

Chapter 2 Everyday Life of Parents and Children

1. Time Spent Together with Children (How) (Q4)

Q4 [card2]

When spending time with (name of child), what sort of things do you do? Choose from the following options all of the things that you do often. (Multiple answer)

- 1 We have meals together
- 2 I help her/him get changed / I get his /her clothes ready for changing
- 3 We play together
- 4 We talk
- 5 We watch the same TV programs
- 6 I teach about housework / we do housework together
- 7 I teach about work other than housework/we do it together
- 8 I help her/him with schoolwork / I help her/him study
- 9 I teach sports/we do sports together
- 10 I teach hobbies/we do hobbies together
- 11 I drop off and pick her/him up at nursery/school
- 12 We go places together
- 13 We sleep in the same room
- 14 I bathe her/him / we bathe together
- 15 I am in a place where I can see her/him
- 16 Other (please specify)

(1) Things to do together with children

We asked parents what sort of things they do when spending time with children, by having them choose from 15 answers. Table 2-1 shows the percentage of answers by country. In Japan, parents answered: “we have meals together” (93%), “we talk” (91%), “we watch the same TV programs” (84%), and “we go places together” (83%). For the other five countries, although there are some differences in the order, the rankings of answers appear almost similar. The exception is that “we watch the same TV programs”(37%) ranked 10th in France.

Of the parents who answered “we sleep in the same room,” France (6%), the United States (14%), and Sweden (29%) all ranked at the lowest percentage. Especially in France,

a very small number of parents answered “we sleep in the same room.” On the other hand, more than half of parents answered “we sleep in same room” in Korea (58%), Japan (65%), and Thailand (78%), and this result has manifested into a difference in parent and child life styles between Western and Asian countries.

Table II-2-1 Time spending together with children (multiple answers) (%)

Ranking	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Having meals together 92.9	Having meals together 92.8	Talk 94.3	Having meals together 92.5	Having meals together 90.0	Having meals together 94.8
2nd	Talk 90.6	Talk 86.5	Play together 90.5	Go places together 86.8	Talk 78.8	Talk 82.0
3rd	Watch TV 84.2	Watch TV 85.5	Having meals together 90.4	Talk 84.0	Play together 73.2	外出する 79.8
4th	Go places together 82.6	Go places together 82.9	Watch TV 90.4	Play together 81.7	Go places together 72.1	Play together 64.7
5th	Play together 75.2	Play together 78.3	Sleep in the same room 77.8	Watch TV 68.2	Teach hobbies 57.3	Watch TV 64.6
6th	Bathe together 71.8	Bathe together 67.9	Go places together 62.1	Help with schoolwork 55.5	Drop off and pick up at school 56.7	Drop off and pick up at school 59.4
7th	Sleep in the same room 64.8	Help her/him get changed 60.5	Help her/him get changed 61.6	In a place where I can see 50.4	Help her/him get changed 46.9	Help her/him get changed 58.8
8th	In a place where I can see 55.5	Sleep in the same room 57.7	Help with schoolwork 53.4	Help her/him get changed 49.5	Help with schoolwork 44.4	Teach about housework 57.6
9th	Help her/him get changed 45.0	In a place where I can see 56.2	Teach about housework 51.9	Teach sport 49.5	Bathe together 40.0	In a place where I can see 56.4
10th	Help with schoolwork 42.4	Help with schoolwork 53.9	Bathe together 49.8	Teach hobbies 46.1	Watch TV 37.1	Bathe together 46.0
11th	Teach sport 38.0	Teach sport 36.8	In a place where I can see 36.8	Teach about housework 45.6	In a place where I can see 32.8	Help with schoolwork 44.5
12th	Teach about housework 36.5	Drop off and pick up at school 25.3	Drop off and pick up at school 33.6	Drop off and pick up at school 41.3	Teach about housework 24.2	Teach about other work 35.3
13th	Drop off and pick up at school 24.7	Teach hobbies 22.5	Teach about other work 30.2	Teach about other work 34.1	Teach sport 21.4	Teach hobbies 31.0
14th	Teach hobbies 24.6	Teach about other work 20.9	Teach sport 29.6	Bathe together 30.1	Teach about other work 17.7	Teach sport 30.0
15th	Teach about other work 21.6	Teach about housework 19.4	Teach hobbies 21.7	Sleep in the same room 14.0	Sleep in the same room 5.5	Sleep in the same room 29.1

In Japan, “I teach about work other than housework/we do it together” is the lowest in the ranking with 22%, and the percentages are also low in the other five countries. Moreover, although the parent who answered “I teach hobbies/we do hobbies together” seems low with 25% in Japan, the percentages are also less than 30% in Korea (23%) and Thailand (22%). It can be inferred that the relationship between Asian parents and children based on hobbies is relatively weak. Although not so high, 31% of parents in Sweden “teach hobbies/do hobbies together”, and the numbers go up to 57% in France and 46% in the United States. In addition, when comparing the item “I help with schoolwork / I help her/him study,” Japan has the lowest percentage among all the six countries with 42%. In Thailand (53%), Korea (54%), and the United States (56%), more than half of parents spent time to “help with schoolwork / help her/him study,” whereas parents are relatively less proactive in Japan, France (44%), and Sweden (45%) in this category.

Table II-2-2 [1994] Time spending together with children (multiple answers) (%)

(%)

Ranking	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Having meals together 91.8	Having meals together 89.1	Having meals together 88.3	Having meals together 93.1	Go place together 90.0	Having meals together 93.2
2nd	Talk 84.3	Watch TV 87.0	Talk 86.8	Go place together 91.1	Having meals together 89.9	Talk 77.1
3rd	Watch TV 82.8	Talk 80.8	Play together 82.4	Talk 88.9	Talk 89.8	Go place together 75.7
4th	Go place together 77.1	Play together 76.7	Sleep in the same room 71.5	Play together 84.7	Play together 86.8	Watch TV 72.4
5th	Bathe together 67.6	Go place together 75.3	Go place together 68.1	Watch TV 69.1	Watch TV 72.3	Play together 70.5
6th	Play together 64.1	Bathe together 62.9	Watch TV 67.9	Teach about housework 52.1	Help her/him get changed 56.9	Help her/him get changed 59.6
7th	Sleep in the same room 56.6	Help with schoolwork 58.4	Help her/him get changed 61.1	Help her/him get changed 52.0	Help with schoolwork 52.5	In a place where I can see her/him 50.8
8th	In a place where I can see 46.5	Sleep in the same room 57.4	Bathe together 50.0	In a place where I can see 50.0	Bathe together 50.3	Bathe together 48.6
9th	Help her/him get changed 39.4	Help her/him get changed 56.1	In a place where I can see 38.8	Teach sport 49.0	In a place where I can see 44.0	Drop off and pick 38.6
10th	Help with schoolwork 37.7	In a place where I can see 50.5	Teach about housework 37.0	Help with schoolwork 48.8	Drop off and pick up at school 43.4	Help with schoolwork 37.8
11th	Teach sport 31.4	Teach sport 19.1	Help with schoolwork 28.2	Teach about other work 42.8	Teach about housework 39.2	Teach about housework 36.7
12th	Teach about housework 30.6	Teach hobbies 18.6	Drop off and pick up at school 21.2	Teach hobbies 41.5	Teach sport 38.3	Teach sport 36.3
13th	Teach hobbies 19.7	Teach about housework 17.7	Teach about other work 20.0	Drop off and pick up at school 39.7	Teach hobbies 37.6	Teach about other work 27.6
14th	Teach about other work 17.4	Teach about other work 15.3	Teach sport 15.5	Bathe together 35.7	Teach about other work 24.8	Teach hobbies 23.6
15th	Drop off and pick up at school 15.7	Drop off and pick up at school 9.9	Teach hobbies 14.5	Sleep in the same room 11.7	Sleep in the same room 5.6	Sleep in the same room 19.6

In terms of housework, many parents in Thailand (52%) and Sweden (58%) answered for “I teach about housework/we do housework together,” whereas the percentages are around 20% in Korea (19%) and France (24%). Japan with 37% is also not too high.

Table II-2-2 shows the ranked results from the survey taken in 1994. To look at changes in the last 10 years, “drop off and pick up at school” has increased about 20% in Sweden, ranking up from 9th to 6th place. Although the same category has also increased by nearly 10% in Japan, it is still a shift in the lower ranking range from 15th to 13th place. In Korea, the ranking of “I help with school work” has become lower, and the rate has increased in Thailand.

(2) Things to do together with children by parents’ gender (Sensei, what about making this shorter – i.e. “Activities with children and the parents’ gender”?)

In table II-2-3, the percentage of fathers who participate in a certain activity is subtracted from that of mothers, and sorted by the percentages of Japan in descending order. In the case of Japan, there are 13 out of a total of 15 activity items wherein the percentage of mothers is larger than those of fathers. Most of all, “teach about housework/do housework together” shows the largest difference of 35% between mothers and fathers, followed by three activity items also showing more than a 20% difference between mothers and fathers: “help her/him get changed or get her/his clothes ready for changing,” “stay in places where I can see her/him,” and “sleep in the same room.” In addition, there is still a 10% or greater difference for “drop off and pick up at school” and “help with schoolwork/ do schoolwork together.” On the other hand, fathers show higher percentages than mothers do for two items: “play together” and “teach sports/play sports together.”

Korea shows “play together” as the only item that the percentage of fathers is higher than that of mothers. Similar to Japan, though there are some differences at different levels, it depicts the reality that mothers tend to spend more time with their children than fathers do. For the items where differences are large, “help her/him changed/ get her/his clothes ready for changing” shows the largest difference, followed by “stay in a place where I can see her/him,” “help with schoolwork,” and “bathe together.”

Thailand shows the most number of activity items where the percentage of fathers is high. Six out of fifteen items show the percentage of fathers is higher than those of mothers. The only item that shows more than a 20% difference is “Help her/him get

changed/get her/his clothes ready for changing,” and two items with over a 10% difference are “sleep in the same room” and “bathe together.” These statistics could be interpreted as either parental role sharing is quite open, or that the fathers’ involvement is high.

For the United States and Sweden, the only item with more than a 20% difference between mothers and fathers is “teach about housework,” and other items show relatively small differences between mothers and fathers, compared to Japan and Korea.

To summarize, parental role sharing by mothers and fathers in the three western countries is relatively open compared to Japan and Korea, though it could be assumed that mothers are taking a primary role in childcare in all six countries. This topic needs to be considered along with section 4 in this chapter.

Table II-2-3 Things to do together with children (delta % by gender)
(Percentage = [% of mother] - [% of father])

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
I teach about housework / we do housework together	35.4	19.9	9.6	27.2	15.5	20.8
I help her/him get changed/ I get her/his clothes ready for changing	27.8	34.8	20.4	11.5	19.8	7.5
I am in a place where I can see her/him	26.5	29.1	8.1	12.4	11.1	9.1
We sleep in the same room	20.8	16.2	10.8	7.6	5.5	0.1
I drop off and pick her/him up at childcare center/school	16.9	11.1	-1.5	10.2	9.0	11.3
I help with schoolwork / I help her/him study	16.5	24.1	4.9	12.9	13.9	4.6
We go place together	13.6	8.8	5.0	11.2	11.7	8.3
We talk	12.0	7.8	-1.7	7.8	16.6	9.5
We have meals together	10.0	3.7	1.8	2.9	7.0	4.1
I teach about work other than housework / we do it together	9.5	13.8	5.8	12.4	-1.8	5.3
I teach hobbies / we do hobbies together	5.9	2.7	-1.0	8.6	0.1	0.4
I bather her/him / we bathe together	5.0	23.2	11.4	11.6	15.7	8.7
We watch the same TV programs	3.9	2.3	-2.6	4.8	7.9	1.3
I teach sport / we do sport together	-2.6	1.6	-4.2	-3.4	-17.8	-3.6
We play together	-3.0	-0.7	-0.8	0.2	-3.5	-8.5

(3)Activities with children by age of child (Table II-2-1)

Looking at notable items by age of child in Table II-2-1, the younger the child, the higher the percentages of such items as “bathe her/him / bathe together,” “Sleep in the same room,” “help her/him get changed/ get her/his clothes ready for changing,” and “play together” in all six countries. On the other hand, there is a large difference among the six countries for the item of “help with schoolwork/help her/him study” for children ages 0 - 6. Particularly for ages between 0 and 3, France is the least with 1%, Sweden at 2%, the U.S. at 7%, and Japan with 9%; they all are less than 10%, whereas it is more than 20% in Thailand and Korea. Moreover, there are also significant differences for ages between 4 and 6 among the countries. In ascending order the percentages are Sweden 9%, France 29%, Japan 39%, the U.S. 56%, Korea 66%, and Thailand 69%. Sweden is quite interesting as to “help with schoolwork/help her/him study.” When a child is 6 years old or younger, the percentage of “help with schoolwork/help her/him study” is less than 10%, but the percentage increases dramatically to approximately 80% for children 7 years old or older.

Fig. II-2-1 Things to do together with children (multiple answers) [by child's age]

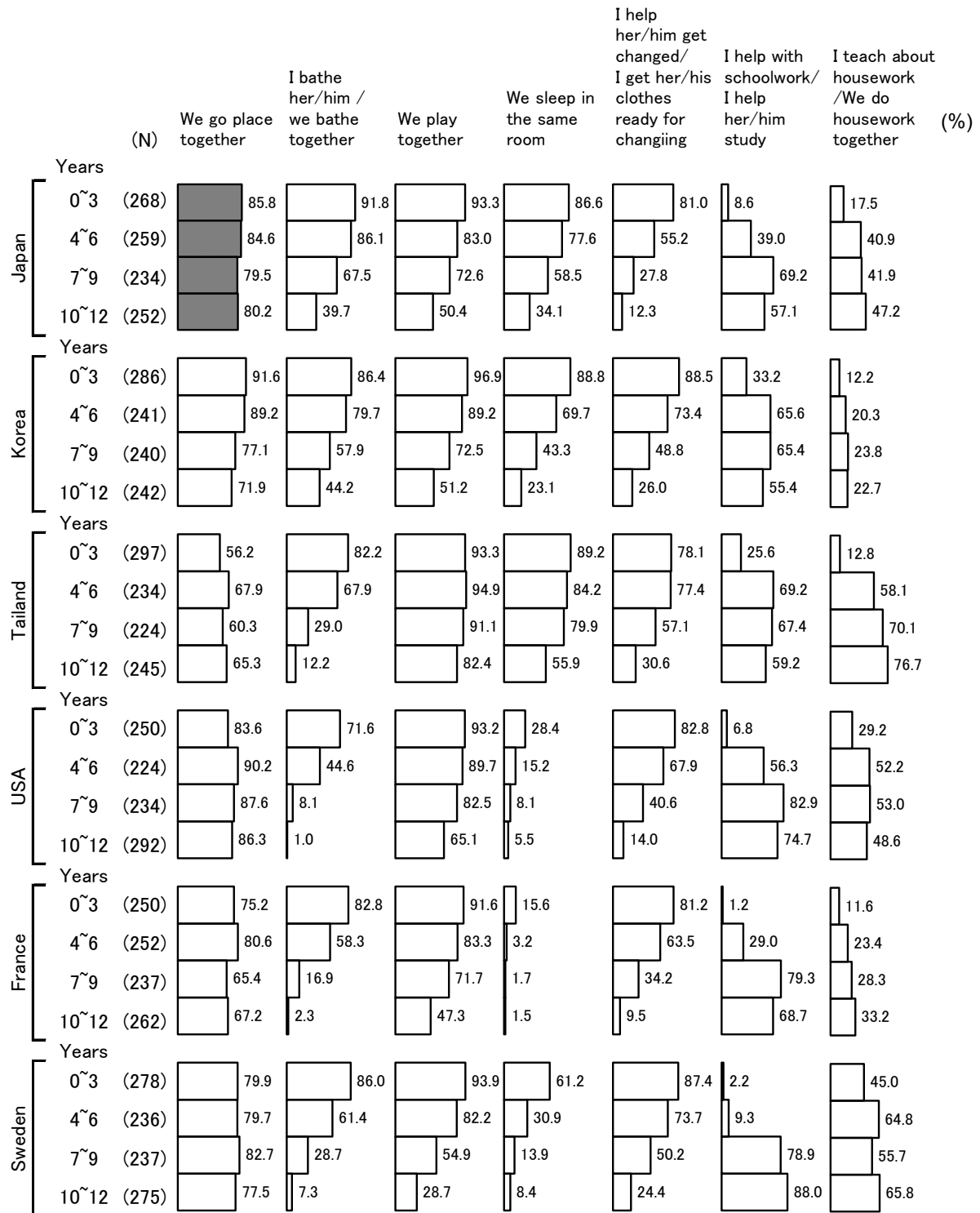


Fig. II-2-2 [1994] Things to do together with children (multiple answers) [by child's age]

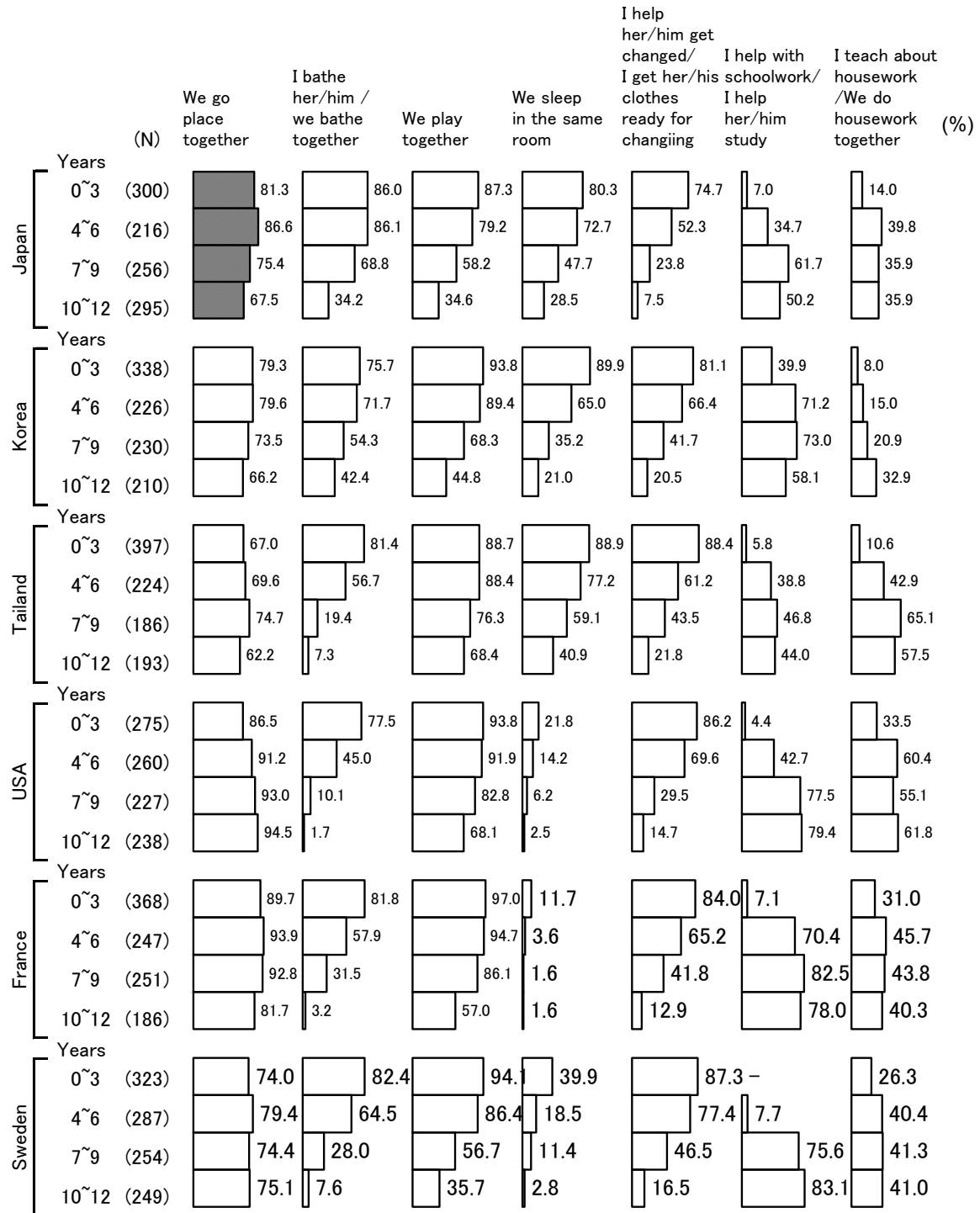


Table II-2-2 shows the research results from 1994. In the last 10 years, the percentage for the item “help with schoolwork/help her/him study” has increased overall in Thailand, therefore explaining the increased recognition and expectations on the importance of an early education. Especially for children aged 0 to 3, the percentage was 5.8% 10 years ago, and it has now greatly increased to 25.6%, following Korea’s 33.2%. Korea conversely shows few decreases at all ages. The enthusiasm for early education might have slightly cooled down.

There have been no significant changes in Japan, the United States, and Sweden in the past 10 years.

(4)Average number of items answered for activities with children

The average number of items answered per country (in descending order) is Thailand (8.74), Japan (8.51), Korea (8.47), Sweden (8.46), the United States (8.31), and France (6.99), and as can be seen here, the parents interacting with children through the most variety of activities is Thailand. The least number of items answered by fathers is France with 6.39 items.

Table II-2-5 shows the research results from 1994. At that time, the least number of items answered was 6.7 by fathers in Japan, but that number has increased to 7.38. At the same time, the average number of items answered by mothers in Japan has also increased from 8.46 to 9.36; therefore, both fathers and mothers in Japan have increased a variety of activities to interact with their children. Korea also shows similar trend as Japan.

Compared to the research results from 10 years ago, the average number of items has increased in Japan, Korea, Thailand, the United States, and Sweden. Among them, Thailand shows the largest change, even though Thailand had the least average number of items among the countries 10 years ago. The largest difference between mothers and fathers are Japan and Korea, though there have been no fundamental changes in 10 years.

Table II-2-4 Average number of items answered for things to do together with child

	[by gender of parents]					(average items)
	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
All	8.51	8.47	8.74	8.31	6.99	8.46
Fathers	7.38	7.48	8.41	7.59	6.39	8.02
Mothers	9.36	9.47	9.07	8.98	7.50	8.77

* The average number of answers is obtained by dividing the total number of answers (excluding "no response") by the number of sample subjects.

Table II-2-5 [1994] Average number of items answered for things to do together with child

	[by gender of parents]					(average items)
	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
All	7.63	7.75	7.52	8.57	8.23	7.74
Fathers	6.70	6.79	7.07	8.20	7.69	7.18
Mothers	8.46	8.64	7.97	8.89	8.75	8.36

* The average number of answers is obtained by dividing the total number of answers (excluding "no response") by the number of sample subjects.

2. Time Spent Together with Children (Hours) (Q5)

Q5 About how much time in a single day do you spend with (NAME OF CHILD)? Answer for weekday. Please exclude time spent sleeping.

About hours and minutes

We asked how much time was spent together with the child in a single day on weekdays.

(1)Time with child

The average amount of time parents in Japan spend together with children (excluding time during sleeping) is 5.63 hours, which is higher than the ground average of 5.54 hours for all six countries. The longest average time that parents spend time together with children is Thailand with 6.49 hours, followed by the United States with 5.90 hours, Sweden with 5.31 hours, and Korea with 4.96 hours. France is the shortest time with 4.82 hours.

(2)Time difference by mother and father

To look at the difference between fathers and mothers in time spent with their child (Table. II-2-6), in Japan, the average time of fathers is 3.08 hours and that of mothers is 7.57 hours. The difference between these fathers and mothers is 4.49 hours - the largest of all six countries, followed by Korea with 4.35 hours, and the United States with 2.50 hours. In the other three countries, the difference is less than 2 hours.

Compared with the research results from 1994 (Table II-2-7), in Japan, the fathers' average time spent together with children has decreased from 3.32 to 3.08 hours, and the difference between mothers and fathers has increased from 4.12 to 4.49 hours. In Korea, the fathers' average time has decreased from 3.62 to 2.78 hours, however the difference between mothers and fathers has lessened from 4.78 to 4.35 hours. What makes up for this kind of time difference? In Thailand and Korea, the average time of mothers has reduced by 1 hour each. In Sweden, fathers' average time has increased whereas mothers' average time has decreased, and the difference has become less from 2.85 to 1.20 hours. There seems to be no significant change for the United States.

Table II-2-6 Amount of time spent together with child (average)
[by gender of parents] (hours)

	Fathers (A)	Mothers (B)	Difference (B) - (A)
Japan	3.08	7.57	4.49
Korea	2.78	7.13	4.35
Thailand	5.89	7.09	1.21
USA	4.60	7.10	2.50
France	3.79	5.71	1.92
Sweden	4.61	5.81	1.20

Table II-2-7 [1994] Amount of time spent together with child (average)

	Fathers (A)	Mothers (B)	Difference (B) - (A)
Japan	3.32	7.44	4.12
Korea	3.62	8.40	4.78
Thailand	6.00	8.06	2.06
USA	4.88	7.57	2.69
UK	4.75	7.52	2.77
Sweden	3.64	6.49	2.85

Table II-2-8 Amount of time spent together with child (average)

(by gender, child's age, and whether or not the mother was working) (hours)

		Japan	Korea	Thiland	USA	France	Sweden
Fathers	0 ~ 3 years	3.73	3.34	7.09	5.24	4.14	6.18
	4 ~ 6	3.30	2.67	5.72	4.41	3.61	4.46
	7 ~ 9	2.67	2.64	5.31	4.34	3.79	3.85
	10 ~ 12	2.58	2.51	5.06	4.38	3.62	3.72
Mothers	0 ~ 3 years	10.91	10.83	10.27	9.52	7.46	8.11
	4 ~ 6	7.50	6.66	6.55	7.72	5.94	5.65
	7 ~ 9	5.92	5.07	5.39	5.90	4.87	4.94
	10 ~ 12	5.37	4.22	5.47	5.54	4.70	4.44

(3) Time difference by child's age

As per Table II-2-8, the amount of time mothers spend together with their children is substantial when children are small in all the countries, and it decreases as children get older. Likewise, the amount of time fathers spend together with their children becomes shorter as children get older in all the countries. In Japan, Korea, the United States, and France, the differences by children's age are rather small, while the differences are relatively large in Thailand and Sweden. This may indicate that fathers in Thailand and Sweden tend to adjust the amount of time spent with their children depending on the children's age.

According to the research results in 1994 (Table II-2-9), Japanese fathers showed almost no difference in the amount of time they spent with their children by children's age, however this time, the research results show that the difference has become larger even though it is a small change. In the case of Sweden, there was a time adjustment for the amount of time spent with children depending upon the children's age 10 years ago, and the research results from this time show the same but stronger trend.

Table II-2-9 [1994] Amount of time spent together with child (average)

(by gender, child's age, and whether or not the mother was working)

(hours)

		Japan	Korea	Thiland	USA	UK	Sweden
Fathers	0 ~ 3 years	3.80	4.12	7.17	5.35	6.45	4.20
	4 ~ 6	3.40	3.65	5.99	5.06	4.12	3.74
	7 ~ 9	3.02	3.50	5.08	4.45	3.58	3.43
	10 ~ 12	3.07	2.93	4.83	4.55	3.59	3.10
Mothers	0 ~ 3 years	11.61	11.66	10.45	9.96	11.40	9.02
	4 ~ 6	7.40	9.20	7.35	8.21	6.65	6.23
	7 ~ 9	5.53	5.87	5.85	5.90	4.98	4.92
	10 ~ 12	4.90	4.72	5.30	5.74	4.94	4.79

(4) Amount of time spent together with children by employed and unemployed mothers

Table II-2-10 shows the time spent together with children by employed and unemployed mothers, as well as the difference between employed and unemployed mothers. Table II-2-11 shows the research results from 1994. Japan and Korea still show a significant difference of over three hours between mothers with and without jobs, while the differences have reduced to less than two hours in Thailand and Sweden.

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
Non-working mothers (A)	9.52	9.05	10.21	9.22	8.23	8.35
Working mothers (B)	5.46	5.94	7.15	6.68	6.80	5.92
Difference (A) - (B)	4.06	3.11	3.06	2.54	1.43	2.43

Table II-2-11 [1994] Amount of time spent together with child by mothers (ave [by mothers w/ and w/o jobs] (hours)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
Non-working mothers (A)	9.52	9.05	10.21	9.22	8.23	8.35
Working mothers (B)	5.46	5.94	7.15	6.68	6.80	5.92
Difference (A) - (B)	4.06	3.11	3.06	2.54	1.43	2.43

3. Shared Family Activities (Q6)

Q6 Recently, how many times a week have you done the following with all family members who presently live with you?		
a Ate evening meal together	<input type="text"/>	time(s) a week
b Spent free time together	<input type="text"/>	time(s) a week

First, as to “ate evening meal together,” Thailand has the highest frequency of 6.2 times a week, followed by France with 6.3 times, the U.S. with 5.5 times, and Sweden with 5.4 times. Japan is in 5th place with 4.4 times a week, barely greater than 4.1 times a week by Korea as the lowest frequency of all (Fig. II-2-3).

For “spent free time together,” Japan is again in 5th place with 2.5 times a week, slightly greater than Korea in the last place with 1.3 times a week. Thailand has the highest frequency of 5.8 times a week, the U.S. and Sweden are at 5.5 times, and France is 4.8 times; Compared to the other countries, the frequencies of Japan and Korea are fairly low. The trend of not enjoying free time or meals together with family could be commonly seen in the two East Asian countries (Fig. II-2-4).

For all the counties, there are no distinctive differences by parents’ and children’s gender or children’s ages.

Fig. II-2-3 Shared Family Activity

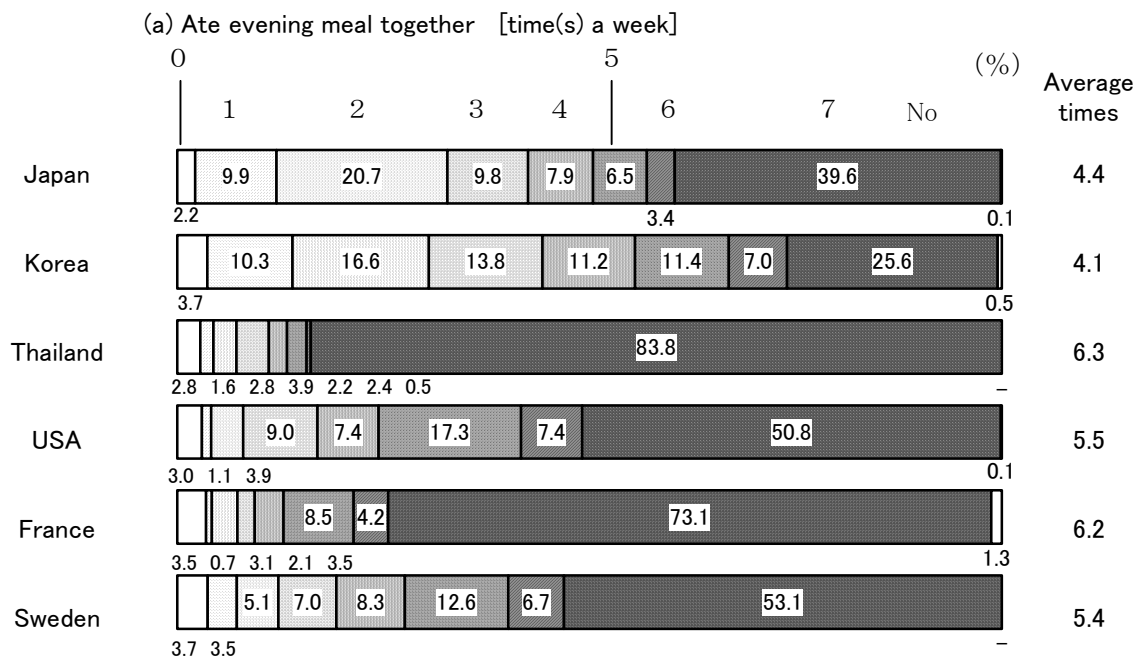
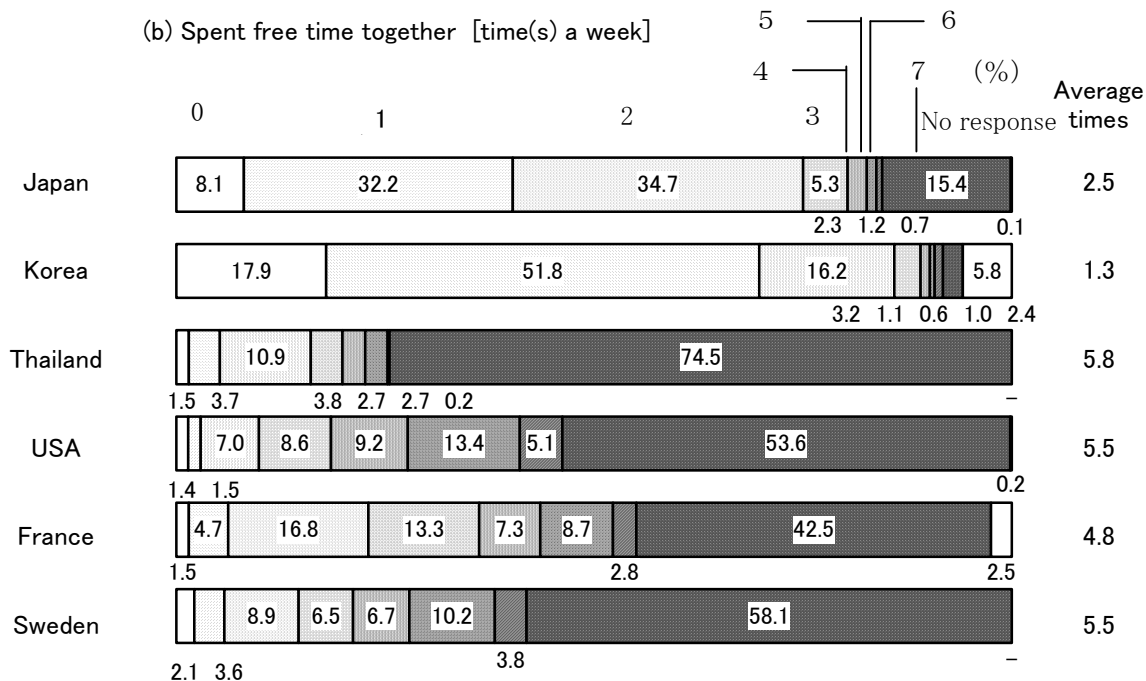


Fig. II-2-4 Shared Family Activity



4. Parental Roles in Child Raising (Q7)

Q7 [card3]

Which person takes care of the following matters for (NAME OF CHIILD)? Is it mainly you, your spouse/partner, or the both of you? Answer for each of the following. (SINGLE ANSWERS FOR EACH)

	Mainly me	Mainly my Spouse/ Partner	Both Spouse/ Partner And I	Don't do/ Not necessary
a. Providing meals/feeding	1	2	3	4
b. Disciplining	1	2	3	4
c. Going to parent associations or teacher meetings at school	1	2	3	4
d. Earning living expenses	1	2	3	4

We asked four questions with regard to how mothers and fathers share and divide the roles in raising their child, and asked them to choose answers from 4 options: “mainly me,” “mainly my spouse/partner,” “both,” and “don’t do/not necessary.”

Fig. II-2-5, Fig. II-2-9, Fig. II-2-13, and Fig. II-2-15 have been rearranged by translating the fathers’ responses of “mainly me” as “mainly the father” and “mainly my spouse/partner” as “mainly the mother.” Likewise, mothers’ responses have also been rearranged by translating “mainly me” into “mainly the mother” and “mainly my spouse/partner” into “mainly the father.” Besides these rearrangements, table II-2-11, table II-2-12, table II-2-13, and table II-2-14 are still made clear enough to distinguish whether the answers were made by mothers or fathers.

(1) Analysis of the questionnaire items

a. Providing meals / feeding

As manifested in Fig. II-2-5, “mainly the mother” is the largest proportion of the responses for “providing meals/feeding” in Japan with 86%, followed by France with 72%, Thailand with 67%, Korea with 65%, the U.S. with 65%, and Sweden as the lowest with 54%. Sweden has 30% of the responses for “both” that is relatively higher compared to the other countries, but 16% for “mainly the father” is also remarkably higher than the other countries. Japan shows the lowest percentages for both “mainly the father” and “both” among the countries.

Comparing with Fig. II-2-6 from the research results of 1994 on “providing meals/feeding,” the percentage of “mainly the father” in Sweden has increased by 10% from 6% to 16%. The percentage of “don’t do/not necessary” in Korea has decreased about 10% from 25% to 14%. Interpretation of this 10% shift of the proportion in Korea remains as a further subject of research.

Fig. II-2-5 Parental roles in child raising (%)

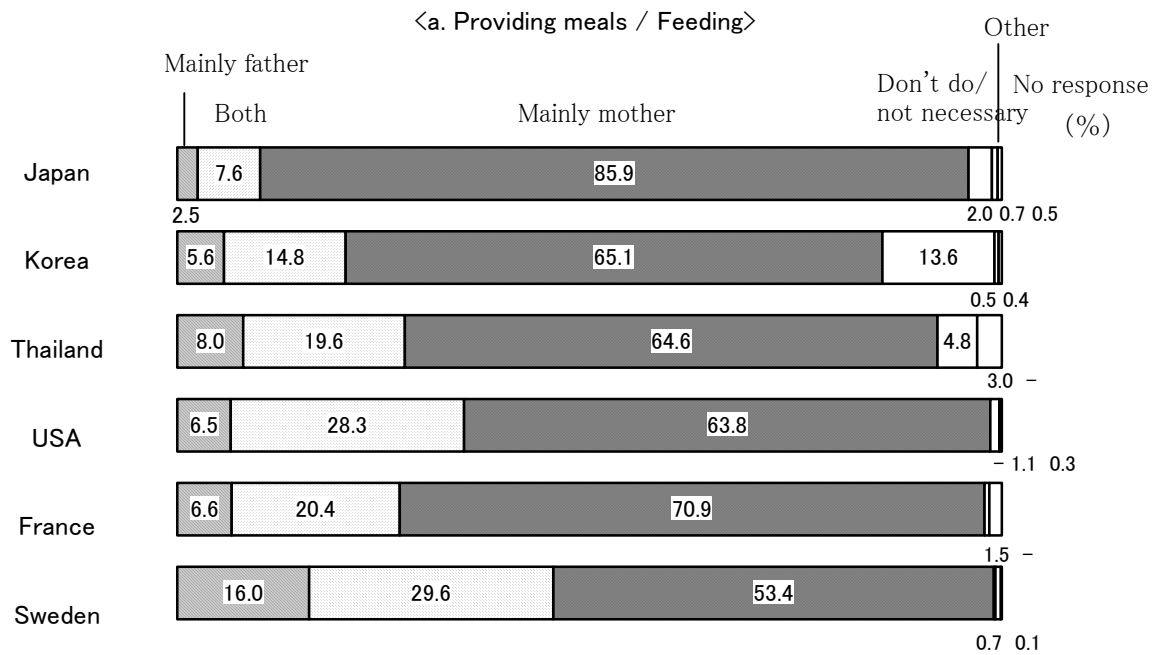


Fig. II-2-6 [1994] Parental roles in child raising (%)

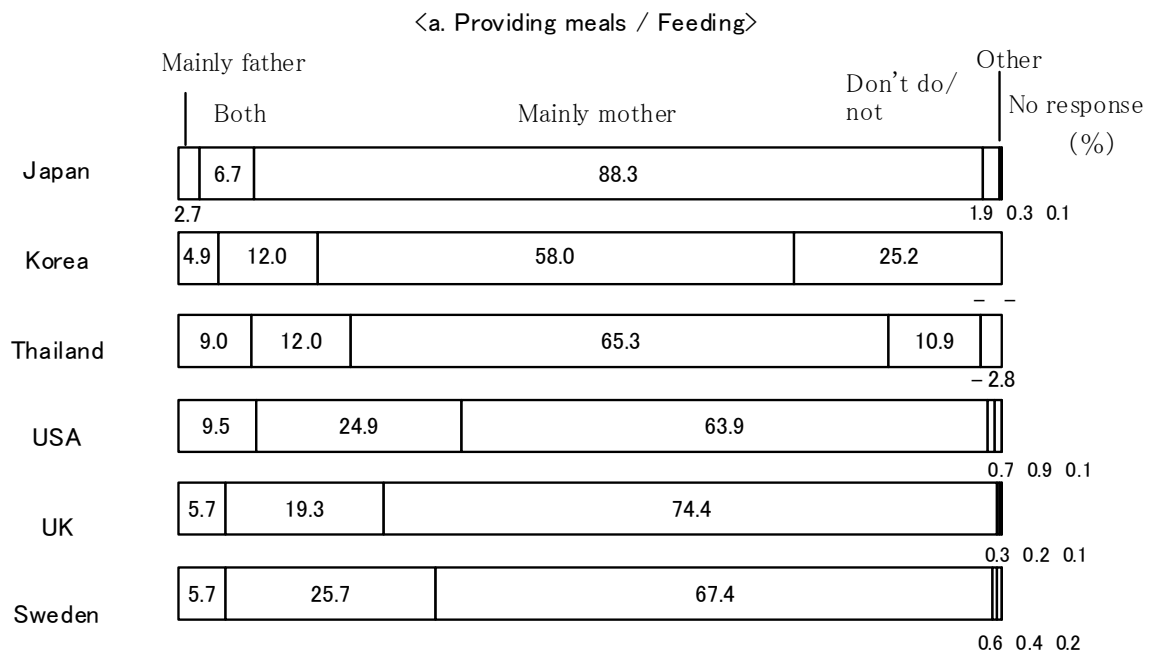


Table II-2-12 shows that more than 80% of mothers in Japan and France responded that they are taking on “providing meals (for)/feeding” their children as well as around 70% of mothers in the remaining 4 countries. The proportion of answers for “mainly father” is less than 5% in all countries except Sweden (5%). It appears that the idea of the mother taking a primary role in preparing meals for children remains steady.

Moreover, there is a gap in the answers of “both” by mothers and by fathers. In other words, the percentage of fathers who answered “both” is greater than that of mothers. Could it mean that even though fathers think that they are “helping“ or “cooperating,” mothers do not recognize as much? In Korea and Thailand, about 20% of fathers answered “both,” and it can be assumed that the fathers have a high awareness of taking part in child rearing compared to Japan. However, when combined with the mothers’ responses, the percentage is not very high.

In the Western countries, the percentage of answers for “both” by mothers and fathers is high in France, the U.S., and Sweden in the order from lower to higher. Both the fathers’ notion of their cooperating in child rearing and the recognition by mothers are higher than the Asian countries.

Table II-2-12 Parental roles in child raising (by gender of parents) (%)
 <a. Providing meals/feeding>

	Japan		Korea		Thailand		USA		France		Sweden	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Mainly me	3.9	88.5	6.7	71.2	12.7	77.8	10.3	74.9	11.6	81.9	31.4	67.3
Mainly my spouse/pater	82.4	1.4	59.1	4.6	51.1	3.4	51.7	3.1	58.4	2.2	33.6	5.1
Both	9.8	5.9	19.0	10.5	29.1	10.3	37.2	20.1	27.7	14.0	33.8	26.7
Don't do/ not necessary	3.0	2.8	14.4	12.7	5.3	4.4	-	-	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2

(2) Father’s Role in Child Rearing

In Fig.II-2-7, we combined the responses for “mainly the father” and “both” to summarize the father’s role in child rearing in each country.

Fathers play primary roles in “paying for living expenses” and “disciplining” as shown in the high percentages. Sweden shows the highest percentages in all the items except for “earning for living expenses.” This might be considered as the most close to equality in child rearing between husband and wife.

Fig. II-2-7 Father's sharing role in child raising (%)
 (obtained by combining "mainly father" and "both")

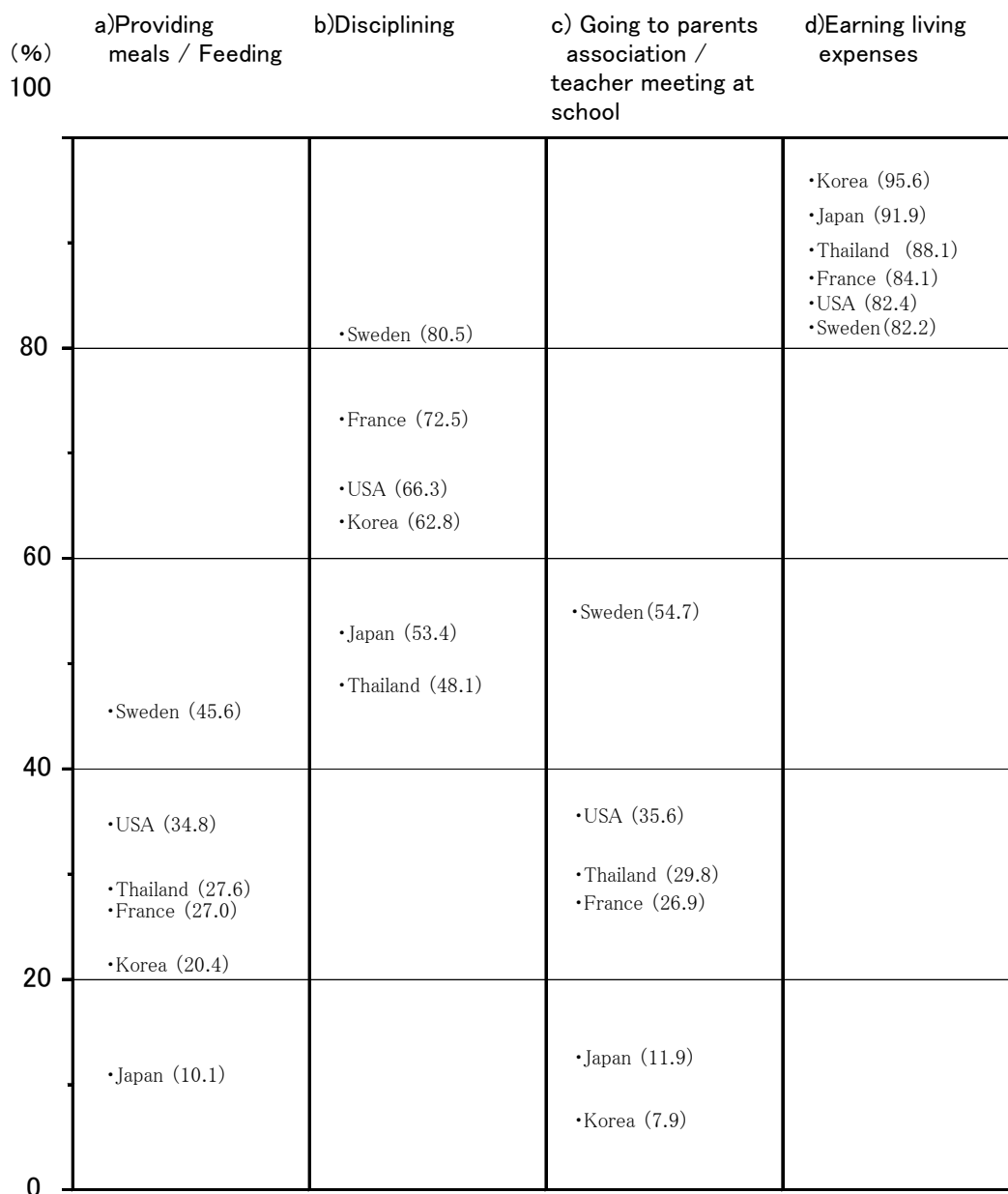
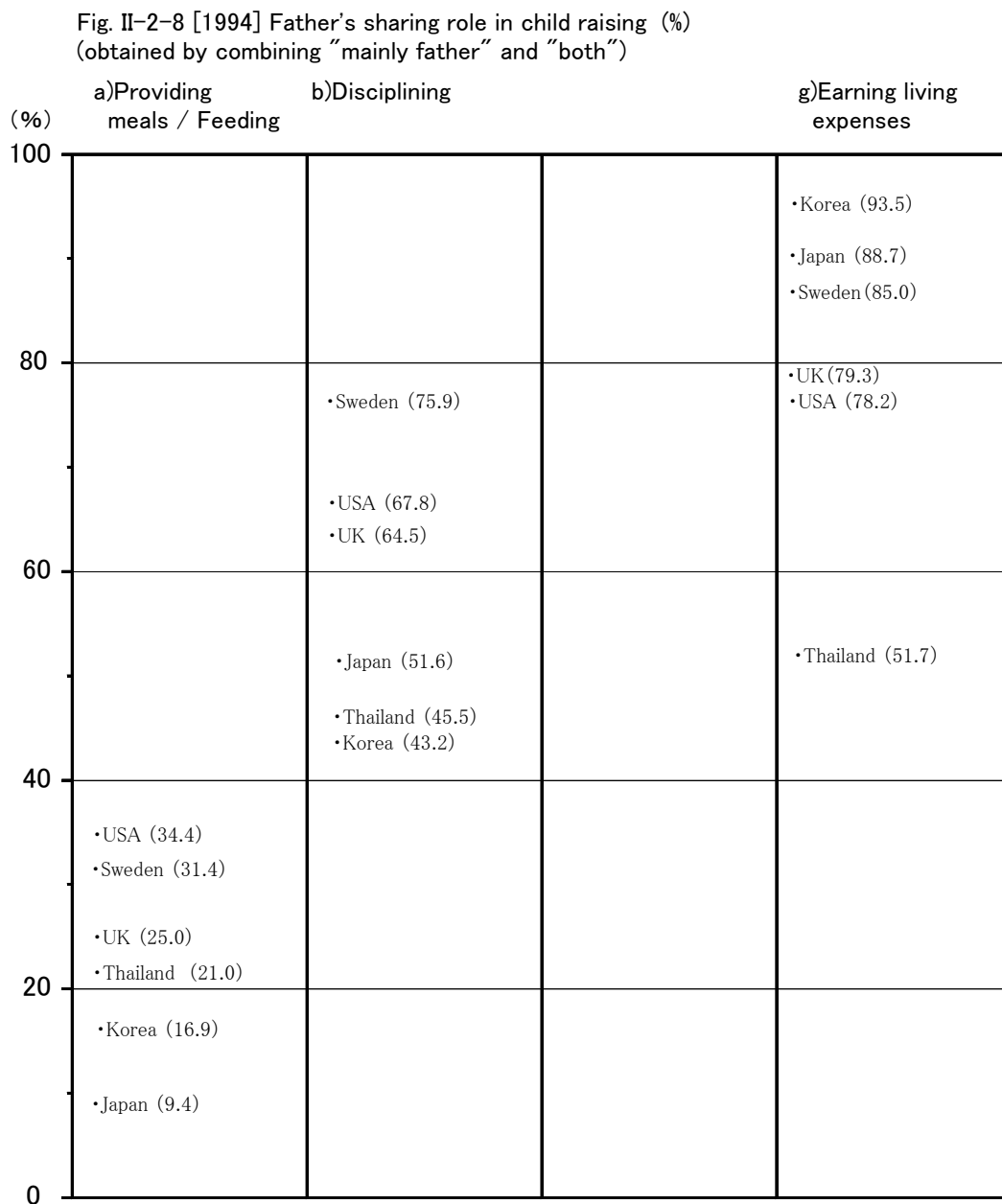


Fig.II-2-8 is data from the research in 1994. Thailand shows a notable change in earning for living expenses that has increased significantly to match similar percentages as the other countries.



Summary

It has become a conspicuous reality that child rearing in Japan still tends to remain the responsibility of mothers. Fathers in Japan are spending a less amount of time with their children as the second least, following fathers in Korea. There appears to be a trend in both countries that they do not enjoy having meals together and spending free time together with family.

In the three Western countries, child rearing is moderately balanced between a father and a mother compared to Japan and Korea, though mothers still play a primary role in taking care of their children in all six countries.

As compared with 10 years ago, the ways parents interact with their children have diversified increasingly in all six countries.

In Japan and Korea, fathers are still spending less time with their children in the last ten years, however in Korea, the difference in time between mothers and fathers has become shorter and the percentage of fathers taking part in child discipline has increased.

As to a difference in the amount of time mothers spend together with their children whether they are employed or not, the difference is large and more than 3 hours in Japan and Korea, while the difference is less than 2 hours in Thailand and Sweden.

In most cases for families with both parents working, fathers take part in child rearing more than fathers of families with housewives/househusbands. In Japan and Sweden, the difference is small between fathers of families with both parents with jobs and fathers of families with housewives/househusbands. However, the trends show that fathers taking part in child rearing is less in Japan and more in Sweden.

Although fathers in France spend less time and in fewer varieties of ways with their children, the mothers show a similar tendency; hence the difference between fathers and mothers is not very significant.

In all six countries, the amount time fathers spend together with their children becomes shorter as children get older, and the same is true for mothers. The difference in time spent together with children depending on the children's age is small in Japan, Korea, the United States, and France, while the difference is relatively large in Thailand and Sweden. This could possibly indicate that fathers in Thailand and Sweden adjust and manage time accordingly to their children's growth.

Within the last 10 years, the balance in the role of child rearing between fathers and mothers has become much more equal in Sweden.

Thailand's change in 10 years is noteworthy., The change can be observed

distinctively in the increased interest in early education as well as the change in the proportion of earning living expenses by husband and wife.

(Sae Etoh)