

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

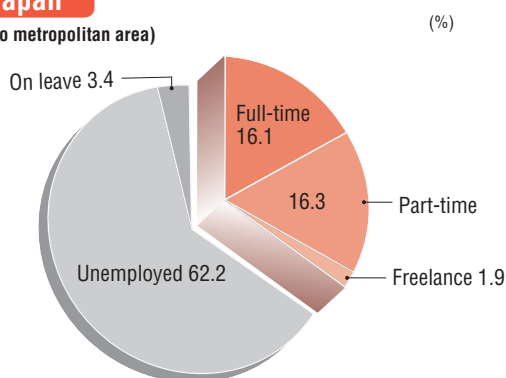
- Mothers who selected "full-time employee," "part-time employee," and "freelance including working at home office."

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

The employment status of mothers

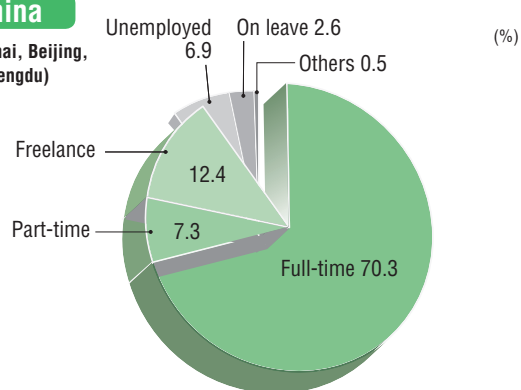
Japan

(Tokyo metropolitan area)



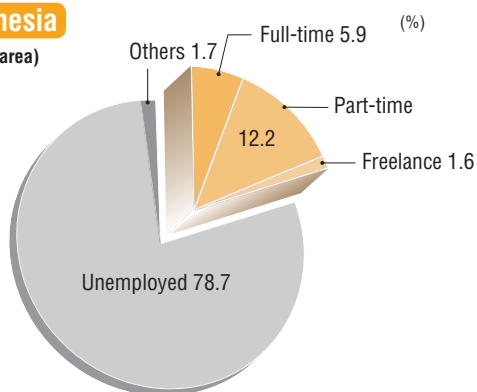
China

(Shanghai, Beijing, and Chengdu)



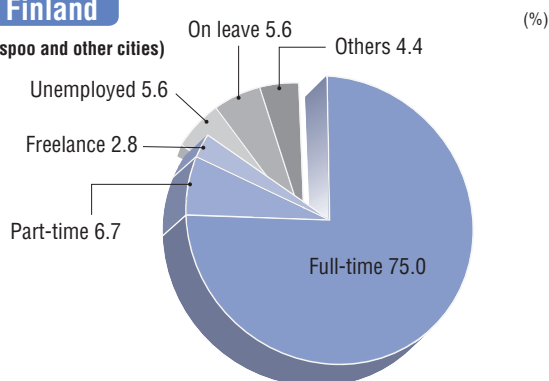
Indonesia

(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

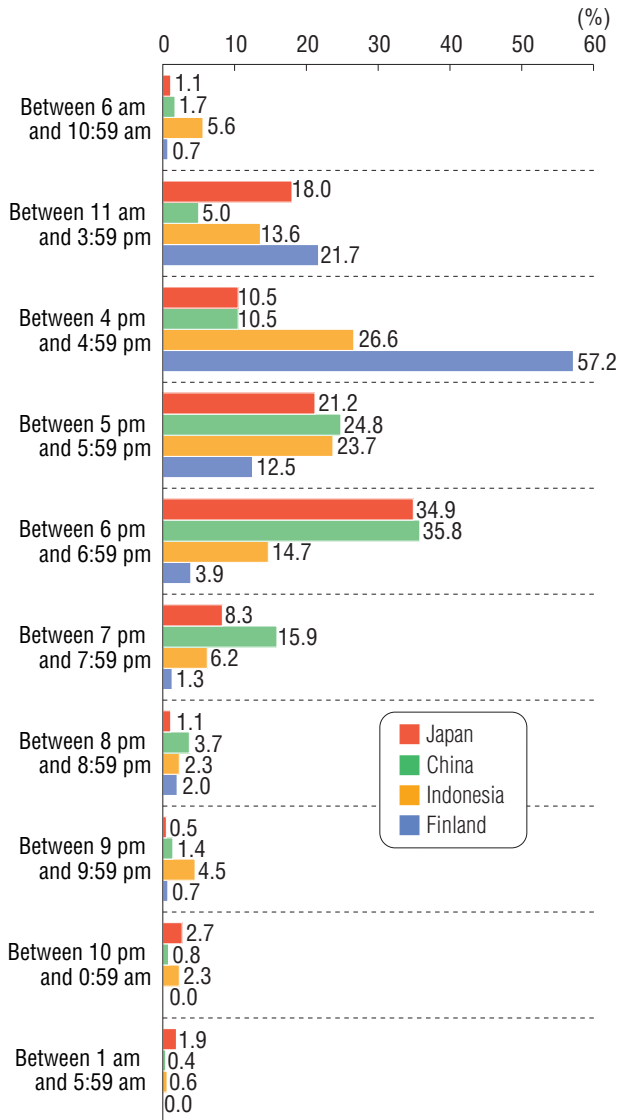
Japan	: 9.9%
China	: 54.5%
Indonesia	: 35.6%
Finland	: 0.7%

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.

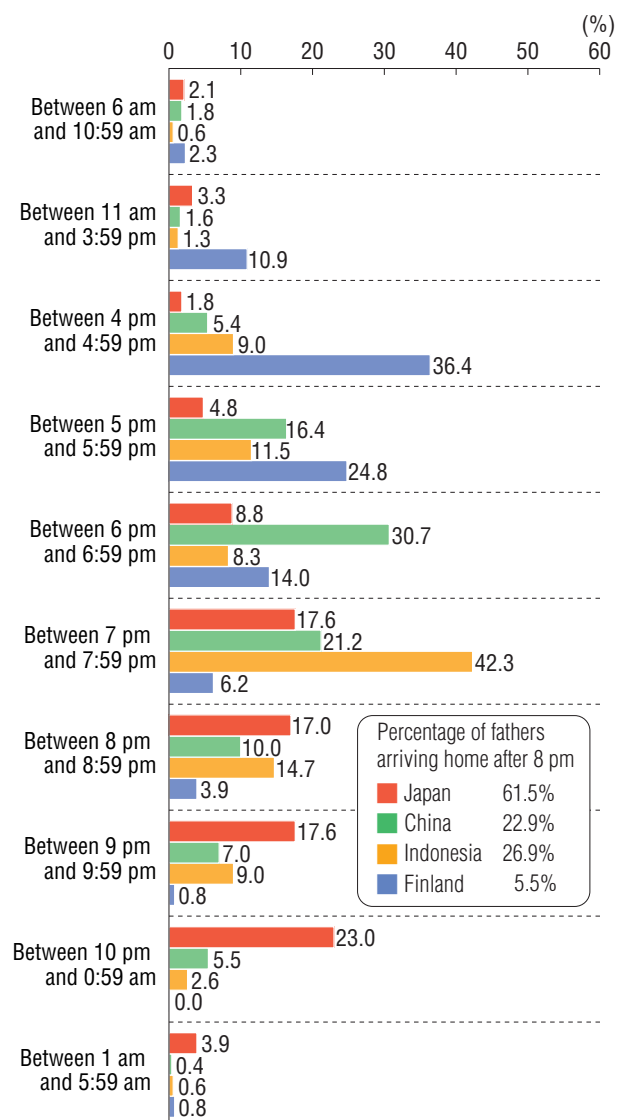
Q On average, what time do you arrive home from work?

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



Percentage of fathers arriving home after 8 pm

Japan	61.5%
China	22.9%
Indonesia	26.9%
Finland	5.5%

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)

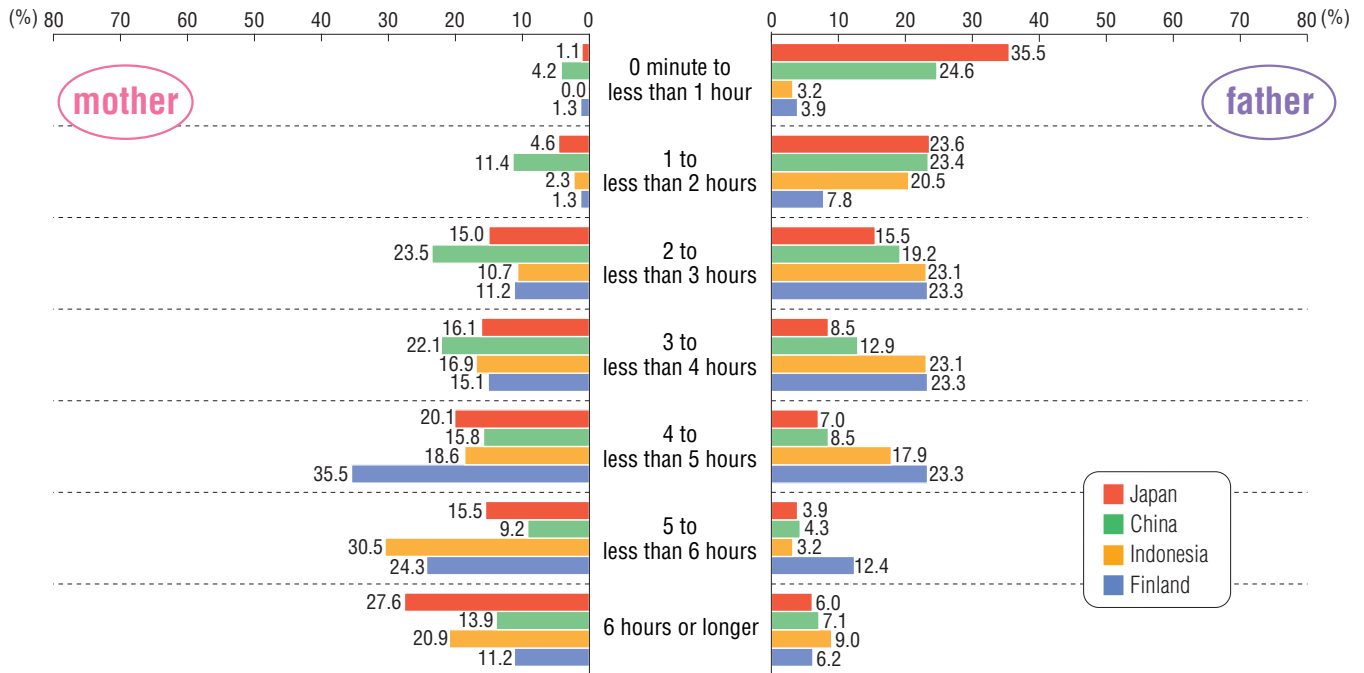
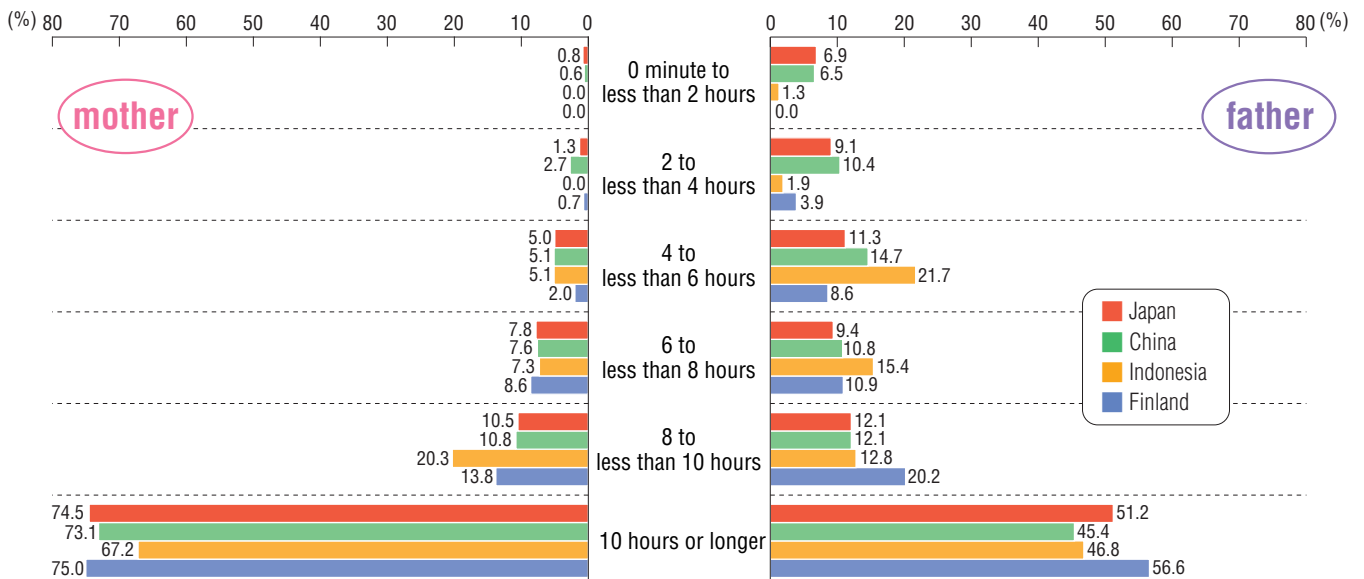


Figure 4-2-2 Time spent with the subject child: weekends



* 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

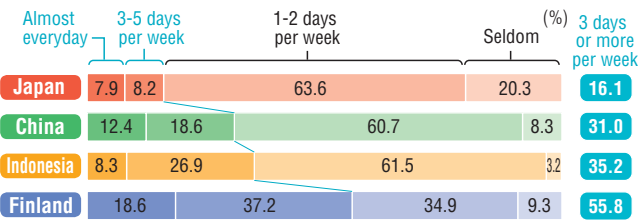


Figure 4-3-2 Play with the child indoors

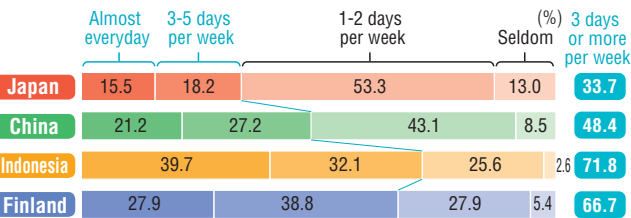


Figure 4-3-3 Praise/scold the child

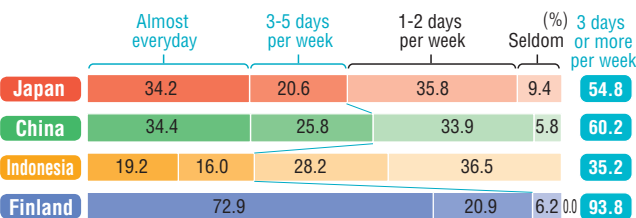
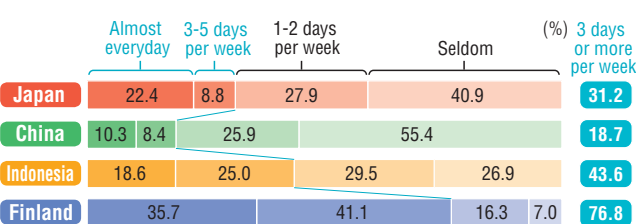


Figure 4-3-4 Help the child go to sleep



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

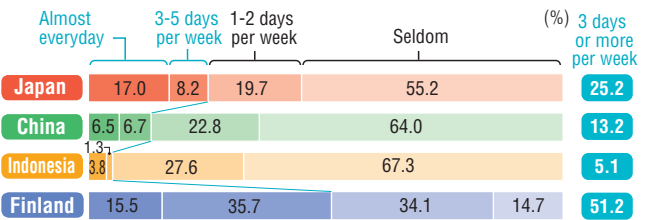


Figure 4-3-6 Clean up the kitchen after meals

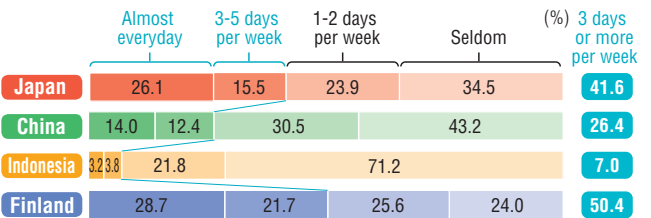


Figure 4-3-7 Take out garbage

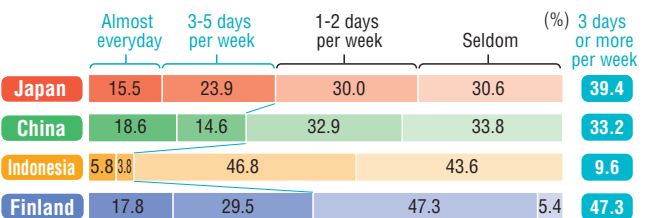
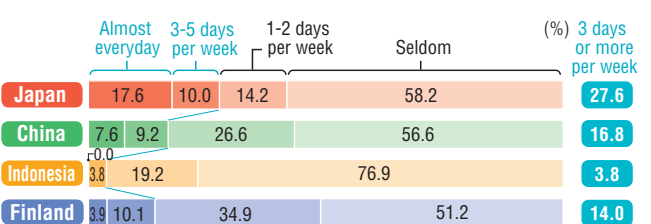


Figure 4-3-8 Do laundry



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

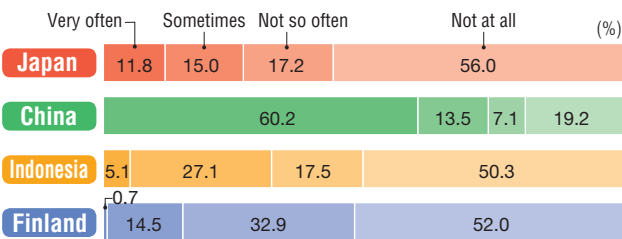
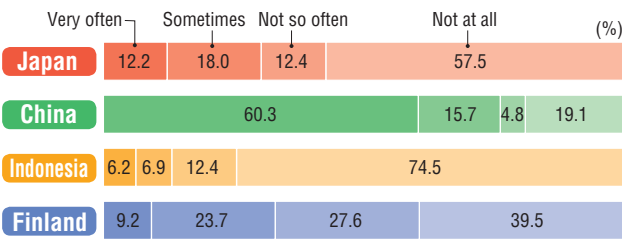


Figure 4-4-5 Support the subject child financially



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

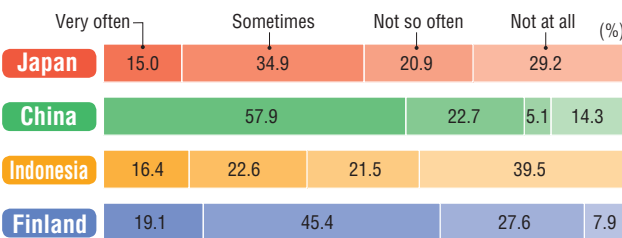
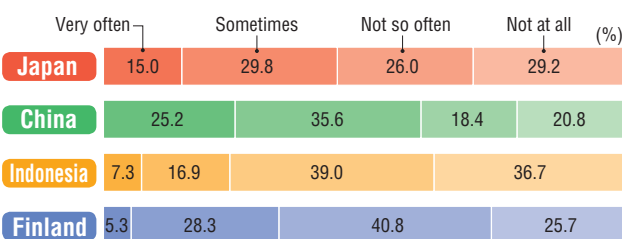


Figure 4-4-4 Give advice about the subject child



* "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

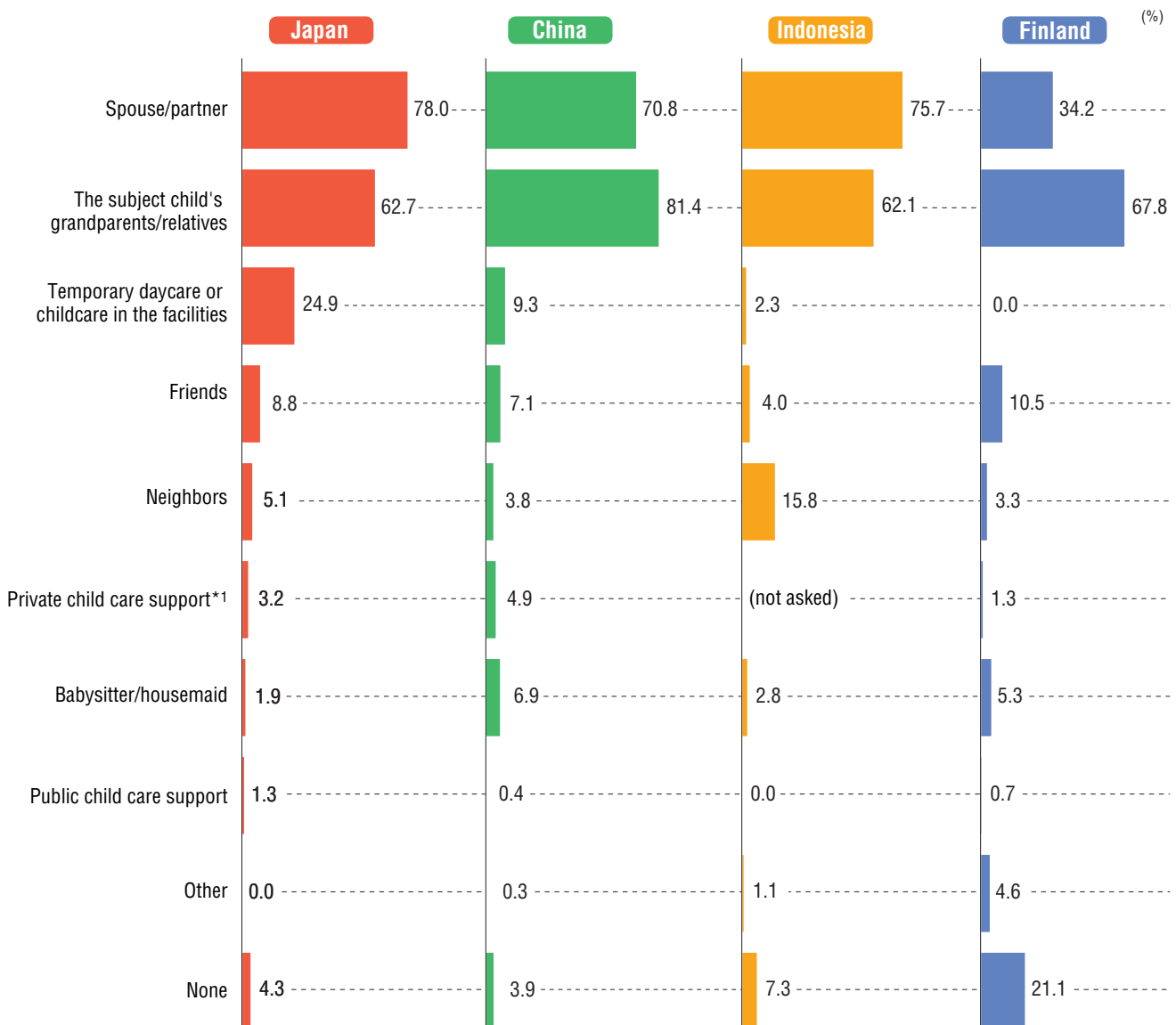
Japan recorded the second highest in receiving advice about the subject child, following China. Indonesia, generally, records a low frequency of receiving grandparents' support. Finland marked the second highest rate of getting grandparents' support in babysitting the subject child, following China. 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

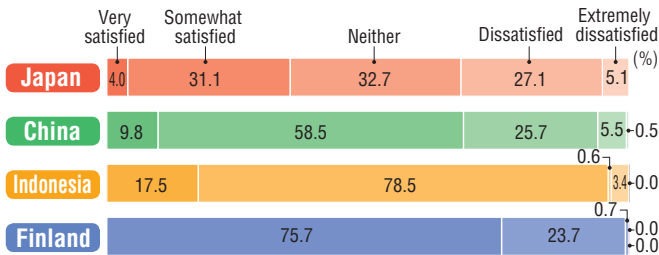


Figure 4-6-4 The balance between work and family life

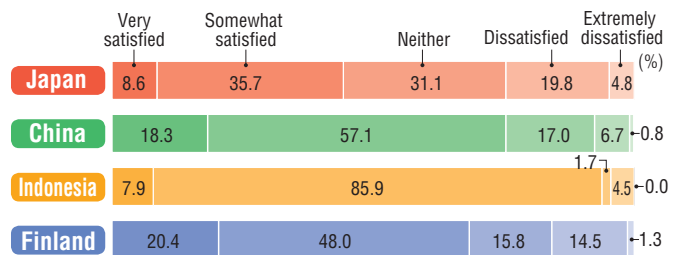


Figure 4-6-2 Household chores

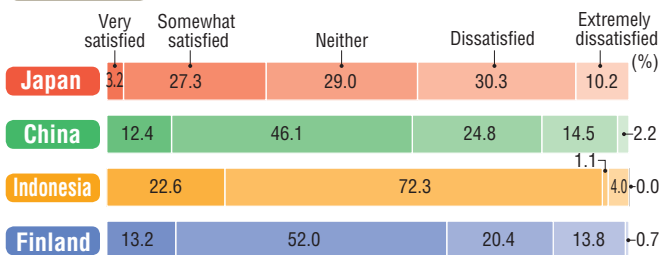


Figure 4-6-5 My life in general

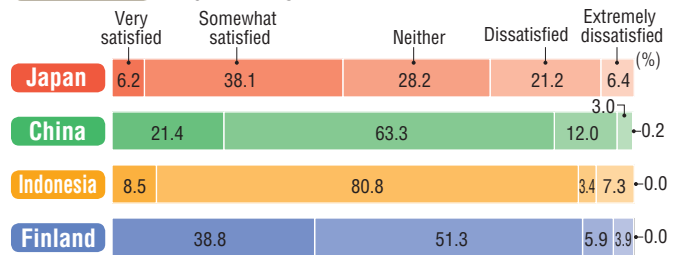


Figure 4-6-3 My current work

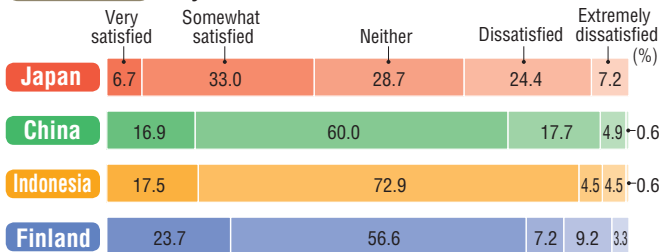
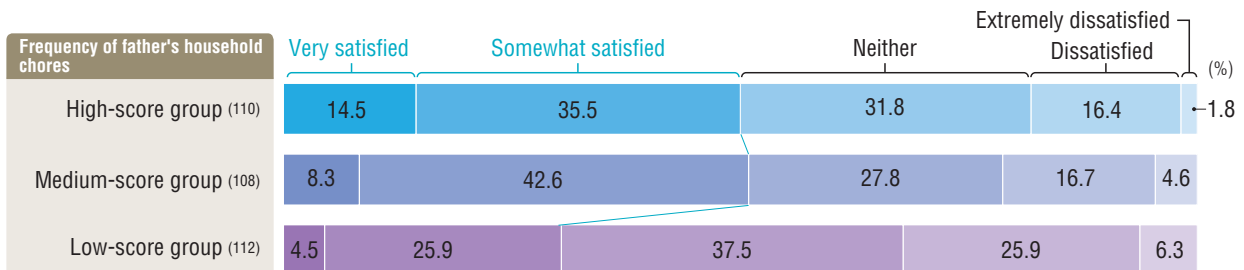


Figure 4-6-6 Frequency of father's household chores and satisfaction level of mother's work and family life



* 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.