachers/staff at a childcare facility” were ranked highly in all four countries, and were selected by approximately 40% or more of mothers in all countries. There were no items that were particularly high or low only in Japan.

Q From whom and where do you get information on child discipline and education?

Table 2-5-1 Sources of Information on discipline and education

		Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland
Family, etc.	Spouse/partner	58.8	41.3	86.1	51.1
	Your parents	46.0	23.1	54.4	41.7
	Your siblings/relatives	18.6	11.8	27.3	21.7
	Spouse's/partner's parents	16.6	9.6	27.6	11.1
	Spouse's/partner's siblings/relatives	3.9	4.6	11.7	2.2
Social relations, etc.	Your friends/acquaintances	52.1	52.2	33.0	63.9
	Teachers/staff at a childcare facility	39.8	57.5	49.7	52.2
	Teachers of lessons/courses that the child is taking	17.7	30.7	9.1	1.7
	Members of a parenting club (Japan)/ Friends you met through parenting *1	7.7	57.2	4.1	8.9
	Education specialists *2	–	20.2	–	–
	Medical doctors/nurses	7.0	8.7	1.2	6.7
	Public health nurses/dietitians	3.9	4.0	0.8	1.7
	Parenting services staff at a city office/public facility	2.8	1.2	3.3	25.6
	Spouse's/partner's friends	1.8	8.4	6.0	1.7
Media	Internet/blog	32.3	25.9	16.4	48.9
	TV/radio	19.2	16.5	18.4	7.8
	Parenting/education magazines	15.1	23.9	3.2	13.3
	Books about parenting/education	10.9	43.3	3.0	15.6
	Social media information (e.g. Facebook)	8.4	58.8	6.4	12.8
	Newspaper	6.0	6.4	0.2	11.1
Others	Others	1.3	0.8	0.1	4.4
	None	8.5	0.9	0.2	8.3

* Multiple answers

* The dark-shaded items are those selected by 50% or more of respondents.

*1: Translated to match circumstances in each of the countries. “Friends met through parenting (China),” “Friends met at the institutions such as the child’s school (Indonesia),” “Fellow moms and dads in the local community (Finland).”

*2: Items pertaining to China only.

Regarding sources of information on matters such as discipline and education, “spouse/partner,” “your friends/acquaintances” and “teachers/staff at a childcare facility” were selected by a high percentage of respondents in all four countries. These items were selected by 40% or more of respondents or were ranked among the top four items in all the countries.

However, top-ranked answers differed from country to country, with “spouse/partner” first in Japan (58.8%), “social media” first in China (58.8%), “spouse/partner” first in Indonesia (86.1%), and “your friends/acquaintances” in the top place in Finland (63.9%). Looking at

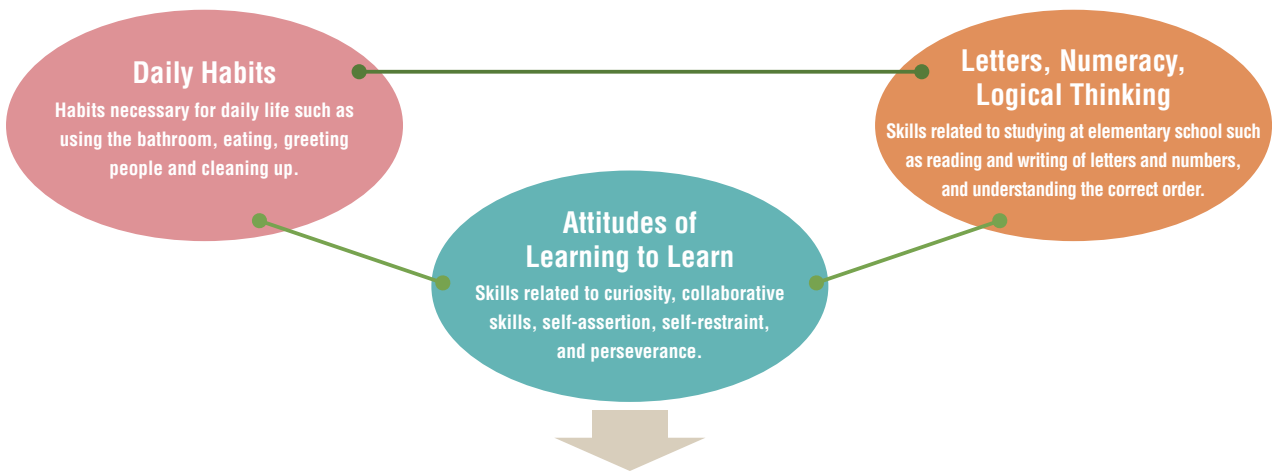
each country, respondents in China acquire information from diverse sources. The percentage of respondents relying on family was high in Indonesia while the percentage of those acquiring information from the media was low. In Finland, in addition to “internet/blog,” a high percentage of respondents selected such sources as “teachers/staff at a childcare facility,” and “parenting services staff at a city office/public facility” (a system called “Neuvola” is run in Finland), demonstrating a higher reliance on public human resources than in the other countries. In Japan, none of the sources showed a notably high or low percentage compared to the other countries.

3 “Attitudes of Learning to Learn” during Early Childhood and Involvement of Mothers

3-1 Three Key Themes That Should Ideally Be Cultivated in Early Childhood and “Attitudes of Learning to Learn”

BERD focused on three key themes that were considered necessary for preparing children for school education as “daily habits,” “attitudes of learning to learn” and “letters, numeracy, logical thinking” as abilities required to cope with the transition from early childhood to life at elementary school and lifelong skills that should ideally be cultivated from early childhood.

Results of the longitudinal research conducted from early childhood through to the first year of elementary school has demonstrated that establishing “daily habits” will then lead to the development of “attitudes of learning to learn” and “letters, numeracy, logical thinking” which correlate with each other.*1



This bulletin discusses “attitudes of learning to learn.”

The results from a “multiple group analysis for structural equation modeling” revealed that “attitudes of learning to learn” comprise five areas common to all four target countries, each with a different sociocultural environment: curiosity, collaborative skills, self-assertion, self-restraint and perseverance.

Attitudes of learning to learn	Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be curious about new things • Can focus on the play that s/he likes • Can be creative when playing • Can ask questions about things s/he does not understand (e.g. Why?)
	Collaborative skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cooperate with friends when playing, etc. • Can express his/her feelings and listen to others' opinions • Can ask a favor of friends such as “Let me join you” “Let's play together” or “Let me borrow it,” when playing. • Can apologize and make up with friends after arguments
	Self-assertion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can state what s/he wants to do • Can ask adults what s/he wants or wants them to do • Can seek the assistance of others when experiencing difficulties • Can say “No” to friends when they do something unfavorable • Can insist his/her opinion when it is different from his/her friends
	Self-restraint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can quietly listen until the end to what others say • Can observe the rules when playing • Can wait for his/her turn when playing • Can move onto the next activity when the time comes even when absorbed • Can resume play after an interruption • Can refrain him/herself from doing what s/he wants to do if others do not like it
	Perseverance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can take on challenges without giving up easily • Can engage in any task with confidence • Can try different ways to achieve goals, even when things don't turn out as anticipated • Can complete activities once they have started

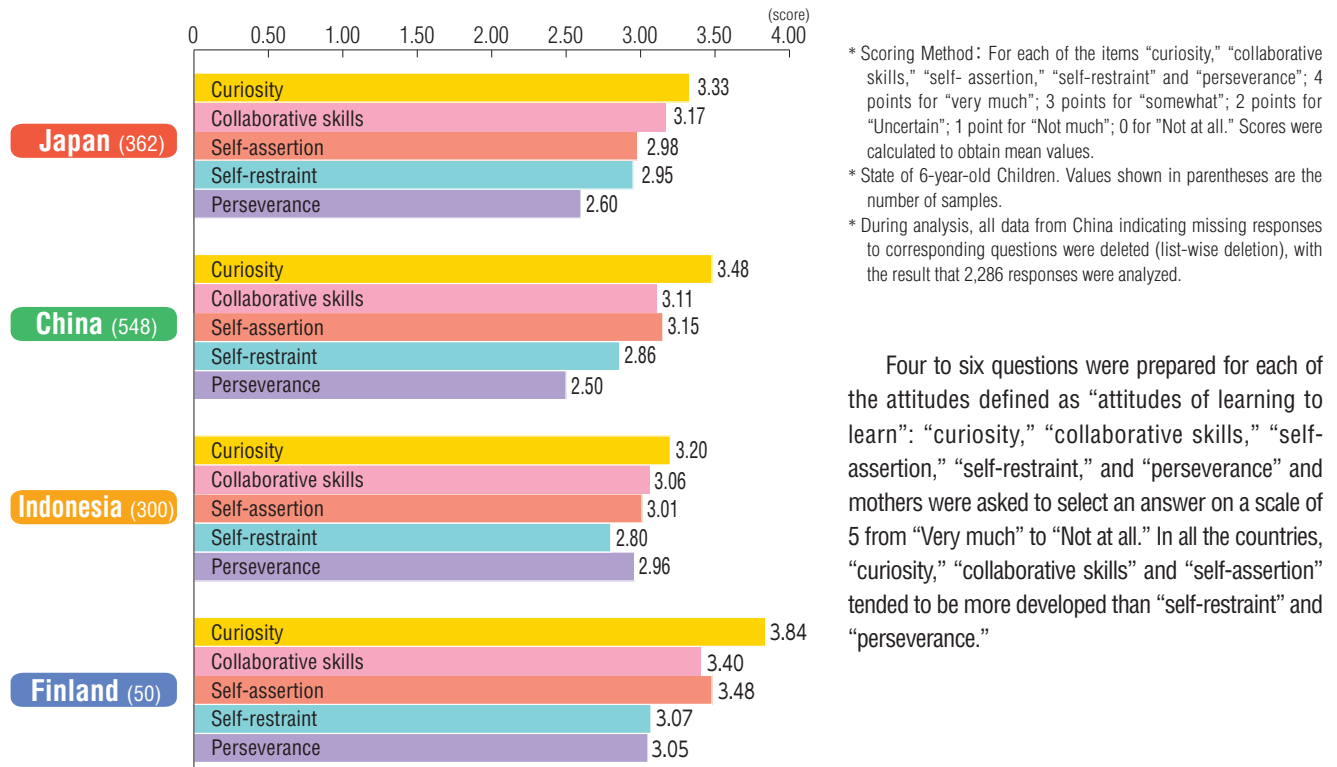
3 “Attitudes of Learning to Learn” during Early Childhood and Involvement of Mothers

*1 Reference: Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute “Research on Home Education from Early Childhood to First Grade of Elementary School” <http://berd.benesse.jp/jisedai/research/detail1.php?id=3684>

3-2 Attitudes of Learning to Learn: State of 6-Year-Old Children in Each Country

Q For the following statements, please select which level applies to the child's current daily life. (Asked about each of the items shown on page 15.)

Figure 3-2-1 《Attitudes of learning to learn》 State of development in 5 areas (6-year-old children)



Four to six questions were prepared for each of the attitudes defined as "attitudes of learning to learn": "curiosity," "collaborative skills," "self-assertion," "self-restraint," and "perseverance" and mothers were asked to select an answer on a scale of 5 from "Very much" to "Not at all." In all the countries, "curiosity," "collaborative skills" and "self-assertion" tended to be more developed than "self-restraint" and "perseverance."

3

3-3 Characteristics of Mothers' Parental Attitudes

Q In your daily interactions with the child, how much do the following statements apply to you?

Table 3-3-1 Parental Attitudes

		Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland
Supportive type	Respect and support what the child wants to do	81.2	95.1	98.9	98.9
	Try to understand the child's feelings no matter what the situation is	68.3	85.8	97.9	94.5
	Try not to be negative toward the child, but show a positive and active attitude	58.0	84.0	83.5	95.5
	Listen to the child's perspectives when scolding him/her	57.7	83.3	90.6	70.6
	Let the child accomplish alone when s/he is trying to do something	66.6	85.7	90.4	94.4
Protective type	Get worried that the child cannot do things unless I am around	34.3	22.6	58.5	27.8
	Feel overprotective towards the child	31.6	17.0	31.5	16.6
	Try to control all the things that the child tries to do	25.8	18.3	60.8	5.5
	Often treat the child as younger than his/her actual age	20.1	14.9	27.6	10.0
	Try to make the child dependent on me	10.0	13.1	26.4	1.1

* Percentage of "very much" and "somewhat"

* Upon analysis, all data from China indicating missing responses to corresponding questions were deleted (list-wise deletion), resulting in a total of 2,286 responses.

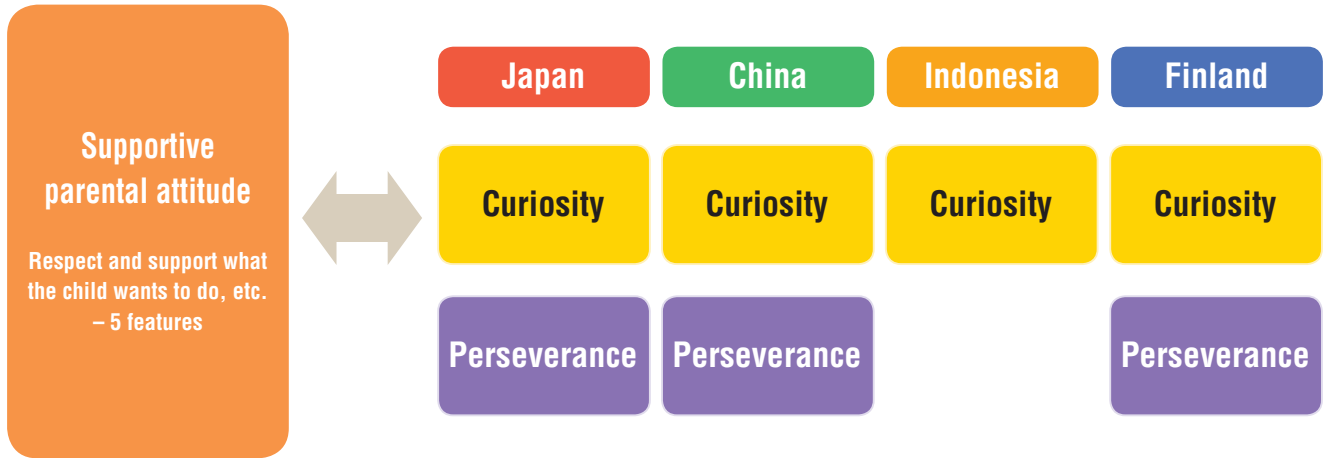
Looking at how mothers interact with their children on a daily basis, in all the countries, tendencies to relate through supportive involvement and respect for the child's feelings were observed to a greater extent than overprotective control. **Parental involvement in respecting the child's intentions or feelings is defined as a**

"supportive childrearing attitude."

In Indonesia, around 60% of respondents answered, "very much and somewhat" to two protective parental attitudes: "get worried that the child cannot do things unless I am around" and "try to control all the things that the child tries to do."

3-4 Mothers' Involvement in Attitudes of Learning to Learn

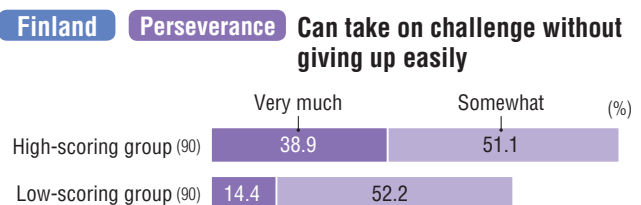
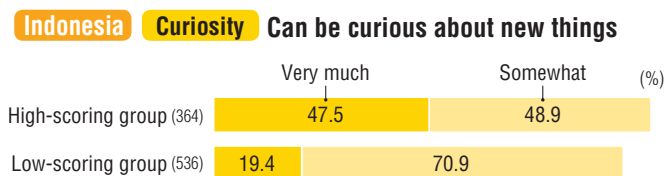
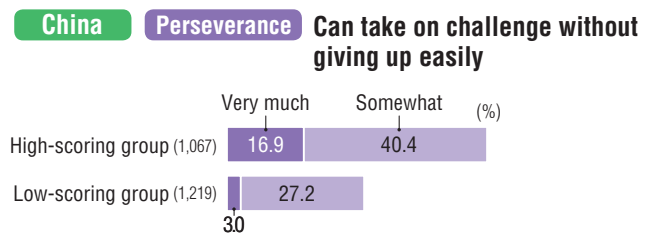
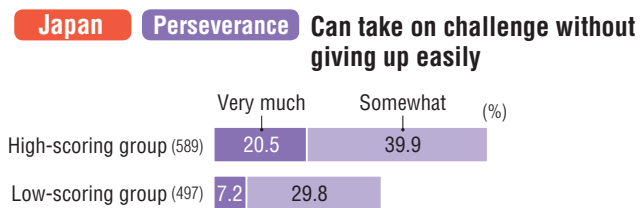
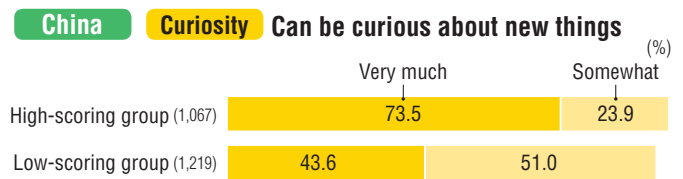
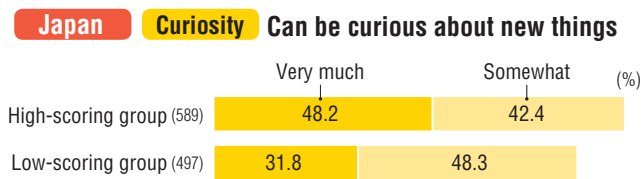
It was observed that the mothers' "supportive parental attitude" is related to the cultivation of "curiosity" and "perseverance" in their children.



* Data of children between the ages of four and six. Bivariate correlation analysis demonstrated medium (0.2–0.4) class correlation.
* Relations between "collaborative skills," "self-assertion," and "self-restraint" were observed depending on the country.

Of the five areas defined as "attitudes of learning to learn," we focused on "curiosity," the highest scored item, and "perseverance," the lowest scored item in all four countries, and examined the

correlation with the "supportive parental attitude" of mothers, which showed a positive medium-level correlation.



* Respondents from each country were divided into high-scoring and low-scoring groups according to their scores for "supportive parental attitude."

* During analysis, all data from China indicating "response unknown" to corresponding questions were deleted (list-wise deletion), with the result that 2,286 responses were analyzed.

Separation of high-scoring and low-scoring items pertaining to the "supportive childrearing attitude" of mothers' and examination of the relationship between "can be curious about new things" (question on "curiosity") and "can take on challenges without giving up easily" (question on

"perseverance") regarding children revealed that the more the mother is supportively involved, the higher the percentage of "can be curious about new things" (question on "curiosity") and "can take on challenges without giving up easily" (question on "perseverance").

Characteristics of Japanese Mothers Viewed from an International Survey

Takashi Muto, Research Professor at Shiraume Gakuen University Graduate School



I would like to summarize the characteristics of Japanese mothers as seen in the results of this survey. A tendency toward prioritization of independence in the preschool years and low prioritization on early education can be seen in the childrearing attitude of Japanese mothers. While valuing “having firm opinions,” Japanese mothers want to raise their children to become people who value friends and family. On the other hand, they also prefer to maintain traditional values such as wanting their children to become people who will not cause problems or trouble for others, and show relatively little interest in areas such as society or work. While valuing their children and cultivating a spirit of independence in them, a tendency to emphasize the meaning of family can also be observed.

As for the “attitudes of learning to learn,” the five aspects, which comprise “curiosity,” “collaborative skills,” “self-assertion,” “self-restraint,” and “perseverance,” showed a tendency to grow in the very order, rather than developing simultaneously. In addition, relevance was observed between the “supportive childrearing attitude” of mothers and “attitudes of learning to learn.” These tendencies were also observed in the other three countries.

In addition, although omitted from this bulletin, the behavior of mothers playing

with their children are linked to “curiosity.” Moreover, a learning environment arranged by their mothers can often lead the children to acquire numeracy. Mothers’ attitudes of encouraging logical thinking in their children has a strong correlation with the growth of “attitudes of learning to learn” in children and seems to stimulate the development of skills in areas such as “classification” and “language.” In sum, parents in Japan are diverse. It can be said that preschool education develops independence in children. It may be that parents’ childrearing attitudes of encouraging qualities such as ambition and independence develop “attitudes of learning to learn.” However, the acquisition of such skills as numeracy and letters seems to be influenced by textbooks and other environmental improvements aimed at developing such skills rather than the childrearing attitudes of parents.

This comparative study research of the four countries has not only shown us the common aspects of parents rearing young children, but has shed light on the differences between cultures and even the social class within them. It may also be attributed to the changes from the flow of times. Most of all, changes could be observed in parental awareness and human relationships, and the views on learning equipments, media, and play.

Findings from International Surveys Regarding Home Education during Early Childhood

Yoichi Sakakihara, Professor Emeritus at Ochanomizu University/Director of Child Research Net



I feel that the results of the survey detailed here include findings of considerable interest. Firstly, the fact that the structure of “attitudes of learning to learn” in children were more or less identical in the four countries surveyed, each having different cultures and histories, demonstrates the universality of home education environments. I believe that this proves that the development of preschool education is a global issue.

Moreover, the survey showed that “supportive” attitudes of mothers toward childrearing foster “attitudes of learning to learn” in children, confirming that Japan, where the practice of supportive preschool education is maintained, has made the right choice — a totally flattering result.

On the other hand, the survey raised several points of concern. Regarding what children mean to their parents, more responses in Japan cited “connection between my spouse/partner and me” than in the other countries, while conversely, those answering “person who will play a part in future society” was the lowest of all the countries, demonstrating a somewhat introverted tendency in Japanese homes. As China and Indonesia are experiencing remarkable economic growth, it can be said that there is a strong tendency to see children as people who will shoulder responsibility

for the society of the future, while in Finland as well, a country that already has a mature economy, parents have expectations of their children playing leading roles in the society of the future. In Japan, a country with the world’s most rapidly declining birth rates and aging population, the low percentage of response indicating expectations of the children contributing to society suggests that this is an issue that needs to be studied.

Furthermore, in the media-oriented environment of today that is such an important part of the childrearing environment, another issue is that the number of respondents in Japan indicating that their children used tablet terminals, a new media in the IoT (Internet of Things) society, was the lowest among all four countries. While, in the United States, it has been suggested that digital media such as tablet terminals may contribute to the development of children, tablet usage in Japan is only one-third that of Finland, and it may be said that this is a matter of concern in modern Japanese society where emphasis is placed on STEM education.

STEM education: Education that focuses on and integrates the four fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

“Attitudes of Learning to Learn” during Early Childhood and the Cultural Differences in Childrearing Attitude of Parents

Misako Aramaki, Associate Professor at Mejiro University



This survey took the form of comparison of Japan with other countries based on knowledge accumulated from international surveys to date regarding the relationship between the involvement of parents during early childhood and the cultivation of cognitive and non-cognitive skills in children. To ensure that there were no inconsistencies arising from circumstances in each of the target countries when selecting survey items for international comparison, selection was carried out with the utmost care with guidance from experts in each country. However, analysis of the data acquired from responses revealed the involvement of parents believed to be ideal in Japan was not necessarily so in the other countries surveyed, possibly resulting in differing evaluations. For example, it seems that the rhythm of daily life on weekdays and holidays in Finland does not change much, with the result that parents do not make a special effort to foster the habit of going to bed and getting up early. Differences were observed among the countries surveyed in areas such as strict insistence on good table manners or controlling the degree to which children use such

devices as smartphones and tablets.

In addition, while involvement of parents in Japan may seem somewhat excessively interfering and negative, this is not necessarily the case in Indonesia. While the survey suggested that the “supportive parental attitude” had a positive influence on “attitudes of learning to learn” in countries such as Japan, China and Finland, it also showed that there was a positive relationship between the “protective parental attitude” and elements such as “self-restraint” in children in Indonesia. While to a certain extent, the structural elements of “attitudes of learning to learn” can be said to be common to all the target countries, regarding the involvement of parents in developing such skills, there are no absolute preferences or ideals. It can probably be said that factors such as sense of values based on the cultural backgrounds of each country also influence such factors as the childrearing attitudes of parents and the development of children.

Reflecting on the Survey

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

Seiko Mochida,
Senior Researcher at Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

Parental Involvement Common beyond Sociocultural Environments and “Attitudes of Learning to Learn”

I would first like to extend my sincere gratitude to the various experts both in and outside Japan who participated in the planning and supervision of the survey and the approximately 4,900 mothers in the four countries who responded to the numerous questions. This survey provides valuable knowledge for our increasingly globalized society of today. It shows that even in the different sociocultural environments of the countries surveyed, fostering “attitudes of learning to learn” in early childhood is given importance in childrearing and related to supportive involvement by parents with respect for the wishes of their child. It is my wish that the findings gained from this survey will provide further insight and perspectives that will be useful to parents and others involved in preschool education in each of the four countries when considering home education in early childhood.

4 Parenting Environment of Working Mothers

Concerning the working mothers' work-life balance during the early-childhood of their children, this chapter addresses such issues as the amount of time spent with their children, the reality of family members' household chores and childrearing.

Analysis targets of Chapter 4

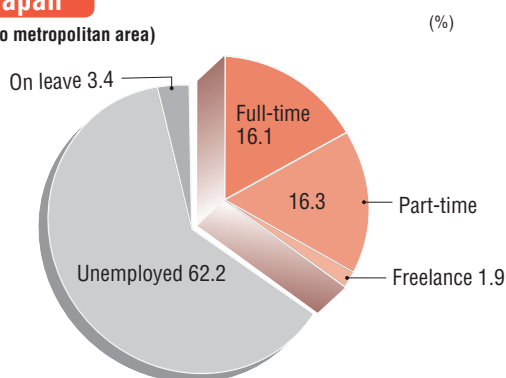
- Mothers who selected "full-time employee," "part-time employee," and "freelance including working at home office."

	Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland
Number of target responses	373	2,480	177	152

The employment status of mothers

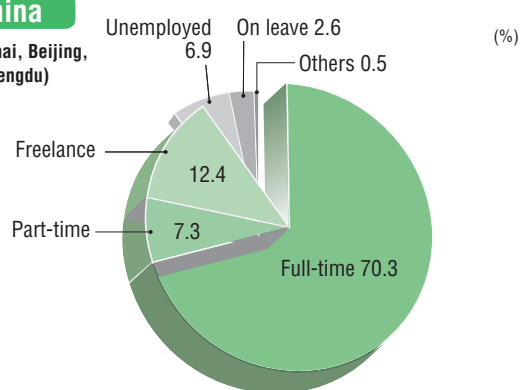
Japan

(Tokyo metropolitan area)



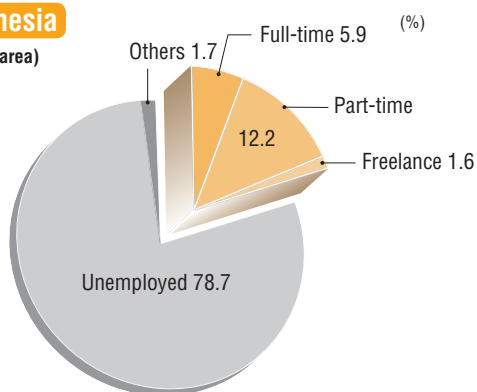
China

(Shanghai, Beijing, and Chengdu)



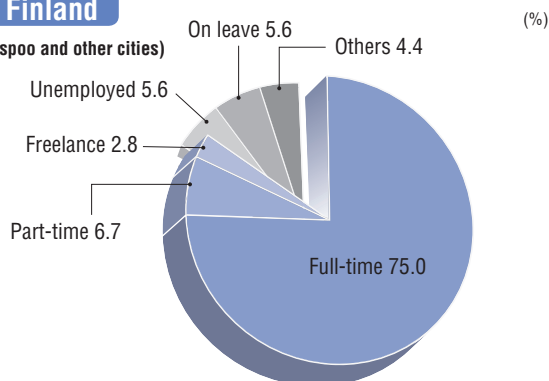
Indonesia

(Jakarta area)



Finland

(Espoo and other cities)



Among the target respondents, the percentages of full-time employed mothers are: Japan 46.9%, China 78.1%, Indonesia 29.9%, Finland 88.8%

- The figures regarding children's fathers are from the responses of working mothers who have spouses/partners with jobs: Japan 330 people/China 2,404/Indonesia 156/Finland 129.

Family members currently living with respondents (multiple answers)

	Japan	China	Indonesia	Finland	(%)
Subject child	100.0	88.1	98.9	97.4	
Siblings of the subject child	45.3	15.4	65.0	71.1	
Spouse/partner	83.6	82.9	87.0	87.5	
Own father	5.6	21.7	18.1	0.7	
Own mother	7.5	29.4	30.5	0.7	
Spouse's/partner's father	2.4	21.4	6.8	1.3	
Spouse's/partner's mother	2.4	27.9	6.2	0.7	
Other relatives	1.1	2.3	12.4	0.0	
Other people	0.0	1.7	0.0	2.0	

*The percentage of respondents living with their own mother, spouse's/partner's mother, or both

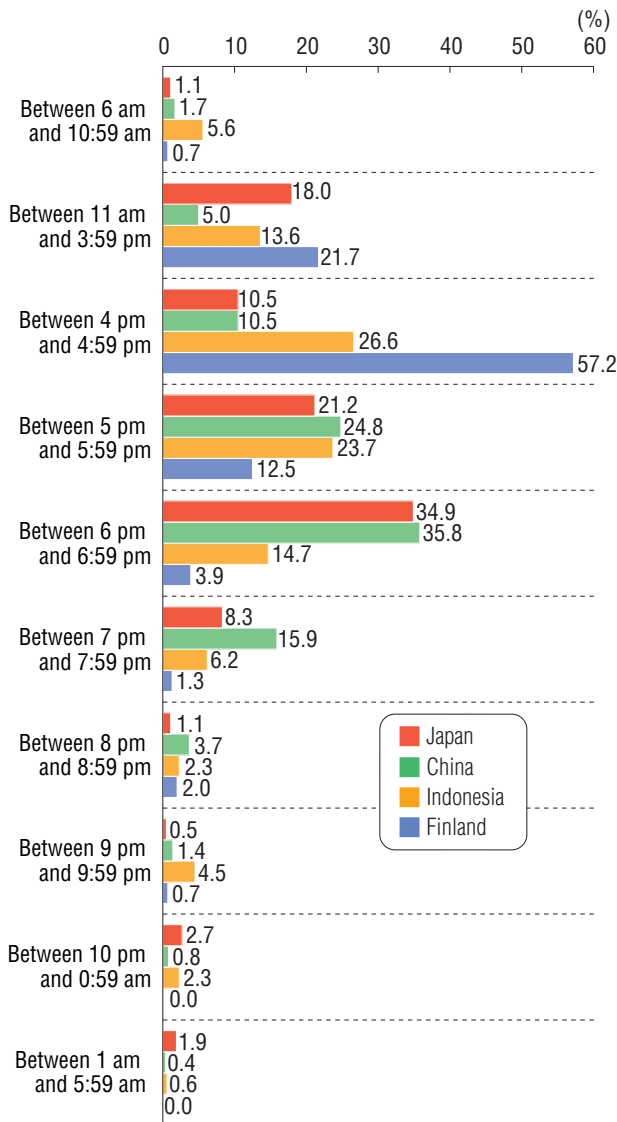
Japan	: 9.9%
China	: 54.5%
Indonesia	: 35.6%
Finland	: 0.7%

4-1 Average Time of Arrival at Home on Weekdays

During weekdays in Japan and China, most mothers arrive home between 6 pm and 6:59 pm, while in Indonesia and Finland they do so between 4 pm and 4:59 pm. As for fathers, in Japan the answers are distributed ranging from 7 pm to 0:59 am, with the highest between 10 pm and 0:59 am. The peak time shown in other countries are: between 6 pm and 6:59 pm in China; between 7 pm and 7:59 pm in Indonesia; and between 4 pm and 4:59 pm in Finland.

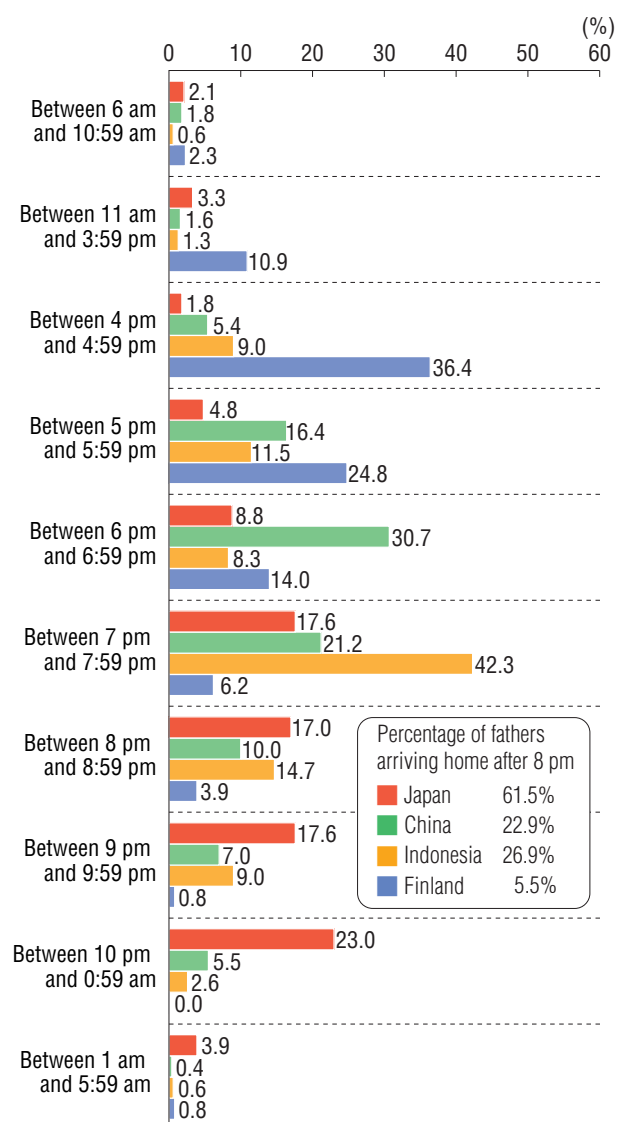
Q On average, what time do you arrive home from work?

Figure 4-1-1 Time for mothers arriving home



Q What time does your spouse/partner generally arrive home from work?

Figure 4-1-2 Time for fathers arriving home



As for the working mothers in the countries under research, "between 6 pm and 6:59 pm" was highest in Japan and China, while "between 4 pm and 4:59 pm" was most selected in Indonesia and Finland. China, with a high percentage of full-time working mothers accounting for 70%, marked the latest time range, with 35.8% for "between 6 pm and 6:59 pm" and 15.9% for "between 7 pm and 7:59 pm." In Japan, most of the respondents answered "between 5 pm and 5:59 pm" or "between 6 pm and 6:59 pm." In Indonesia, with its full-time working mothers' percentage rather low at 30%, large numbers of respondents selected "between 4 pm and 4:59 pm" or "between 5 pm and 5:59 pm." In Finland, the time to arrive home is centered around "between 4 pm and 4:59 pm," in spite of its highest full-time working mothers' percentage of over 80%. According to the supervisors of the

Finland survey, it can be inferred from the country's situation where they start and finish work early, as well as daycare centers closing early.

The time for fathers arriving home is dispersed from 7 pm to 0:59 am in Japan, with 23.0% for its peak time "between 10 pm and 0:59 am." The peak time of the other countries surveyed are: China "between 6 pm and 6:59 pm" with 30.7%; Indonesia "between 7 pm and 7:59 pm" with 42.3%; and Finland "between 4 pm and 4:59 pm" with 36.4%. In urban areas in Indonesia, commuting takes up a lot of time due to heavy traffic congestion. Among the four countries, fathers in Japan arrive home late to a remarkable extent. Looking at the percentage of fathers arriving home after 8 pm, Japan registers more than 60%, while China and Indonesia are 20%, and Finland even lower than 10% (5.5%).

4-2 Time Spent with Children

On working days, 35.5% of Japanese fathers spend less than an hour with their children, which is the shortest among the four countries. On weekends, 80% of mothers and around 60% of fathers spend eight hours or longer with their children commonly in all the four countries, if sleeping time is excluded.

Q How many hours a day do you and your spouse/partner spend with the subject child?

Figure 4-2-1 Time spent with the subject child: weekdays (working days)

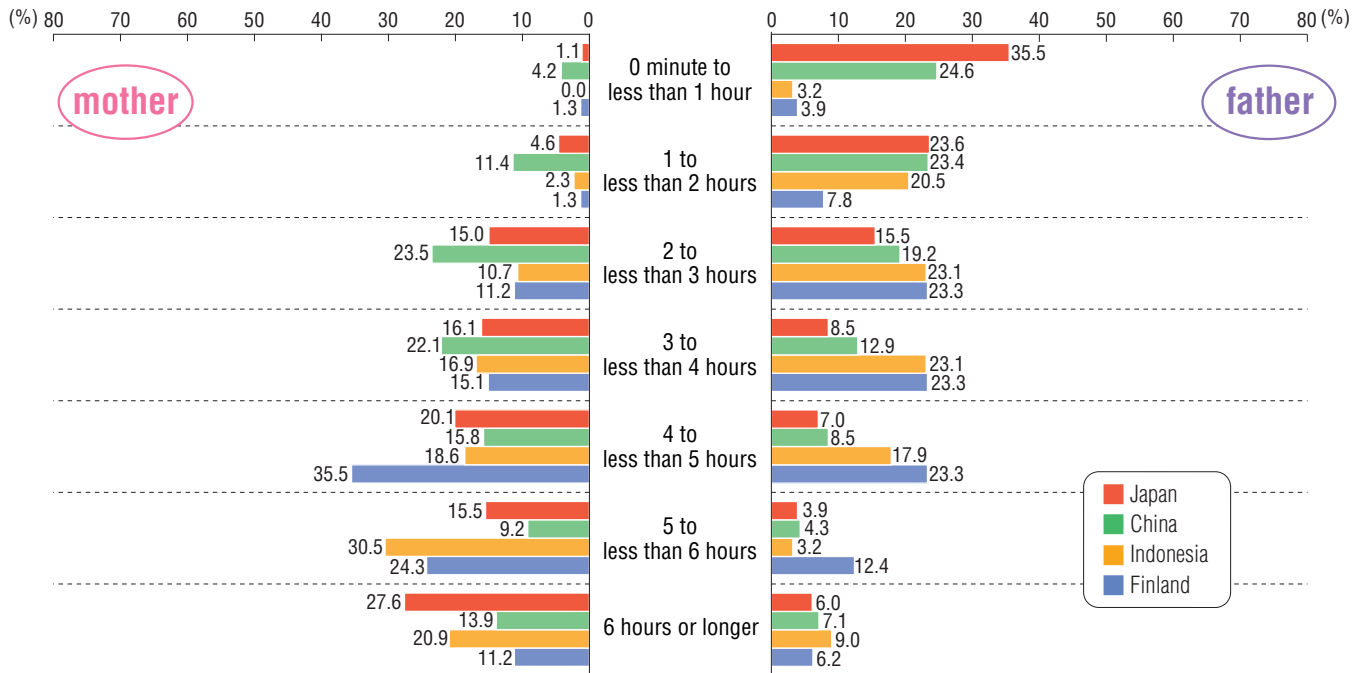
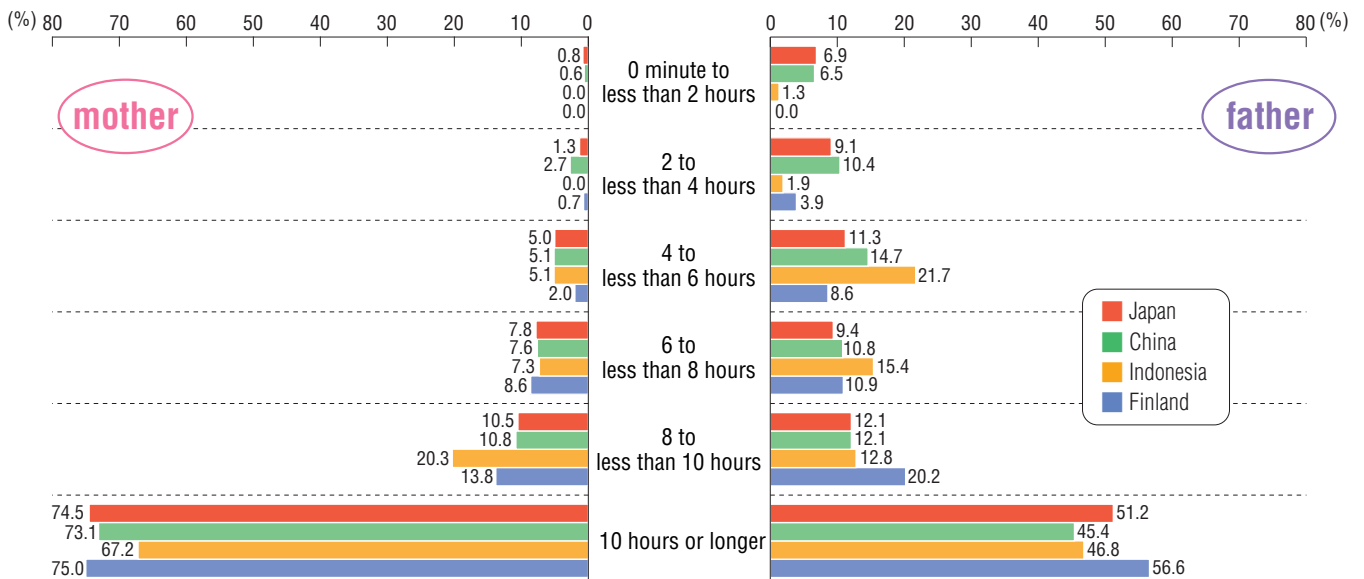


Figure 4-2-2 Time spent with the subject child: weekends



* Sleeping time is excluded.

The four countries record the same tendency that mothers spend more time with their children on weekdays (working days) compared to fathers. The responses by the Japanese mothers are scattered between "2 to less than 3 hours" and "6 hours or longer" (Figure 4-2-1). The mothers who work part-time or on a freelance basis are inclined to spend longer hours as in "6 hours or longer" (Figure omitted). Compared to fathers in Indonesia and Finland, those in China and

Japan spend less time with their children. In Japan, 59.1% of fathers spend "less than 2 hours," and likewise 48.0% in China. Looking at the fathers in China and Japan who arrive home "after 8 pm," 51.3% of fathers in Japan and 52.3% of those in China spend "0 minute to less than 1 hour" (Figure omitted). On weekends, 60% to 70% of mothers and 40% to 50% of fathers spend "10 hours or longer" with their children in all four countries.

4-3 Frequency of Fathers' Parenting and Housework

Finland records the highest rate of fathers engaged in parenting and housework out of the four countries. Fathers in Japan take roles in what they can do after arriving home late, such as "clean up the kitchen after meals," "take out garbage," and "do laundry."

Q How often does your spouse/partner do parenting for the subject child and housework?

Frequency of parenting

Figure 4-3-1 Play with the child outdoors

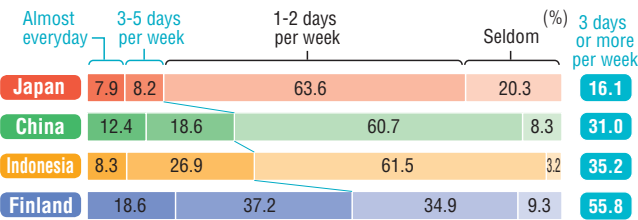


Figure 4-3-2 Play with the child indoors

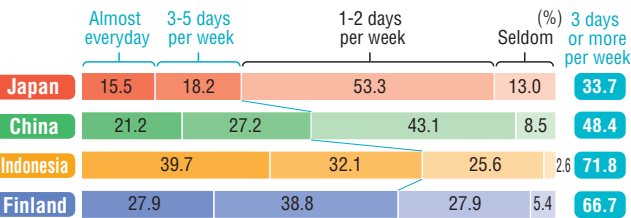


Figure 4-3-3 Praise/scold the child

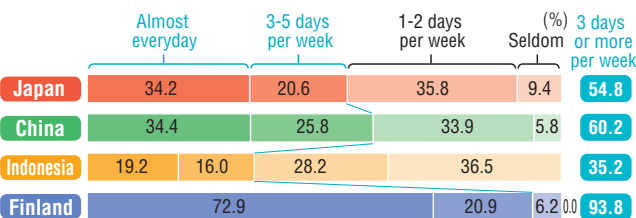
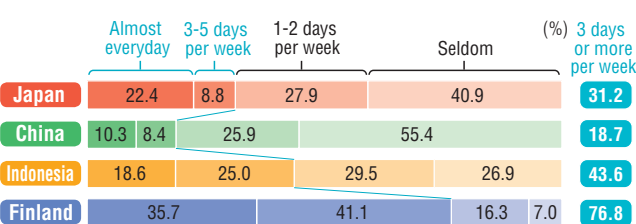


Figure 4-3-4 Help the child go to sleep



With regard to fathers' engagement in parenting and housework, Japanese fathers who arrive home the latest, record the lowest rate of playing with children, if compared at the level of "3 days or more per week," among the four countries. On the other hand, Finnish fathers, arriving home the earliest, record high rates of playing with the child (50%-60%) and helping the child go to sleep (more than 70%). Considering the research findings that children go to bed at around 9 pm in every country (Figure 1-1-2, p.7), fathers arriving home late could find it difficult to get themselves involved with children.

Frequency of housework

Figure 4-3-5 Prepare meals

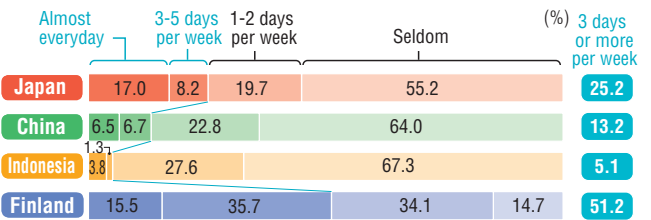


Figure 4-3-6 Clean up the kitchen after meals

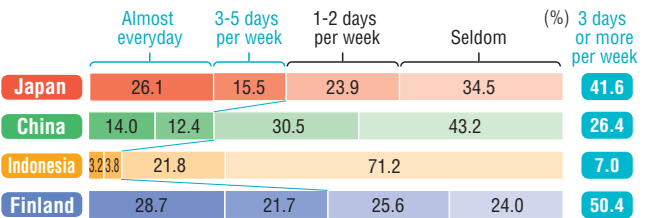


Figure 4-3-7 Take out garbage

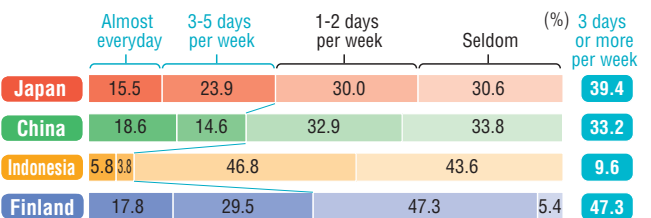
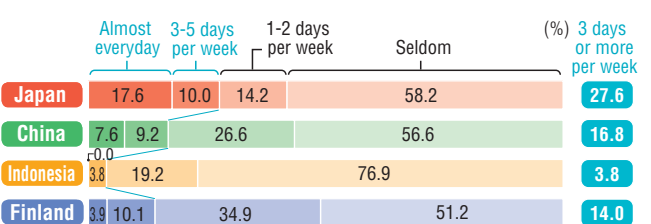


Figure 4-3-8 Do laundry



As for housework, fathers in Japan who "prepare meals," "clean up the kitchen after meals," and "take out garbage" for "3 days or more per week" accounted for a high percentage after Finland, while Japanese fathers who "do laundry" more than three days a week marked the highest. It can be considered that they engage in those tasks which can be taken up even after arriving home late. Among the four countries, Indonesian fathers indicate the lowest engagement in housework, although they arrive home earlier than Japanese fathers.

4-4 Support from Grandparents

China records a high rate of living with grandparents (ref. p.19), and around 60% of the Chinese mothers selected the answer of "very often" in receiving their support such as "do household chores," "take the subject child to/from the childcare facility," and "babysit the subject child." For the respective items, the Japanese mothers answered "very often" (10%) and "sometimes" (10%-30%), and therefore more of them get support "sometimes."

Q How often do the grandparents of the subject child help you with the following things?

Figure 4-4-1 Do household chores

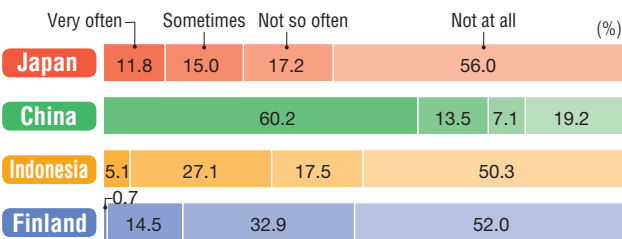
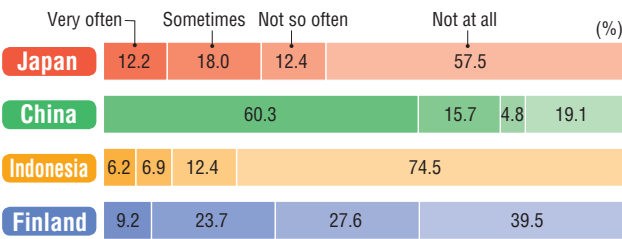


Figure 4-4-5 Support the subject child financially



Figure 4-4-2 Take the subject child to/from the childcare



* Answered by the respondents whose subject child go to child care facilities.

Figure 4-4-3 Babysit the subject child

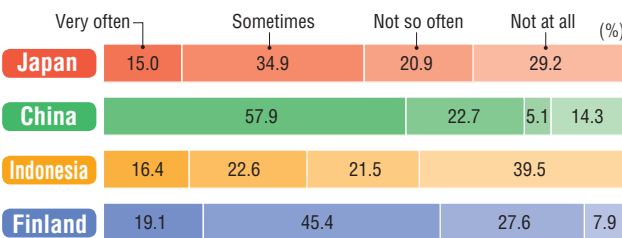
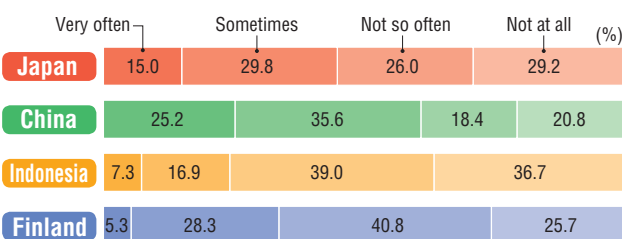


Figure 4-4-4 Give advice about the subject child



* "Not at all" selected if grandparents are non-existent.

China records a notably high rate of grandparents' support in "do household chores," "take the child to/from the childcare," and "babysit the subject child," in which the percentage of "very often" indicates approximately 60%. In China, the later mothers arrive home from work, the more grandparents provide support (Table 4-4-1). In Japan, the rate of the respondents living with their mothers is low (10%), while a higher percentage of them "sometimes" get support to "take the subject child to/from the childcare" and "babysit the subject child."

Table 4-4-1 Time for mothers arriving home and support from the grandparents (Japan and China) (%)

Japan		Between 5 pm and 5:59 pm	Between 6 pm and 6:59 pm	After 7:00 pm
Do household chores	Very often	11.4	13.8	18.5
	Sometimes	10.1	13.8	18.5
	Very often + Sometimes	21.5	27.6	37.0
Take the subject child to/from the child care facility	Very often	9.0	15.6	17.6
	Sometimes	11.5	18.0	19.6
	Very often + Sometimes	20.5	33.6	37.2
Babysit the subject child	Very often	10.1	14.6	24.1
	Sometimes	38.0	33.1	27.8
	Very often + Sometimes	48.1	47.7	51.9

China		Between 5 pm and 5:59 pm	Between 6 pm and 6:59 pm	After 7:00 pm
Do household chores	Very often	59.2	68.8	74.3
	Sometimes	14.9	12.4	10.0
	Very often + Sometimes	74.1	81.2	84.3
Take the subject child to/from the child care facility	Very often	58.7	73.1	77.4
	Sometimes	18.4	12.3	11.0
	Very often + Sometimes	77.1	85.4	88.4
Babysit the subject child	Very often	54.1	69.5	74.5
	Sometimes	27.7	18.8	15.9
	Very often + Sometimes	81.8	88.3	90.4

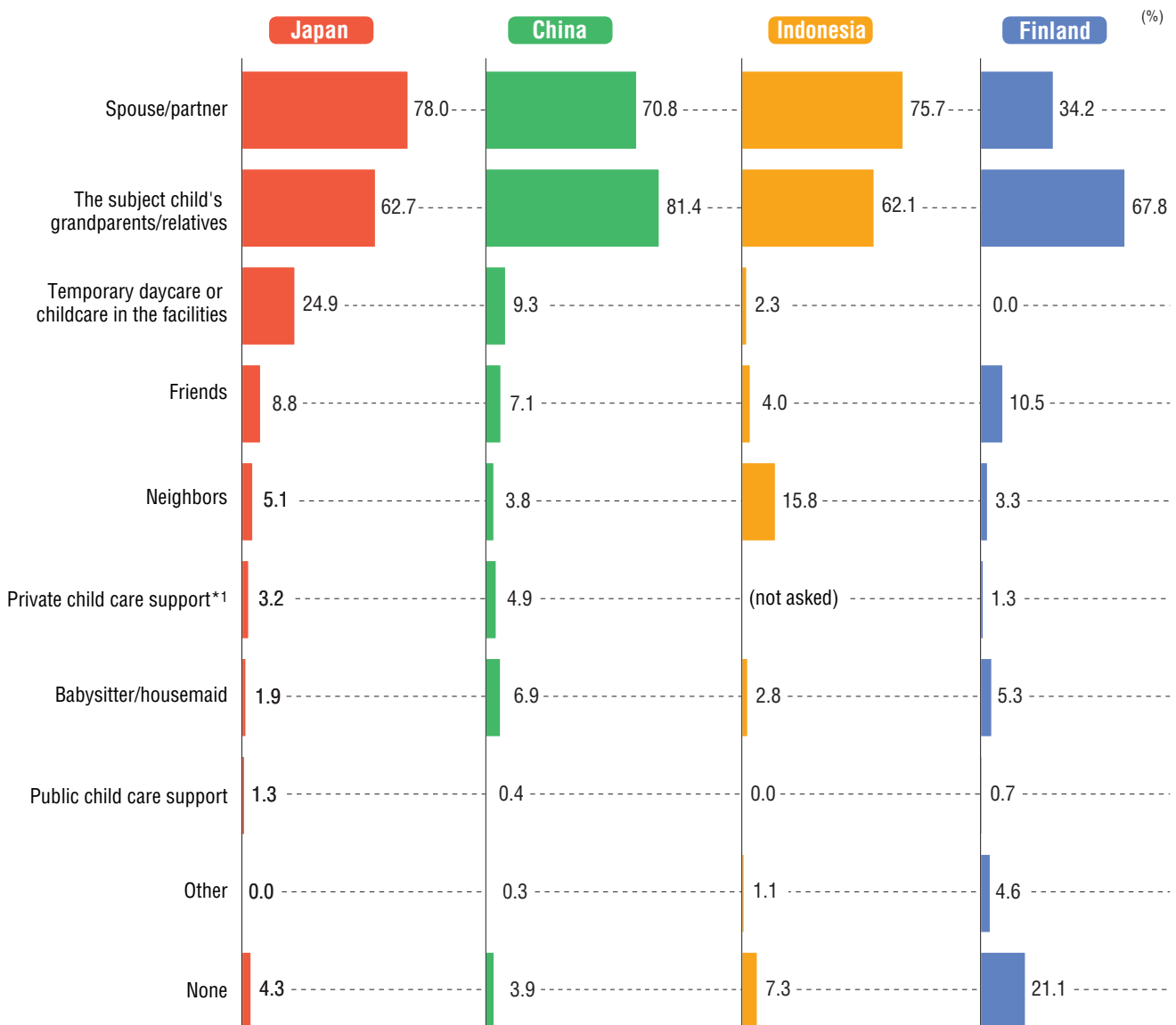
Japan recorded the second highest in receiving advice about the subject child, following China. Indonesia, generally, records a low frequency of receiving grandparents' support. Finland marked the second highest rate of getting grandparents' support in babysitting the subject child, following China. According to the supervisors of the country's survey, it seems the grandparents provide support especially when mothers go out with their spouse/partner, or during the summer holidays of the childcare.

4-5 Childcare Providers Apart from Mothers

In all the four countries, 70% of the respondents' "spouse/partners" (apart from Finland), and 60%-80% of the respondents' "subject child's grandparents/relatives" take care of the children. In addition to the family members, 24.9% of Japanese mothers selected "temporary day care or childcare in a kindergarten," 15.8% of Indonesian mothers answered "neighbors," and 10.5% of Finnish mothers said "friends." In addition, 21.1% of Finnish mothers answered "none."

Q Please list all individuals other than yourself, organizations, and services involved in looking after the subject child, when the subject child is not at a childcare facility (e.g. kindergarten).

Figure 4-5-1 Childcare providers apart from mothers



* Multiple answers

*1: "Private childcare support" is not on the list of items in the Indonesian questionnaire.

When asked in the multiple-choice questions regarding the childcare providers apart from mothers, more than 60% of the respondents answered "the subject child's grandparents/relatives" in all the four countries, with the highest rate of 81.4% in China. In Japan, China, and Indonesia, "spouse/partner" records more than 70%, while Finland turns out rather low (34.2%) for this question. In reality, however, fathers in Finland are engaged in childcare on a daily basis (ref. p.22), and the supervisors of the Finland survey mentioned that the Finnish respondents could have regarded the answer option of "spouse/partner" as a "divorced husband," considering the situation that

father's participation in childcare is taken for granted, and both parents together play an important role in childrearing even after divorce. This question item, as for childcare providers other than family members, particularly characterized the differences in each country. The Japanese mothers utilize "temporary daycare or childcare in a kindergarten" (24.9%), and the Indonesian mothers receive support from "neighbors" (15.8%). The Finnish mothers seem to help "friends" (10.5%) with each other in picking up and dropping off for enrichment lessons and programs, according to the supervisors of the Finland survey.

4-6 The Satisfaction Level of Life for Working Mothers

Among the four countries, the working mothers in Japan tend to record markedly low rates in the question items: satisfaction with their parenting, household chores, current work, the balance between work and family life, and their life in general. In Japan, the more fathers engage in household chores such as "clean up the kitchen after meals," "take out garbage," and "do laundry," the higher is the level of satisfaction in the balance between work and family life recorded by mothers.

Q Please tell us about your satisfaction level of the following aspects of your current life.

Figure 4-6-1 Parenting my child



Figure 4-6-4 The balance between work and family life

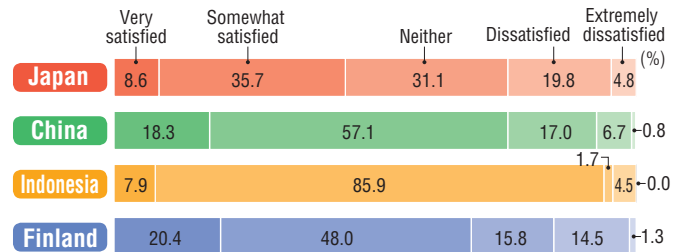


Figure 4-6-2 Household chores

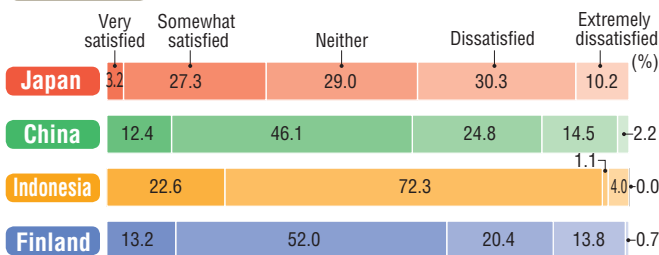


Figure 4-6-5 My life in general

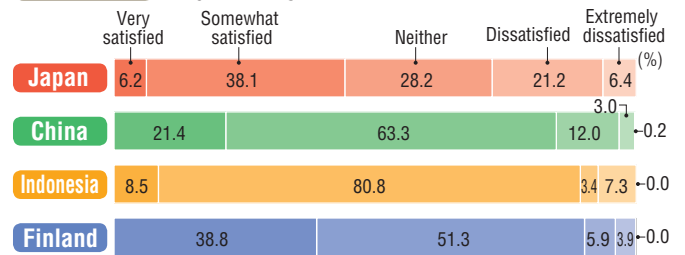


Figure 4-6-3 My current work

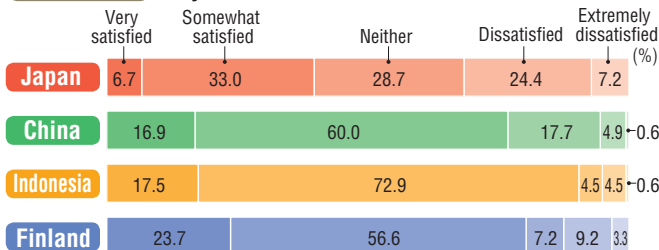
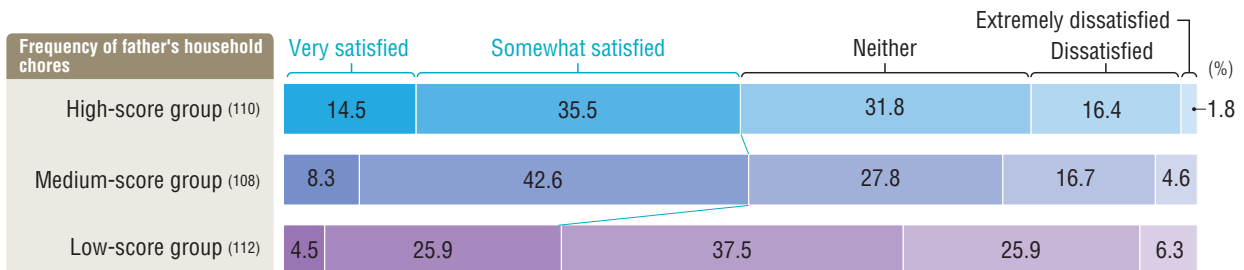


Figure 4-6-6 Frequency of father's household chores and satisfaction level of mother's work and family life



* Father's household-chose score: As for the three items of "clean up the kitchen after meals," "take out garbage," and "do laundry," 4 points are allocated for "almost every day," 3 points for "3-5 times per week," 2 points for "once or twice a week," and 1 point for "seldom," and the average scores were calculated accordingly. Then, the average scores were divided into three groups so as to provide an even distribution, and categorized as "High-score," "Medium-score," and "Low-score" groups.

Among all the four countries, the satisfaction levels of Japanese mothers are markedly low in parenting, household chores, current work, and the balance between work and family life. Looking at the percentage between "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied," in many questions, Indonesian and Finnish mothers show high levels of satisfaction.

Regarding the Japanese mothers' level of satisfaction in the balance between work and family life, the level tends to increase in the case that

fathers show high frequency of engagement in household chores that can be done after arriving home late, such as "clean up the kitchen after meals," "take out garbage," and "do laundry." Although Japanese fathers might find it difficult to take on roles in parenting or preparing meals during weekdays, it can be inferred that they maintain the balance of work and family life for mothers by doing other household chores in which they can take part.

"Team Parenting" Increases the Satisfaction Level of Work and Life Balance

Kiyomi Akita, Professor, Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo



The survey shows that the level of satisfaction in the work-life balance of Japanese mothers recorded the lowest among the four countries, and the result is fairly remarkable. Such international comparison again revealed another remaining issue in Japan. Mothers in China arrive home later than those in Japan. However, the percentage of mothers living with grandparents is much higher in China, and grandparents provide assistance with housework and childrearing to a large extent. Also, the positive attitude of fathers in Japan, who try to cooperate in parenting and household chores at their best, even when they arrive home latest among the four countries was revealed in the survey. Such a result that "the more fathers engage in the household chores that they can do as part of family, the higher the level of satisfaction of mothers" means that a couple, as a team, supporting each other in parenting and housework, could increase mothers' satisfaction. Similarly, the study shows that mothers in Japan make higher use of services such as temporary daycare at childcare facilities compared to other countries. This shows the importance of effective use of childcare support provided by communities, as well as the necessity for the government to develop such services and programs. It can be said that team parenting, in which couples, relatives and community members share the tasks in childrearing, without isolating mothers, is necessary to further increase the level of satisfaction of mother's work-life balance. It is expected that the increased

level of mother's work-life balance will also nurture contentment and close relationship for both fathers and children in a good atmosphere.

At the same time, when thinking of work-life balance, it is necessary to consider the father's side as well. To that purpose, first, our society as a whole should give thorough thought to father's time of arriving home, based on the data collected through such international comparative research. Productivity and efficiency of our work style will be in question. With a view to increasing the work and life balance on both mother's and father's sides, dialogue between a husband and wife is also important, to understand each other's family visions as well as desirable role-sharing in household chores, parenting, and work. In addition, it is worth considering the long-term visions of work and life balance, along with the different stages of child's growth. The key to realize that is not only held by couples themselves, and it is critical for them to gather information on how to make use of various outsourcing services and how to get support from relatives, friends, and local communities. Together with enriching individual happiness and contentment, I regard it to be also important to enhance happiness and contentment among the members in the family and society as a whole, by fulfilling both parenting and housework.

A Thought on the Work and Life Balance for Mothers of Young Children in China

Mariko Ichimi, Senior Researcher, National Institute for Educational Policy Research



I watched the documentary film "The Beginning of Life" (directed by Estela Renner, 2016, Brazil), which is now earning itself a good reputation after its release in Japan last year. The film, co-funded by UNICEF, well described how significant it is for infants to spend time with their parents or rearers, through strong evidence and on-site information gathering. China is the only country selected from East Asia, as an exemplar case at the frontier of childrearing, among the nine countries represented in the film. Moreover, it shows the simple attitude of grandparents, who seriously, more than the parents, take roles in childrearing with full of dreams. Bearing this in mind, let us look at the research findings.

Among the targeted countries, around 60% of the Chinese working mothers are "living with own or spouse's/partner's parents," and more than 80% of mothers indicate "grandparents and relatives" as child care providers on a daily basis. Both of China's percentages of children living with grandparents, and of mothers depending on grandparents for childrearing are absolutely in a top position. Those mothers were born after the 1980s, as the one-child policy generation, and apparently their grandparents seem to engage in "skipped-generation parenting." In addition, China records the highest rate (12%) of working mothers not living with their children, which implies that grandparents and relatives take part in childrearing on behalf of mothers.

Furthermore, the home-arrival time of working mothers in China is rather late among the surveyed countries, thus the mothers spend the shortest amount of time with their children. During that short period of time, the mothers seem to focus on upbringing of the subject child and educational approaches as well as collecting information on education, rather than looking after their daily habits that can be taken care of by other supporters. Apparently, these Chinese mothers were encouraged to place importance on their own intellectual development, study and work, during their own growing process; in the same way, they seem to be involved in their field of strengths when childrearing.

Let's say, on the other hand, the generation of the grandmothers were urban, full-time

workers during the transition period from China's planned economy of a socialistic society to a market economy. Most of them must have been working mothers who left their children to other family members, babysitters, daycare centers or kindergartens to accomplish their work life, and retired at around the age of 55 or before. After retirement, the chances of rearing children themselves have come again. While their health is still good, it is often said that it turns out to be a new joy of life after retirement. From the above, it is fairly understandable that the aforementioned film did reporting from China to emphasize the fact that "grandparents also take on significant roles in childrearing."

As a matter of fact, specialists often emphasize the problems of childrearing done only by grandparents, or the importance of children spending time with their mothers. Mothers themselves thus cannot be blindly passing their parenting responsibilities to other people. However, devoting the attentions only to their children is unrealistic for mothers taking part in a highly competitive work environment, and one can see such a situation in the ambivalent responses in "Working Mothers' Awareness on Parenting." (*1)

Finally, as for the husband's (father's) participation in housework and childrearing, which is deeply related to the mother's emotional stability, the "Questionnaire on Daily Life of Children in Five East Asian Cities: Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, and Taipei" conducted in 2005 (*2) and "Survey of Father's Views on Childrearing in Japan - A Comparative Study of Fathers in Four East Asian Cities" conducted in 2010 (*3), revealed that the life of fathers in China seemed more carefree when compared to that in Japan, taking "early home-returning time," "lengths of time engaged in household chores and parenting," and "daily partnership with wives" for example. However, this international comparative survey shows that fathers in China arrive home later than before, with less time spent with their children, and they also appear to take roles in upbringing and playing with their children, with the daily support from grandparents and home electronic appliances, just as mothers do. (→ P.27)

Hope for "Work Style Reforms" to Realize Parents Arriving Home Early so that Both Can Participate in Childrearing

Seiko Mochida, Senior Researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

The long duration of working hours in Japan and its impact on the participation in childrearing is thought to have contributed to the decline in the birth rate. In this survey, the working mothers and fathers in Japan (Tokyo metropolitan area) turned out to arrive home later, in the four countries researched. As a result, Japan marked the lowest in the time spent with children, particularly during weekdays when fathers are at work. Also, the frequency of father's engagement in childrearing is lower in comparison with other countries. On the other hand, the frequency of Japanese fathers participating in household chores "3-5 times a week" such as "clean up the kitchen after meals," "do laundry," and "take out garbage" is the second highest, following Finnish fathers who arrive home the earliest. In particular, "do laundry" scored the highest in the four countries. Such housework can be done even when fathers arrive home late. Accordingly, it can be inferred that working mothers in Japan who do not receive daily support from grandparents, unlike those in China,

mainly take part in childrearing after work, while fathers take charge in housework, which is not restricted by the time of arrival at home.

The result shows the lowest level of satisfaction of Japanese mothers in terms of the balance between work and family life among the four countries researched. It can be considered that various factors contributed to the low level of satisfaction. However, the survey also points out that mother's satisfaction level could increase in accordance with the father's increased participation in household chores.

It is desirable that the "Work Style Reforms" help create an environment in which Japanese fathers arrive home earlier, spend more time with their children, and cooperate with mothers in childrearing. I hope that this survey provides good food for thought in searching for better balance in which mothers and fathers share housework and childrearing together in the Japanese society where double-career households are rapidly increasing.

The research presents the situation where the changes in working conditions due to rapid improvement in information technologies, as well as the generation alternation of parents group, have brought about another change in the work and life balance of mothers in childrearing. At the same time, the findings also revealed that the tradition of "culture of nurturance" in China, where multiple generations cooperate together for the growth of the next

generation, is still ingrained even in such a rapidly changing era.

*1: In the two-alternative questions between "a mother should always stay with her child until s/he is around 3 years old" and "it is OK if a mother is not always around her child as long as she raises him/her with love," 80% of the working mothers in China selected the former.

*2 and *3: conducted by Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

Work and Life Balance in Indonesia

Sofia Hartati, Dean, Faculty of Education, State University of Jakarta



From the International Survey Research on Home Education in Early Childhood, I concluded that Indonesian women show a relatively high level of satisfaction regarding work and childrearing, among the targeted four countries. This is related to factors in the data such as the time mothers spend with their children, do household chores, arrive home from work, and the support gained from their family members including spouses/partners. The trend of working mothers in Indonesia is basically the same as the survey results. That is, women in Indonesia have a high level of contentment with both their work and family life. The traditional teachings in Indonesian culture say that women should do housework, engage in childrearing, and take care of their spouse/partners.

As for the father's engagement in household chores, it is less common for males to clean the house or do the dishes or laundry, take the garbage out, or prepare meals. In Indonesia, males are expected to act as breadwinners to financially support the family, and thus females take care of the household chores. However, in response to the changing era, women also need to work to improve the economic status of the family, in addition to being a good housewife. Such contradicting situations of the changing society casting over traditional culture, women in Indonesia are currently forced to take on double responsibilities of work and family.

Working mothers in Jakarta arrive home earlier than fathers, so that they can take care of childrearing and house work such as meal preparation. On the other hand, fathers arrive home later than mothers so that they earn more income for the family members. By the time the fathers arrive home, mothers will have finished most of the housework, and thus fathers help out with only the remaining chores.

During weekdays, the time parents spend with children are only during breakfast (from 6 am to 7 am) and after they arrive home until the child goes to bed (from 4 pm to 9 pm), which means around 5 to 6 hours regularly. During weekends, more time can be spent with children, but from time to time parents engage in other activities without children. Some mothers go shopping for the family, some fathers work second jobs, or others might simply take some rest

at home. Nonetheless, they basically spend time with their families on weekends/holidays.

In Indonesia, neighbors play highly important social roles in childrearing. Our culture encourages us to be kind and warm-hearted, willing to help each other. Therefore, it is commonly seen that children play around together with neighboring families when one's parents are out at work. Children seldom play alone, but play with a couple or more of their neighboring friends.

Grandparents are expected to look after children and help with the household chores rather than provide financial support.

In Indonesia, married and independent couples do not receive financial aid from the parents. Of course, it depends on the economic status of the grandparents, so if the grandparents are fairly well off, they might help their children both financially and practically. On the contrary, if the economic status of the grandparents is rather restricted, the parent generation offers financial assistance to the grandparent generation on a regular basis. The grandparents usually live at their own home if there is someone who can take care of them. If they have nobody around to be looked after, in many cases the grandparents live with their married daughters. From the standpoint of the Indonesian culture and religion, children should respect and take care of their parents. The reason why the parents choose to live with their daughters is that we regard houses to be owned by females, as daughters take on more housework and deal with family issues more than males. Therefore, in Indonesia, grandparents on the mother's side generally look after their grandchildren when the mothers go out to work, which is considered safe and reliable.

As shown in the data collected from the International Survey Research on Home Education in Early Childhood, it is accurate to say that women in Indonesia have a high level of satisfaction with work and family. To offer future prospects, I propose to conduct research on the roles of grandparents and community in childrearing.

A Peek into the Life of Finnish Families with Preschool-age Children

Sirkku Kupiainen, Special Adviser(right) & Risto Hotulainen, Associate Professor(left)
Centre for Educational Assessment, University of Helsinki



The International Survey Research on Home Education in Early Childhood opens a captivating comparative view into the lives of Finnish children and families. The survey also shows interesting cultural differences between Finland and the participating Asian countries in childrearing practices and in factors affecting family life.

Even if the survey covered only mothers whose child was in daycare, the share of mothers working full time was almost twice as high in Finland as it was in Japan and three times as high as it was in Indonesia. Only in China their share was close to that in Finland (78 % vs. 89 %). The share of full time employed fathers was almost equally high in all countries, however.

One explanation to the difference between Finnish and Japanese mothers seems to be that despite the full-day work, four out of five Finnish mothers arrived home before five o'clock, whereas almost as many of the Japanese mothers returned home only after five, a majority of them an hour or more later. Furthermore, in Finland, also half of the fathers arrived home from work before five o'clock, making the difference in parents' arriving home from work the widest between Finnish and Japanese fathers.

It is thus evident that the Finnish world of work differs greatly from the Japanese in the length of working hours, allowing Finnish parents more time to spend with their children. The shorter working hours are also reflected in other factors related to family life. Live-in grandparents are almost non-existent in Finland, and few families need to rely on outside caretakers on a regular basis. Instead, parents often share childcare with one parent taking the child or children to daycare and the other bringing them back, thus allowing both longer workdays without extending the child's time in daycare. Most daycare facilities also close at 5 pm, so there is no option for parents other than to fetch the children at that time. Moreover, no child or parent wants to be always the last one. Consequently, Finnish parents – both mothers and fathers – seem to spend more time with their children than Asian parents.

The role of grandparents in families' lives seems also to differ between Finland and the participating Asian countries. If the grandparents live close by, they might help families in taking children to after-school activities, but few parents resort to the help of their parents on a daily basis. Collaboration with the parents of the other children is quite common, however, in taking children to football practice or other such activities. Most parents value grandparents highly, however. Grandparents often act as a resource for vacation times when schools are closed but parents are at work.

Finnish parents – also fathers – clearly spend more time with their offspring than their Asian counterparts and, unlike for them, this often includes a lot of outdoor activities. This emphasis on outdoors begins early in Finland with babies often napping in their prams on the balcony or in the courtyard, also in the sub-zero temperatures of the Finnish winter. Outdoor activities play a large role also in the daycare centers' daily schedules.

The survey also reveals that Finnish mothers and fathers have relative equality regarding household chores and the many activities parents do with their children. However, as in the other countries, mothers still seem to carry the main burden especially of the former. In this, the results reinforce national studies' picture of just partial gender equality in Finnish families.

Likewise, the results regarding mothers' overall life satisfaction confirm earlier Finnish and comparative studies. They, too, show, that Finnish people on the whole and parents among them are generally very satisfied with their lives even if parents of small children do feel tension with balancing work and children. Maybe this is why – with financial support from the state and municipalities – Finnish mothers tend to stay home longer with small children than mothers in most Western nations, an aspect missed by the present survey, presented to mothers through public daycare centers.

“International Survey Research on Home Education in Early Childhood Parents in Four Countries”

List of Survey Planners, Analyzers, and Collaborators

● Supervisors on Overall Project and Survey in Japan

Takashi Muto (Research Professor at Shiraume Gakuen University Graduate School)

Kiyomi Akita (Professor at the University of Tokyo)

Mariko Ichimi (Senior Researcher at National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

Yoichi Sakakihara (Professor Emeritus at Ochanomizu University/Director of Child Research Net)

Misako Aramaki (Associate Professor at Mejiro University)

◆ Design and Analysis

Haruo Kimura (Chief researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute)

Junko Takaoka (Chief researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute)

Seiko Mochida (Senior researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute)

Mieko Sanada (Senior researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute)

Yukiko Kuboki (Researcher, Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute until March, 2018)

Satoko Tamura

◆ Collaboration

Aiping Liu (Senior researcher, Child Research Net)

Junko Ogawa (Researcher, Child Research Net)

Hatsue Ouchi (Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute)

● Supervisors and Collaborators in China

Jiaxiong Zhu (Professor Emeritus, East China Normal University)

Nianli Zhou (Professor, East China Normal University)

Yan Zhang (Professor, Beijing Normal University)

Hajime Ishiyama (General Manager, Shanghai Children's Epoch Benesse Culture Development Co. Ltd.)

Li Yu (Senior researcher, Shanghai Children's Epoch Benesse Culture Development Co. Ltd.)

Yinghua Deng (Researcher, Shanghai Children's Epoch Benesse Culture Development Co. Ltd.)

Naoko Kaneko

● Supervisors and Collaborators in Indonesia

Sofia Hartati (Dean, Faculty of Education, State University of Jakarta)

Mina Hattori (Professor of Anthropology of Education, Department of Educational Sciences, School of Education and Human Development, Nagoya University)

Gilang Yudhistira Suryadimulya, M.A. (Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Social and Lifelong Education Research laboratory (D3), Nagoya University)

El Amanda de Yurie Arrafajr Suryadimulya (Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Nagoya University)

● Supervisors and Collaborators in Finland

Risto Hotulainen (Associate Professor, University of Helsinki, Centre for Educational Assessment)

Sirkku Kupiainen (Special Adviser, University of Helsinki, Centre for Educational Assessment)

Kuniko Shimomura

*Affiliations and titles are current as of the date of publication.

- For quotations, reprinting and related research in the results of this survey, see the Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute website.

<http://berd.benesse.jp/>

- For information on surveys conducted through visits to childcare and education facilities and homes in China, Indonesia and Finland, see the “Current Situation Regarding Children's ‘Attitudes of Learning to Learn’” on the Child Research Net website.

<https://www.childresearch.net/projects/ecec/attitudes/>

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