

## Chapter 5 Child Rearing Support

### 1. People Involved in Raising a Child (Q10)

Q10 [card 7]

From the time of (name of child)'s birth until now, who have taken care of (name of child)?

List all the people, as many as you want, who have taken care of (name of child). (Multiple Answer)

1. Spouse/Partner
2. Child's brothers and/or sisters
3. My/spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us
4. My/spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us
5. Babysitter or housekeeper
6. Staff at childcare center or other facility
7. Nursery school / Kindergarten teacher
8. Staff at extended care facility or after school program
9. Family daycare ("Day Mother")
10. Neighbors, friends who are raising children themselves (play group, etc.)
11. Only me (have never been helped by anyone)

We asked parents what sorts of people have been involved in taking care of their children from their birth to the present time.

## **(1) Rankings**

Overall, more than 80% of parents in all countries listed their “spouse/partner” as the person who has taken care of their children the most, putting them in the first place of ranking. The other individuals of the second rank and below vary depending on a country.

The “spouse/partner” is 95% and in the first place in Japan’s ranking. It also marks the highest percentage among the six countries. The second highest in the ranking is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” (58%). The third place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (40%). Thus, many parents have responded that their children have been taken care of by their own or their spouses’ parents as well as brothers or sisters. Korea, where relationships among relatives are assumed to be stronger than those in Japan, is different from Japan. On contrary to what one might expect, “nursery school/kindergarten teacher” (32%) comes in second place of the ranking in Korea, and it is followed by “staff at a childcare center or other facility” (31%) in third place. In fourth place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” (29%) and in fifth place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (24%), but both percentages are smaller than those of Japan in the same places. In Thailand, second place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (33%), and third place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us.” These people listed in the second and third highest places symbolize the strong bonds with relatives in Thailand. It is likewise representative of the United States that “babysitter or housekeeper” (41%) comes in third place, following after “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (56%) in second place in the ranking.

In France, parents listed “nursery school/kindergarten teacher” (46%) in second place and “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (43%) in third place. The second place in the Sweden’s ranking is “staff at childcare center or other facility” (68%), and third place is “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” (53%). As it seems, all of these people for France and Sweden are listed with relatively high percentages.

It is remarkable that many parents answered “babysitter or housekeeper” as a person being involved in taking care of their children in the United States, whereas the rates are particularly low in the Asian countries. It is only 2% (ninth place) in Japan, 3% (ninth place) in Korea, and 4% (eighth place) in Thailand.

For “neighbors, friends who are raising children themselves (play group, etc.)”, the

rates are relatively high in the United States and in Japan with 31% (5<sup>th</sup> place) and 22% (7<sup>th</sup> place) respectively, whereas it is quite low in Thailand (4%) and Korea (7%). The percentage for “staff at extended care facility or after-school program” is high in Sweden (36%), while it is very low within 1% in Korea and Thailand. Thus, there are inferred differences in childcare systems largely depending on each country.

Looking at the average number of people involved in taking care of a child, Sweden has the most (3.61) followed by the United States (3.39) and Japan (3.17), while the lowest average is by Thailand (1.88). Furthermore, in Thailand, there seems to be a relatively high percentage (7%) for “only me (have never been helped by anyone).”

Table II-5-1 People involved in taking care of child (Multiple Answer)

(%)

Ranking	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Spouse/partner 95.3	Spouse/partner 89.7	Spouse/partner 84.7	Spouse/partner 89.5	Spouse/partner 84.1	Spouse/partner 89.4
2nd	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 57.5	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 31.7	Parents ets. Who live with us 32.9	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 55.6	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 45.7	Staff at childcare center or other facility 67.9
3rd	Parents ets. Who live with us 39.7	Staff at childcare center or other facility 31.0	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 23.7	Babysitter/house keeper who come to our home 41.3	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 42.8	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 52.6
4th	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 33.0	Parents ets. Who live separate from us 29.0	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 18.5	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 32.6	Child's brothers and/or sisters 20.0	Nursery school kindergarten teacher 42.3
5th	Child's brothers and/or sisters 29.9	Parents ets. Who live with us 23.9	Child's brothers and/or sisters 9.9	Neighbours 31.3	Staff at childcare center or other facility 18.0	Staff at extended care facility etc. 36.0
6th	Staff at childcare center or other facility 28.6	Child's brothers and/or sisters 11.3	Only me 7.2	Staff at childcare center or other facility 25.7	Babysitter/house keeper who come to our home 17.1	Child's brothers and/or sisters 19.5
7th	Neighbours 22.3	Neighbours 6.6	Neighbours 4.4	Child's brothers and/or sisters 23.4	Staff at extended care facility etc. 14.5	Neighbours 16.5
8th	Staff at extended care facility etc. 7.2	Only me 5.3	Babysitter/house keeper	Parents ets. Who live with us 19.4	Parents ets. Who live with us 11.2	Family daycare staff 12.0
9th	Babysitter/house keeper who come to our home 2.1	Babysitter/house keeper who come to our home 2.5	Staff at childcare center or other facility 3.0	Staff at extended care facility etc. 10.1	Neighbours 11.2	Parents ets. Who live with us 11.9
10th	Only me 1.0	Staff at extended care facility etc. 0.5	Staff at extended care facility etc. 0.2	Family daycare staff 5.6	Family daycare staff 9.6	Babysitter/house keeper who come to our home 11.5
11th	Family daycare staff 0.3	Family daycare staff -	Family daycare staff 0.1	Only me 4.7	Only me 8.9	Only me 1.8
Average number of responses	3.17	2.32	1.88	3.39	2.83	3.61

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "no response") by the number of completed questionnaires.

## **(2) Whether Both Parents Are Working or Not**

If we look at the people involved in taking care of a child by types of family whether both parents are working or whether a family has a full-time housewife/househusband, “staff at childcare center or other facility” is 46% in Japan for the families with both parents working, and it is 4 times higher than the 11% of families with a full-time househusband/full-time housewife. Moreover, the number of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” is greater for the families of working parents than for the families of a fulltime housewife/husband, but the percentage for “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” is rather less for the families of working parents. The results show that the childcare support from “babysitter or housekeeper” (2%) is hardly used in Japan even by the families with both parents working.

Families with both parents working also seem to have an inevitable association with the “staff at a childcare center or other facility” in Korea, Sweden, France, and the United States, though there is hardly any difference in Thailand as it is 4% for the families of both parents working. “My/Spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” is much higher for families with both working parents in the United States, Korea, France, and Thailand, while it is less in Japan and Sweden where instead the percentage of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” is more. As for the families with both parents working in Sweden, the rate of “staff at childcare center or other facility” (73%) is high and, in fact, the highest among the six countries. In the United States, “babysitter or housekeeper” shows the greater involvement with families with both parents working (49%) than with families with fulltime housewives/househusbands (31%). France also shows an increased association of “babysitter or housekeeper” with families of both parents working, whereas there is no difference in Sweden. Moreover, in the five countries except Japan, the percentage of parents who answered “only me” is clearly less for the families with both parents working than for the families with full-time housewives/husbands. The opposite result in Japan is incomprehensive; some parents from families with both working parents may be conceptually feeling “only me.”

Table II-5-2 People involved in taking care of child (Multiple Answer) [whether both parents working or not]

(%)

		N	Spouse/partner	Child's brothers and/or sisters	Parents Who live with us	Parents Who live separate from us	Babysitter/housekeeper who come to our home	Nursery school teacher	kindergarten teacher	Staff at extended care facility etc.	Family daycare staff	Neighbours	Only me	No answer
Japan	Family with both parents working	429	97.2	33.6	43.1	55.7	1.9	46.4	33.3	8.2	0.5	20.5	1.2	—
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	522	97.5	27.0	35.2	60.7	1.9	10.9	33.9	6.3	0.2	24.1	0.8	—
Korea	Family with both parents working	372	90.1	10.5	29.6	30.1	3.8	37.6	35.5	1.1	—	8.1	1.9	—
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	622	90.2	11.7	20.3	28.0	1.6	27.0	29.7	0.2	—	5.8	7.2	0.2
Thailand	Family with both parents working	662	90.2	11.6	33.5	26.7	4.7	3.8	19.3	0.2	0.2	4.5	4.2	—
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	252	86.9	5.6	31.7	21.8	1.6	2.0	15.9	0.4	—	5.2	8.7	—
USA	Family with both parents working	540	95.9	23.9	19.6	61.1	48.5	31.5	35.6	12.4	6.3	30.4	2.2	0.2
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	279	94.3	24.4	15.8	48.0	30.8	11.1	28.0	1.8	3.6	30.5	6.5	—
France	Family with both parents working	559	90.3	17.2	10.7	46.9	20.4	20.4	47.8	16.5	12.9	10.9	5.5	0.9
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	285	89.5	23.9	10.2	36.5	10.2	10.9	40.4	8.8	3.2	9.1	10.2	1.4
Sweden	Family with both parents working	595	96.1	21.0	13.1	53.8	10.3	72.6	45.2	39.2	13.8	16.1	0.7	0.2
	Family with full-time housewife/husband	231	94.4	10.8	8.2	55.0	10.4	54.5	29.9	22.1	8.7	13.0	1.3	0.4

### **(3) Comparison with the Survey Results from 1994**

The fact that the “spouse/partner” is the number one person involved in taking care of a child in all countries has not changed from the past survey results.

In Japan, it stands out that the rate of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” has increased by more than 10% from 46% to 58%, while the rate of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” has decreased by a few points from 43% to 40%. There are no other significant changes in terms of ranking and rates, other than a slight increase in the rate of “neighbors, friends who are raising children themselves.”

In Korea, the percentage of “nursery school/ kindergarten teacher” has remarkably increased from 10% to 32%. Like Japan, the increase of parents’ responses for “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” can be attributed to the increased numbers of two-generation households in the past 10 years from 77% to 87%. Although there is some decrease in the number of three-generation households from 15% to 10%, the rate of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” has not changed. This is presumably because the percentage of households in which both husband and wife are working is high in cases when they are living with their parents.

In Thailand, the percentage of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” has decreased by 12%, while the percentage of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” has increased by 4%. Furthermore, it is remarkable that the participation of “nursery school /kindergarten teacher” has increased from 8% to 19%. It is also notable that childcare support by relatives living together with the parents has decreased in all three Asian countries.

The percentage of “babysitter or housekeeper” has increased from 29% to 41% in the United States. In Sweden, the percentages of “spouse/partner” and “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” have decreased about 6~14%. Instead, the percentage of “nursery school/kindergarten teacher” has increased from 23% to 42%.

The average number of items answered per person has increased in Japan, Korea, and the United States, even though there was 1 more item than in the previous survey 10 years ago. As observed in the increased number of associations with official childcare systems and organizations, children are being raised through relationships with various kinds of people in all countries.

Table II-5-3 [1994] People involved in taking care of child (Multiple Answer)

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Spouse/partner 95.2	Spouse/partner 82.0	Spouse/partner 84.0	Spouse/partner 86.9	Spouse/partner 88.6	Spouse/partner 95.9
2nd	Parents etc. who live separate from us 46.4	Parents etc. who live with us 23.7	Parents etc. who live with us 44.0	Parents etc. who live separate from us 51.5	Parents etc. who live separate from us 64.1	Staff at childcare center or other facility 66.5
3rd	Parents etc. who live with us 42.5	Parents etc. who live separate from us 22.8	Parents etc. who live separate from us 19.5	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 35.6	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 45.1	Parents etc. who live separate from us 66.0
4th	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 32.1	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 9.9	Child's brothers and/or sister 9.6	Babysitter/housekee per who comes to our home 29.0	Babysitter/houseke eper who comes to our home 26.6	Child's brothers and/or sister 29.0
5th	Child's brothers and/or sister 30.6	Child's brothers and/or sister 9.1	Neighbours 8.8	Neighbours 25.6	Neighbours 22.2	Neighbours 25.8
6th	Staff at childcare center or other facility 26.3	Only me 9.0	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 7.9	Staff at childcare center or other facility 25.3	Parents etc. who live with us 14.9	Staff at extended care facility etc. 24.2
7th	Neighbours 18.9	Neighbours 4.6	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 5.7	Parents etc.who live with us 22.7	Staff at childcare center or other facility 12.5	Nursery school/ kindergarten teacher 23.1
8th	Staff at extended care facility etc. 5.7	Staff at childcare center or other facility 2.2	Only me 4.2	Child's brothers and/or sister 21.5	Child's brothers and/or sister 12.5	Babysitter/houseke eper who comes to our home 22.6
9th	People at work 1.5	Babysitter/housekee per who comes to our home 0.9	Staff at childcare center or other facility 3.7	Staff at extended care facility etc. 9.0	Staff at extended care facility etc. 3.2	Parents etc.who live with us 13.2
10th	Only me 1.1	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 0.8	Babysitter/housekee per who comes to our home 1.2	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 4.8	Only me 2.5	People at work 2.6
11th	Babysitter/housekee per who comes to our home 1.0	People at work 0.6	People at work 0.6	People at work 3.1	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 2.3	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 2.2
12th	Live-in babysitter or housekeeper 0.3	Staff at extended care facility etc. —	Staff at extended care facility etc. 0.5	Only me 2.7	People at work 1.0	Only me 0.1
Average number of responses	3.02	1.65	1.90	3.18	2.96	3.71

\* "Staff at extended care facility etc." is not applicable for Korea data.

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "no response") by the number of completed questionnaires.

## 2. Concerns and Problems in Raising a Child (Q12)

Q12 [card 9]

While raising (name of child), do you ever have concerns or problems about the issues on the card? Choose as many concerns or problems as apply. (M.A.)

1. Education expenses cost too much
2. Our house is too small
3. I don't spend enough time with my child
4. Having a child and a job is difficult
5. I'm concerned about how my child will fare at school
6. I'm concerned about my child getting sick or disabled
7. I'm concerned that my child is slow to develop
8. I worry for my child's safety
9. Problems related to taking examinations or graduation/advancement
10. Bullying or discrimination my child encounters from others
11. Others ( please specify )
12. Nothing in particular

We asked parents what sort of worries or problems they have in raising their children by having them choose as many concerns or problems as applicable from 10 answer options.

### (1) Ranking

In Japan, what parents listed most as their concerns or problems in raising children are "I worry for my child's safety" (47%) as the highest percentage and "I don't spend enough time with my child" (27%) in the second place of the ranking. The remaining concerns included: "education expenses cost too much" (26%), "our house is too small" (21%), "I'm concerned about my child getting sick or disabled" (19%), and "I'm concerned about how my child will fare at school" (18%).

In Korea, parents' concerns and problems in raising their children are "education expenses cost too much" (53%) in first place, "I don't spend enough time with my child" (38%) in second place, as well as "I'm concerned about my child getting sick or disabled" (32%), and "Our house is too small" (26%). While the biggest concern of parents in Japan

is “I worry for my child’s safety,” it is only in eighth place in Korea (18%) and the percentage is low as well. In Thailand, the highest number of parents answered “I worry for my child’s safety” (73%), and it also reached the highest percentage among the six countries. The other issues that parents in Thailand are concerned about are, “I’m concerned about my child getting sick or disabled” (49%), “education expenses cost too much” (46%), and “Problems related to taking examinations or graduation/advancement” (32%).

Table II-5-4 Concerns and problems in raising a child (Multiple Answer)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Worry for child's safety 46.9	Educational expenses cost too much 52.6	Worry for child's safety 72.6	Worry for child's safety 50.7	Worry for child's safety 42.6	Don't spent enough time with child 41.3
2nd	Don't spent enough time with child 26.7	Don't spent enough time with child 37.8	Concerned about sick or disabled 48.7	Educational expenses cost too much 43.6	child's life at school 37.5	Bullying or discrimination 34.6
3rd	Educational expenses cost too much 25.8	Concerned about sick or disabled 32.3	Educational expenses cost too much 45.9	child's life at school 36.4	Concerned about sick or disabled 35.3	Worry for child's safety 33.0
4th	House is too small 20.7	House is too small 25.9	School and entrance examination 32.2	Don't spent enough time with child 34.8	Don't spent enough time with child 30.2	child's life at school 26.7
5th	Concerned about sick or disabled 18.9	School and entrance examination 22.0	Bullying or discrimination 27.4	Having a child and a job 28.9	Having a child and a job 25.1	Having a child and a job 26.0
6th	child's life at school 18.2	child's life at school 21.2	child's life at school 27.2	House is too small 27.1	Educational expenses cost too much 21.9	Concerned about sick or disabled 24.1
7th	School and entrance examination 16.5	Child's slow development 18.5	Child's slow development 20.9	Concerned about sick or disabled 27.0	Child's slow development 19.4	House is too small 20.5
8th	Having a child and a job 13.3	Worry for child's safety 18.1	House is too small 19.8	Bullying or discrimination 20.9	House is too small 17.9	School and entrance examination 7.2
9th	Bullying or discrimination 12.8	Having a child and a job 17.6	Don't spent enough time with child 16.8	School and entrance examination 11.4	Bullying or discrimination 15.3	Child's slow development 4.4
10th	Child's slow development 5.2	Bullying or discrimination 16.2	Having a child and a job 14.6	Child's slow development 8.5	School and entrance examination 12.9	Educational expenses cost too much 2.3
Average number of responses	2.05	2.62	3.26	2.90	2.58	2.23

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding “nothing particular”) by the number of completed questionnaires.

In both the United States and France, the biggest concern of parents in raising a child is “I worry for my child’s safety.” In the United States, “education expenses cost too much” (44%) is the second most concern of parents, and the third is “I’m concerned about how my child will fare at school” (36%). The second and third highest concerns of parents in France are, “I’m concerned about how my child will fare at school” (38%) and “I’m concerned about my child getting sick or disabled” (35%). In fourth place of the rankings for the United States and France is the same again\* “I don’t spend enough time with my child.”

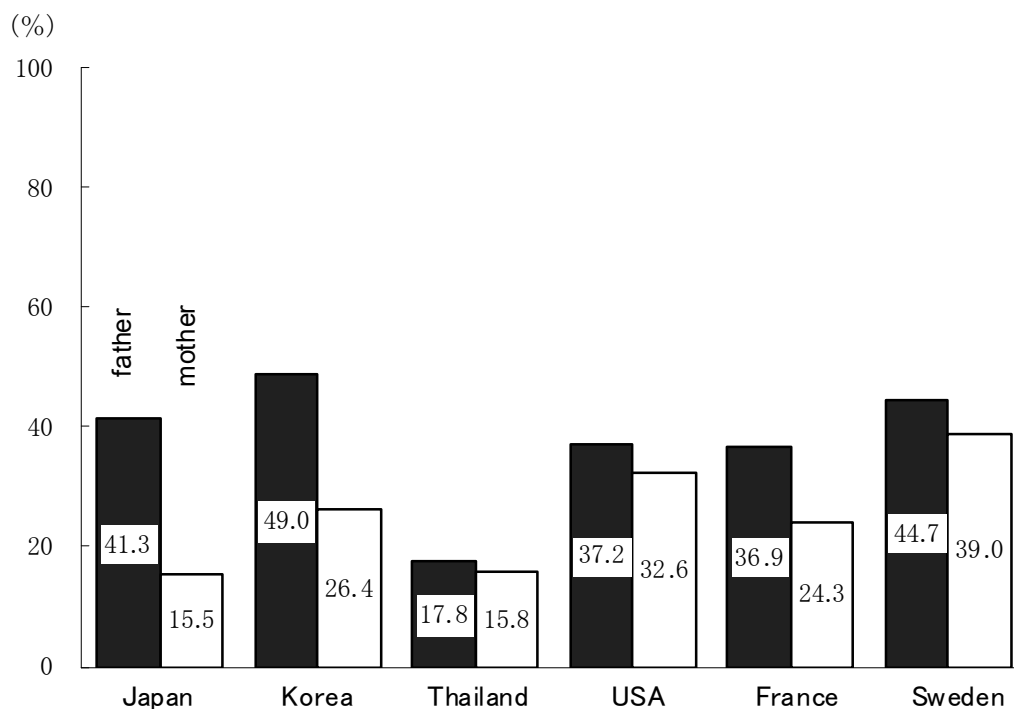
In Sweden, parents are most worried about “I don’t spend enough time with my child” (41%), with “bullying or discrimination my child encounters from others” (35%) coming in second place, and “I worry for my child’s safety” (33%) in third place. Only 2% of parents think “education expenses cost too much,” which is most notable in that it is the lowest in the ranking at 10<sup>th</sup> place.

## (2) Gender of Parents

When we divide each item by gender of the parents, mothers generally have more concerns and problems than fathers do in all six countries. The only exception is the item “I don’t spend enough time with my child,” for which more fathers are concerned about than mothers. Especially among the six countries, there are many fathers who are feeling “I don’t spend enough time with my child” in Korea (49%), Sweden (45%), and Japan (41%). Japan shows the largest difference of 25% between fathers and mothers: mothers 16% and fathers 41%. Korea also shows a large difference of 23% between fathers and mothers. If we look at only Japanese fathers, the items of “I don’t spend enough time with my child” and “I worry for my child’s safety” are both at 41% and tied in first place for concerns by fathers. Likewise, “I don’t spend enough time with my child” is in first place in Sweden and in second in Korea for what fathers are most concerned about in raising their children. Thailand, although it is also an Asian country, shows merely a slight difference of 2% between fathers and mothers for the item of “I don’t spend enough time with my child,” and it is in the seventh place out of 10 for fathers’ concerns.

Fig. II-5-1 Concerns and problems in raising a child (Multiple Answer) [by parent’s gender]

<I don’t spend enough time with my child>

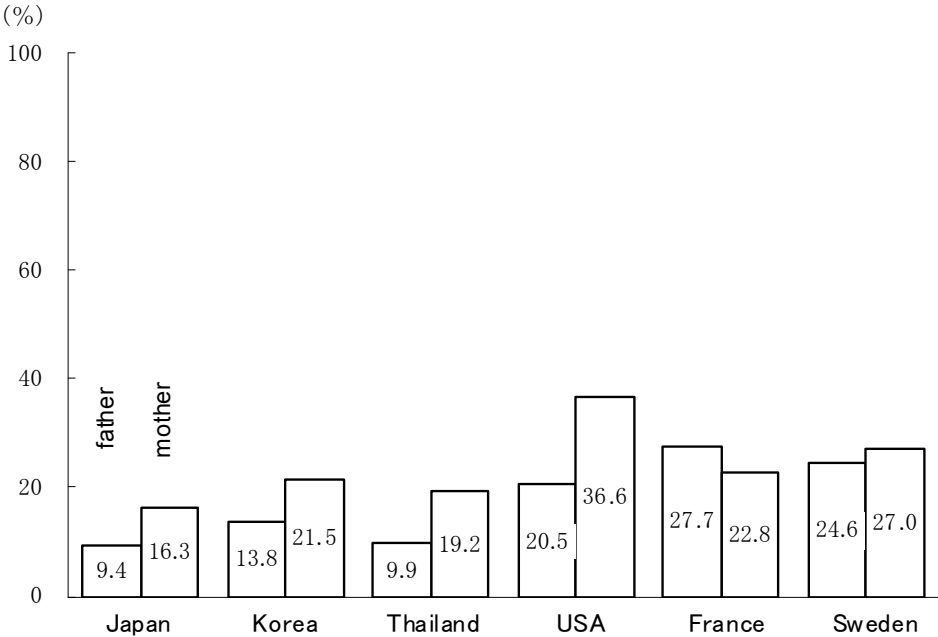


Even though fathers want to spend more time with their children, only 9% of fathers in Japan and 14% of fathers in Korea think that “having a child and a job is difficult.” The item of “having a child and a job is difficult” mostly appears to be an issue for mothers in the United States (37%), and there is a 16% difference for fathers. Similarly in Japan, mothers are also concerned more than fathers are with a difference of 7%, whereas it is only a 1% difference between fathers and mothers in Sweden. It is interesting that fathers (28%) are more concerned than mothers (23%) are in France.

For the items of “I worry for my child’s safety” and “I’m concerned about how my child will fare at school,” the number of mothers who are concerned is more than fathers in all the countries, while the differences between fathers and mothers are relatively small in Sweden. There is a comparatively small difference between fathers and mothers for “our house is too small” in all the countries.

Fig. II-5-2 Concerns and problems in raising a child (Multiple Answer) [by parent’s gender]

<Having a child and a job is difficult>



**(3)Whether Both Parents are Working or Not**

“I don’t spend enough time with my child” is a growing concern among families with both working parents in all 6 countries. In Japan, concern differs between families with both working parents (34%) and families with a full-time housewife/househusband (19%). In Korea, 53% of families with both working parents and 29% of families with a full-time

housewife/househusband are concerned about this, but with a difference of 24%.

A high percentage of families with both working parents in all 6 countries worry that “Having a child and a job is difficult”, and while a big difference is noted in the United States, Korea, and France, almost no difference is observed between families with both working parents and those with a full-time housewife/househusband in Sweden.

In Japan and the United States, more families with both working parents raise “Education costs too much” as a concern compared to families with a full-time housewife/househusband, but in Thailand and France more families with a full-time housewife/househusband raise this concern. It appears that in some cases both parents work because of the heavy burden of education expenses, etc., but in others parents feel the burden of education expenses more keenly because they only have a single income. For the other attributes, comparatively little difference was observed in all 6 countries between families with both working parents and those with a full-time housewife/househusband.

#### **(4) Children’s Age**

“Problems related to taking examinations or graduation/advancement” was raised less frequently than expected, so we looked at whether this became more of a concern as children grew older.

Looking only at families with children aged 10~12, parents’ biggest concern in Japan was “I worry for my child’s safety”, followed by “I don’t spend enough time with my child”. Although the overall ranking does not change, “Problems related to taking examinations or graduation/advancement” joined in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. This attribute ranks 7<sup>th</sup> overall but jumps to 3<sup>rd</sup> for families with children aged 10 or above. Looking at changes in ranking, although “Education expenses cost too much” remains the biggest concern in Korea, “Problems related to taking examinations or graduation/advancement” has jumped from 5<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>. In Thailand, it has moved up from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, and it is remarkable that this concern does not rise above 5<sup>th</sup> irrespective of the children’s age in the United States, France and Sweden.

In terms of the average number of attributes identified as concerns or problems, Thailand had the most (3.23), followed by the United States, France, Korea and Sweden; parents in Japan raised the least number of concerns (2.19) of the 6 countries. The number of attributes raised as concerns increases as the age of children increases in all countries.

### **(5) Comparison with the Research from 1994**

Since the options consisted of 18 items in the previous research of 1994, it is difficult to do a simple, direct comparison. However, it is still possible to compare the higher-ranking items because the items marked higher in the ranking of the 1994 research have also been used in this survey.

The average number of items chosen by each person is incomparable since we asked the question with more than 18 answer options to choose from in the previous survey. Instead, to sort the countries in the previous survey of 1994 by the total number of items selected in the descending order, parents in the United States selected the most number of items, followed by Korea, Japan, England, Sweden, and Thailand. Thailand was the country with the lowest number of concerns and problems 10 years ago. It is interesting that Thailand has become the country of parents with the most number of concerns and problems among the 6 countries this time.

In the case of Japan, there has been no change in that the parents' concern of "I worry for my child's safety" has been in the first place since the previous survey. It is worthy of notice, however, that "I don't spend enough time with my child" was only in seventh place (23%) in the survey in 1994 and it has moved up to second place (27%) this time. The issue item of "I'm concerned about my child getting sick or disabled" was in second place (33%) last time, but the percentage has decreased to 19% and ranked down to fifth place in this survey. The item of "education expenses cost too much" has stayed in third place in the ranking of what parents are concerned most about in Japan.

Table II-5-5 Concerns and problems in raising a child (Multiple Answer)

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Child's physical safety 33.8	Child's illness or handicap 41.4	Financial situation at home 37.3	Cost of the child's education 59.7	Child's physical safety 46.9	Spending enough time with the child 55.7
2nd	Child's illness or handicap 32.9	Child's physical safety 38.5	Child's illness or handicap 24.3	Financial situation at home 59.0	Financial situation at home 32.4	Child's physical safety 38.3
3rd	Cost of the child's education 29.5	Relationship with other children 29.7	Cost of the child's education 21.8	Spending enough time with the child 55.7	Spending enough time with the child 31.7	combining child-rearing and a career 24.3
4th	Relationship with other children 27.8	Cost of the child's education 28.4	Spending enough time with the child 15.5	Child's physical safety 50.9	Relationship with other children 24.7	Financial situation at home 23.9
5th	Housing problems 27.6	Environment around our home 26.3	Child's physical safety 14.2	Child's life at school 35.8	Child's life at school 24.0	Child's life at school 22.7
6th	School and entrance examinations 23.5	Housing problems 25.0	Someone to assist with child-rearing 12.3	Relationship with other children 33.9	Child's illness or handicap 22.5	Relationship with other children 20.9
7th	Spending enough time with the child 23.2	Child's life at school 24.4	Environment around our home 11.4	Combining child-rearing and a career 31.9	Environment around our home 20.0	Child's illness or handicap 18.8
8th	Child life at school 21.6	Spending enough time with the child 22.1	Housing problems 10.8	Discrimination in society 23.6	Combining child-rearing and a career 16.3	Discrimination in society 11.5
9th	Financial situation at home 20.7	School and entrance examinations 19.8	Combining child-rearing and a career 10.2	My relationship with spouse(partner) 21.5	School and entrance examinations 15.3	Environment around our home 9.9
10th	Involvement of spouse(partner) 17.2	Financial situation at home 19.7	Relationship with other children 9.8	Child's illness or handicap 21.1	Discrimination in society 11.9	Involvement of spouse(partner) 7.9
11th	Combining child-rearing and a career 15.1	Combining child-rearing and a career 15.8	School and entrance examinations 8.2	Housing problems 20.6	My relationship with spouse(partner) 11.0	Housing problems 7.6
12th	Environment around our home 12.9	Involvement of spouse(partner) 14.2	My relationship with spouse(partner) 6.5	Environment around our home 20.4	Sex problems among children 10.2	My relationship with spouse(partner) 7.1
13th	My relationship with spouse(partner) 7.5	Someone to assist with child-rearing 13.3	Child's life at school 5.9	Sex problems among children 20.3	Housing problems 9.2	Local traditions 6.5
14th	Family traditions 6.4	Sex problems among children 11.9	Involvement of spouse(partner) 5.6	Involvement of spouse(partner) 20.3	Cost of the child's education 9.2	Someone to assist with child-rearing 5.8
15th	Sex problem among children 6.4	Family traditions 9.3	Discrimination in society 2.1	Someone to assist with child-rearing 18.2	Involvement of spouse(partner) 7.9	School and entrance examinations 4.5
16th	Local traditions 5.6	Discrimination in society 6.7	Local traditions 1.7	Family traditions 17.0	Family traditions 6.2	Sex problems among children 3.6
17th	Discrimination in society 4.1	My relationship with spouse(partner) 5.1	Family traditions 1.2	School and entrance examinations 11.8	Someone to assist with child-rearing 5.5	Family traditions 2.7
18th	Someone to assist with child-rearing 4.1	Local traditions 4.3	Sex problems among children 1.0	Local traditions 7.8	Local traditions 2.4	Cost of the child's education 2.3
Average number of responses	3.20	3.56	2.00	5.30	3.07	2.74

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "nothing particular/don't know" and "no answer") by the number of completed questionnaires.

The most significant change is of Japanese fathers during the past 10 years. In the research of 1994, only 28% of Japanese fathers had chosen the item of “I don’t spend enough time with my child,” and the number has increased to 41% in this research. At the international symposium held after the previous survey, the question was raised by a researcher from Sweden why fathers in Japan had never brought it up as a concern or problem, even though they had spent the shortest time with their children among the six countries. The change can be clearly observed that fathers in Japan have begun to recognize that they should be more concerned about their not spending enough time with their children. In the previous survey, Korean fathers also showed very little concern that “I don’t spend enough time with my child” with 25%, however it has greatly increased to 49% this time. The amount of increase made by Korean fathers is greater than the change made by Japanese fathers.

On the other hand, as for the item of “I don’t spend enough time with my child,” the percentage of fathers has decreased from 60% to 37% in the United States, and similarly in Sweden, the percentage of fathers concerning the same item has also decreased from 59% to 45%. What does this result of decreases explain? It could be considered that fathers’ issue of not being able to spend enough time with their children has been improved substantially in the Western countries during the last 10 years. It seems that a change in fathers’ awareness has finally taken place in Korea and Japan.

### 3. People/Source for Advice When Worries or Problems Arise (Q13)

Q13 [card 10]

When worries or problems have arisen in the course of raising (name of child), who have you gone to for advice? List all of the people/source you go to for advice.  
(Multiple answer)

1. Spouse / partner
2. My parents, brothers and/or sisters
3. My spouse's parents, brothers, and/or sisters
4. Doctor, midwife, nurse or public health official
5. Teacher at school or daycare center staff or family daycare staff
6. Friends
7. Friends who are also raising children /people in a play group
8. Neighbors
9. Counselors, childcare support advisor or psychologist
10. Books and magazines on child-rearing
11. TV and/or radio program
12. Internet site
13. Person in official religious capacity(minister, priest, pastor, rabbi, etc.)
14. There is no one I can go to for advice
15. I don't have any worries or problems

We asked parents to whom they have gone for advice when worries and problems arose in the course of raising their children. There were 14 options of possible advisers to be selected as many as applicable.

## **(1) Ranking**

In all six countries, the majority of respondents answered that they go to their spouses or partners for advice as “spouse/partner” is listed in the first place of each country’s ranking with the highest percentage of all. Moreover, the second place in the rankings is also the same in all six countries; parents talk to “(my) parents, brothers, and/or sisters” when they have worries or problems in the course of rearing their children. 2% of parents in Thailand responded with “there is no one I can go to for advice” (11<sup>th</sup> place), being the highest percentage for this item among the six countries, while it is less than 1% and the lowest in the ranking (14<sup>th</sup> place) in all the other countries. It is interesting that people at the top two and the lowest one are basically common in all countries as universally fundamental people involved in child rearing support for parents.

In Japan, “friends” (43%) is the third highest percentage, followed by “my spouse’s parents, brothers, and/or sisters” (28%), “teacher at school or daycare center staff or family daycare staff” (23%), and so on.

In Korea, 95% of parents listed “spouse/partner,” and it is the highest percentage of “spouse/partner” among the six countries. The percentage of “my parents, brothers, and/or sisters” is 31% and is the second highest rate, though the percentage is relatively low compared to 60% in Japan.

In Thailand, “my spouse’s parents, brothers, and/or sisters” ranks in the third place, and it proves the importance of one’s own and one’s spouses parent generation as advisers. Although it was expected that there would be a significant number of responses for “person in official religious capacity (minister, priest, pastor, rabbi, etc.)” in Thailand, it is unexpectedly low with less than 1% ranking at the lowest. It turns out that such a religious or monastic person as a priest is not included as an adviser of child-rearing.

The United States shows the highest percentage for “my parents, brothers and/or sisters” among the six countries with 64% of the parents’ ballots. Japan also shows a high proportion of 60% following the United States. This result is related to the ranking of people involved in taking care of a child (Q10) in which “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” (65%) ranked in second place (58% as the 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Japan). In Japan and the United States there seems to be a common tendency that there is a strong relationship between a grandchild and grandparents, though the grandparents are not living together. The people in the third place of the United States ranking are “friends who are also raising children/people in a play group”

(42%) being the highest percentage among the six countries.

In third place in France is “doctor, midwife, nurse or public health official” (33%), and the percentage is high next to “my parents, brothers and/or sisters.”

“Teacher at school or daycare center staff or family daycare staff” is in third place (39%) in Sweden’s ranking. For “teacher at school or daycare center staff or family daycare staff,” both the ranking and the percentage are the highest among the six countries. Moreover, “internet site” ranked at 10<sup>th</sup> place with 12%. Similar to the United States, the internet is also fulfilling the role of adviser when parents encounter a problem in the course of child-rearing.

When comparing each country’s average number of answers, the most number is made by parents of the United States (3.85), followed by Sweden (3.69). There are quite a few types of people to whom parents go for advice in Thailand (1.76).

Table II-5-6 People/Sources for advice when worries or problems arise (Multiple Answer)

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Spouse/Partner 87.3	Spouse/Partner 95.3	Spouse/Partner 79.1	Spouse/Partner 77.1	Spouse/Partner 68.2	Spouse/Partner 81.2
2nd	Parents, brothers/sisters 60.1	Parents, brothers/sisters 30.8	Parents, brothers/sisters 34.3	Parents, brothers/sisters 63.6	Parents, brothers/sisters 36.8	Parents, brothers/sisters 55.5
3rd	Friends 43.4	Friends 22.9	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 13.1	Friends at play group 42.3	Doctor 33.2	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 39.2
4th	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 28.2	Neighbors 17.3	Doctor 13.1	Doctor 38.3	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 26.4	Doctor 38.9
5th	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 23.4	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 13.7	Neighbors 10.8	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 29.4	Friends at play group 18.9	Friends 37.9
6th	Doctor 13.4	Friends at play group 13.3	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 8.6	Teachers at school / staff at daycare 29.4	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 13.1	Friends at play group 31.0
7th	Neighbors 11.7	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 12.5	Friends 7.3	Books and magazines 24.6	Friends 8.5	Books and magazines 24.6
8th	Friends at play group 11.0	Internet site 9.6	Books and magazines 3.5	Friends 20.9	Books and magazines 7.5	Spouse'sparents, brothers/sister 22.3
9th	Books and magazines 5.4	Doctor 5.5	TV and/or radio 3.5	Person in religious capacity 17.6	Counselors,advisor psychologist 7.3	TV and/or radio 13.6
10th	Internet site 4.6	Books and magazines 5.3	Friends at play group 1.9	Counselors,advisor psychologist 11.8	TV and/or radio 5.8	Internet site 11.6
11th	TV and/or radio 2.5	TV and/or radio 4.9	No one I can go for advice 1.7	Internet site 11.7	Neighbors 3.4	Neighbors 7.1
12th	Counselors,advisor psychologist 2.2	Person in religious capacity 4.1	Internet site 0.4	Neighbors 9.3	Internet site 3.1	Counselors,advisor psychologist 3.1
13th	Person in religious capacity 1.0	Counselors,advisor psychologist 1.3	Counselors,advisor psychologist 0.2	TV and/or radio 8.7	Person in religious capacity 0.9	Person in religious capacity 2.8
14th	No one I can go for advice 0.1	No one I can go for advice 0.3	Person in religious capacity 0.1	No one I can go for advice 0.8	No one I can go for advice 0.8	No one I can go for advice 0.3
Average number of responses	2.94	2.36	1.76	3.85	2.33	3.69

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "no response", "no one for advice" "don't have any problems") by the number of completed questionnaires.

## **(2) Comparison with the Research from 1994**

Considering changes in the social environment, we have added 3 new answer options such as 1) friends who are also raising children/people in a play group [to be abbreviated as “friends who are also raising children”], 2) internet sites, and 3) persons in official religious capacity (minister priest, pastor, rabbi, etc.), and we have removed the low percentage item of “colleagues/coworkers” from the previous research. In fact, the results show that “friends who are also raising children” play an important role that is still different from “neighbors” and “other friends” in the United States (42%), Sweden (31%), and France (19%). Furthermore, even though the proportions are not so large, “internet site” also appears to be more helpful for parents than “TV and/or radio program” in Japan, Korea, and the United States.

It should be noted that there are no changes in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places in the rankings of all the countries; “spouse/partner” has been the 1<sup>st</sup> place and “my parents, brothers and/or sisters” have been the 2<sup>nd</sup> place for 10 years.

The United States also had the most average number of answers, followed by Sweden in the previous research. It is the same as the research of this time. The country with the least average number of answers was Korea in the previous research, and it has changed to Thailand this time.

In Japan, though there has been almost no change in the order of ranking, the proportion of “spouse/partner” has decreased by 7% and the proportions of “my parents, brothers and/or sisters” and “friends” have increased by 10% each. While the percentage of “neighbors” remains 11%, there was an additional 11% for the new item “friends who are also raising children.” Therefore, over the 10 years, parents seem to be seeking advices from a more open network of people such as relatives and friends rather than only from a limited family environment.

#### 4. The Ideal Environment for Raising a Child (Q14)

Q14 [card 11]

For raising (name of child), what sort of things do you wish were available or were more readily available? Choose as many things as apply. (multiple answer)

1. Places where child and friends can play freely
2. Places where I can get advice and learn about child-rearing
3. Facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child
4. A system of parental leave available to either parent
5. A working environment that allows parents to spend ample time
6. Financial aid for raising and educating children
7. Nothing in particular

We asked parents what sort of things they wish were available or were more readily available when raising a child, and had them choose as many options as applicable from 6 answer options. The six options in this research were exactly the same options used in the research of 1994 so that we should be able to compare changes and similarities over the 10 years.

Table II-5-7 [1994] People/Sources for advice when worries or problems arise (Multiple Answer)

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Spouse/Partner 94.7	Spouse/Partner 97.5	Spouse/Partner 84.9	Spouse/Partner 76.3	Spouse/Partner 66.7	Spouse/Partner 90.4
2nd	My parents,sisters and/or brothers 52.6	My parents,sisters and/or brothers 27.9	My parents,sisters and/or brothers 41.7	My parents,sisters, and/or brothers 59.8	My parents,sisters and/or brothers 46.0	My parents,sisters and/or brothers 41.5
3rd	Friends 31.7	Neighbours 14.4	Doctor 29.1	Doctor 48.0	Doctor 44.0	fFriends 36.7
4th	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 26.0	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 12.7	Neighbours 20.4	Friends 41.4	Friends 30.2	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 32.7
5th	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 19.0	Friends 12.5	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 17.5	Books and magazines on child-rearing 34.6	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 23.0	Doctor 22.7
6th	Doctor 15.7	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 10.8	TV and/or radio programmes 12.3	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 31.7	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 21.0	Books and magazines on child-rearing 20.5
7th	Neighbours 11.4	Doctor 9.9	Friends 9.2	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 27.8	Books and magazines on child-rearing 13.3	My spouse's parents, brothers and/or sisters 18.1
8th	People at work 8.7	Books and magazines on child-rearing 6.7	Teachers at school or daycare centre staff 9.2	Counsellors or other professionals 16.6	Counsellors or other professionals 9.4	People at work 14.5
9th	Books and magazines on child-rearing 8.2	TV and/or radio programmes 5.3	Books and magazines on child-rearing 8.6	Neighbours 14.9	Neighbours 8.5	Neighbours 8.3
10th	Counsellors or other professionals 2.2	People at work 3.9	People at work 5.5	TV and/or radio programmes 14.4	People at work 4.6	TV and/or radio programmes 6.9
11th	TV and/or radio programmes 2.2	Counsellors or other professionals 2.2	There is no-one I can go to for advice 3.9	People at work 11.6	There is no-one I can go to for advice 4.5	Counsellors or other professionals 4.7
12th	There is no- one I can go to for advice 0.5	There is no- one I can go to for advice 0.5	Counsellors or other professionals 1.7	There is no- one I can go to for advice 3.1	TV and/or radio programmes 3.3	There is no- one I can go to for advice 1.8
Average number of responses	2.72	2.04	2.40	3.77	2.70	2.97

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "There is no-one I can go to for advice" and "no response" by the number of completed questionnaires.

Table II-5-8 The ideal environment for raising a child

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Place where child can play freely 67.6	Place where child can play freely 70.7	Financial aid for raising children 62.8	Place where child can play freely 53.6	Place where child can play freely 48.5	Working environment etc. 47.6
2nd	Financial aid for raising children 48.5	Financial aid for raising children 70.1	Place where child can play freely 55.5	Facilities where I can leave my child 42.3	Financial aid for raising children 45.7	Place where child can play freely 38.0
3rd	Facilities where I can leave my child 38.0	Facilities where I can leave my child 55.7	Facilities where I can leave my child 51.7	Financial aid for raising children 37.1	Facilities where I can leave my child 40.3	Financial aid for raising children 33.9
4th	Working environment etc. 32.3	Places where I can go for advice etc. 42.0	Places where I can go for advice etc. 37.5	Working environment etc. 34.6	Working environment etc. 27.5	Facilities where I can leave my child 23.9
5th	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 25.5	Working environment etc. 38.1	Working environment etc. 30.2	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 20.1	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 20.7	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 12.0
6th	Places where I can go for advice etc. 25.0	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 27.8	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 22.5	Places where I can go for advice etc. 13.0	Places where I can go for advice etc. 18.4	Places where I can go for advice etc. 11.6
Average number of responses	2.37	3.04	2.60	2.01	2.01	1.67

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "nothing in particular/don't know") by the number of completed questionnaires.

### (1) Ranking and Comparison with the Research from 1994

The items in first place in the ranking of each country are the same as in the research results of 1994 (the UK in the previous research is replaced with France); parents wish for "places where child and friends can play freely" in Japan, Korea, the United States, and France, parents in Thailand wish for "financial aid for raising and educating children," and parents in Sweden wish for "a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time." The percentages of Japan, Korea, and Thailand have somewhat increased, and the percentages have decreased by a few in the United States and Sweden. Since the first place items for what most parents wish for in all the countries are the same for the past 10 years, it could be considered that the environments for raising children have not improved as well as the parents' attitude toward improving the environments have not changed.

In Japan, many parents wish for "places where child and friends can play freely" (68%) ranked in the first place, and the percentage has slightly increased from the previous

research. Second place in Japan's ranking is "financial aid for raising and educating children" that was also second place in the research of 1994, while its percentage has significantly increased from 31% to 49%. Third in the ranking is "facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child" (38%) that was fifth in the previous research. The significant increase in percentage by 15% implies the increased demand by parents. Although the position in the ranking has fallen from third to fourth, the percentage has increased from 29% to 32% for "a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time." In addition, as the increased percentages are also observed for "a system of parental leave available to either of the parents" and "places where I can get advice and learn about child-rearing," the overall demand for a better and improved child-rearing environment has apparently increased. The average number of answers per person has also increased from 1.93 to 2.37.

The highest percentage in Korea is "places where child and friends can play freely" in the first place. Compared to the result from 1994, it was also first place in the ranking but the percentage has increased. The second place of the ranking has changed from "facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child" (45%) to "financial aid for raising and educating children" (70%) obviously with strong demands as indicated by the percentage difference. "Facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child" has ranked up to third place, and the percentage has increased from 45% to 56%.

Table II-5-9 [1994] The ideal environment for raising a child

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Place where child can play freely 66.2	Place where child can play freely 65.4	Financial aid for raising children 61.7	Place where child can play freely 63.6	Place where child can play freely 63.6	Working environment etc. 51.7
2nd	Financial aid for raising children 31.0	Facilities where I can leave my child 44.5	Place where child can play freely 46.6	Facilities where I can leave my child 50.3	Facilities where I can leave my child 45.1	Place where child can play freely 38.5
3rd	Working environment etc. 29.4	Places where I can go for advice etc. 39.0	Places where I can go for advice etc. 42.1	Financial aid for raising children 44.1	Financial aid for raising children 29.6	Facilities where I can leave my child 29.2
4th	Places where I can go for advice etc. 24.9	Working environment etc. 27.0	Facilities where I can leave my child 40.5	Working environment etc. 39.2	Working environment etc. 29.3	Financial aid for raising children 18.2
5th	Facilities where I can leave my child 22.6	Financial aid for raising children 26.5	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 22.6	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 27.7	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 18.3	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 9.9
6th	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 18.7	Sytem of child-rearing vacation time 14.7	Working environment etc. 21.5	Places where I can go for advice etc. 19.1	Places where I can go for advice etc. 13.0	Places where I can go for advice etc. 6.6
Average number of responses	1.93	2.17	2.35	2.44	1.99	1.54

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "nothing in particular/don't know") by the number of completed questionnaires.

In Thailand, “financial aid for raising and educating children” is the highest percentage, same as in the research results of 1994 with a slightly increased percentage. The second highest percentage of “places where child and friends can play freely” still remains in the same position as in the 1994 ranking but with nearly a 10% increase. The other notable items with increased demands of parents are “facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child” (41%→52%) and “a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time” (22%→30%).

In the United States, the item of “places where child and friends can play freely” stays in the first place of the ranking, however the percentage has decreased from 64% to 54%. Also, from the second through sixth places in the ranking, the items and their positions in the ranking remain the same as the results of the previous research: “facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child” (50%→42%), “financial aid for raising and educating children” (44%→37%), “a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time” (39%→35%), “a system of parental leave available to either parent” (28%→20%), and “place where I can get advice and learn about child-rearing” (19%→13%). It is very interesting that all the percentages have decreased as a possible implication of substantial improvement during the last 10 years.

In Sweden, “a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time” (48%) stays in first place, and the percentage has somewhat decreased. There has been no change in the second place of ranking with “places where child and friends can play freely” while the percentage remains the same as the previous result. The percentage for “financial aid for raising and educating children” has increased from 18% to 34% and has moved up from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> in the ranking order. The percentage of “facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child” has decreased from 29% to 24%. Based on these results, people in Sweden satisfied with the working environment and facilities where parents can leave their children for the most part.

Compared to the research results from 1994, the average number of answers per person has greatly increased in the three Asian countries of Japan, Korea and Thailand. In contrast, the average number of answers per person has decreased in the United States, and it could imply certain improvements made in the child-rearing environment over the past 10 years and the subsequent change in parents’ attitude in demanding for an improvement.

## 5. Experiences and Training before Parenthood (Q15)

Q15 [card 12]

Before becoming a parent (including the period during pregnancy), did you have any experience caring for small children? Did you take any classes or study about children? (Choose all that apply). (Multiple answer)

1. Took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister
2. Took care of small children of relatives, friends or neighbors
3. Was a babysitter at other people's home
4. Learned at school
5. Participated in a class offered locally
6. Read books on child-rearing
7. Learned from TV and/or radio program
8. Learned from my own parents
9. Had never really learned or had any experience

We asked whether parents had any previous experience or training in caring for children before becoming parents, providing 9 answer options for subjects to choose all that apply. The options used for this question are exactly the same as the research in 1994 so that we would compare and contrast changes in the results over time.

### (1) Ranking & Comparison with the Research from 1994

In Japan, in the descending order of percentage, the ways parents gain experiences in caring for children before becoming parents are “read books on child-rearing” (30%), “learned from my own parents” (29%), “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (29%), “took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister” (18%), and “learned from TV and/or radio program” (11%). As it is led by reading child-rearing books, Japanese parents tend to gain very limited experience in caring for children. These ways of gaining prior experiences in caring for children and their ranking order have not changed from the previous research in 1994. However, the percentage of each way of gaining experience has decreased by approximately 10%: “read books on child-rearing” 39%→30% (-9%), “learned from my own parents” 37%→29% (-8%), “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” 34%→29% (-5%), “took care of a small/younger brother

and/or sister” 24%→18% (-6%), and “learned from TV and/or radio program” 21%→11% (-10%). The average number of answers per parent has also decreased from 1.84 to 1.36. It appears that individuals who did not have enough experience or training in caring for children have now become parents with even less opportunities for the experiences than 10 years ago.

Table II-5-10 Experiences and Trainings Before Parenthood (Multiple Answer)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	France	Sweden
1st	Read books on child-rearing 29.9	Read books on child-rearing 25.0	Took care of children of relatives etc. 35.1	Learned from my own parents 54.6	Took care of a younger brother etc. 23.1	Took care of children of relatives etc. 38.8
2nd	Learned from my own parents 29.4	Learned from TV and / or radio 14.8	Took care of a younger brother etc. 32.4	Took care of children of relatives etc. 39.2	Learned from my own parents 27.4	Learned from my own parents 38.7
3rd	Took care of children of relatives etc. 28.6	Took care of children of relatives etc. 14.2	Learned from my own parents 23.1	Was a babysitter at other people's home 37.7	Took care of children of relatives etc. 19.3	Was a babysitter at other people's home 36.5
4th	Took care of a younger brother etc. 13.2	Learned from my own parents 11.2	Read books on child-rearing 11.4	Took care of a younger brother etc. 36.0	Was a babysitter at other people's home 18.8	Took care of a younger brother etc. 31.7
5th	Learned from TV and / or radio 11.3	Learned at school 5.7	Learned from TV and / or radio 8.0	Read books on child-rearing 25.5	Read books on child-rearing 15.5	Read books on child-rearing 31.1
6th	Participated in a class offered locally 10.9	Took care of a younger brother etc. 4.9	Was a babysitter at other people's home 5.0	Learned at school 13.2	Learned from TV and / or radio 6.3	Participated in a class offered locally 19.8
7th	Learned at school 6.6	Participated in a class offered locally 3.4	Learned at school 1.0	Participated in a class offered locally 11.4	Learned at school 4.2	Learned at school 19.3
8th	Was a babysitter at other people's home 1.4	Was a babysitter at other people's home 0.9	Participated in a class offered locally 0.6	Learned from TV and / or radio 10.8	Participated in a class offered locally 2.0	Learned from TV and / or radio 11.2
Average number of responses	1.36	0.80	1.17	2.28	1.21	2.27

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding “had never really learned or had any experience” and “no responses”) by the number of completed questionnaires.

In Korea, the highest percentage is “read books on child-rearing” (25%), and the second highest is “learned from TV and/or radio program” (15%). Korean parents have even less practical experiences in caring for children before becoming parents than Japanese parents have. In the research of 1994, the percentage of “took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister” was the second highest, but it is now down to the sixth place. As the average number of answers per parent has also decreased from 1.59 to 0.80, the experience and training before parenthood has decreased in the last 10 years. Japan and Korea are similar in that their babysitting experience is almost none at about 1%.

In Thailand, the highest percentage is “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (35%), followed by “took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister” (32%). Parents in Thailand do seem to have had experience before becoming parents. However, the overall percentage of experience shows a tendency to decline, and the average number of answers per parent also decreased from 1.64 to 1.17.

The most number of parents in the United States answered that they “learned from my own parents” (55%) as marked with the highest percentage. The second highest is “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (39%), therefore these parents have practical experience in taking care of children before becoming parents. The unique characteristic of parents in the United States is that as many as 38% have been “a babysitter at other people’s homes.” The order of ranking from the first to fifth places has not changed from the research result of 1994. The sixth place is “learned at school,” which has moved up in the ranking. Since “learned from TV and/or radio programs” has lowered in the ranking from 6th to 8th place, it is understood that people are actually experiencing childcare before becoming parents. Even though the average number of answers per parent has decreased from 2.79 to 2.28, it is still the highest average among the six countries.

Parents in France answered that they had experiences or training in taking care of children prior to becoming parents through “taking care of a small/younger brother and/or sister” (28%), “learned from own parents” (27%), and “taking care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (19%). Although these percentages are not so high, it shows that parents have more practical childcare experiences than indirect learning experiences. The average number of options chosen by a parent is 1.21 and is lower than Japan's average.

The highest three percentage items in Sweden are “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (39%), “learned from own parents” (39%), and “a babysitter at other’s home” (37%). The total number of answer options is the second highest following after the United States. There are parents who have gained experiences in caring for children via public service or facilities outside of the family environment as certain percentages are observed for “participated in a class offered locally” (20%) and “learned at school” (19%). The average number of answer options per parent is 2.27, the 2nd most next to the United States. However, the overall percentage has decreased; especially, the percentage of “a babysitter at other’s home” was the highest percentage in the previous research but has decreased considerably from 45% to 37%.

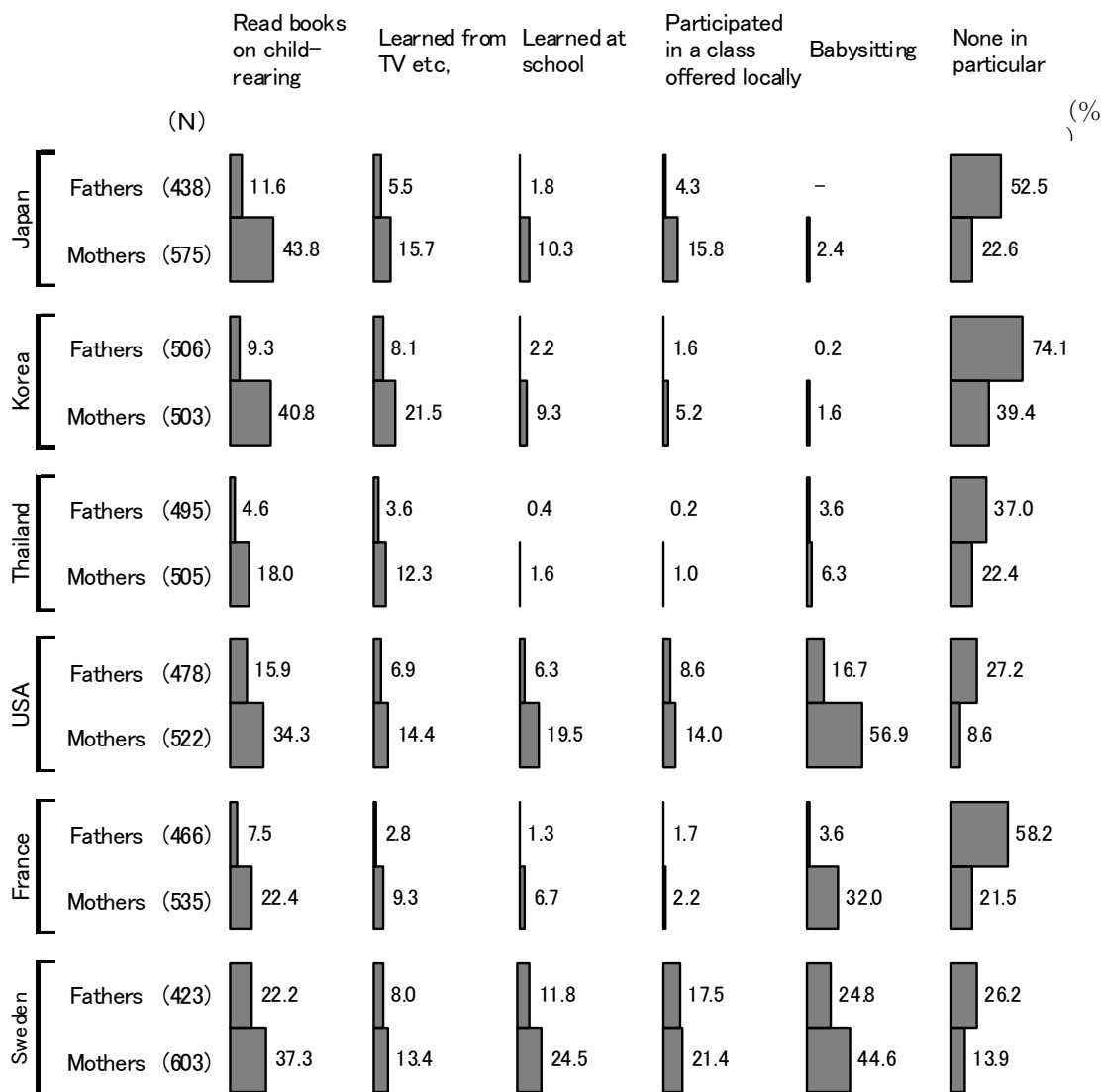
Table II-5-11 [1994] Experiences and Trainings Before Parenthood (Multiple Answer)

(%)

	Japan	Korea	Thailand	USA	UK	Sweden
1st	Read books on child-rearing 39.3	Read books on child-rearing 34.9	Took care of a younger brother etc. 39.0	Learned from my own parents 58.9	Took care of children of relatives etc. 32.4	Was a babysitter at other people's home 45.3
2nd	Learned from my own parents 36.7	Took care of a younger brother etc. 29.0	Took care of children of relatives etc. 32.0	Took care of children of relatives etc. 47.6	Was a babysitter at other people's home 31.7	Learned from my own parents 42.6
3rd	Took care of children of relatives etc. 34.3	Learned from my own parents 24.4	Learned from my own parents 30.2	Was a babysitter at other people's home 45.9	Learned from my own parents 28.7	Took care of children of relatives etc. 38.7
4th	Took care of a younger brother etc. 23.6	Took care of children of relatives etc. 24.4	Read books on child-rearing 24.0	Took care of a younger brother etc. 40.3	Took care of a younger brother etc. 24.8	Read books on child-rearing 31.1
5th	Learned from TV and / or radio 21.3	Learned from TV and / or radio 19.8	Learned from TV and / or radio 22.8	Read books on child-rearing 33.3	Read books on child-rearing 22.9	Took care of a younger brother etc. 30.5
6th	Learned at school 13.8	Learned at school 18.1	Learned at school 9.8	Learned from TV and / or radio 21.6	Participated in a class offered locally 12.2	Learned at school 23.6
7th	Participated in a class offered locally 12.7	Participated in a class offered locally 6.9	Was a babysitter at other people's home 4.3	Learned at school 19.0	Learned from TV and / or radio 10.0	Learned from TV and / or radio 13.2
8th	Was a babysitter at other people's home 2.2	Was a babysitter at other people's home 1.6	Participated in a class offered locally 2.3	Participated in a class offered locally 12.6	Learned at school 8.5	Participated in a class offered locally 9.3
Average number of responses	1.84	1.59	1.64	2.79	1.71	2.34

\* The average number of responses is calculated by dividing the total number of responses (excluding "had never really learned or had any experience" and "no responses") by the number of completed questionnaires.

Fig. II-5-3 Experiences and Trainings Before Parenthood (Multiple Answer) [by parent's gender]



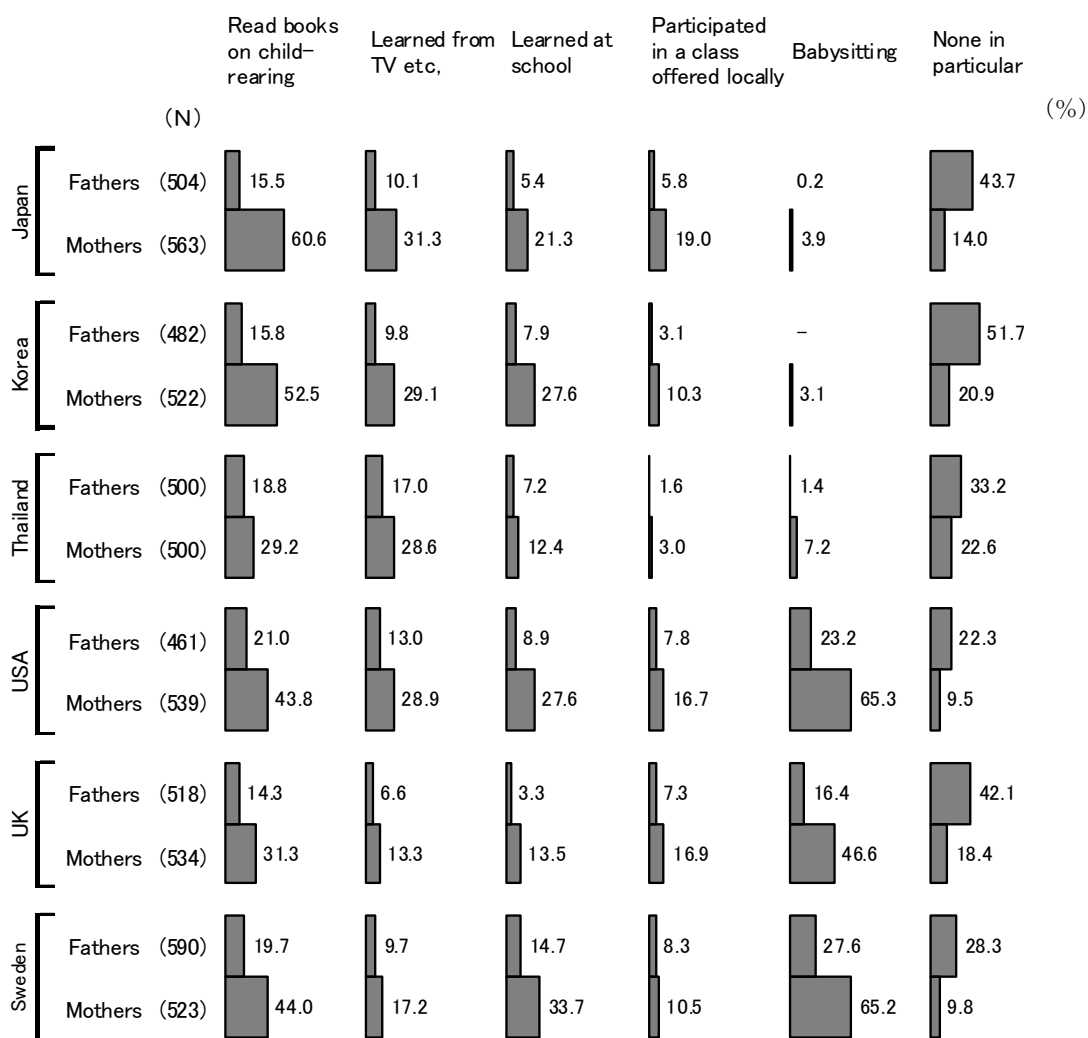
## (2) Gender of Parents

Let us take a look at the results by gender of parents, particularly on the major items and “had never really learned or had any experience.”

First of all, it is noticeable that fathers show the largest number of responses for “had never really learned or had any experience,” and the difference ratio between mothers and fathers is significant. The countries with the largest number of responses for “had never really learned or had any experience” are Korea (74%), France (58%), and Japan (53%). In addition, 39% of mothers in Korea answered that they “had never really learned or had any experience.”

Compared with the research results from 1994, the number of parents who answered that they “had never really learned or had any experience” has significantly increased for both fathers and mothers in Korea and Japan. In contrast, the proportion of fathers whose responses were “had never really learned or had any experience” has decreased in Sweden for the research in 2005, implying that the other proportion of fathers who experienced caring for children before parenthood has increased. For example, 25% of fathers in Sweden experienced being a babysitter, and it is the highest percentage among the six countries.

Fig. II-5-4 [1994] Experiences and Trainings Before Parenthood (Multiple Answer) [by parent's gender]



For the other categories, mothers generally have more experience or training on becoming a parent while fathers have significantly less experience or training in all six

countries. There are relatively small differences by gender in Sweden and Thailand.

In the United States, there is a difference of 40% between mothers (57%) and fathers (17%) for the experience of being “a babysitter at another’s home.” Although there are a relatively large number of men with the experience of babysitting in the United States, babysitting still seems to be viewed as work for women.

In case of Japan, 44% of mothers answered “read books on child-rearing” and it is the highest percentage among the six countries. Although there are home economics courses in Japanese junior-high and senior high schools where female students learn about nurture and upbringing, only 10% of mothers’ responses were for “learned at school.” This issue has resulted because either the parents are from a generation when nurture was not required in home economics courses, or that they did not learn effectively even if they had learned at school.

In the end, there is a vivid contrast in how the gender of parents is connected with experience and thoughts about nurturing in the parents of Japan and Korea, to the remarkable participation of fathers in child rearing in Sweden.

## Summary

To summarize the research results in terms of child rearing support, there is a notable change in the fathers of Japan as to their responses of “I don’t spend enough time with my child.” Only 28% of Japanese fathers had answered that not spending enough time with their children was a problem in the study 10 years ago (4<sup>th</sup> rank), and the percentage has increased to 41% (1<sup>st</sup> rank) in the research this time. Although fathers are concerned about the short time spent with children, fathers’ interest and demand for the ideal environment for raising a child are lower than mothers’, and the difference is the largest among the countries. As for the experience and training in taking care of a child before parenthood, there are many Japanese parents who learn about child rearing from books, and there are a significantly small number of Japanese parents having actual experience in caring for small children before becoming parents. The majority of fathers, especially, answered that they “had never really learned or had any experience,” and the number of those fathers has increased in the past 10 years.

Although there are an increasing number of people other than close family members who are involved in raising a child directly or indirectly compared to 10 years ago, there does not exist a really high interest and demand of parents for improving the environment for raising a child in society as a whole. Especially, fathers have less experience and interest than mothers do in child-rearing, and the difference between fathers and mothers is substantial compared to the other countries.

### (1) People Involved in Raising a Child

We asked parents what sorts of people have been involved in taking care of their children from birth to the present time.

In all six countries, “spouse/partner” is listed the most by parents as a person who is involved in raising their children. The other types of individuals ranked in second and below vary depending on country. It is remarkable that many parents answered “babysitter or housekeeper” as a person being involved in taking care of their children in the United States, whereas the rates are particularly low in the Asian countries of Japan, Korea, and Thailand. The percentage for “staff at extended care facility or after-school program” is high in Sweden (36%), whereas it is very low and less than 1% in Korea and Thailand; thus it varies significantly depending on each country.

Looking at the average number of people involved in taking care of a child, Sweden has the most (3.61) followed by the United States (3.39) and Japan (3.17), while the lowest average is by Thailand (1.88).

The number of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live separately from us” is greater for the families of working parents than for the families with a full-time housewife/househusband in the United States, Korea, France, and Thailand, while the numbers decrease in Japan and Sweden and the percentage of “my/spouse’s parents, brothers and/or sisters who live with us” increases instead.

Compared with the survey result from 1994, there is no change in each country that the “spouse/partner” is the number one person involved in taking care of a child. The average number of items answered per person has increased in Japan, Korea, and the United States. As observed in the increased number of associations with official childcare systems and organizations, children in all countries are being raised through relationships with various kinds of people.

## **(2) Concerns and Problems in Raising a Child**

For the results of the survey question with up to 10 possible answer options asked to parents on whether they had worries or problems in raising their children, parents in Japan, Thailand, the United States, and France had the most worries or problems about their “child’s safety,” “education expenses” in Korea, and “not spending enough time with child” in Sweden.

To see the results split by gender of parents, mothers generally have more concerns and problems than fathers do in all six countries. The only exception is the item “I don’t spend enough time with my child” for which more fathers are concerned about than mothers are. The most fathers who feel that “I don’t spend enough time with my child” are in Korea (49%), Sweden (45%), and Japan (41%). Japan shows the largest difference of 25% between fathers and mothers on this item: mothers 16% and fathers 41%.

It is a profound concern in all six countries for the families of both parents working in terms of “having a child and a job is difficult.” If we limit the age of children between 10~12 years old in Japan, parents’ concern of “problem reflected to taking examinations or graduation/advancement at school of child” comes tied in second place with an equal percentage. As for the “problem reflected to taking examinations or graduation/advancement at school of child,” it never makes to a rank higher than 5<sup>th</sup> place in the United States, France, and Sweden even when the children get older. During the

research in 1994, only 28% of Japanese fathers were concerned that “I don’t spend enough time with my child,” while the percentage has increased to 41% in this research.

### **(3) The People/Source for Advice When Worries or Problems Arise**

In all six countries, the most number of parents answered that they go to their spouses or partners for advice when worries and problems arise. Second place in the ranking is also the same in all six countries: “parents, brothers, and/or sisters.” When comparing each country’s average number of answers, the most number is made by parents in the United States (3.85), followed by Sweden (3.69). There are quite few types of people to whom parents go for advice in Thailand (1.76).

To compare with the research of 1994, there are no changes in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places in the rankings of all the countries: “spouse/partner” has been in 1<sup>st</sup> place and “my parents, brothers and/or sisters” have been in 2<sup>nd</sup> place for 10 years. The United States was also the most in the average number of answers, followed by Sweden, in the previous as well as the present research. The country with the least average number of answers was Korea in the previous research, and it has changed to Thailand this time. In Japan, though there has been almost no change in the order of ranking in the past 10 years, parents seem to be seeking for advice from a more open network of people, such as relatives and friends, rather than only from a limited family environment.

### **(4) The Ideal Environment for Raising a Child**

We asked parents what sort of things they wish were available or were more readily available when raising a child, and for them to choose from up to 6 answer options. The items ranking first in each country are the same as in the research results of 1994; parents in Japan, Korea, the United States, and France wish for “places where child and friends can play freely,” parents in Thailand wish for “financial aid for raising and educating children,” and parents in Sweden wish for “a working environment that allows parents to spend ample time.”

Compared to the research results of 1994, the average number of answers per person has greatly increased in the three Asian countries of Japan, Korea and Thailand. In contrast, the average number of answers per person has decreased in the United States, and it could imply certain improvements made in the child-rearing environment over the past 10 years, and the subsequent change in parents’ attitude in demanding for an improvement.

To see the results for the ideal environment for raising children by gender of parents, especially in Japan, there is a strong demand from mothers for “facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my child,” as well as a large difference between mothers and fathers in their demands. Even for every other item, mothers show more fervent wishes and demands than fathers do, as Japanese fathers do not show much interest in the environment for raising children. It makes a sharp contrast with the other two Asian countries wherein both fathers and mothers have fervent wishes and demands for a better environment for raising children.

For the answer option of “nothing in particular,” the percentage is higher for fathers than mothers in all the six countries, while large differences between fathers and mothers are observed in Japan and the United States.

Looking at the differences as to whether both parents are working or not, though the differences are small, parents of families with a full-time housewife/househusband in Japan show slightly stronger wishes for such items as “places where child and friends can play freely,” “financial aid for raising and educating children,” “facilities where I can feel comfortable leaving my children,” “system of parental leave available to either parent,” and “places where I can get advice and learn about child-rearing.”

In Korea and Thailand, similar as in Japan, parents of a family with a full-time housewife/househusband tend to show stronger wishes for an ideal environment for raising children. In contrast, in the United States and France, stronger wishes and demands for a better environment for raising a child are observed among the families of both working parents than the families with a full-time housewife/househusband. As for Sweden, parents of a family with a full-time housewife/househusband show a fervent wish and demand for the ideal child-rearing environment than parents of a family with both parents working on all six items, same as in the research of 1994. Therefore, the trend remains basically the same for 10 years.

There is a common tendency observed in Japan, Korea, Thailand, and France that the younger the child, the stronger the demand of parents for “places where I can feel comfortable leaving my child.” Moreover, the same tendency is observed for “a system of parental leave available to either parent” for which the demand is stronger among the parents of younger children; this tendency is also common in Japan, Korea, Thailand, and France. As to the parents’ need for “places where child and friends can play freely” (which is at 1<sup>st</sup> rank in several countries), there is no significant correlation observed with the age of a child. However, the need or demand is somewhat strong among parents of children

between 4 and 6 years of age in Japan and Korea, among parents of children between 0 and 3 years old in Thailand, France, and Sweden, as well as among parents of children between 7 and 9 years old in the United States.

Basically, there has been no significant change in the trends according to the age of children regarding the needs and demands for the ideal environment for raising children since the research in 1994.

### **(5) Experiences and Training before Parenthood**

In Japan, the ways parents gain experience in caring for children before becoming parents include (in descending order): “read books on child-rearing” (30%), “learned from my own parents” (29%), “took care of the small children of relatives, friends or neighbors” (29%), “took care of a small/younger brother and/or sister” (18%), and “learned from TV and/or radio program” (11%). As it is led by reading child-rearing books, Japanese parents tend to gain very limited experience in caring for children. These ways of gaining prior experience in caring for children and their ranking order have not changed from the previous research of 1994. However, the percentage of each way of gaining experience has decreased by approximately 10%.

Compared with the research in 1994, the average number of answer options per parent has also decreased from 1.84 to 1.36. It appears that individuals who did not have enough experience or training in caring for children have now become parents with even less opportunities for the experiences than 10 years ago. In the United States and Sweden, there are a relatively substantial number of people who have practical experience in childcare before becoming parents.

The number of parents who answered “had never really learned or had any experience” has significantly increased for both fathers and mothers in Korea and Japan. In contrast, the proportion of fathers whose responses were “had never really learned or had any experience” has decreased in Sweden for the research in 2005, implying that the other proportion of fathers who experienced caring for children before parenthood has increased. For example, 25% of fathers in Sweden have experience of being a babysitter, and it is the highest percentage among the six countries.

For the other categories, mothers generally have more experience or training on becoming a parent while fathers have significantly less experience or training in all six countries. There are relatively small differences by gender in Sweden and Thailand.

(Katsuko Makino)