

Fumie Kumagai · Masako Ishii-Kuntz  
*Editors*

# Family Violence in Japan

A Life Course Perspective

 Springer

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## Preface

During my final years of graduate studies, I was fortunate to study under the direction of Professor Murray A. Straus, a pioneer in the sociological study of family violence in the U.S.A., and a founder of the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire. I was his PA (project assistant) on the National Survey Research of Family Violence in the U.S.A. I learned that family violence tapped on various types of abusive behaviors in family interactions, including child abuse, intimate partner violence (IPV), youth and filial violence, elder abuse, corporal punishment, sibling rivalry, and others. But no scholar of family violence can study all of these different types of abusive conducts in family relations. Consequently, it is generally true that a researcher concentrates on only a certain type of family violence as his/her major area of specialization. Professor Straus, however, changed attitudes toward studying family violence in Western societies by looking at family interactions throughout a person's entire life course.

In Japan, however, family violence today means exclusively IPV and is often called "DV," domestic violence. I have often wondered why the interpretation of family violence among Japanese people differs from that of their Western counterparts.

Two major reasons for it have come to mind. First, Western scholars and researchers have come to look at violence in the family through a life course perspective, where it can be seen that family violence is often transmitted from one generation to the next. Instead, Japanese scholars and researchers of family violence have confined their area of specialization only to a certain segment of abusive conduct at a specific point in the family interaction. Japanese methods of studying family violence lack the view of the whole, the gestalt, which would allow a view of family interactions through a life course perspective.

Second, family violence is a phenomenon transmitted through generations and needs to be viewed as a social issue which requires social intervention to alleviate the problem. In Japan, however, the issue is more or less viewed as a personal pathology.

Unfortunately, my views and stance for studying family violence are not fully appreciated in Japan. Nevertheless, I am eager to let the global society know the true state of family violence in Japan. As I do not specialize in any type of family violence in Japan, my desire to inform the global society on the topic has been beyond the scope of my ability. Furthermore, I have very few acquaintances among researchers who specialize in family violence in Japan.

So I asked Professor Masako Ishii-Kuntz to help me. Masako is a prominent scholar specializing in the field of fathering and mothering. She possesses a wide range of scholarly activities in the United States, Japan, and throughout the world. In April 2014, I contacted Masako, asking her if she had any interest in coediting an anthology, to be titled *Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective*. I was extremely anxious waiting for her reply. Fortunately, she not only responded positively by agreeing with the significance of the project but also volunteered to contact two postdoctoral researchers and a Ph.D. candidate under her direction as possible members for the proposal. Our project team was organized in a week, with three other researchers, namely, Yoko Hayashi, Takayo Sasaki, and Rie Okamura, agreeing to help. We met several times for briefings and exchanged frequent emails.

This anthology aims at providing insightful sociological analyses of family violence in Japan through a life course perspective. More specifically, this is a summary of family violence in Japan on child abuse, IPV, youth filial violence, and elder abuse, of which I believe little is known to non-Japanese readers on these family violence topics. It is a paradigm shift for the majority of Japanese researchers on family violence, who have only been looking at each area of family violence segmentally, to viewing family violence through a life course perspective, in an effort to better understand family violence as a whole. This anthology will also open doors for non-Japanese readers to in-depth studies in the field of family violence in Japan.

The subject of the book is a sociological study of family violence in a life course perspective. The method of analysis is the summary of governmental publications, research articles, and media reports on child abuse, IPV, youth and filial violence, and elder abuse. Each topic/chapter taps on the definition, historical development, the extent of violence today, research in Japan, development of legal measures, and future prospects. As family violence is a very sensitive area, it is difficult to conduct survey research in Japan. Such nationwide extensive survey analyses as those conducted by Murray A. Straus and his associates in the United States are not feasible in Japan. And, therefore, the scope of the problem and the truth is not known even to Japanese people, much less so to non-Japanese-speaking people. This study will attempt to inform all people on the state of family violence in Japan in a life course perspective.

It is often said that the degree of family violence in Japan is relatively low in contrast to Western societies. If that is the case, sociocultural characteristics inherent in Japanese society might have helped suppress or induce such tendencies. Thus, in this anthology we discuss each type of family violence deliberately with relation to such sociocultural characteristics. As such, we pointed out six major characteristic aspects of Japanese society, culture and personality, a vertical social structure, patriarchal-hierarchical family structure, group orientation, interdependence in

human relations, *Giri-Ninjo*, and the “mind-to-mind” Japanese style of communication. The reader of this anthology will be interested in seeing how and to what extent these sociocultural characteristics interact with Japanese family relations, to suppress or induce family violence.

Another important aspect to be noted about this anthology is that it will hopefully contribute to a true understanding of family violence in Japan from the Japanese perspective by five Japanese family sociologists. This new anthology will take the reader deep inside the institution normally hidden to non-Japanese eyes, to reveal the entire scope of family violence in Japan. Therefore, this book will be of great interest not only to Asian scholars but also to other specialists in comparative family studies around the world. In addition, this anthology also sheds light on how and in what direction family violence in Japan will be shifting in the process of a dynamically changing global society. This book is a must for specialists in the area of cross-cultural studies of family violence as well as those interested in Japanese studies.

Generally speaking, for a native speaker of Japanese, writing an academic manuscript in English is an extremely difficult undertaking. It requires an extensive period of training and experience. In my case I owe tremendously to the assistance of Lawrence R. Blake for some time. Larry, formerly a professional editor, assisted me in editing, rewriting, and bringing the manuscript to publishable form with true-hearted sincerity. Masako Ishii-Kuntz maintains the hyphenated last name to recognize the contribution of her partner, John A. Kuntz, in assisting to improve her English writing for over the last three decades. For papers by Yoko Hayashi and Rie Okamura, Stephanie Farrell Tunçay, lecturer at Ochanomizu University, kindly undertook proofreading their manuscripts. Without their supports, it would not have been possible to complete the numerous tasks required to publish this anthology.

Sincere acknowledgment is also extended to various individuals and institutions. Without their cooperation and warm support, this book project could not have been accomplished. It is next to impossible to list them all, but let me list a few. Jayanthie Krishnan, editor of Springer Asia; Vishal Daryanovel, assistant editor of Springer Asia; Rameshbabu Rathinam, production editor for books; and S. Madhuriba, project manager in charge of this anthology encouraged and supported us to pursue writing this anthology by providing us with insightful and meticulous instructions throughout the entire process of publishing this anthology. Last but not least, special appreciation is extended to two anonymous reviewers of the book proposal, and to Keith Farrington for his most dedicated work in reading our complete manuscript and gave us extremely thorough, comprehensive, elaborate, critical, but truly constructive review comments. Their professional support was essential for the completion of this project.





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# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Toward a Better Understanding of Family Violence in Japan

Fumie Kumagai

In Japan the definition of family violence has not been standardized, and studies on the issue have been segmented rather than taking the issue as a whole. Thus, the objectives of this introductory chapter for the current anthology *Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective* are fivefold: first, the term “family violence” is defined for this book, and its various forms and types are presented; second, the importance of viewing family violence as a social issue rather than a personal defect is discussed; third, the “life course perspective” for the study of family violence is explained; fourth, seven major characteristic aspects of Japanese society, culture, and personality that may affect family violence in Japan are presented; and finally, some suggestions for the future development of family violence studies in Japan are proposed.

### 1.1 Defining Family Violence

#### 1.1.1 What Is Family Violence?

It is difficult to derive a consensus of opinion on the definition of family violence. In official government documents in many Western societies today, family violence includes family members and intimate partners (Department of Justice, Government of Canada 2015, and the following US agencies: Federal Bureau of Investigation 1995; National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) 2015; Office for Victims of Crime 2015).

Academics do not necessarily include intimate partners in family violence studies. One definition is: “family violence includes family members’ acts of omission

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or commission resulting in physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, or other forms of maltreatment that hamper individuals' healthy development" (Levesque 2001: 13 and by others: Barnett et al. 2011; Gelles and Straus 1979; Hines et al. 2012; Lawson 2015; Tolan et al. 2006).

In Japan, there has been scant attention to the concept of family violence as a whole. Studies have focused on such topics as elder abuse or domestic (among partners) violence. Only a minority of Japanese scholars has taken the broader view (Kumagai 1983b, 1999, 2005).

This anthology adopts the definition of family violence stipulated by the Department of Justice, Government of Canada, which states "family violence is when someone uses abusive behavior to control and/or harm a member of their family, or someone with whom they have an intimate relationship" (Department of Justice, Government of Canada 2015: 1).

### ***1.1.2 Why Is There Violence in the Family?: Family Relations and Violence***

We tend to think of the family as the place where we find comfort, affection, and safety and assume the existence of amicable family relationships. Furthermore, it has been a long tradition in Japanese society to consider the institution of the family as private – "what happens in the family stays in the family." Nevertheless, changing trends in the prevalence of violence in Japanese families no longer allow the Japanese people to continue holding such traditional attitudes.<sup>1</sup>

The existence of violence in one's family is a natural course of our life for three reasons. First, phrases such as "at home" and "home sweet home" indicate the family is where we find emotional satisfaction. But it is also where we show our true selves. When one has stresses outside the home, the family is the very place where one can vent one's frustrations and true feelings.

Second, family members do not necessarily share the same ideas. Personality and values differ. Before marriage, the husband and wife were strangers. We are learning to see the family as a place where conflicts and differences are abundant.

Third, the family is one of the basic groups in human society where power relationships emerge and, often, a leader who is expected to control and manage the

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<sup>1</sup>For some examples of governmental agencies and/or bureaus publishing reports on various types of family violence in Japan, refer to Appendix 1.1 at the end of the current chapter. In addition, some examples of individual publications are as follows: child abuse – Fujino 2007; Hanada et al. 2007; Takeuchi et al. 2014, and Yoshimi 2012; IPV – Akazawa et al. 2011; Aono 2010; Kaino 2013; Ogawa 2012, and Okamoto 2012; filial violence – Futagami 2007; Hiroi and Kodama 2010; Ito 2012; Makino 2006; Matsuda 2006; Saio 2013; Yamada and Miyashita 2007, and Yamamoto 2014; and elder abuse – Hasegawa et al. 2009, Hatta et al. 2012, Hayashi 2010, Kato and Yabuki 2012, Kuroda et al. 2014, Soeda and Tsuchiya 2011, Taguchi 2013, Yamamoto 2010, and Yuhara 2010. Details of these publications are found in the References of the current chapter.

group. Should there be a conflict in the group, the issue becomes how to resolve the conflict. One solution is violence.

## **1.2 Forms of Violence and Abuse**

Even outside the family, violence and abuse are used to establish and maintain power and control over others and often reflect an imbalance of power between the victim and the abuser. Various forms of family violence are carried out by family members or intimate partners intended to establish and maintain control over family, household members, intimate partners, colleagues, individuals, or groups. While violent perpetrators are most often known to their victims (intimate or estranged partners and spouses, family members, relatives, peers, colleagues, etc.), acts of violence and abuse may also be committed by strangers.

Nine distinct forms of violence and abuse can be identified (Violence Prevention Initiative, Newfoundland Labrador, Canada [2015](#): 2–5). They are as follows:

### ***1.2.1 Physical Violence in General***

Physical violence occurs when someone uses a part of their body or an object to control a person's actions.

### ***1.2.2 Sexual Violence***

Sexual violence occurs when a person is forced to unwillingly take part in sexual activity.

### ***1.2.3 Emotional Violence***

Emotional violence occurs when someone says or does something which results in a person feeling stupid or worthless.

### ***1.2.4 Psychological Violence***

Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in a person to gain control.

### ***1.2.5 Spiritual Violence***

Spiritual (or religious) violence occurs when someone uses a person's spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate, or control the person.

### ***1.2.6 Cultural Violence***

Cultural violence occurs when a person is harmed as a result of practices that are part of her or his culture, religion, or tradition.

### ***1.2.7 Verbal Abuse***

Verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to a person.

### ***1.2.8 Financial Abuse***

Financial abuse occurs when someone controls a person's financial resources without the person's consent or misuses those resources.

### ***1.2.9 Neglect***

Neglect occurs when someone has the responsibility to provide care or assistance for someone but does not. There are two kinds of neglect, physical and medical, by withdrawing necessary medicine.

For details of these nine distinct forms of violence and abuse, refer to [Appendix 1.2](#) at the end of the current chapter.

## **1.3 Types of Family Violence and Abuse**

Family violence is not just limited to those in intimate partner relationships and against children but extends to all types of relations between family members and intimate partners. The Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire lists 12 topics, including all aspects of family violence and abuse (Family

Research Laboratory 2015; brief explanations for each are added by the author taken from various sources). They are as follows:

- *Physical abuse of children*: Defined as non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, or otherwise harming a child. Physical abuse is the most visible form of child maltreatment (American Humane Association 2015a).
- *Corporal punishment of children*: Corporal punishment is the most common form of violence to children, by adults using violent and humiliating methods to control children's behavior (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2012).
- *Sexual abuse of children*: At the extreme end of the spectrum, sexual abuse includes sexual intercourse or its deviations. All offenses that involve sexually touching a child, as well as non-touching offenses and sexual exploitation, are just as harmful and devastating to a child's well-being (American Humane Association 2015b).
- *Physical abuse of spouses (domestic abuse)*: Spousal abuse occurs when one person in an intimate relationship or marriage tries to dominate and control the other person. Domestic abuse that includes physical violence is called *domestic violence* (HelpGuide.org 2015).
- *Dating violence*: Dating violence is when one person purposely hurts or scares someone they are dating. It can happen whether they are young or old and in heterosexual or same-sex relationships (WomensHealth.gov 2015a).
- *Elder abuse*: Many older adults around the world are being abused in some substantial way, often by people who are directly responsible for their care. It tends to take place where the senior lives, most often in the home where abusers are often the adult children, other family members such as grandchildren, or spouses/partners of elders. It can also occur in institutional settings, especially long-term care facilities (HelpGuide.org 2015).
- *Intra-family homicide*: Most family homicides are spousal homicides, fueled by male sexual proprietaries. In the case of parent-child conflict, an evolutionary psychology model predicts variations in the risk of violence as a function of age, sex, and other characteristics of protagonists (Daly and Wilson 1997: 115).
- *Rape, including marital rape*: Rape is sex one does not agree to, including forcing a body part or an object into a vagina, rectum (bottom), or mouth. In the USA, one in six women reported experiencing rape or attempted rape at some time in their lives (WomensHealth.gov 2015b).
- *Violence between siblings*: Sibling violence or abuse is a repeated pattern of physical aggression with the intent to inflict harm and motivated by a need for power and control. Often, it is an escalating pattern of aggression that parents have difficulty stopping (AAMFT: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy 2015).
- *Peer victimization of children*: Peer victimization is the experience among children of being a target of the aggressive behavior of other children, who are not siblings and not necessarily the same age (Hawker and Boulton 2000).

- *Pornography*: Pornography is the depiction of sexual behavior that is intended to arouse sexual excitement in its audience. During the twentieth century, Americans debated whether pornographic material should be legally protected or banned. Pornography has been regulated by the legal standards that govern the concept of obscenity which refers to things society may consider disgusting, foul, or immoral and that may include material that is blasphemous. Pornography is limited to depictions of sexual behavior and may not be obscene (Legal Dictionary 2015).
- *Missing and abducted children*: Children who have been missing, including those who have been abducted, wrongfully retained or concealed by a parent or other family member (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 2015).

## 1.4 Family Violence as a Social Problem

With the advent of the Information Age, reports on family violence have been published by various governmental authorities in Japan. The prevalence of family violence in Japanese society today made people realize the necessity for the issue to be dealt with by public intervention and social policies rather than viewing them as personal problems.

Some examples of reports published by various governmental bureaus and agencies in Japan on family violence are shown in Appendix 1.1 mentioned earlier, and their names of governmental agencies and/or bureaus are listed as follows:

### Child Abuse

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Ministry of Justice

### Intimate Partner Violence

Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office

### Filial Violence

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan  
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications

### Elder Abuse

Association for Health Economics Research and Social Insurance and Welfare  
Cabinet Office  
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications  
Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting  
Nationwide Human Rights Volunteers' Organizations



National Police Agency

Zenkoku jinken-yōgo iin rengokai (Japanese Association for Civil Rights Commissioners)

Zenkoku rojin kurabu rengokai josei-iin (Japanese Association for Older Women's Activities)

## 1.5 How to View Family Violence

### 1.5.1 *Different Views on Family Violence between the West and Japan*

There exists a marked difference on how to view the issue of family or domestic violence between Western and Japanese sociologists, not by “society.”<sup>2</sup> In the West, its approach is based on a life course perspective, whereas in Japan its study has been quite segmented indeed.

Western studies have shown that there is a relationship between a person's exposure to violence as a youth and acceptance of violence in later years, either as a continuing victim or an aggressor (American Psychological Association 2015; Center for Disease Control and Prevention 2014; Counseling.Com 2015; Gelles and Perlman 2012; MacKenzie et al. 2011; Straus et al. 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2013). A victim of child abuse may “learn” it is acceptable and abuse his children later or become a victim or perpetrator in a marriage. Studying violence over the course of one's life will show that various different types of family violence are in fact not independent of each other, but are interconnected and inter-related. They occur at different stages in one's own life course and are transmitted from one generation to the next.

### 1.5.2 *Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire*

Murray A. Straus pioneered sociological studies of family violence (Straus 1974a, b) and founded the Family Research Laboratory (hereafter referred to as FRL) at the University of New Hampshire in the mid-1970s.<sup>3</sup> He and his research associates

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<sup>2</sup>In the author's opinion, however, there is not a major difference by “society” in viewing family violence. It is the author's personal observation and opinion that among most US citizens, the violence is viewed as an individual defect of character. The author wishes that all the people regardless of societal differences could look upon it as Western sociologists do.

<sup>3</sup>Since 1975, the Family Research Laboratory (FRL) has devoted itself primarily to understanding family violence and the impact of violence in families. As public and professional interest in family violence has grown, so has the need for more reliable knowledge. The FRL has tried to fill that

began studying various types of violence that exist in “ordinary” families, not just isolated problems. They learned to look at the interrelation of various types of family violence rather than studying them segmentally or independently (Family Research Laboratory 2015). In fact, many FRL studies have probed such interconnections (Finkelhor 1979; Hines and Malley-Morrison 2005; Hines et al. 2012; Kumagai 1981a, b, c, 2005; Malley-Morrison and Hines 2004; Straus et al. 1980; 2013; Straus and Gelles 1990).

### ***1.5.3 Violence in American Society in the 1960s***

Sociological studies of family violence developed in the USA (Steinmetz and Straus 1974:22) following turbulent times in American society in the 1960s. We never have difficulty recalling them: racial discrimination and the civil rights movement, the assassination of the two Kennedy brothers (John and Robert) and of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Vietnam War casualties, and increases in homicides, violence, and street demonstrations to name just a few. As a consequence, the American public started to show grave concern toward these violent incidents (Kumagai 2004, 2013).

The assassinations of the leader of the civil rights movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., on April 4, 1968, and Senator Robert Kennedy on June 6, 1968, in particular, meant to many American people the end of American liberal idealism. What followed afterward was the rise of radical leftists and a revolt by conservative movements, creating serious cleavages between these two camps. It naturally took a long while to solve the problems (Embassy of the United States in Japan 2015).

These two grave assassination incidents turned the USA into a more violent society. The Democratic convention for the presidential election held in Chicago in August 1968 became a riotous assembly, and presidential hopeful Hubert Humphrey was defeated by the Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, by only 1 %. The commission for the prevention of violence in American society was established. The commission’s report (Graham and Gurr 1969) tapped on the issue of family violence, which naturally contributed to the rising awareness of people’s attitudes toward the problem.

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need in a variety of ways: through comprehensive literature reviews, new theories, and methodologically sound studies. Researchers at the FRL pioneered many of the techniques that have enabled social scientists to estimate directly the scope of family violence. These efforts have brought international recognition to the FRL. <http://cola.unh.edu/frl/about>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

### 1.5.4 American Social Movements in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s

The “coming out” of family violence as a social issue has been in accord with various social movements in American society in the 1970s.<sup>4</sup> Examples of American social movements in the 1970s were the antiwar movement against the US involvement with the Vietnam War, the women’s liberation movement, and human rights protection for homosexuals (“gay rights”). These movements contributed to raise the awareness of battered women by their male partners (Kumagai 2004, 2005).

In addition, the impact of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child enacted in 1959 (United Nations Human Rights 1959) was significant for scientific studies of child abuse. Subsequently, nationwide social survey research on conjugal violence began in the mid-1970s (Straus et al. 1980). Although a great majority of conjugal violence was that of wife-beating, the battered husband syndrome was also studied (Steinmatz 1977, 1978).

During the 1980s, advocate groups for older adults, then called the aged or the elderly, such as Gray Panthers (2015) became active. Older adults had been ignored in this American culture which glorified youth. With the rise of the advocate groups for older adults, problems of elder abuse, which had been hidden, were brought to the attention of the general public (Kumagai 2005). The US governmental agency specializing in elder abuse has begun in the mid-1980s (National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services 2014).

As history reveals, the prevalence of various forms of abusive conduct in family relations began to be realized by the American people. In 1994 the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was enacted. In 2000, a definition of dating violence was included. In 2005, the provision urged health providers to screen patients for domestic violence and associated long-term psychological and physical health problems. Thus, in 2013, the US government made VAWA services available to LGBT<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>The author of this chapter lived in the United States for 15 years, from August 1970. Thus, she was in the midst of various social movements during the period. For example, she studied at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, and at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, both of which were under the strong influence of the student revolt against the US involvement with the Vietnam War. She feels that these valuable experiences have been assets in her career as a sociologist.

<sup>5</sup>LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. Social milieu to accept LGBT has been widened since the mid-2000s, especially in the Western societies, but not so much so in Japan yet (weblio Shingo Jijiyogo Jiten on LGBT [weblio New Dictionary of Current Topics]. <http://www.weblio.jp/content/LGBT>. Accessed 15 September 2014). Same-sex marriage in the United States became legal nationwide in June 2015, when the Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that state-level bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional (CNN 2015; New York Times 2015; Washington Post 2015). The US Supreme Court ruling may affect the Japanese counterpart. In fact, of the total 1741 municipalities throughout Japan, only two recognized same-sex partnerships as equivalent to marriage, Shibuya-ward (on March 31, 2015) and then followed by Setagaya-ward, another ward (on July 28, 2015), both in Tokyo (Japan Times 2015). These ward offices in Tokyo recently started issuing certificates recognizing same-sex partnerships as equivalent to legal

Americans (Biden 2014), and the US Supreme Court rejected state laws which denied same-sex marriage rights (US Supreme Court 2015).

Furthermore, in the mid-1990s, with the coming of the Information Age and information economies (Negroponte 1995), all sorts of information was dispersed widely not only within the American society but also throughout the world. Victims of family violence had come to realize that they were not alone, but part of a world-wide community. As the Information Age progressed, Japanese people started to show strong interest in family violence in intimate relations in the 1990s. The author of this chapter tried to introduce the importance of scientific studies on family violence to Japanese scholars in the early 1980s. Unfortunately, however, it was premature, and her points and suggestions for further studies were simply ignored by Japanese academics at that time. It is truly welcomed to see a change – the wide interests among various sectors in Japan in the issue of family violence in intimate relationships. At the same time, it was disappointing that it was not welcomed in the early 1980s.

## 1.6 The Conflict Tactics Scales: CTS

### 1.6.1 CTS

How to measure violence in the family? There are many ways. One of the most widely adopted methods, however, is the conflict tactics scales (hereafter called CTS) constructed and developed by Straus and his associates (Straus et al. 1980; Straus and Gelles 1990). Both the validity and the reliability of the concepts measured in CTS were tested and proved significant (Bulcroft and Straus 1975; Kumagai and Straus 1983; Straus 1979; Straus and Kumagai 1980). Furthermore, the author of this chapter used CTS in her comparative studies of family violence in Japan, the USA, and India. Results of these comparative studies proved significant for validity and reliability as well (References in English – Kumagai 1978, 1979b, c, f, 1981a, 1983a; Kumagai and O'Donoghue 1978; Kumagai and Straus 1983; Straus and Kumagai 1980; references in Japanese – Kumagai 1979a, d, e, g, h, 1980a, b, 1981b, c, 1983b, 1999, 2005, 2006).

The construction of CTS was in accord with the changing trend of American sociological theories from the static-consensus equilibrium model to the dynamically changing conflict model. In other words, the family institution is viewed as an arena where differences in opinion among family members are natural and the place in which conflict – laden human interactions – is inevitable (Adams 1965; Coser 1956; Dahrendorf 1959; Scanzoni 1982; Sprey 1969). Given these circumstances, we are expected to resolve the family conflicts. In order to pursue this difficult task,

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marriages in October 2015 in Shibuya-ward and in November 2015 in Setagaya-ward. However, the Japanese Constitution, at present, recognizes marriage as between a male and a female only.

CTS derived three concepts of resolving the family conflicts: reasoning, verbal aggression, and physical violence.

Question items in CTS used by Straus and his associates are shown in Table 1.1. As shown in the table question, items for reasoning are A, B, and C; verbal aggression are D, E, F, H, I, and J; and violence are K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, and S.<sup>6</sup>

## 1.6.2 Cross-Cultural Comparative Studies Using CTS

During her early stages of career as a sociologist, the author of this chapter conducted cross-cultural comparative studies on conjugal violence in Japan, India, and the USA (Kumagai 1979c, d, f, g). Studies proved that the use of CTS on reasoning, verbal aggression, and violence in conjugal violence were valid across societies. Studies revealed the following four major findings:

First, in conjugal relationships across societies, verbal aggression frequently does not lessen or prevent physical violence (Kumagai 1979c, d). In intimate family relations where people are honest in their feelings, the use of verbal aggression and physical violence are permitted to a certain degree. Thus, such conflict resolution tactics are utilized in resolving conjugal conflicts.

Second, there exist similarities between the behaviors of husbands and wives in their conjugal relationships (Kumagai 1979f, g). In other words, when the husband tries reasoning, then the wife adopts similar measures in their conjugal conflicts. Similarly, if the wife uses verbal aggression, then the husband will return it.

Third, concerning physical violence in conjugal relationships, if a husband uses physical violence, the wife will react violently (Kumagai 1979f, g). In other words, a couple becomes similar in their family relationships. (Correlation coefficients of these three scales range from the highest of  $r .64$  to the lowest of  $r .54$ , yielding the average  $r .59$ .) It was proved true within and across cultural boundaries.

Fourth, the frequency in using the three conflict resolution tactics differed among the three societies (Kumagai 1979c, d, f, g). Both in Japan and India, the use of physical violence by wives was significantly lower than that of husbands. In the USA, on the other hand, no significant level of difference was detected for the use of violence between the husband and the wife. That is, if the husband is violent, then the wife is also, in the USA. These differences may likely reflect the differences in each of the cultural orientations, may it be an expressive or a non-expressive cultural orientation.

From these findings we can say that reasoning, verbal aggression, and/or physical violence are not necessarily conflict resolution tactics. Reasoning could be classified as a conflict resolution tactic, but not verbal aggression nor violence. It would be more appropriate to call them conflict-revealing processes. In resolving conflict-

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<sup>6</sup>The question item "G. Cried" was not included in CTS. The reason for its inclusion in the survey questionnaire was due to the fact that at the time of pretesting, many respondents chose this item for their answers (Straus and Gelles 1990).

**Table 1.1** Question items in conflict tactics scales (CTS)

The conflict tactics scales (CTS), couple form R
<i>Reasoning scale:</i>
A. Discussed an issue calmly
B. Get information to back up your/his/her side of things
C. Brought in, or tried to bring in, someone to help settle things
<i>Verbal aggression scale:</i>
D. Insulted or swore at him/her/you
E. Sulked or refused to talk about an issue
F. Stomped out of the room or house or yard
(G. Cried)
H. Did or said something to spite him/her/you
I. Threatened to hit or threw something at him/her/you
J. Threw or smashed or hit or kicked something
<i>Violence scale:</i>
K. Threw something at him/her/you
L. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved him/her/you
M. Slapped him/her/you
N. Kicked, bit, or hit him/her/you with a fist
O. Hit or tried to hit him/her/you with something
P. Beat him/her/you up
Q. Choked him/her/you
R. Threatened him/her/you with a knife or gun
S. Used a knife or fired a gun

*Source:* Question items are adopted from the National Family Violence Resurvey conducted in 1985 (Gelles and Straus 1988: 33) and added three concepts of the scale by the author

ing situations, the husband and the wife reveal their feelings to each other. If that is the case, we can say that the degree of revealing feelings differs from one culture to the other.

### ***1.6.3 An Attempt to Analyze Family Conflicts Using NFRJ03 Data***

The Japan Society of Family Sociology (JSFS) has conducted a nationwide survey every 5 years since 1998 entitled the NFRJ (the National Family Research of Japan) projects. Major objectives for the study are twofold: periodic nationwide research on the family and household by use of a random sampling method and making such data available for use by members of JSFS and the public (NFRJ-Org 2014a; NFRJ-Project 2014b).

As could be guessed, the NFRJ has not studied family violence. At the time when the preparation for its second-wave research, i.e., NFRJ03, conducted in 2003, was under way, this author made a request to include question items on the CTS. Unfortunately, however, the request was not accepted. Instead, the organizing committee incorporated questions on “family conflicts,” indicating problems and differences in opinions, among various family members in the previous year. The question asked is if there were conflicts and, if so, with whom and how often.

In an attempt to measure conflict in the family, the author of this chapter analyzed family conflict questions utilized in the NFRJ03 study (Kumagai 2006). Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the questions utilized in the family violence study, using CTS, differ from those adopted in the NFRJ03 research. That is, the utilization of violence in the former study is regarded as a “tactic” to resolve the conflicts, but not to measure whether or not conflicts exist, or how frequently it occurs. In other words, the family violence study with CTS is based on the assumption that the existence of family conflict is inevitable in any family relationship (Cosser 1956). With such assumption in mind, the family violence study with CTS measures the type and the frequency of conflict resolution tactics.

In analyzing the NFRJ03 data set, this author assumed that the family with conflicts possesses various types of conflicts interacting with different family members. More specifically the study aimed at testing the following two issues. First, based on the field theory framework of J. M. Yinger (1965), which will be explained in the following section, the study purports to test the intergenerational transmission of violence originally proposed by Straus (1974b). Second, the study aims at testing the multivariate causal relationship of family conflicts.

We should remember that family conflicts in Japanese families are presumed to be quite low, although it is not known whether Japanese families truly have less conflict or the Japanese culture discourages people from revealing family conflicts. Analysis of this question is expected in chapters to follow.

Analyses of the multivariate regression model of family conflicts revealed that it is necessary to consider factors both inside and outside the family. A woman with a live-in mother-in-law increases the level of conflict in the home significantly ( $p < .001$ ), but decreases the level of her distress (not significant). On the other hand, a wife who does not work outside the home tends to have more conflicts with her live-in mother-in-law and with her husband (neither of them are at a significant level). A woman who works outside the home tends to abuse her children more and experiences distress significantly more frequently than those who are not working outside the home ( $p < .001$ ). For more details, please refer to the article (Kumagai 2006).

At any rate, the existence of family conflicts is an undeniable natural course of human life. We must admit it happens and try to resolve them by nonviolent force. Such constructive countermeasures will contribute to alleviating the level of family violence in constructing better family relations.

## 1.7 Views of Family Violence in Japan

As it has been pointed out earlier in the current study, the approach to the study of family violence in Japan is quite different from that of the USA. In Japan, studies of family violence adopt a more or less segmented approach to the topic. Different types of family violence such as child abuse, filial violence, IPV, and elder abuse are viewed independently of each other rather than highlighting their intergenerational interconnectedness.

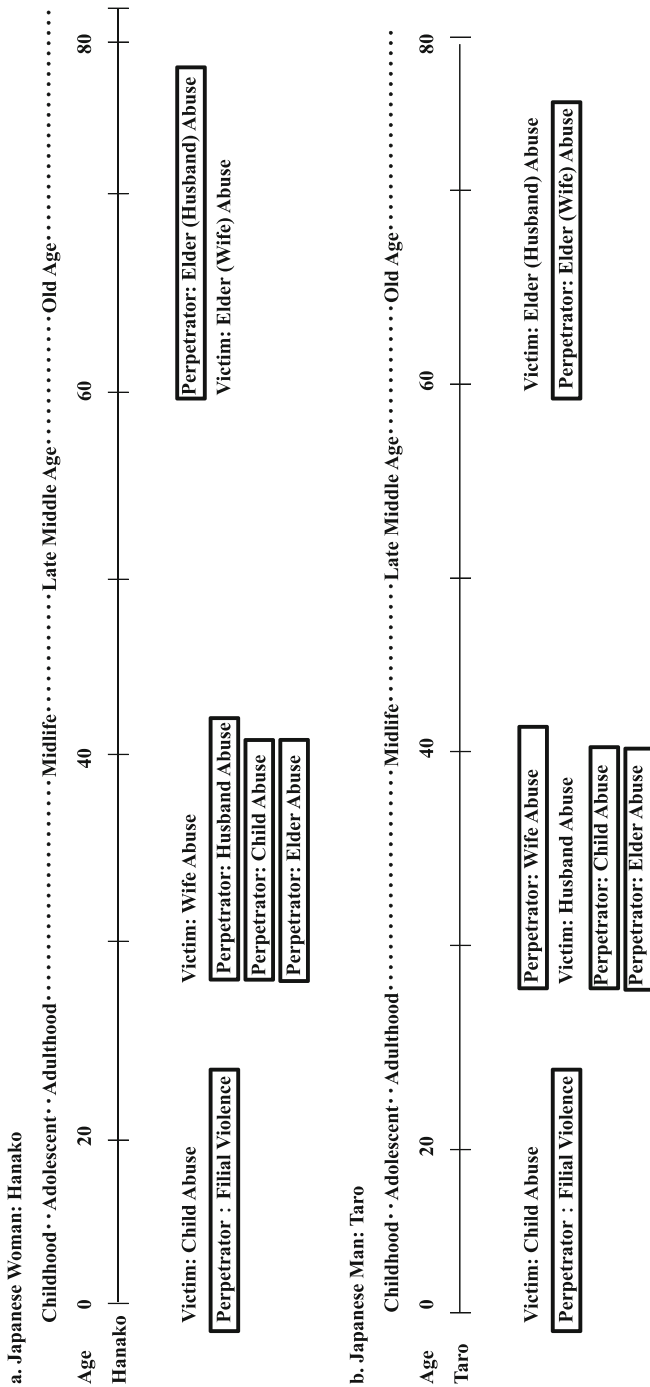
Since these different types of family violence are viewed independently, each type of family violence has its own name: child abuse, intimate partner violence (in Japan it is called “domestic violence” or “DV”), filial violence, and elder abuse. There exists scant attention to the interconnectedness among these different types of violence in the family.

Furthermore, to a great majority of Japanese people, both professionals and laypersons, *kateinai boryoku* (literal translation=violence in the family) or “DV” means a specific type of violence in the family. Moreover, it differs from time to time. During the mid-1970s to early 1980s, it was referred to as filial violence in which youths victimize their parents and/or other members in the family. Ever since the mid-1980s, however, abusive and violent conducts of husbands against their wives were considered wife abuse, exclusively. As a consequence, today when most Japanese say family violence, they are likely to refer to the intimate partner violence (hereafter referred to as IPV).

### 1.7.1 A Woman as Victim and Perpetrator

In general, it is true that a great majority of IPV victims are women, but not all. Either a woman or a man can be a victim at times in their lives and a perpetrator at other times (see Fig. 1.1).





**Fig. 1.1** The same woman or man as a victim and a perpetrator of family violence: (a) Japanese woman Hanako and (b) Japanese man Taro (*Source*: Kumagai 1996a: 26, 2004: 160, and 2005: 60, with demographic data updated. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author)

Let us look at two fictional Japanese individuals, a woman we will call Hanako and a man we will call Taro. Hanako could be a victim of child abuse, wife abuse, and/or elder (wife) abuse, but she could also be a perpetrator of filial violence, husband abuse, child abuse, and elder (husband) abuse. Taro, on the other hand, could be a victim of child abuse, husband abuse, filial violence, and elder (husband) abuse. At the same time, he could be a perpetrator of filial violence, wife abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, and/or elder (wife) abuse. Both men and women may experience different types of family violence in their life course. Moreover, experiences in their family violence could be both as victim and as perpetrator regardless of their sex differences. Thus, it is not correct to assume that only women are victims of family violence. They could also be perpetrators.

### ***1.7.2 The Intergenerational Transmission of Violence Theory***

Violence is a learned response, transmitted from one generation to the next. This is the perspective that most researchers of family violence in the West adopt (Finkelhor 1983; Straus 1974a, 1994a; Straus et al. 2013; Wallace and Roberson 2013:21, WHO 2005). An individual could experience life events as a victim of child abuse, a perpetrator of filial violence, a victim of IPV, a perpetrator of child abuse, and a victim/perpetrator of elder abuse, as discussed already. Violence is learned in one's childhood and surfaces later in life. Childhood experiences of violence are not only limited to the victims of child abuse but also transmitted generationally later in one's life as the perpetrator of IPV, child abuse, and elder abuse. This is why studies should focus on the life course perspective.

Walker in her theory of the "cycle of violence" in the battered woman syndrome describes four periods in the interactions between the batterer and his wife (Walker 1979). The cycle starts with tension building, followed by a battering incident, then the batterer's expression of remorse, and the final stage of calmness. Over time, the cycle escalates, and violence becomes more frequent, and an abusive husband will endlessly dominate, punish, and criticize his wife (Malley-Morrison and Hines 2004: 48). This theory correctly describes the wife-beating process but is a segmented approach to the study of family violence. However, Walker's theory has been erroneously introduced as the "cycle of family violence" theory to Japanese academia (Kusayagi 2004: 11, Nakamura 2001: 65).

A life course perspective of family violence could well be explained by the impact of spanking on children (Straus et al. 2013). It is based on the scientific observations of more than 7000 families longitudinally throughout the USA and cross-cultural comparative analyses of 32 nations. The study revealed that spanking of children becomes a primordial violence and will have a detrimental effect on the making of their personalities and human relations in their later lives.

Spanking may have instantaneous effects – ending the mischievous behaviors of children – but its impact harms the child's development and, worse, extends into their adulthood, including frail relationships between the parent and the child.

Children with spanking experiences may initiate violence against peer children and against the parents in filial violence and will be a perpetrator in IPV. It is equivalent to a Japanese proverb, *Mitsugo no tamashii hyakumade* (could be translated as “One’s spirit at the age of three will last for 100 years” or the English phrase, “The child is father to the man”). Violence that one experienced in childhood is internalized and will have a detrimental impact on one’s life course.

### ***1.7.3 Some Weaknesses of Family Violence Studies in Japan***

Three issues need to be studied in the field of family violence: the amount of violence in the family; variances in social class, economic situations, regions, and others; and what factors lead someone to abuse one’s own family members.

Since the mid-1970s, the nationwide social survey research on family violence in the USA has been conducted under the leadership of Murray A. Straus with these issues in mind (Straus et al. 1980, 2013; Straus and Gelles 1990; Straus 1994a). Study results obtained from random sampling enabled researchers to generalize them to the entire American population.

Japanese studies of family violence, on the other hand, possess two weaknesses. They are, first, more or less segmented studies, of specific types of violence in the family. They lack the life course perspective of an individual. As a consequence, studies of family violence are focused on specific types independently such as child abuse, wife abuse, filial violence of the youth, and elder abuse. They tend not to pay attention to the interrelationships among them.

The second drawback of family violence studies in Japan is that they are mostly based on problem families rather than on representative samples. To say it more precisely, studies are mostly based on cases brought to the attention of professional institutions such as social welfare agencies, police authorities, and medical professions. It is quite different from studying the population as a whole, through randomly selected samples.

What is the development of family violence studies in Japan? Topics of child abuse, IPV, filial violence, and the elder abuse will be discussed extensively by each of the experts in these fields in the four chapters to follow, respectively.

## **1.8 Why Family Violence Occurs**

### ***1.8.1 Developments of Social Theories in American Sociology***

Changing development of social theories in American sociology contributed to the rise of interest in family violence among scholars in the field of social sciences. That is, the predominant theory of the consensus-equilibrium model/functionism was

severely criticized by proponents of the conflict model. The former is best suited for situations in which the function of each individual is balance and operates properly. The latter model, on the other hand, is best suited to explain where functions of individuals are no longer balanced and conflict with each other (Sprey 1969). Thus, the conflict-laden relationships of family violence and abuse could be better studied through the conflict model.

In other words, we accept the inevitable nature of conflict in human relationships, and we perceive that social changes are necessary in sustaining the existing institutions and units. Should the conflict be suppressed, social change would not be permitted, society would be stagnate, strong antagonistic feelings would emerge, and the bonding of a group could no longer be expected (Adams 1965; Coser 1956; Dahrendorf 1959; Scanzoni 1982; Sprey 1969).

It is undeniable that changing developments in sociological theories in the USA gave rise to the studies of violence in family relations. These developments in sociological theories were introduced in Japan. Nevertheless, it took a long while before the active applications of these newly evolved social theories evoked empirical research in the field of social issues in Japan. It is unfortunate to say that social theories and empirical research stood independent of each other in Japan.

### ***1.8.2 The Nature of the Family and Violence***

When we understand the characteristics of family relations, we can see why the family is such a violent institution. Thus, let us consider family characteristics likely to induce violent behaviors within one's own group. As such, Gelles and Straus (1979: 552–554) discussed 12 characteristics:

1. Time at risk
2. Range of activities and interests
3. Intensity of involvement
4. Impinging activities
5. Right to influence
6. Age and sex discrepancies
7. Ascribed roles
8. Family privacy
9. Involuntary membership
10. High level of stress
11. Normative approval
12. Socialization into violence and its generalization

Given these family characteristics, we can say that the family is a training ground of violence (Straus et al. 1980). Parents may view early childhood physical punishment as a sign of love, a lesson in how to behave in society. For children, however, these childhood experiences can give legitimacy to the use of intra-family violence in their later lives.

How prevalent family violence is in society is a difficult question to answer. Exact statistics are not available in any society, including the USA and Japan. Why not?

First, until the late twentieth century, family violence had been considered a private matter within the domestic arena. Thus, the family pathology was not revealed outside the family unless it moved beyond a limit that the family could not handle. It was only at that point that victims of family violence were obliged to seek help from the authorities.

Second, it is the tendency to view violence as an abnormal personal issue rather than a natural event. Thus, family violence must be interpreted as the natural course of intra-family interactions, not evidence of abnormality. If social institutions get involved, authorities will begin to realize the need for social intervention. Social changes will naturally affect the attitudes of people toward the realization of family violence as a social issue.

## **1.9 A Life Course Perspective of Family Violence**

The author of this chapter, being trained under the direction of Murray Straus and with extensive cross-cultural experiences overseas, wonders where these different views for the study of family violence in two societies stem from. It means a total neglect of the interconnectedness among different types of family violence in Japan. Then, what does it mean for the study of family violence? The essence of this book truly taps on this point. That is, to study the issues of “family violence in Japan through a life course perspective.” Thus, let us review briefly as to what it means to study family violence through a life course perspective.

### ***1.9.1 Family Violence Through a Life Course Perspective***

The knowledge of various types of family violence makes us aware that it could happen anytime in any individual’s life. In other words, family violence could be viewed as various events that an individual might experience along with her/his family members. It is different from the life stages that an average individual in a society commonly experiences, such as childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. The latter is the life cycle perspective (Kumagai 1984), different from the life course counterpart.

The life course perspective has its origin from Ryder in the mid-1960s for his study of social change by way of cohort life patterns (Ryder 1965). Then, Elder furthered to establish its perspective (Elder 1974, 1975, 1977, 1985, 1992, 2000, 2001, 2002; Elder and Giele 2009; Elder and Johnson 2002; Elder et al. 2003; Giele and Elder 1998). It is defined as “a sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time” (Giele and Elder 1998: 22). Moreover, the life

course perspective freed us from single-factor explanations to the intersection of social and historical factors with personal biography and development within which the study of family life, family violence in our study, can emerge (Elder 1985). Only through a life course perspective, therefore, it is possible to view an individual's experiences in various types of family violence, such as child abuse, IPV, filial violence, and elder abuse, throughout the entire history of one's ongoing and developing process of family interactions from childhood to old age.

The coming of life course perspective was in accord with various types of social changes that emerged since the mid-1960s in American society. They are, for example, the civil rights movement; Vietnam War reaction, especially by students; and the women's liberation movement.

Life course perspective views an individual throughout one's entire life as an aging process. As one is a social individual, not only various attributes of one's own but also social events, termed as life events, need to be taken into consideration. Moreover, the perspective pays close attention to the relationship between one's life events and social events (Fujisaki 1999: 1006). Morioka summarizes the life course perspective into four essential points:

- The individual is the center of analysis.
- The individual's developmental process.
- The analysis is by cohort, not individual.
- Impacts of historical events (Morioka 2005: 120).

With these brief explanations on life course perspective, now is the time for us to reevaluate what it means to view family violence in accord with the life course of an individual. There are different types of violent conduct within a domestic arena that each individual might encounter. It is not just violence against wives, although this is often what is perceived today in Japan. Instead, family violence through a life course perspective includes such abusive conduct as physical, sexual abuse, and corporal punishment of children in one's childhood, physical abuse of spouses, dating violence, and marital rape during adulthood, intra-family homicide and filial violence addressed to parents and family members, and elder abuse during one's later years.

Now that we understand the 12 different types of family violence (discussed earlier in Section 1.3 of the present chapter), this anthology will focus on four types of family violence in Japan:

- Child abuse (Chapter 2)
- Intimate partner violence (Chapter 3)
- Filial violence (Chapter 4)
- Elder abuse (Chapter 5)

## 1.10 Inducing and/or Suppressing Cultural Factors of Family Violence and Theories

It is not easy to measure national characters and cultures. They are deeply rooted within the historical development of each society. Take Japanese culture, for example. It developed differently in each region and was transplanted into different societies, such as those of Japanese Americans. It is beyond the question that Asian American cultures differ from each other significantly: from Japanese to Chinese, to Korean, and to Filipino Americans. Furthermore, among Japanese Americans, cultural orientations differ from those in Hawaii to Los Angeles and to New York City (Kumagai 2004). It is because culture is historically bounded and develops in accord with the society in which one resides.

### 1.10.1 Japanese Culture, Society, and Personality Inducing and/or Suppressing Family Violence

The level of conjugal violence in Japan is significantly lower than other societies (Kumagai 1979f, g; WHO 2005). It might be true for other types of family violence, too. Why does family violence in Japan occur less frequently than other societies? In order to address this question properly, an understanding of the culture, social structure, and people in Japan is essential.

In understanding Japanese culture, society, and personalities, let us discuss them through two perspectives, the “Surveys on the Japanese National Character” and the four disciplines discussed by Yinger (1965),<sup>7</sup> namely, biological, psychological, anthropological, and sociological. They would be the vertical social structure (Nakane 1967, 1970), the patriarchal-hierarchical family structure (Fukutake 1981), group orientation (Wagatsuma 1985), interdependence in human relations (Doi 1971), *giri-ninjo* (Minami 1953), and the mind-to-mind Japanese style of communication (Kumagai 1996b). Furthermore, in discussing Japanese society and culture, the author of the current chapter emphasizes the importance of the regional variation framework which comprises one of the essential components of Japanese society and culture (Kumagai 2008, 2011, 2015). And, therefore, such geographic factors should also be applied for the study of family violence in Japan. Let us discuss each of them briefly in the sections that follow.

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<sup>7</sup>The essence of the field theory proposed by Yinger (1965) is that human behavior should be studied by four disciplines simultaneously, i.e., biology, psychology, cultural anthropology, and sociology, not only through the additive effects of these four disciplines independently but also more importantly by the interactive effects of them all simultaneously. Thus, human behavior is studied most appropriately through the multiplicative effects of these four disciplines combined. The unit of analysis is neither the individual nor the social structure, but the field within which they meet. There are multiple possibilities in each, and the behavioral outcome is determined by their mutual influence.

### ***1.10.2 The Surveys on the Japanese National Character by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan<sup>8</sup>***

Cultural characteristics are difficult to measure. It does not tap on the Japanese characteristics or personalities directly, but the Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan has been conducting Surveys on the Japanese National Character every five years since 1953. The summary of the 13th report, its most recent survey conducted in 2013, was made available in November 2014 (Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan 2014).

These survey questions over time highlight changes and continuities in the thoughts of the Japanese people. The survey also purports to prepare for emerging new directions. For these reasons, the survey not only repeats questions from previous surveys but also adds new questions.

The Surveys on the Japanese National Character by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics are not designed to measure the determinants of family violence directly. Thus, let us list the major findings derived from the 2013 survey, for those who were between 20 and 84 years of age (randomly selected total sample size (N: 6400) with response rate of 50%; n: 3170; M: 1451 (46%); F: 1719 (54%)). For more details on the survey methods, please refer to the report (Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan 2014).<sup>9</sup>

- (1) Politeness (77%) and kindness (71%) were rated the highest.
- (2) “Should I be reborn, I would like to be Japanese again” (83%).
- (3) The Japanese people feel that the standard of living of Japan as a whole has risen since 2008 when the previous survey was conducted (54%), not necessarily so for the individual level (no difference: 53%).
- (4) Increasing proportions of people (26%) felt that they were not getting rewarded commensurate to their efforts.
- (5) The prevalence of the feeling of getting frustrated (50%).
- (6) The younger cohorts in particular seek for leading a peaceful and quiet life (in their 20s 31%; 30s 35%; 40s 38%).
- (7) The Japanese people are more optimistic for the future than before (average 27%; in their 20s 42%).
- (8.1) Two out of three (65%) feel uneasy about the recent nuclear plant accidents.
- (8.2) The family is the most important of all (44%).
- (8.3) The human relations at work are getting back to the traditional (65%).
- (8.4) Japanese women enjoy their lives (62 %) more than men (42%) do.

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<sup>8</sup>For detailed results and discussion of the surveys (from the first survey conducted in 1953 to the 13th survey conducted in 2013), refer to the following: <http://www.ism.ac.jp/kokuminsei/page6/index.html>. Accessed 31 October 2014.

<sup>9</sup>This section is an excerpt from the report of the 13th Survey on the Japanese National Character by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics. For more detail, refer to the following website: <http://www.ism.ac.jp/kokuminsei/page2/index.html>. Accessed 17 November 2014.



Of the above characteristics of Japanese people, let us discuss five points which seem to be relevant to inducing or suppressing family violence in Japan.

### **1.10.2.1 Politeness, Kindness, and the Family**

As pointed out above, politeness and kindness are considered Japanese national characteristics, and nearly half of the Japanese people place the family as the utmost importance. Then, in reality, why are there various types of violent behavior in family relations in Japan? Would it be proof of the hierarchical-vertical human relationship with the antagonistic dualistic behaviors of *uchi* (inside) vs. *soto* (outside) of the Japanese people (Nakane 1967, 1970)? Or, would it be the reflection of interdependence of the Japanese people with intimate family members (Doi 1971)? Japanese people might have dual faces, that is, a polite self to people outside the family and a violent self to intimate family members, revealing their true feelings. We look forward to extensive discussion on this point in the following chapters.

### **1.10.2.2 Improved Standard of Living in Japan as a Whole, but Not So for Individuals**

Studies have proved a significant relationship between the economic situation and the level of family violence (Straus et al. 1980; Straus and Gelles 1990; Kumagai 2006). Thus, when an improved state of the national economy does not extend to the lives of individuals, people get frustrated and are more likely to use violence in family conflicts. Extensive discussions are expected in chapters to follow.

### **1.10.2.3 Not Rewarded Properly and Getting Frustrated**

More than one third (37%) of the Japanese people in their 20s and 30s feel that they are not properly rewarded for their efforts. In addition, on average, half of the Japanese people (50%) are frustrated, and it is especially high for women in their 20s (77%) and 30s (76%). These feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration might be likely to induce violent behavior in their family interactions. We expect to see extensive discussions in the following chapters.

### **1.10.2.4 Getting Back Traditional and Close-Knit Relations at Work**

Over the three decades since the 1980s, Japanese people have revealed their declining preference in having close human relations at work (72% in 1977 to 55% in 1998) (Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan 2014). In 2013 such preference increased to 65% and more so for those in their 20s and 30s. This could be taken as an evidence for appreciation for the vertical-hierarchical human relations (Nakane

1967, 1970), which may suppress the level of family violence. We expect to see active discussion on this in the following chapters.

### 1.10.2.5 Positive Attitudes

The Japanese people feel good about themselves. More than eight out of ten (83%) would like to be reborn as Japanese, more people are optimistic about their future, and a great majority of the Japanese people (94%) feel happy about their present conditions. Then, with these strong positive feelings and attitudes toward themselves, why are there violent behaviors in family relations? Extensive discussion on this matter is expected in chapters to follow.

All in all, the 13th Survey on the Japanese National Character by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics of Japan (2014) revealed that Japanese people have gradually come to regain confidence in themselves except for the economic aspect. If that is the case, together with the esteem for the high level of the Japanese production system (Kumagai 1996b), it is worthwhile to investigate their relationship with family violence. In the following section, therefore, we will discuss briefly each of the six aspects of Japanese social, structural, cultural, and psychological characteristics pointed out earlier. They are the vertical social structure (Nakane 1967, 1970), the patriarchal-hierarchical family structure (Fukutake 1981), male supremacy social norms and sex role identification (Wagatsuma 1985), interdependence in human relationships (Doi 1971), *giri-ninjo* (Minami 1953), and the mind-to-mind Japanese style of communication (Kumagai 1996b).

### 1.10.3 The Vertical Social Structure: Anthropological Factor

Japanese society is most effectively explained by its vertical social structure, and its human relations are unique to itself (Nakane 1967, 1970). Although Nakane coined the word *tate shakai* (vertical society) nearly half a century ago, its fundamental nature still remains valid today. In other words, Japanese human relations in essence consider feelings more important than the rational.

Nakane contends that a social group is composed of two different components. They are the *shikaku* qualifications of an individual, namely, various attributes to identify each individual such as name, educational achievement, and social status which one can acquire along with the process of socialization, on the one hand. On the other hand, the *ba* is the special field to which each individual belongs, such as a company, a university, or a community. Japanese people put priority to the special field of *ba* that the group members share over the attributes of *shikaku* that one achieved.

In a group with members of different attributes, Japanese people consider the feeling of togetherness and comradeship as very important; hence, the group members identify themselves as *uchi-no-mono* (people inside the group) rather than *soto-*

*no-mono* (people outside the group). The feeling of togetherness and the human bonding among the group members inside (*uchi*) are the central elements of the Japanese style of human relations. Thus, human relations in Japanese society are vertical rather than equal, and consequently the people are placed in the ranking order of higher or lower.

There is a leader in the vertical society, but not in the society with a horizontal relationship where people stand equal. In Western societies, the leader possesses power and authority, and members of the group must submit to the order initiated by the leader. Japanese leaders, on the other hand, must manage to create amicable human relationship among the group members that he/she leads. It is because of the very nature of Japanese vertical society which values human relations among group members rather than the relationship between the leader and subordinates under the directorship of the leader

Thus, the vertical social structure of Japanese society coined by Nakane (1967) is taken as an integral anthropological factor which determines what Japan is about. In the following chapters, we hope to see active discussions as to the impact of the Japanese vertical society on family violence.

#### ***1.10.4 Patriarchal-Hierarchal Family Structure: Sociological Factor***

Fukutake most eloquently analyzed the traditional Japanese family system called *ie* which has become the integral foundation of Japanese social structure (Fukutake 1981: 24). In the *ie* system, called the stem family, in principle the eldest son, or the eldest daughter in case there was no male sibling, gets married, resides with parents, and consequently succeeds the household headship. Thus, the family relationship under the *ie* system was structured on the basis of the male-oriented, hierarchical parent-child rather than the equilibrium husband-wife relationship (Fukutake 1981; Kumagai 2015: 3).

The *ie* system brought about inequalities among family members and sex role identifications between men and women. The second and third sons in the family branch out, living elsewhere, but still subordinates to the household headship. Under these circumstances, the parent and child relationship in the *ie* system resulted in the *oyabun* (parental status) vs. *kobun* (child status) relationship (Fukutake 1981: 30–31).

A daughter at the time of her marriage got a minimal amount of a marriage fund from her parents. However, she possessed no right to ask for the dispensation of parental assets as the continuation of the household headship was considered top priority in the *ie* system. These family relations and the family system developed into the hierarchal male supremacy in Japanese society.

Studies of family violence in the USA, conjugal violence in particular, reveal that the impact of patriarchy is significant (Yllo 2005; Yllo and Straus 1984). Then, what would be the impact of patriarchy on the conjugal violence in Japan, which is

reported to occur relatively infrequently (Kumagai 1979c, 1979g, 2006; WHO 2005)? Due to the patriarchal and hierarchal structure in the Japanese family and household, we expect the level of conjugal violence to be low in Japan.

Thus, we believe that the traditional, patriarchal, and hierarchal family structure of Japan has been one of the founding elements of Japanese human and family relations today. We expect to see extensive discussions on this issue in chapters to follow in this book.

### ***1.10.5 Group Orientation: Social Psychological Factor***

The Japanese people possess a strong group orientation, in that people act as part of their group rather than as an individual, apart from a group. It is characterized as *onigiri* (rice ball) which sticks together as opposed to green pieces that stay apart independently (Wagatsuma 1985: 18–19). In Japanese group activities, therefore, keeping group harmony is the prime importance, even if an individual's opinions are invaluable.

Victims of family violence could be those considered as ones who do not fit into the family group and disturb the group harmony. As a consequence, the problems of family violence stay only within the domestic arena and are not revealed outside. Would it be a part of the reason for the low level of family violence reported in Japan?

Thus, the group orientation is considered as a central social psychological factor in making what Japanese society, culture, and personality are today. Extensive discussions are expected in the chapters to follow in this book.

### ***1.10.6 Giri-Ninryo: Social Psychological Factor***

Contemporary Japanese social structure has a dual nature, based on a Western capitalist economy, yet at the same time containing feudal characteristics. Consequently, there emerges the dual structure (Boeke 1942, 1953; Kumagai 1996a, 2015) of Japanese society. It is characterized as a harmonious coexistence of two contrasting characteristics, the traditional and the modern. As a result of the dual nature of Japanese society, Japanese human relations become dual in nature as well.

The dual nature of Japanese human and family relations is explained by *giri* (obligation and a moral code stemming from Confucius ideology) vs. *ninryo* (humanity and honest conduct reflecting the human nature) in the psychology of the Japanese people. Since the Edo era, the term *giri* has been modified to signify conduct and *gimu* the duties that one must fulfill even against one's will. The situation in which *giri* is called for occurs during the course of various human relations in Japan (Niimura 1993: 689).

Human relations in modern capitalist society are based on one's rights and duties. In Japanese society, however, as a result of the dual nature of both the traditional *giri* and the modern *gimu* operating simultaneously, human relations become complicated. As a result Japanese feelings of *ninryo* emerge that contrast with *giri*. Thus, the Japanese people find themselves in a dilemma between *giri* and *ninryo* in their human relations (Minami 1953: 186–211).

Thus, it is evident that the psychological factor of *giri-ninryo* has significant impact on Japanese human and family relations. Let us discuss its impact on family violence in detail in the chapters to follow.

### ***1.10.7 Interdependence in Human Relations: Biological Factor***

Doi, a renowned Japanese psychiatrist and the author of the best-seller book, *Amae no Kozo (The Anatomy of Dependence, 1971)*, analyzed the concept of *amae* (dependence) for his study abroad in the USA in 1950. Doi realized that manners, customs, and ways of thought, all of which he had thought natural in Japan, were not necessarily suitable to the USA. Doi accounted for it by the Japanese unique psychology of *amae* (dependence). Thus, Doi claimed the concept of *amae* as an integral keyword for understanding human relations and social structure in Japan.

*Amae* signifies one's dependence on others. Such concepts as *giri-ninryo* and *uchi-soto*, as discussed in this section, also represent the Japanese style of human relations based on *amae*, according to Doi. In other words, the intensity of human relations could be measured by knowing whether or not *amae* exists consciously or unconsciously between the interacting individuals (Doi 1971: 53–63). Thus, Japanese organizations and human relations are all based on this concept of *amae*. Should there be an *amae* between people, they can depend on each other without any reservation. This relationship could be called *uchi*, *ninryo*, and true. The opposite, if there are any reservations in relations, are called *soto*, *giri*, and false. Depending on the situation, Japanese people tactically manage in their usage of *amae* in human relations and organizations.

In Western societies, in contrast, the concept of *amae* is not valued.<sup>10</sup> It is because of their freedom of thought and the relationship between the group and the individual. The Western ideology of freedom has a historical background, developed from slavery and the supremacy of an individual to the group, who was accorded the positive meaning of dignity. The Japanese meaning of freedom, on the other hand, contains *amae* in itself, as an individual does not exist independently of the group.

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<sup>10</sup>It is subjective observations of the author that there are examples in which *amae* is valued in the West, specifically sports, where the team's results are more important than any individual achievements.

Japanese human relations and social structure are all constructed on the basis of the *amae* concept (Doi 1971: 133).

If one cannot depend on others, one would suffer from such psychological disorders as a feeling of being captured, social phobias, and/or a loss of self. Japanese society differentiates the relationship between *uchi* and *soto*. Within the realm of *uchi*, one is allowed to depend on others, but not so much so in *soto* relations. According to Doi, such *soto* relations result in one's feelings of hesitation and shyness which result in pathologies. Doi accounted for the source of *soto* relations as the social change of human relations from the traditional to the modern, since the Meiji Restoration (Doi 1971: 175).

We look forward to active discussion on the impact of the *amae* concept on family violence in Japan in the following chapters.

### ***1.10.8 Honne vs. Tatemaie and Ishin-Denshin: Social Psychological Factors***

During the course of intercultural communication, it is often the case that *honne* and *tatemaie* of the Japanese people become a problem. *Honne* is the truth of one's own feeling, but *tatemaie* is what is proper to show others, not necessarily reflecting one's true feeling (Niimura 1993: 1601 and 2385). There is no problem in understanding the *honne* and *tatemaie* differences between and among Japanese people. It would be, perhaps, more appropriate to say that Japanese people are expected to understand the differences between *honne* and *tatemaie*. In the course of intercultural communication, however, it is unfair to expect a non-Japanese person to understand the subtle differences in nuance between *honne* and *tatemaie*.

The author of this chapter conducted studies for an extended period of 10 years on the impacts of the Japanese style of production system in the USA (Kumagai 1996b). The study revealed that one of the most difficult problems to overcome for American workers under Japanese management is the issue of the *honne* and *tatemaie* intercultural communication. To American workers, the dual communication style of *honne-tatemaie* could rarely be understood and was interpreted such that Japanese people appeared deceptive and dishonest. The Americans thought that what one says should be carried out. When a Japanese businessman says "Yes," then American workers expected to see the action fulfilled. However, it seldom happened so. To the Japanese businessman, the "Yes" was just *tatemaie*, a sign of respect. He never meant to deceive American workers. Instead, the Japanese businessman wanted "Yes" (*tatemaie*) to mean that he did not want to disappoint the American workers. "Yes" in this context meant "No" in actuality. This mind-to-mind communication style (*ishin-denshin* in Japanese) is common among the Japanese people, but should be avoided in intercultural communication. It causes miscommunication and cultural friction (Kumagai 1996b: 62–65).

It is not that the Japanese *honne-tatemae* communication style is right or wrong. When the Japanese style of communication is carried out within the context of Japanese culture, society, and human relations, there is no problem. Nevertheless, during intercultural communication, this style of Japanese communication could result in a serious hindrance to any business transaction and would become a source of cultural friction. Thus, in the course of intercultural interaction, it is essential to share a common ground of communication. In other words, in the course of intercultural communication, it is not appropriate for the Japanese people to expect to carry on the mind-to-mind nonverbal style of communication (Kumagai 1996b: 64).

The *honne* and *tatemae* could become a problem leading to family violence among Japanese family members. Intimate partners are strangers at first. Then conflicts and differences in opinion emerge. Thus, the conflict resolution tactics would become important to be considered. In order to alleviate the situation, it is essential to communicate with *honne*, but not with *tatemae*, in intimate family relations. Realization of the *honne* communication might reflect the family violence in Japan. We expect active discussion on the relationship between the *honne-tatemae* communication style and family violence in the chapters to follow.

### ***1.10.9 Nonverbal Static Japanese Language: Anthropological Factor***

As we have discussed already, the communication style of Japanese people is generally nonverbal and static. Such orientation is outstanding when we compare the Japanese-speaking people with those of English-speaking counterparts. The basic syntax of Japanese is “subject+object+verb,” whereas English is “subject+verb+object.” Thus, when you say “I like you” in Japanese, its word order is “I+you+like.” When the sentence is affirmative, there is no problem. But if the sentence is negative, there is. Then, the word order of “I don’t like you” in Japanese becomes “I+you+like+not.” The sentence begins affirmatively, but then all of a sudden becomes negative. As a consequence, an attitude is fostered to listen to what one says to the final word. The static and nonverbally oriented Japanese language is contrasted with the active and verbally oriented English language (Kumagai 1996b: 57, 2004: 15).

The static orientation of the Japanese people with a nonverbal communication style becomes apparent in the global spheres. Japanese professionals at international professional meetings and conventions are often observed as quite reticent and quiet. “The cultural virtues of modesty, respect for others, and politeness in intercultural communication will only be valued if and only if others have a good knowledge and understanding of Japan” (Kumagai 2015: 169). Thus, Japanese people must learn to speak out actively and clearly in intercultural communication, to convey their messages.

The reportedly low level of family violence in Japan (Kumagai 1979c, d, f, g, 2006; WHO 2005) may be a reflection of the static and nonverbally oriented Japanese language. Then, a Japanese individual who is dynamic and verbally oriented could become violent in family relations. We hope to see active discussions on this point in the following chapters.

### 1.10.10 Geographic Factors in Japan

Regional variations in Japanese families and households are well documented by the author of this chapter (Kumagai 2008, 2011, 2015). Such regional variations exist contrastingly in the small island nation of Japan, across prefectures, and even within a single prefecture. These variations stem from historical and cultural development of Japan (Kumagai 2011, 2015).

#### 1.10.10.1 Reasons for Regional Variations in Japan

Japan's history gives two reasons for regional variations in its culture and lifestyle: a centralized government, established in 824, and the so-called Second Meiji Restoration of *haihan-chiken* (dissolution of feudal domains and establishment of prefectures), enforced in August 1871 (Amino 1997: 150; Asai 2007a: 28–31, 2007b: 14–31; Jansen 2000: 348). Both steps solidified one country, but split it into regions.

These regions were established for the first time in 701 under the centralized administration called the *Ritsuryo* system (literally, due to statute). This system divided the area of Japan stretching from Tohoku on the north to Kyushu on the south (excluding Ezo (Hokkaido) in the north and Ryukyu (Okinawa) in the south) into the *Gokishichido* (five regions and seven national routes). These five regions and seven routes were subdivided into *kuni* (states), *gun* (counties), and *sato* (villages). These administrative divisions from Tohoku to Kyushu were finalized into *Rokujyuu Ro-Kokku* and *Ni-to* (66 states and 2 islands) in 824.

This structure lasted for more than a millennium until the end of the Edo/Tokugawa shogunate. The control system of the Edo shogunate was characterized by its dual structure called *bakuhan taisei*. *Baku* or *bakufu* means the central government of the Edo shogunate, and *han* represents the local feudal domain headed by the feudal lord. Although the exact number of han is not known, it is widely believed that there were some 270 traditional feudal domains by the end of the Edo shogunate (Shiba 1994: 153). The traditions developed by each of the feudal domains became part of the people, distinctive local characteristics in each domain, as they developed independently of each other (Asai 2007a: 31; Shiba 1994: 153).

The next significant step was the Meiji Restoration in 1868. A new government, under the Meiji Emperor, enforced *haihan-chiken* in 1871. At that time Japan's centralized system became *San-pu Sanbyakuni-ken* (3 fus and 302 prefectures),



based on each of the feudal domains. It is natural, therefore, that these newly established 302 prefectures were identical to the former feudal domains. After further consolidation of these 302 prefectures in several stages, the administrative divisions of Japan were reduced by 1880 to a total of 46 prefectures, three of which were fus (Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto).

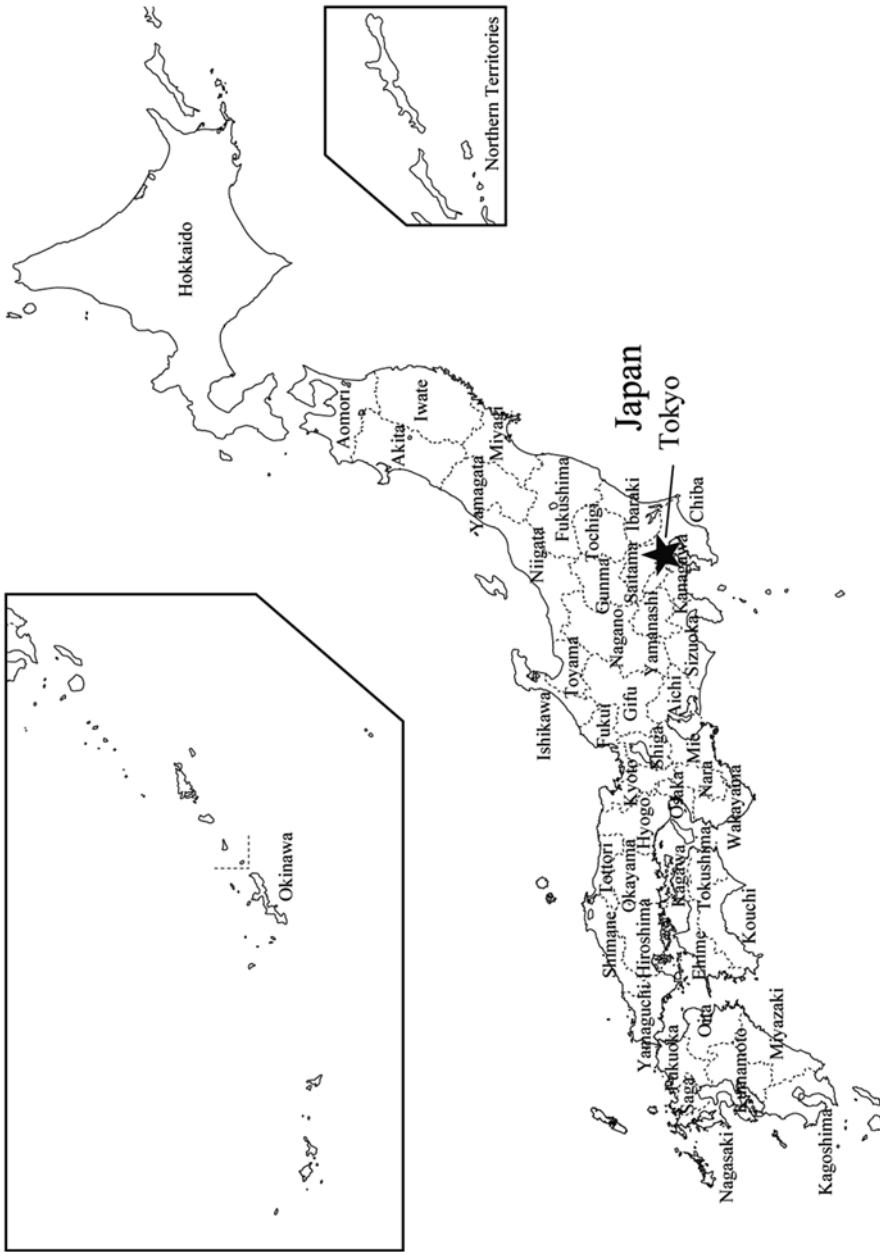
Today, there are 47 prefectures in Japan, with Okinawa returned to Japan by the USA in 1972. Therefore, it has been just 40 years since the administrative divisions of Japan have been organized as 47 prefectures, comprised of one to (Tokyo), one do (Hokkaido), two fus (Osaka and Kyoto), and 43 kens (prefectures) (see map on *Sekai Chizu to Kakkoku no Chizu* 2007, as shown in Fig. 1.2). The history of the traditional feudal domain system is long, while today's administrative divisions are brief. As would be expected, therefore, characteristics of Japanese society, culture, and personality are deeply affected by the traditional feudal domain system.

In studying Japanese families today, we note that even within a single prefecture, there exist distinctively different characteristics from one area (or district) to the other. (Some examples of well-known prefectures containing multiple characteristics are Aomori, Yamagata, Nagano, Shizuoka, Aichi, Hiroshima, and Fukuoka prefectures (Kumagai 2011: 25).) For more details on regional variations on Japanese families and households, refer to earlier writings of the author (Kumagai 2008, 2011, 2015).

### 1.10.10.2 Regional Variations in Family Violence in Japan

The perspective of regional variations should also be applied for the study of family violence in Japan. It would be appropriate to assume and validate the regional variation in family violence in such a diverse and vast society as the USA (Straus 1994b; Yllo and Straus 1984). Japan being equivalent to only 1/25th of the US mainland, very few people, Japanese or non-Japanese, imagine regional variations. As we have just discussed, regional variations in Japan are quite comprehensive indeed, and the family and households differ extensively from one region to the other (Kumagai 2008, 2011, 2015). If so, it would be appropriate to hypothesize regional variation in family relations and family violence in Japan.

As discussed in Section 1.6.3, "An Attempt to Analyze Family Conflicts Using NFRJ03 Data," the author of this chapter attempted to analyze regional variations in family conflicts in Japan, using the same data set (Kumagai, 2006). However, since the NFRJ03 research was not designed primarily for the study of family violence, the samples collected were too small to test for regional variations. In the study of family violence in the future, therefore, it is strongly recommended that tests for regional variation be considered. Should we desire to alleviate the family violence in Japan, it is essential to consider the issue through the regional variation perspective. It is hoped that the authors in the chapters to follow, child abuse, IPV, filial violence, and elder abuse, will discuss each type of family violence with special attention to regional variations as much as possible.



**Fig. 1.2** Map of Japan by prefecture: administrative divisions (*Source*: Sekai Chizu to Kakkoku no Chizu [World maps and Japanese maps] 2007)

In this chapter, the author first discussed some basic issues on family violence, i.e., what it is, what forms it takes, and why it is an important sociological phenomenon to study, and then gave suggestions for studying family violence through a life course perspective. The chapter also highlighted the fact that the development of family violence studies has been influenced by a changing development of social structure and sociological theories. Such social development has contributed to changes in viewing the field from family pathologies to social issues. If that is the case, for the study of family violence in Japan, we need to be sensitive enough to pay close attention to sociocultural characteristics unique to Japan. With these points in mind, the next chapter will discuss the issue of child abuse in Japan which will be the first type of family violence in our life course.

## **Appendix 1.1 Some Examples of Governmental Agencies and/or Bureaus Publishing Reports on Various Types of Family Violence in Japan**

### (1) Child Abuse

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (2013a). *Kodomo Gyakutai ni yoru Shibou Jirei tou no Kensho Kekka tou nit tsuite (dai 9ji houkoku)* [Investigation Results of Death Cases of Child Abuse (9th Report)]. [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/kodomo/dv37/index\\_9.html](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/kodomo/dv37/index_9.html). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (2013b). *Kodomo Gyakutai Taiou no Tebiki* [Handbook for Responding to Child Abuse]. [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo\\_kosodate/dv/dl/120502\\_11.pdf](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo_kosodate/dv/dl/120502_11.pdf). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (2015). *Jidou Gyakutai Boushi Taisaku-shitsu* [Office for the Prevention of Child Abuse]. [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo\\_kosodate/dv/index.html?HPSESSID=f35dc09021d8a21dc12d3aceb0109caf](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo_kosodate/dv/index.html?HPSESSID=f35dc09021d8a21dc12d3aceb0109caf). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Justice. (2001). *Jidou Gyakutai ni kansuru Kenkyu (Dai 1ji Houkoku): Shonenin Zaiinsha ni taisuru Higai Keiken no Anketo Chousa* [Research on Child Abuse (1st Report): Questionnaire Study on Victimization of Youths in Reformatories]. <http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000074918.pdf>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Justice. (2015). *Act on the Prevention, etc. of Child Abuse*. Japanese Law Translation. <http://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/law/detail/?id=221&vm=04&re=02>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

### (2) Intimate Partner Violence

Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office. (2015). *White Paper on Gender Equality in Japan*: 2015. [http://www.gender.go.jp/about\\_danjo/whitepaper/h27/gaiyou/index.html](http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/whitepaper/h27/gaiyou/index.html) Accessed 15 July 2015.

Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office. (2008). *Act on the Prevention of Violence from Spouse and Protection of Victims*. <http://www.gender.go.jp/e-vaw/law/nichiei.pdf>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Tokyo Metropolitan. *Jakunensou ni okeru Kousaiaite karano Bouryoku ni kansuru Cyousa kekka* [Investigation about the Violence from the Date in the Young Group]. <http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/INET/CHOUSA/2013/02/60n2d200.htm>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Yokohama-shi Citizen Station Gender Equality Promotion Section (2009). *Haigusya karano Bouryoku (DV) ni kansuru Anketocyouosa oyobi Higaisya jittai cyousa (mensetsucyouosa) Cyousakekka* [Questionnaire Survey about the Violence (DV) by Spouses fact-finding (interview investigation) findings]. Yokohama-shi Citizen Vitality Promotion Station, Child Young People Station. <http://www.city.yokohama.lg.jp/shimin/>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

### (3) Filial Violence

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan. (2010) *Seisyounen no Hikou to Bouryokukan ni Kansuru Tyousa* [Research on Juvenile delinquency and youth conformity with violence]. <http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/kenkyu/violence/html/mokuji.html#4-2-23>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan. (2014). *Heisei 26 Nenban Kodomo Wakamono Hakusyo* [White paper on children and young people 2014]. [http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h26honpen/pdf\\_index.html](http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h26honpen/pdf_index.html). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan of Japan. (2015) *Kodomo to wakamono hakusho* [White paper on children and young people in Japan]. [http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h27honpen/pdf\\_index.html](http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h27honpen/pdf_index.html) (Summaries) [http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h27gaiyou/pdf\\_indexg.html](http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/whitepaper/h27gaiyou/pdf_indexg.html) Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Education. (2014). *Heisei 25-nendo jidouseito no mondaikoudou tou seitoshidoujyou no shomondai ni kansuru chousa nitsuite* [Report on the study of juvenile delinquencies and problems of primary and secondary school students]. [http://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/houdou/26/10/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2014/10/16/1351936\\_01\\_1.pdf](http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/26/10/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2014/10/16/1351936_01_1.pdf). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (2006) *Jidou gyakutai no boushitou ni kansuru houritu* [Act on the Prevention, etc. of Child Abuse]. <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/kodomo/dv22/01.html>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. (2000). *Seisyounen no hikou to bouryokukan ni kansuru tyousa* [Research on juvenile delinquency and violence]. <http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/kenkyu/hikoug/hikoug.htm>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. (2013). *Oya to doukyo no mikonsya no saikin no jyoukyou* [Recent situation of unmarried people who lives together with parents]. <http://www.stat.go.jp/training/2kenkyu/pdf/zuhyou/parasi10.pdf>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. (2014). *Gakunenbetsu futoukou jidouseitosuu* [Number of students who

refuse to go to school for each grades] <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/List.do?bid=000001052836&cycode=0>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

#### (4) Elder Abuse

National Police Agency. (2015). Furikome Sagi no Syurui [Variation of Furikome fraud]. [https://www.npa.go.jp/safetylife/seianki31/1\\_hurikome.htm](https://www.npa.go.jp/safetylife/seianki31/1_hurikome.htm). Accessed 15 July 2015.

Police Department. (2013) Heisei 25 Nendo Hanzai Hakusyo [White paper on crimes: 2013]. <http://hakusyo1.moj.go.jp/jp/60/nfm/mokuji.html>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Association for Health Economics Research and Social Insurance and Welfare. (2003). *Katei ni okeru koreisha gyakutai ni kansuru chosa* [The research on Elder Abuse in home]. <http://www.ihp.jp/publications/report/search.php?dl=170&i=1>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Cabinet Office. (2006). *Zusetsu koureisha hakusho* [White paper of elderly people: Illustration]. <http://homepage2.nifty.com/tanimurasakaei/rousin-isi.htm>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (1995–2014). *Kokumin-seikatu-kiso-chosa* [National Livelihood Survey]. <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/list/20-21kekka.html>. Accessed 15 July 2015.

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. (1997–2015). *Korei shakai hakusho* [White Paper on Aging Society]. <http://www8.cao.go.jp/kourei/whitepaper/index-w.html>. For 2015: [http://www8.cao.go.jp/kourei/whitepaper/w-2015/zenbun/27pdf\\_index.html](http://www8.cao.go.jp/kourei/whitepaper/w-2015/zenbun/27pdf_index.html). Accessed 15 July 2015.

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*Sources:* Compiled by the author, as of July 16, 2015. All the URLs were accessed on July 15, 2015.

## Appendix 1.2 Nine Forms of Violence and Abuse

### (1) Physical Violence

Physical violence occurs when someone uses a part of their body or an object to control a person's actions. Physical violence includes but is not limited to:

- Using physical force which results in pain, discomfort, or injury
- Hitting, pinching, hair pulling, arm twisting, strangling, burning, stabbing, punching, pushing, slapping, beating, shoving, kicking, choking, biting, force feeding, or any other rough treatment
- Assault with a weapon or other objects

- Threats with a weapon or object
- Deliberate exposure to severe weather or inappropriate room temperatures
- Murder

(2) Sexual Violence

Sexual violence occurs when a person is forced to unwillingly take part in sexual activity. Sexual violence includes but is not limited to:

- Touching in a sexual manner without consent (i.e., kissing, grabbing, fondling)
- Forced sexual intercourse
- Forcing a person to perform sexual acts that may be degrading or painful
- Beating sexual parts of the body
- Forcing a person to view pornographic material; forcing participation in pornographic filming
- Using a weapon to force compliance
- Exhibitionism
- Making unwelcome sexual comments or jokes; leering behavior
- Withholding sexual affection
- Denial of a person's sexuality or privacy (watching)
- Denial of sexual information and education
- Humiliating, criticizing, or trying to control a person's sexuality
- Forced prostitution
- Unfounded allegations of promiscuity and/or infidelity
- Purposefully exposing the person to HIV-AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections

(3) Emotional Violence

Emotional violence occurs when someone says or does something to make a person feel stupid or worthless. Emotional violence includes but is not limited to:

- Name-calling
- Blaming all relationship problems on the person
- Using silent treatment
- Not allowing the person to have contact with family and friends
- Destroying possessions
- Jealousy
- Humiliating or making fun of the person
- Intimidating the person; causing fear to gain control
- Threatening to hurt oneself if the person does not cooperate
- Threatening to abandon the person
- Threatening to have the person deported (if they are an immigrant)

(4) Psychological Violence

Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in a person to gain control. Psychological violence includes but is not limited to:

- Threatening to harm the person or her or his family if she or he leaves
- Threatening to harm oneself
- Threats of violence
- Threats of abandonment
- Stalking/criminal harassment
- Destruction of personal property
- Verbal aggression
- Socially isolating the person
- Not allowing access to a telephone
- Not allowing a competent person to make decisions
- Inappropriately controlling the person's activities
- Treating a person like a child or a servant
- Withholding companionship or affection
- Use of undue pressure to:
  - Sign legal documents
  - Not seek legal assistance or advice
  - Move out of the home
  - Make or change a legal will or beneficiary
  - Make or change an advance health-care directive
  - Give money or other possessions to relatives or other caregivers
  - Do things the person doesn't want to do

(5) Spiritual Violence

Spiritual (or religious) violence occurs when someone uses a person's spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate, or control the person. Spiritual violence includes but is not limited to:

- Not allowing the person to follow her or his preferred spiritual or religious tradition
- Forcing a spiritual or religious path or practice on another person
- Belittling or making fun of a person's spiritual or religious tradition, beliefs, or practices
- Using one's spiritual or religious position, rituals, or practices to manipulate, dominate, or control a person

(6) Cultural Violence

Cultural violence occurs when a person is harmed as a result of practices that are part of her or his culture, religion, or tradition. Cultural violence includes but is not limited to:

- Committing "honor" or other crimes against women in some parts of the world, where women especially may be physically harmed, shunned, maimed, or killed for:
- Falling in love with the "wrong" person
- Seeking divorce
- Infidelity; committing adultery



- Being raped
- Practicing witchcraft
- Being older

Cultural violence may take place in some of the following ways:

- Lynching or stoning
- Banishment
- Abandonment of an older person at hospital by family
- Female circumcision
- Rape marriage
- Sexual slavery
- Murder

#### (7) Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to a person. Verbal abuse includes but is not limited to:

- Recalling a person's past mistakes
- Expressing negative expectations
- Expressing distrust
- Threatening violence against a person or her or his family members
- Yelling
- Lying
- Name-calling
- Insulting and swearing
- Withholding important information
- Unreasonably ordering around
- Talking unkindly about death to a person
- Telling a person she or he is worthless or nothing but trouble

#### (8) Financial Abuse

Financial abuse occurs when someone controls a person's financial resources without the person's consent or misuses those resources. Financial abuse includes but is not limited to:

- Not allowing the person to participate in educational programs
- Forcing the person to work outside the home
- Refusing to let the person work outside the home or attend school
- Controlling the person's choice of occupation
- Illegally or improperly using a person's money, assets, or property
- Acts of fraud; pulling off a scam against a person
- Taking funds from the person without permission for one's own use
- Misusing funds through lies and trickery and controlling or withholding money
- Not allowing access to bank accounts, savings, or other income
- Giving an allowance and then requiring justification for all money spent
- Persuading the person to buy a product or give away money

- Selling the house, furnishings, or other possessions without permission
- Forging a signature on pension checks or legal documents
- Misusing a power of attorney, an enduring power of attorney, or legal guardianship
- Not paying bills
- Opening mail without permission
- Living in a person's home without paying fairly for expenses
- Destroying personal property

(9) Neglect

Neglect occurs when someone has the responsibility to provide care or assistance for you but does not. Neglect includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Failing to meet the needs of a person who is unable to meet those needs alone
- Abandonment in a public setting
- Not remaining with a person who needs help

Physical neglect:

- Disregarding necessities of daily living, including failing to provide adequate or necessary:
  - Nutrition or fluids
  - Shelter
  - Clean clothes and linen
  - Social companionship and failing to turn a bedridden person frequently to prevent stiffness and bedsores

Medical neglect:

- Ignoring special dietary requirements
- Not providing needed medications
- Not calling a physician; not reporting or taking action on a medical condition, injury, or problem
- Not being aware of the possible negative effects of medications

*Source:* Violence Prevention Initiative, Newfoundland Labrador, Canada (2015), and compiled by the author.

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## Chapter 2

# Child Abuse: History and Current State in Japanese Context

Masako Ishii-Kuntz

In Japan, child abuse has been recognized as a “problem” since the pre-World War II days. However, it was often believed that this type of abuse would occur only in nurseries caring for orphans or in poor families (Hanada et al. 2007). This myth has been largely challenged during the last several decades, and, as a result, we became much more aware that the occurrence of child abuse could not be restricted only to troubled families and child care facilities. The objectives of this chapter are fivefold: First, various forms of child abuse are defined. Second, a life course perspective as it is applied to child abuse is explained. Third, history and current state of child abuse in Japan are described. Fourth, factors causing child abuse are discussed. Finally, problems in developing further preventive measures concerning child abuse in Japan are pointed out.

### 2.1 Defining Child Abuse

In this chapter, we focus on children who are victims of abuse that occur in families. When considering child abuse, we must also take into account that adult children of families can also be the victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. These topics, however, will be described in detail in Chaps. 4 and 5, thus this chapter concerns the abuse of younger children in families.

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### 2.1.1 *Diverse Forms of Child Abuse*

In English-speaking countries, words such as child abuse, child maltreatment, and cruelty to children have been used to describe verbal, physical, and sexual violence against children. In Japanese society and legal system, the word “*jido gyakutai*” (*jido*=children, *gyakutai*=abuse) has been used to describe child abuse for many years. *Jido*, however, usually refers to school-age children, not infants and pre-schoolers. In addition, since *jido* is often used with such words as *yougo shisetsu* (group care home), it sounds like we are only referring to those children cared for in the institutional setting. In most recent years, the word “*kodomo gyakutai*” (*kodomo*=children of all ages) has been replacing “*jido gyakutai*,” with the assumptions that abuse against children can occur at any age, from infancy to teen years, and in noninstitutional setting such as family. It should be noted, however, that the word “*jido gyakutai*” is still used in most of the government’s documents and by general public.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the USA, child maltreatment is defined as “any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver (e.g., clergy, coach and teacher) that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child” (CDC 2014). This definition thus assumes that any act that ends up in “real” or “potential” physical, sexual, and verbal harm to the child, whether intended or unintended, can be seen as child abuse. In addition, physical, medical, and educational neglect as well as the abandonment of child care and placing children in a violent environment are also considered as child abuse.

In Japan, the Article II of the Law for Prevention of Child Abuse (hereafter referred to as the Child Abuse Prevention Law) (Ministry of Justice 2015) enacted in May 2000 defines child abuse as “the following acts committed by a custodian (meaning a person who exercises parental authority, a guardian of a minor or other person who is currently engaged in custody of a child) against a child (meaning a person who is under 18 of age) under his/her custody”:

1. Assaulting the child in a manner that will cause or is likely to cause external injury on the body of the child
2. Engaging in indecency against the child or cause the child to engage in indecency
3. Substantially reducing the amount of food for the child or abandoning and neglecting the child for a long time period in a manner that may interfere with normal development of the child mentally or physically, or leaving a person living together other than the custodian to commit any act that is equivalent to those listed in the preceding two items or the following item, or otherwise materially failing to perform the duty of custody as a custodian
4. Using significantly violent language or taking an extreme attitude of rejection against the child, using violence upon one’s spouse in a family in which the child is living together (meaning illegal attacks on the body of the spouse (including the one who is under circumstances substantially equivalent to marital relationship although the marriage notification has not been made) that threaten

the spouse's life or body, as well as the words and behaviors equivalent to said attacks which would have harmful effect on the spouse mentally or physically), or otherwise speaking or behaving in a manner that would be significantly traumatic to the child

The Child Abuse Prevention Law of 2000 was amended in 2004, leading to the expanded definition of child abuse and neglect. These amendments state that failure on the part of the guardian or parent to protect his/her child from perpetrators who live with them falls under the definition of neglect, and indirect victimization through witnessing domestic violence was also covered.

These definitions also imply that rather than form of child abuse occurring separately or independently, the perpetrators are likely to use various or multiple combinations of abuse in reality, such as combining physical and verbal abuse at the same time or committing sexual violence with the verbal threats. In a psychological counseling homepage in Japan, a 29-year-old married woman describes her childhood experiences of being abused in several ways by her parents (Counseling.Com 2015).

My parents abused me frequently when I was a child. My oldest recollection in childhood is the scene that I was crying because I was scared of my parents. Their yelling, screaming, hitting, kicking and pulling my hair (and even cutting me with a knife) would start when my school grades were not so good, and I fail to receive an award for my artwork. ... It was not just physical abuse; my parents also abused me psychologically, like throwing away the gift I made and the letter I wrote for my mother's birthday.

This example of co-occurrence of several forms of abuse shows that it is not always realistic to identify one form of violence when reporting the experiences of the abused child.

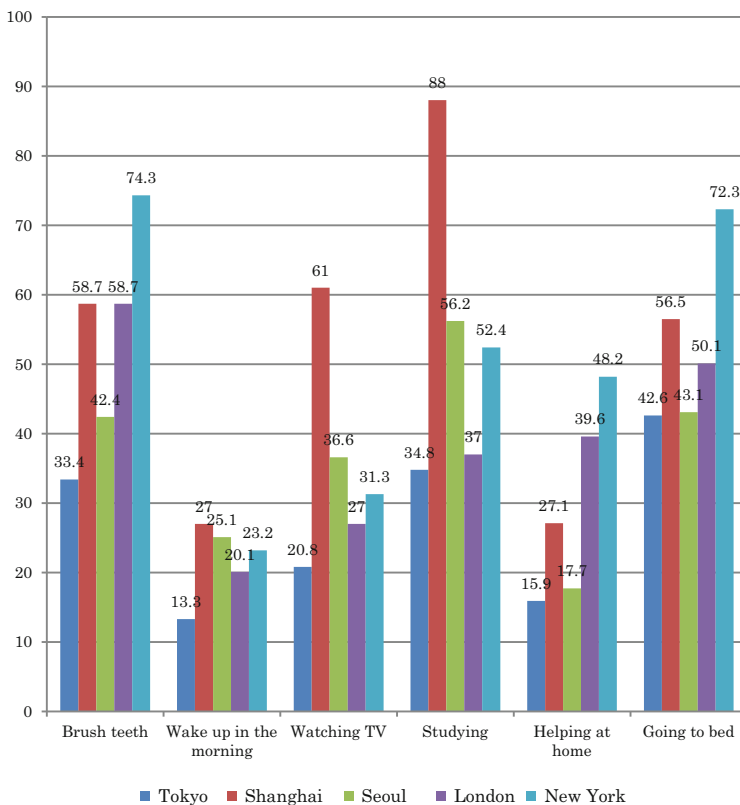
### 2.1.2 *Corporal Punishment and Child Abuse*

What adds to the complexity of the definition of child abuse is the debate over the difference or similarity between corporal punishment and child abuse. Sociologists, psychologists, and other professionals are divided on the benefits or hazards of corporal punishment. Some researchers have found that corporal punishment could be effective (e.g., Baumrind 1996a, b, 1997; Larzelere 1996), whereas others have argued that corporal punishment is ineffective and harmful (e.g., Gershoff 2002, Straus 2000a, b; Straus and Yodanis 2000). According to the data collected by Straus and Stewart (1999), 94 % of parents who have 3–4-year-olds have admitted to using corporal punishment such as hitting hand or foot; spanking with hand, stick, or belt; pinching; shaking; and slapping the child's face at least once in the past.

In the West, parents encourage children to be independent, whereas Asian parenting emphasizes family harmony, cooperation, and interdependence (or *amae* in Japan). Because of the emphasis on harmony in socializing their children, Japanese parents may want to avoid conflictual situations in front of children at home and outside. This may also be related to the weak approval of corporal punishment

among Japanese parents. Kobayashi et al. (1997) report that, in general, Japanese parents considered “mild corporal punishment” acceptable, but they did not approve of “striking,” “punching,” “beating,” or “kicking.” “Milder corporal punishment” means “spanking on the bottom” and “kneeling,” or children being “forced to stay at home after school and study.” At the same time, however, parents believe that corporal punishment is permissible in cases such as “delinquent behavior,” “dangerous activities,” or “bullying” (Kobayashi et al. 1997). Japanese parents today are likely to disapprove of corporal punishment, and while the corporal punishment may occur at home, it is probably not that frequent, if it happens at all. Interestingly, however, “discipline” is the most frequent response (20 %) given as a “rationale” for child abuse (National Children’s Medical Research Center 1995).

Figure 2.1 shows the comparative data of the percentage of 5th grade children who are told by parents to brush teeth, wake up in the morning, not to watch TV, help out at home, and go to bed at a certain time. With respect to education, 88 % of Shanghai children are told by parents to study harder, followed by children in Seoul, Korea (56.2 %), and New York (52.4 %), but the least percentage (34.8 %) is shown among Japanese children. Additionally, children in London and New York are likely



**Fig. 2.1** Parental disciplines: international comparison (%) in 1994 (Source: Tamura 1996:2. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author)

to be disciplined in daily activities such as brushing teeth, helping at home, and going to bed. Japanese children are least likely to be told by their parents to do these things which show the lower level of disciplining by Japanese parents. Indeed, children yelling and screaming in public places such as parks and restaurants without any parental punishments are commonly seen in Japan.

There is an image that Japanese parents were once strict disciplinarians. Japanese fathers were especially feared by their children at the same level as earthquake, thunder, and fire as the Japanese saying “*jishin, kaminari, kaji, oyaji*” goes (Ishii-Kuntz 1994). According to Hirota (1999), however, in Edo period through the post-WW II days, children were considered as important sources of labor; thus, they were not physically disciplined as much as we think they were.

Before the collapse of the bubble economy in early 1990s, fewer Japanese parents seemed to be engaging in physical discipline of their children. This does not mean that the parents stopped disciplining children all together. Instead, the form of discipline may have changed from physical to that of more education-oriented. In fact, Japanese mothers were called “education mamas” during the economic boom for their “general manager” role to ensure that their children would receive high-quality education in schools and prep (cram) schools. These mothers may have considered that their involvement in education was a way of disciplining their children.

Less strict style of disciplining can also be attributed to the (1946) publication of *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* written by American pediatrician Benjamin Spock. This book which was translated into Japanese and read by many parents emphasized the importance of recognizing child’s individuality and emphasized the “gentle” approach in child care. This influential book also indirectly contributed to the enactment of laws that prohibited parental corporal punishment in several countries. As of 2014, there are approximately 40 countries worldwide that include corporal punishment as a form of child abuse thus legally banned in households and elsewhere (Mainichi Shimbun 2014).

## 2.2 Child Abuse from a Life Course Perspective

As it was stated by Kumagai in Chap. 1 of this book, “Life course perspective views an individual throughout one’s entire life as an aging process.” Viewing family violence from this perspective allows us to examine the connectedness among and between various types of violence and abuse that may occur or co-occur throughout one’s entire life. How can we then incorporate this view when considering child abuse?

### 2.2.1 Applying a Life Course Perspective to Child Abuse

Applying a life course perspective to child abuse allows us to examine generational factors surrounding child abuse, that is, childhood environment of the abusive parents, children’s experiences of being abused, and experiences of social relationships as an adult of childhood abuse victims as well as the relationship between the abuser and the abused.

Figure 2.2 shows the life course of the child through his/her experiences of being abused. As shown in the upper left box, if a parent of the child was a victim of childhood abuse, he/she may have difficulties in constructing nonviolent parent-child relationship, which, in turn, may trigger violence against his/her own child. This process has been labeled as the cycle or transmission of violence through generations (Straus 1974). At the same time, a parent who is abused by his/her spouse may end up abusing the child as a way of venting his/her stress or anger. The experiences of childhood abuse may result not only in physical and psychological hardships but also in the way adults form healthy social relationships. Further, because of the attachment disorder in childhood due to the abuse, the child may grow up to be an adult who has a difficulty in controlling his/her emotions and feelings as well as forming healthy relationships (Bowlby 1951; Kashiwagi 1993; Miyasaka 2008).

The two boxes on the lower right hand show that, due to the cycle of violence, the adults who were victims of child abuse may end up abusing their own children and older parents or being abused by their spouses and teenage and adult children. Walker (1977) applied the theory of learned helplessness to describe women’s seemingly lack of efforts to leave or escape an abusive relationship or their failure or inability to take action to protect themselves and their children. Children who are

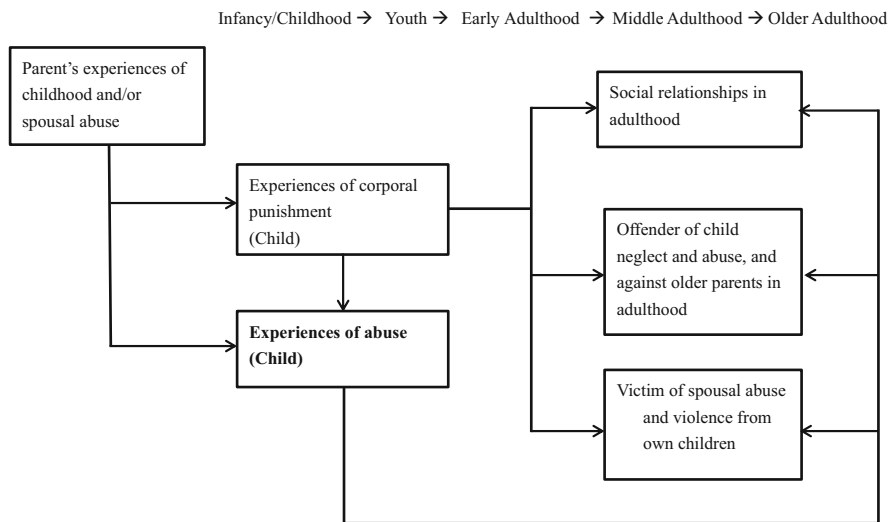


Fig. 2.2 Child abuse from a life course and children’s perspectives (The figure was constructed and drawn by the author.)



abused may also feel that there is not much they can do to escape the violent home. Thus, these victims may grow up to feel the sense of helplessness when and if they experience spousal abuse. This vicious cycle of childhood to adulthood violence shows that the child abuse does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in relationship with other forms of abuse that could occur across a life course.

### ***2.2.2 Usefulness of a Life Course Perspective***

Applying a life course perspective is useful in explaining the causes of child abuse because (1) it is important to look into the past experiences of family members, (2) the experiences of childhood abuse may have a long-lasting effect, and (3) an abused child may grow up to be the abuser or abused in adulthood.

First, child abuse is most likely to occur because of the past cumulative risk factors of family members rather than some unexpected events that happen only once in a while (Begle et al. 2010; MacKenzie et al. 2011). For example, child abuse is more likely to occur because of the childhood experiences of their parents or because of the spousal abuse than by unexpected events such as the death of a grandparent or the loss of a job. Thus, a life course perspective can explain the cyclic nature of child abuse.

Second, there are many negative effects of child abuse on the victims, and these effects are likely to last a lifetime rather than evaporating in adulthood years (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2013). This also means that the experiences of being abused may indeed affect the child's relationships with his/her friends, coworkers, and significant others. Those children who learned in childhood that the most effective way to solve the problems and conflicts is the use of violence may indeed use the same style of problem solving in adulthood. At the same time, as stated earlier, victims of child abuse may have a greater feeling of helplessness compared to those who never experienced the abuse (Gross and Keller 1992). Persons with this sense of helplessness may feel that there is no other alternative but to stay in the abusive relationships in adulthood. Applying a life course perspective allows us to examine these long-term effects of child abuse which may last way beyond the childhood.

Third, when viewing one's life from a life course perspective, we can easily see that it is possible for the victims of child abuse to become the perpetrators of such abuse in adulthood. In other words, viewing child abuse over the life course can help us identify interchangeable nature of abuse, i.e., moving between being a victim and a perpetrator in the same person's life from as early as adolescence (Xiangming and Corso 2007). According to the Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, girls who experienced childhood physical abuse were 1–7 % likely to become perpetrators of youth violence and 8–10 % more likely to be perpetrators of interpersonal violence. Boys who experienced childhood sexual violence were 3–12 % more likely to commit youth violence and 1–17 % more likely to commit interpersonal violence (Xiangming and Corso 2007).

The usefulness of a life course perspective is perhaps most evident in discussing child abuse because being the victim of such abuse has the long-lasting impact on one's life. With this in mind, let us now view the history and present state of child abuse in Japan and other countries.

## 2.3 The History of Child Abuse and Its Social Background

It is imperative to understand the history and social background in order to understand the current situations surrounding child abuse in Japan. We will first briefly review the situations in the USA, England, and Canada, countries that share relatively long histories of child abuse prevention and the voluminous research on child abuse. We will then present written history of child abuse in Japan that could be traced back in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* (two of the oldest chronicles of Japan) of the Nara period. Further, the history of child abuse from *Meiji* to *Heisei* periods is detailed in this section.

### 2.3.1 *Child Abuse in the USA, England, and Canada*

In the USA, the case of Mary Ellen Wilson, an 8-year-old girl who died because of the abuse by her adoptive mother, contributed to the birth of the 1875 Child Abuse Prevention Law and the founding of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NYSPCC), the very first such association in the world (Myers 2006). The level of public attention on child abuse in the USA began to increase in significant ways after the publication of the (1962) article entitled "Battered Child Syndrome" by Helfer and Kempe. Prior to this publication, it was believed that child abuse and child maltreatment would occur only in troubled families. However, Helfer and Kempe found that parents who were neither poor nor mentally ill were abusing their own children. In 1974, more than a decade after the battered child syndrome drew public attention, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was passed by the US Congress and signed into law, which was followed by the similar legislation in all 50 states.

In the UK, there was considerable resistance toward public protection of children because this was seen as "interfering" in the private sphere of the family (Fogarty 2008). Nevertheless, child protection did emerge in the UK after Thomas Agnew, a banker from Liverpool, visited the USA in 1881 where he observed the work of the NYSPCC (NSPCC 2000). Agnew returned to England and established the UK's first child protection service, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), founded in 1883. Earlier efforts of NSPCC were to protect children from the harsh conditions of child labor (Bequale and Myers 1995). Owing to the activities of NSPCC, the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act was enacted in 1889. In 1945, the death of Dennis O'Neal, a child who was abused by the foster

parent, caught the public attention, and as a result, the Children's Act was established in 1948.

In response to the increasing concern over physical and sexual abuse against children and their consequences, the Canadian government established the research committee in 1983 to examine the extent of child abuse in Canada. The alarming number of child abuse victims triggered the revisions of laws concerning child protection. For example, major revisions were made in Child Welfare Acts in Ontario leading to the new Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) in 1984.

What are commonly seen in these countries as far as protecting children from abuse are their efforts to encourage family support instead of an institutional intervention. This effort is considered necessary for child victims of abuse to establish the basic trusting relationship with others. This is quite evident by their efforts to keep the family intact with various supports from agencies or to provide children with the continuous family-like relationships in care home or foster care. It is also evident that the intensive efforts to prevent child abuse and to provide the safe environment for children are relatively new phenomenon in even countries known as having progressive laws for the prevention of child abuse.

### 2.3.2 *Child Abuse in Japan*

In Japan, child abuse has existed for a long time as the practices of “*kogoroshi*” (killing child), “*mabiki*” (killing child to reduce the family's economic burden), and “*kosute*” (abandoning child) can be traced back in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, published in *Nara* period. It also continued throughout *Meiji*, *Taisho*, and *Showa* periods, as shown in extensive documentations (Iwama 1998; Kumagai 1981; Yoshimi 2012).

#### 2.3.2.1 *Nara to Edo Period (710–1867)*

The descriptions of child abuse date back to the *Nara* period (710–794) and are found in the *Kojiki*, the oldest written historical record of ancient Japan published in 712. It begins with various myths including the creation of Japan. Then the narrative moves from mythology to historical legends and culminates in a chronology of the early Imperial line.

Several tragic stories of *kogoroshi* (killing child) and *kosute* (abandoning child) are recorded in *Kojiki*. For example, *Hiruko*, the first baby of *Izanagi* (god) and *Izanami* (goddess) both of whom were believed to be responsible for creating the land of Japan, was not officially recognized as their child; thus, the baby was abandoned immediately after the birth and placed on the straw boat which floated away on the ocean. *Gakutsuchi*, the last-born baby of *Izanagi* and *Izanami*, was also killed by the father soon after the birth.

The killing of *Gakutsuchi* also appears in the *Nihon Shoki* (720), sometimes translated as the Chronicles of Japan which is the second oldest book of classical Japanese history. *Izanami* died soon after giving a birth to *Gakutsuchi* who was a prince of fire, because of the burn she sustained in the genital area while delivering the baby. His father, *Izanagi*, became angry and extremely depressed over the death of his wife and blamed his last child for the mother's death, thus, ended up killing *Gakutsuchi* by cutting off his head. Additionally, in the *Nihon Shoki*, the abandonment and killing of *Hiruko* was attributed to the disabilities that she was born with (Sakamoto et al. 1994).

Another form of child abuse is trafficking in children for slavery which was rampant in *Heian* (794–1192) to *Muromachi* (1336–1573) periods as described in *Sansho Dayu* (Mori 1915). Human trafficking was prohibited by law at the time, but the merchants frequently engaged in the slave trade of young children. Trafficking in children also continued in *Edo* period. These children were sold by their parents to become laborers and remained as slaves throughout their lives. Many boys became coal miners and servants, and girls became servants, prostitutes, and strolling entertainers.

In *Edo* period (1603–1867), farming and fishing families were stricken with extreme poverty because of the climate change and the heavy taxation. Many of these families could not afford financially and physically to raise their children. Thus, they began the practices of *mabiki* (reducing the number of children by killing them) and *sutego* (abandonment of children). The oldest boy was usually saved from *mabiki*, but the younger brothers were killed because of the financial difficulties of the family. It was also a common practice to save at least one daughter's life because she could be sold as a prostitute when the "emergency" money was needed.

### 2.3.2.2 Meiji to Showa Period (1868–1989)

As the Japanese industrialization began in *Meiji* period, many younger children were forced to work in factories. Many of these young workers who came from poor farming and fishing families were placed in harsh working environments and were forced to work extremely long hours. It was reported that the rate of tuberculosis of these factory workers was about 3 times higher than that of other workers. These harsh conditions are described in such documentary books as *Nihon Zankoku Monogatari* (Japan's Cruel Story) (Miyamoto et al. 1995) and *Joko Aishi* (Women Laborers' Miserable Story) (Hosoi 1925).

As described above, for many years prior to Showa period (before 1926), "dark" ages prevailed for children in Japan because trafficking of children, abduction, killing of infants and children, abandonment of children, and child apprenticeship were rampant during those years. The early part of Showa also witnessed the increase in the killing of children, and parent and child double suicide because of economic hardship. In 1933, the Child Abuse Prevention Law was enacted, mainly to save child beggars and those involved in show and sex industries (Yoshimi 2012). Additionally, the law required the authority to identify and arrest parents whose

children were forced to work in these industries; thus, the orphans (without parents) were largely excluded from the public protection under this law.

During this early Showa period, Japanese family system known as *ie* was the dominant form. Under this system of multigenerational households, the father was the head of the family, and his children were considered as assets “owned” by the household head. This privatization of children may have caused the parents to think that they could do whatever they liked to do to their children including the harsh disciplining. Although the *ie* system was abolished by the Civil Code Reform enacted in 1947 after the World War II, the strong patriarchal customs remained in Japanese families for a long time.

Today, even almost 70 years after it ended, we see a remnant of *ie* system, especially in the hierarchical parent-child relationship and traditional gender ideology of male supremacy in Japanese families. As Kumagai pointed out in Chap. 1 of this book, the *ie* system is an important part of the Japanese family. For some parents, this traditional thinking of the family may lead to the misconceived “ownership” of their children and the use of it to justify their abusive behaviors toward the children.

The 1947 Child Welfare Law incorporated much of the Child Abuse Prevention Law; thus, the latter law was abolished (Yoshimi 2012). The Child Welfare Law required the reporting of child abuse to the authorities; thus, this law is seen as the first legal attempt to protect the victims of child abuse in Japan.

In 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a human rights treaty which clearly identified the civil, political, economic, social, health, and cultural rights of children (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 1989). Article 19 of this convention states that “Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.” Japan ratified this treaty in 1994, followed by the revision of the Child Welfare Law of 1997. These revisions included the establishment of child family support centers, placing part-time psychological counselors in child protection agencies and strengthening the functions of child consultation center (*Jido Soudansho*), but no revisions were made concerning the definitions of child abuse.

Then, in 1999, the Child Abuse Prevention Act was enacted and provided legal definitions of child abuse and required the reporting of abuse cases and the “treatment” concerning the perpetrators. Although these laws provided significant departure from the older laws, its exclusion of young adult victims aged between 18 and 20 was pointed out as problematic by legal experts.

Child abuse cases in Japan can also be seen as the invasion of children’s rights. The people who work for child protection centers have been the strong advocates of children’s rights in Japan. Ironically, these staff members can also be the perpetrators of child abuse. A report on victims of child abuse entering child protection facilities, and their parents was published in 1994, and some findings were quite alarming (Hasegawa 2001). The data were collected between 1991 and 1992 from 382 centers (total of 20,407 children) with a response rate of 71.4 %. Of these children, 2931 (14.4 %) reported being abused by the center director or staff members. The most

prevalent form of maltreatment was neglect (56.9 %), physical abuse (20.5 %), refusal to meet or exchange letters (14.1 %), and psychological abuse (10.1 %).

In Japan, the law concerning the welfare of children had existed since 1947. But the preventive efforts became more evident only after the ratification of the UN's CRC in 1994. This triggered the establishment of laws concerning child welfare and child abuse.

The most recent legal trends are summarized in Table 2.1. In recent years, several revisions have been made for the Child Welfare Law, Child Abuse Prevention Act, and the Civil Law. In 2004, for example, both Child Abuse Prevention Act and

**Table 2.1** Recent legal trends of child abuse prevention in Japan

Year	Legal system	Contents of revisions
2004	Revisions of Child Abuse Prevention Act and Child Welfare Law	Redefined child abuse (to include ignoring child and abuse by a person who is residing in the same household)
		Expanded the reporting system (including the cases which may be considered as abusive ones)
		Clarified the roles of local communities (clear objectives of the consultation and notifying them to those reporting the violence)
		Legalized local committees that provide assistance to the victims of child abuse
2007	Revisions of Child Abuse Prevention Act and Child Welfare Law	Strengthened the investigation to check the safety of children and the interview to and communication with the guardians
		Clarified the consequences to those guardians who do not follow the orders
2008	Revisions of Child Welfare Law	Established visitation system for families with infants, legalized the child care support for families in need of such care
		Strengthened the function of local committees supporting the abused children
		Expanded the care provided by foster parents
2011	Revisions of Civil Law	Established the system of stopping parental rights
		Included that the child protection and education should be offered for the benefit of children
2011	Revisions of Child Welfare Law	Added the right to request information concerning the stopping parental rights and management rights by the director of child consultation center
		Added the clause that parents cannot prevent the directors of the child consultation center from conducting necessary procedures to protect the child
		Added the parental rights of the child consultation center director when children without parents are cared for by foster parents or in other places

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2015)

Child Welfare Law were revised by redefining child abuse, expanding the reporting requirements which include the “suspected” cases of abuse, and clarifying the roles of local communities in consultation and prevention of child abuse. Both laws were again revised in 2007 to strengthen on-the-spot inspection for checking the safety of the child, to limit the visitation and communication of the abusive guardians with their children, and to clarify the procedures taken for parents who do not follow the orders. The 2008 revisions of the Child Welfare Law included the health center’s visitations to families with infant/toddler children and legalization of the child care support involving home visits. Finally, the revisions of Child Welfare Law in 2011 expanded the role of child consultation center by preventing the parents from disturbing the center director in conducting necessary procedures.

## **2.4 The Current State of Child Abuse in Japan**

As previously stated, for many years, children who lived in nursing homes were the targets of the preventive efforts in Japan (Hasegawa 2001). It was also considered that child abuse would occur only in poor and problem-stricken families (Hanada et al. 2007). These misconceptions have been largely faded, especially with the data such as those collected by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2014a) that revealed the circumstances surrounding child abuse. Recent revisions of the laws concerning child abuse have also incorporated research findings. In this section, we will examine child social welfare system in Japan, provide statistical data, and present some research findings in order to better understand current state about child abuse in Japan.

### ***2.4.1 Child Abuse from the Government Statistics***

It is extremely difficult to grasp the number of child abuse cases, because they are most likely to occur in an isolated environment such as home and because the victims are children who have little knowledge about abuse and how to seek assistance. In Japan, data concerning child abuse come from the two sources: (1) the number of reports and consultation cases and (2) the number of child abuse-related deaths. Therefore, there are no hard data that can reveal the extent of child abuse in Japan.

Japanese police avoided interfering “family matters” for many years; thus, they did not begin to collect data on arrest cases of child abusers until 2000 (Higaki 2005). According to these statistics, there were 317 arrests between January and June of 2014 against abusers of children under the age of 18. This figure shows a 43 % increase from the previous year’s record of 96 cases. This was also the highest number of arrests and the first time ever to exceed 300 cases. The number of children abused by these perpetrators totaled 320, and this figure was also the highest since the beginning of the data collection. These changes may be related to the

increased awareness about child abuse and early police intervention efforts. However, relatively lower numbers of 317 arrests and 320 child victims may only be the tip of the iceberg.

Under these circumstances, perhaps the most reliable data that indicate the extent of child abuse in Japan come from the Child Consultation Centers (or Child Guidance Centers) that are located nationwide. Currently, this center system is the primary agency in Japan that deals with child abuse.

Under the current child abuse prevention law, it is the citizen's duty to report the suspected cases of abuse. These reports, made either in writing or verbally, come from children themselves, parents, neighbors, and medical or social welfare personnel. More specifically, the patterns of reporting can be divided into three categories: (1) school, day care center, and hospital personnel with whom children have frequent contacts, (2) family members residing together with children and/or close relatives, and (3) neighbors. The Child Consultation Center or Social Welfare Center is considered by these people and agencies as the first place to discuss the suspected case of child abuse.

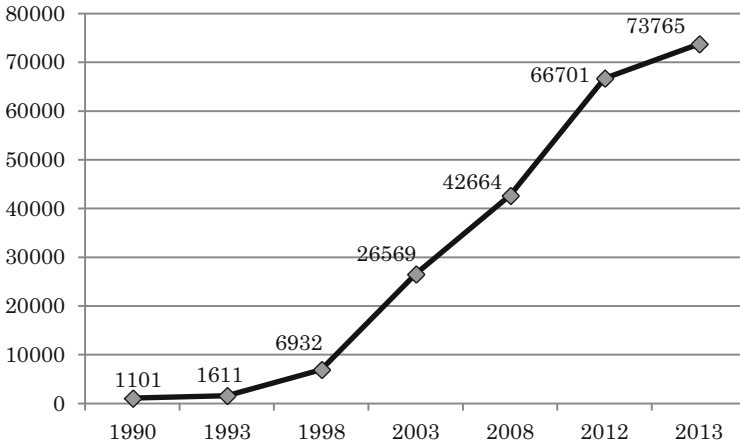
It is important to note, however, that the number of consultation cases does not directly indicate the number of abuse cases. Therefore, we must understand, similar to police statistics, that the number of consultation cases may be underestimating the total number of child abuse cases in Japan. Nonetheless, among the limited choices, these data may be the most appropriate data that indicate the general trend of concerns over child abuse in Japan. Using the data from the Child Consultation Center, we will examine the current state of child abuse in Japan.

As of 2013, there were 207 consultation centers throughout Japan. These centers had approximately 9827 employees, about 27 % of whom were juvenile welfare officers who deal with children (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2014b). In 2013, the child consultation centers handled 73,765 cases that were related to child abuse. This figure is much higher compared to 1101 and 1611 cases in 1990 and 1993, respectively (see Fig. 2.3). The number of consultation cases in 2013 was the highest since the recording of the data began. It should also be noted that the numbers of consultation cases significantly increased from 1998 to 2003 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2014a). This increase may be related to the enactment of the Child Abuse Prevention Law in November 2000.

The data from the child consultation centers also show the users of these centers. In 2003, of all the people who made reports to the center, 17 % were family members followed by schools (15 %), social welfare officers (14 %), neighbors and acquaintances (13 %), child care providers (6 %), police (6 %), public health center officials (3 %), and the child himself/herself (1 %). Similar data from 2011 show that only those reported by neighbors/acquaintances and police increased to 21 % and 19 %, respectively. Not surprisingly, those who are abused are least likely to report their cases to the child consultation center.

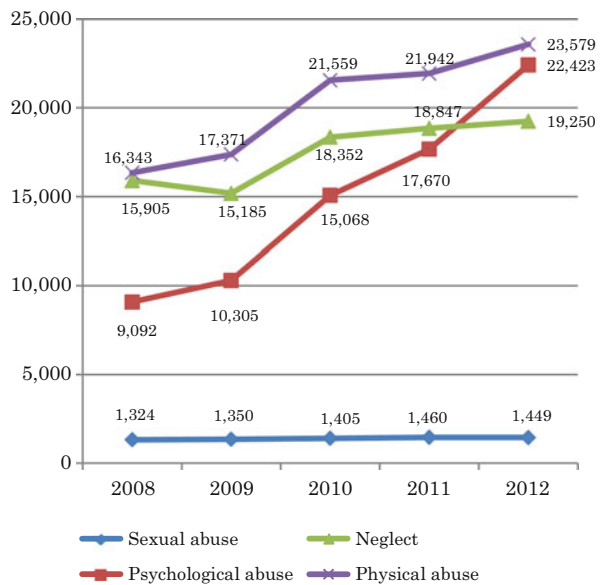
Next, we will examine the forms of child abuse that are reported to child consultation centers during 2008 and 2012 (see Fig. 2.4). These data show a few interesting trends concerning forms of abuse in Japan. First, it is apparent from these data that physical abuse has been reported most frequently. Second, there has been a



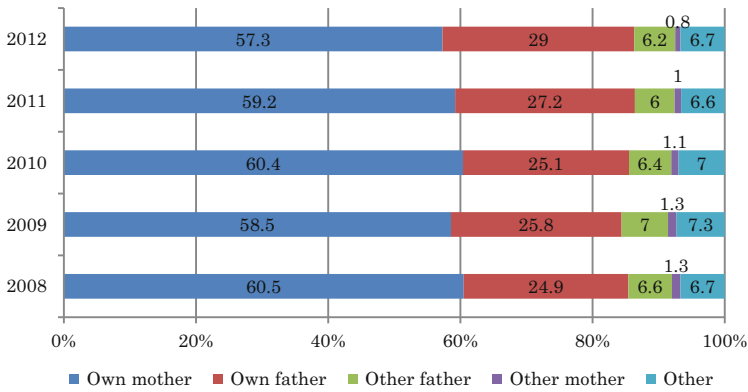


**Fig. 2.3** Changes in the number of receiving of consultation on child abuse in Child Guidance Center: 1990–2013 (Source: *Jidou Soudanjo deno Jidou Gyakutai Soudan Taiou Kensuu* [Number of child abuse consultation cases at the child guidance centers] Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2014a. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author.)

**Fig. 2.4** Changes in the number of consultation cases by year and forms of child abuse: 2008–2012 (Source: *Jidou Soudanjo deno Gyakutai Soudan no Naiyoubetsu Kensuu no Suii* [Changes of the number of child abuse consultation cases by year and types at the child guidance centers] Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2014b:3. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author.)



significant increase in the reporting of psychological abuse over the last decade. The numbers of reports about physical abuse and neglect were similar in 2008, but the number of reports on psychological abuse surpassed that of neglect in 2011. Third, the number of reports on sexual abuse has been rather low compared to other forms of abuse. This may be due to the “silent” and “secret” nature of sexual abuse against



**Fig. 2.5** Changes in the proportion (%) of child abuse consultation cases by abusers: 2008–2012 (Source: *Shutaru Gyakutaisha no Suii, Jidou Sodanjo* [Changes of the number of child abuse consultation cases by abusers at the child guidance centers] Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2014b:4. The figure was constructed drawn by the author.)

children so that people around the abused child may have difficulties in identifying the incidents. Figure 2.5 shows the percentage of child abuse consultation cases by the categories of different abusers. Between 2008 and 2012, biological mothers were most likely to be perpetrators (60.5 % in 2008 to 57.3 % in 2012), followed by biological fathers (24.9 % in 2008 to 29 % in 2012), other fathers (6.6 % in 2008 to 6.2 % in 2012), and other mothers (1.3 % in 2008 to 0.8 % in 2012) that include adoptive and foster parents.

To summarize these trends, the number of reports made to the child consultation centers has increased significantly during the last two decades. Physical and psychological abuse cases are most likely to be reported, and biological mothers are most frequently reported as perpetrators of child abuse. Again, the number of reported cases to the child consultation center does not reflect the exact number of child abuse. If anything, these numbers are underestimates of the real child abuse cases. However, these data at least reveal that the general public in Japan is becoming more aware of child abuse. Additionally, these figures demonstrate that child abuse is a major growing problem in Japan.

In Japan, children's deaths caused by abuse are investigated by the children's division of the Social Security Council. According to the reports by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2013a), 99 children died because of abuse between April 2011 and March 2012. Of these cases, the Council conducted interviews to the related agencies, and the results of these interviews were published by the Ministry. Based on this report, we know that 58 children were killed by the abusers and 41 were killed in child-parent double suicides. These numbers increased slightly from the previous report. Of the above 58 children, 67.2 % were infants and toddlers under the age of two showing that younger children are at a greater risk of being killed because of abuse. In addition, 65.5 % of these children were physically abused and 27.6 % were neglected. The perpetrators were most likely to be their biological mothers (56.9 %), followed by biological fathers (19 %).

The fact that more than half of the perpetrators of child abuse are biological mothers can perhaps be explained by several sociocultural characteristics described by Kumagai in Chap. 1. First, as Kumagai noted, “more than one third (37 %) of the Japanese people in their 20s and 30s feel that they are not properly rewarded for their efforts.” Kumagai further states that women are more likely to be frustrated than their male counterparts, and this may be particularly true when it comes to child caring. Women, out of frustration for the maternal role that is not always rewarded, may end up being violent toward their children.

Second, as it was described in Chap. 1, there still exists “*tate shakai*” (vertical society) in Japan. This vertical relationship is also manifested in the Japanese patriarchal family in which husbands may feel superior over their wives because of their breadwinning role. As a result, husbands’ involvement in child care is quite limited, which then may increase maternal anxiety and stress.

Finally, whereas wives may be dependent on husbands’ financial resources, husbands may also be dependent on wives’ role as a mother and a homemaker. This relationship of interdependence, or *ame*, described by Kumagai in Chap. 1, may be seen as forcing mothers to be a “perfect” parent. But if this is not achieved, then it may become a source of mother’s frustration, and as a consequence, they may end up abusing their children.

The mothers involved in deathly child abuse were less likely to receive medical checkup during the pregnancy, more likely to give birth to unwanted children, and more likely to be teenage mothers. Reasons for abuse included “getting upset because the baby kept crying” and “wanted to do something else other than caring for the baby.”

Table 2.2 is a summary of the 1st to 10th report created by the Social Security Council (Children’s Division of the Social Security Council, Sept. 2014), and it shows the risk factors of child abuse which ended in the death of the child. Other than the reasons stated above, delivering the baby at home without any medical supervision, refusing to be contacted by the child welfare agency, being depressed, and worrying about the child’s lack of development were found to be common among parents who abused and killed their children.

With these findings along with the percentage of mothers killing their children, we can see that Japanese mothers who are isolated from the supportive network are at the highest risk to be perpetrators. Children who were abused and killed were more likely to have physical signs of abuse such as bruises on the face, neck, and head, and stopped coming to day care centers. That is, these children were placed in physically and emotionally unstable environments. As far as living environment of parent(s), they are more likely to be experiencing economic difficulties, relocate frequently, and are isolated from their families, friends, and coworkers. Risk factors at the institutional level include the lack of communication and information sharing between child welfare agencies and other related agencies, and not being able to conduct the accurate risk assessment of the families involved in child abuse.

**Table 2.2** Risk factors involving death cases as a result of child abuse: from the perspectives of guardians, children, living environment, and assistance process (based on 1st to 10th reports)

Guardian	Child	Living environment	Process of assistance
Not receiving Maternity Record Book Not receiving or infrequent medical check-up during pregnancy Refusal to be contacted by child welfare agency Unwanted pregnancy Delivered a baby without assistance of doctor and midwife Not receiving medical check-up for infants and children upon entering school, Children not receiving vaccination , Mental illness, Depressive tendency Past suicide attempt Stress and anxiety over child’s development Asking for public assistance Not admitting suspected abuse Not allowing public official to see the child Having had multiple births and many children	Injured marks on the body, face, neck and head Child stop coming to day care center Frequent in-and-out movement of the day care center Abuse against sibling	Information gathering from the public officials and neighbors Difficulty in life Frequent moving out of the residence Isolation	Not sharing information of a child abuse case among or between agencies Unable to integrate the information so that risks of child abuse were not identified Local network protecting children had little knowledge about case studies Lack of risk assessment for the entire family, and not enough awareness of the danger of the abuse child

Source: Children’s Division of the Social Security Council, Sept 2014

### 2.4.2 Research on Child Abuse

In addition to the government’s statistics, there has been an increase in research that attempted to estimate the extent of child abuse in Japan. Kobayashi (2000), for example, conducted a nationwide mail questionnaire survey to more than 100,000 agencies that deal directly or indirectly with child abuse. Based on these data, the number of child abuse cases that required some form of social intervention was estimated to be 35,000, or 1.54 in 1000 children aged 0–17 needed such interventions.

Other characteristics were found as follows:

- About 60 % of the child abuse victims were infants and toddlers.
- Of these, about 80 % needed medical care and treatment.

- About 60 % of the perpetrators were biological mothers, whereas 10 % were both parents.
- About 70 % of the abused children were living with their parents, whereas 20 % were under the care of nursing homes.

Nanbu (2003) also studied more than 5604 agencies, such as child consultation centers, social welfare offices, public health centers, and nursing homes in Hyogo Prefecture, and estimated that approximately 0.5 in 1000 children aged 0–17 were victims of child abuse. According to the study conducted by the Child Abuse Prevention Center (2000), more than 30 % of the sample mothers residing in Tokyo Metropolitan areas were either abusing their children or showed the tendency to abuse their children. The reason why this figure of 30 % is higher than other studies is because these are not officially reported cases of abuse, and it also includes not only actual abusive episodes but also mothers' "tendency" to abuse their children. These studies show that despite the increase of "reported" cases of child abuse, there are still many hidden cases of child abuse in Japanese homes.

In addition to the above studies that looked into the extent of child abuse, there have been a series of research that focus on the cost of child abuse (see Children's Division of the Social Security Council 2014). Because child abuse is considered to have a major effect on society, many countries have been researching the effects of child abuse from an economic perspective, particularly in terms of its so-called "social costs" (Bowlus et al. 2003; Gells and Perlman 2012; Taylor et al. 2008; Wang and Holton 2007). In Japan, the cost of child abuse is estimated to be about \$136 billion in 2012 (Children's Division of the Social Security Council 2014). This is a similar amount to the damage sustained in Fukushima Prefecture after the Great East Japan Earthquake and the nuclear plant disasters in 2011.

In the USA, various studies have calculated the total direct costs (losses due to the abuse itself) and indirect costs (long-term effects of abuse) of child abuse as \$103.8 billion (Wang and Holton 2007) and \$80,260,411,087 (Gelles and Perlman 2012). Similar studies on the social costs of child abuse have also been conducted in Canada (Bowlus et al. 2003) and Australia (Taylor et al. 2008).

## 2.5 Child Abuse: Antecedents and Consequences

The view that an economically rich country such as Japan would not have serious problems of child abuse was shared among those attending the 1989 international conference of the Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry held in Kyoto (Hanada et al. 2007). In addition, the existence of maternal instinct was strongly believed in the 1980s; thus, it was unimaginable for Japanese people to think that mothers would be hurting their own children. This myth, however, was beginning to be reevaluated because of several shocking cases of Japanese mothers' killing their children in the 1980s. These incidents also prompted a series of studies by Makino (1982, 1983) that focused on maternal child care stress and anxiety.

As Kumagai reported in the previous chapter, Murray A. Straus, a pioneer researcher of family violence, founded the research laboratory in the mid-1970s. It was not until the 1990s, however, that Japanese scholars began to pay serious research attention on family violence including child abuse (Kumagai in press: Sect. 1.1). In this section, we will first review several theories of child abuse derived from the US studies and summarize research findings about the causes and consequences of child abuse in Japan.

### 2.5.1 *Theories*

In the USA, there have been several attempts in developmental psychology and family sociology to theorize the mechanisms of familial violence. We will explain three of these theories here, resource theory, social exchange theory, and social learning theory as they relate to child abuse.

According to resource theory (Blood and Wolfe 1960), individuals with more social and economic resources are likely to think that they can control others who possess fewer resources. Applying this theory to parent-child relations, we can see that fathers and mothers are likely to have more financial resources than do their children. Parents, therefore, may exert their “power” over their children, sometimes by resorting to violent episodes.

If we are to borrow ideas from social exchange theory (Blau 1964) to explain the phenomenon of child abuse, we must focus on the costs and rewards of the abusers (Burgess and Drais-Parrillo 2005). The basic tenet of social exchange theory is that a person is likely to rationally calculate costs and rewards associated with some actions, and the person will choose the action that will maximize the rewards and minimize the costs. This perspective has been used to explain why the abused wives would be less likely to escape the violent relationship with their husbands. Pfouts (1978), for example, states that an abused wife will weigh the cost of being abused and the reward of escaping an abusive environment. If she thinks that the economic benefit by staying with her husband outweighs the cost of being abused, then she is more likely to stay in an abusive relationship. Social exchange theory has also been applied to explain the elder abuse (Wolf et al. 1982).

In case of child abuse, a perpetrator may find it “rewarding” to abuse a child because this will relieve his/her stress and will show the child who has more power. The cost of child abuse, on the other hand, will be the physical and emotional damage to the child and the potential arrest of the perpetrator. If the abusive parent considers that the stress reduction and the display of authority are more important than the child’s physical and psychological injury, then he/she may continue to be abusive toward the child.

Social learning theory posits that we learn to repeat the behavior that had been praised by others (Bandura 1963). We also learn to behave by modeling other persons’ actions. Therefore, adults who were abused in their childhood may model the violent behavior of their parents, thus may end up abusing their own child.

As discussed by Kumagai (in press, Sect. 1.5), this process has been referred to as the cycle of violence or intergenerational transmission of violence (Finkelhor 1983; Straus et al. 2013). This theory has been frequently applied to explain why the childhood abuse victims end up becoming the abusers themselves in their adulthood.

### ***2.5.2 Why Does the Child Abuse Occur?: Antecedents to Child Abuse***

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, in their “Handbook for Responding to Child Abuse” (2013b), details risk factors to cause child abuse. These factors are divided into three categories of guardian’s risk, children’s risk, and home environments’ risk. First, child’s parent or guardian is at a higher risk of abusing his/her child when he/she feels high level of child care stress and anxiety, has an unwanted baby, is psychologically unstable, has alcohol dependence and drug addiction, and has experienced abuse as a child.

Second, premature babies and those with physical disabilities are at a higher risk of being abused. However, it is important to understand that not all the premature babies or those with disabilities are abused by their mothers and fathers.

Finally, the risk factors at home include single-parent household, families living together with nonrelated persons, remarried families with other children, spousal conflicts, families being isolated from the relatives and local communities, and families experiencing economic hardship, among others. Additionally, factors with high propensity toward child abuse are lack of proper care during the pregnancy and for the babies such as not taking them to regular physical checkups.

We have seen the statistics of who are abusing the child and found that the biological mothers are most likely perpetrators of child abuse. Why then are mothers abusing their own children? In an international comparative study of parents, Japanese mothers reported lowest level of satisfaction with child rearing compared to mothers in Korea, Thailand, France, and the USA (Makino 2007). In addition, Japanese mothers were less likely than fathers to be satisfied with child rearing.

What does this mean in a context of child abuse? We can speculate that Japanese mothers are under much more pressure than their husbands when it comes to a child care because mothers are given more or sole responsibility to raise the child. Our society also puts a lot of pressure on women to be good mothers because of the traditional gender ideology. These stresses may be the cause of maternal child care anxiety and other mental breakdowns, which may result in mothers abusing their own children. In fact, Kamakura (2006) studied mothers who have abused their children in the past and found that mother’s mental breakdown or illness are the most common problems of these mothers. Ohara (2003) divided mothers into those who are abusive or nonabusive and reported that the mothers in an abusive group were more likely to be suffering from depressive symptoms.

Takeuchi et al. (2014) studied 112 mothers who have infants to examine the effect of depression and child care support on the nurturing attitudes of mothers. Their analyses show that the mothers with higher scores of depression are likely to

be isolated from other mothers. They also found that the likelihood of psychosocial and physical abuse of these mothers tended to be higher when they are depressed.

Other possible factors that increase the likelihood of child abuse by mothers include alcohol dependence, economic hardship, single parenting, and unrealistic expectations for their children (Kamakura 2006). Overreliance on mothers to care for children was also stated by several mothers in Kamakura's study as a potential cause of child abuse.

Furthermore, this heavy child care responsibility of mothers is related to the overattachment between mothers and children. The importance of fathers' child care involvement has been promoted by the Japanese government mainly to encourage the couples to have more babies, thus stopping the birthrate decline (Ishii-Kuntz 2013). Given the findings reported above, paternal involvement may increase mothers' positive attitudes toward child, which, in turn, may lower the incidents of child abuse by mothers.

### ***2.5.3 The Impact of Child Abuse on Children and Family Relationships***

The impact of child abuse on children themselves is not restricted to childhood, but rather it may leave long-lasting effects. Here, we will first see the short-term and long-term effects of abuse on children.

Abused children are more likely to suffer from physical and psychological injuries than those who are not abused (Sadamori 2002). They may have burn marks and/or flashbacks that may cause memory breakdowns (Miyamoto 2000). Additionally, as a result of neglect, children may be deprived of balanced diet, which may consequently hamper their physical and cognitive development (Miyamoto 2000). Childhood experience of abuse may also negatively affect their relationship with others because abused children may be demanding and aggressive or extremely timid in dealing with others (Miyamoto 2000). Children who are abused are also likely to conclude that they are not worthy of being loved by other people (Okuyama et al. 2001). Through their experiences of being abused, they also learn that violence is one method of solution when the conflicts arise; thus, they themselves may end up becoming the abuser to their own children (American Psychological Association 2015).

The effects of childhood abuse are also seen in their adolescence and early adulthood. We know, for example, that juvenile delinquents and criminals are more likely to come from the abusive background (Ministry of Justice 2001). The report of the Ministry of Justice (2001), for example, found that almost 50 % of those juvenile delinquents housed in reformatories had been abused at least once by their family members. Those who are abused in childhood are not only aggressive toward others but also to themselves as well. In marriage, those who experienced childhood abuse are more likely to be abused or become abusers in their relationship with their



spouses (Bancroft and Silverman 2004; Nakamura 2001). Despite these negative reports, we should not forget that there are those who were once victims of child abuse but grew up to be functional members of the society.

Studies in Japan that focused on child abuse tended to collect data from those who work in hospitals and welfare agencies (e.g., Inagaki 2001; Nanbu 2003). But not all the childhood abuse victims are taken to these institutions. In fact, most of the child abuse cases are not reported to public institutions; thus, studies that collect the real voices of the abused are sorely needed in Japan.

Of a few studies that investigated the abuse victims, Fujino's (2007) study of child abuse victims is noteworthy. The sample of this study consisted of 39 women in their 30s all of whom are victims of childhood abuse. Fujino divided these women's experiences into "from birth to 10 years of age" and "10 to 18 years of age" to ask about their parents' physical and psychological abuse. Below are the major findings of this study:

- Reasons for the abuse were parents' stress and frustration, illness, and lack of parental resources. Parents also abused their children with their rationales to "educate" and "discipline" them. Overall, these women reported that a combination of reasons seemed to have existed in their parents' abusive behavior.
- Many women reported that their parents used different levels and forms of violence against themselves and their siblings. These differences were related to the level of parent's expectations and closeness in parent-child relationship.
- Not all the women maintained negative feelings toward their abusive parents, even in their adulthood. Some even reported rather positive attitudes toward the parents. Some subjects were not aware that they were being abused by their parents in their childhood. However, through their interaction with friends and other nonfamily members, they came to realize that they were being abused by their parents.
- Parental abuse against children became less frequent as the children grew up. In some cases, the abuse continued into adulthood although the form of abuse often shifted from physical to verbal or psychological.
- The effects of child abuse these women experienced lasted even after the parents became "nonviolent." Some women continue to have difficulties in building intimate relationships with men because of the physical abuse they sustained from their fathers.
- Some women who have no children were not confident at all in raising a child, thus decided not to have their own babies. Others who became mothers themselves reported low level of parental satisfaction.
- More than half of these women continue to have negative feeling against the parent who abused them. Some women reported that their negative feeling toward the abusing parents had declined as they age.

To summarize, these findings show that it is important to examine the experiences of child abuse from a life course perspective because their relationship with their parents span over a lifelong process.

## 2.6 Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse

As we have seen, several revisions were incorporated in Japanese Child Abuse Prevention Act over the last decade. Although these laws are strengthened to protect our children from becoming the victims of child abuse, some criticize that they were too hastily enacted; thus, it is difficult to enforce them. For example, the role that the Child Consultation Center plays is crucial in identifying the abused and preventing child abuse, but most of these centers are understaffed to serve all the needs of the abused children. It is also imperative to expand the support systems for child abuse victims such as increasing the number of shelters for abused children nationwide.

### 2.6.1 *Child Consultation Center and Child Welfare Center*

There are both positive and negative aspects in the Child Abuse Prevention Act when viewing it from the perspectives of child consultation centers and social welfare facilities. Positive aspects include the provision of immediate assistance for the abused children and then a safe housing. However, in reality, the understaffed centers and facilities pose a problem in implementing the laws to treat and prevent further abuse of these children.

There are mainly two problems that need to be resolved in order to maximize the functions of these centers. First, there is an overwhelming amount of work that the staff at the child consultation centers faces every day. However, when the report of suspected child abuse arrives, they must immediately respond to them. They are also required to visit the homes of the children and must make various decisions about the placement of the children. On top of these, they are responsible to consult cases of juvenile delinquents, children with disabilities, and other jobs related to healthy development of children. Additionally, these staff members are also responsible to provide counseling to the abusive parents. With the dramatic increase in reports received by the child consultation centers, we need to prepare the funding to hire more staff members who specialize in the cases of abused children.

Second, if the children under the temporary custody of the child consultation center are unable to return home for the fear that they may be abused again, they are usually placed in child welfare facilities. With the increase of consultation cases, the number of children who need temporary housing is expected to be on the rise. At the same time, however, the number of these facilities is not increasing at the same pace. It is extremely important to provide a safe environment for these children. When there are more than 10 of these children being housed, each facility can hire a part-time staff who can consult these children about 2–3 times a week. This is obviously not enough; thus, an additional funding needs to be allocated to the child welfare facilities so that they can increase staff resources.

### 2.6.2 *Roles of Communities and Cultural Characters*

In the USA and England, there is a penalty for those citizens who neglected to report the suspected cases of child abuse. In Japan, however, there is no such penalty; thus, the reporting of potential child abuse cases is left up to the “moral standards” of the citizens. In the past, it was required to disclose the name of people (even to abusers) who reported the child abuse to the police or child consultation center. Although this requirement is no longer in the law, many citizens are unaware of this revision; thus, they may still be hesitant to report the child abuse to the authority with the fear of possible retaliation of the abuser.

When the killing of a child because of abuse is reported in the media, we often hear the neighbors’ comments such as “we should have done something to rescue the child from the abusive environment.” There are more than a few things that the neighbors can do, but many are simply unaware of what they can do to help the child. Our government, therefore, must make more concerted efforts to spread the information about the role of citizens to rescue the child victims of abuse.

Japanese cultural characters of *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) as described by Kumagai in Chap. 1 may also be related to the neighbors’ reluctance of making the child abuse reports to the authorities. In other words, when suspecting a child abuse in the neighborhood, Japanese people may think that child abuse is a problem that occur in *uchi* (inside of the family), and thus, it is not appropriate to “invade” the privacy of their neighbors by reporting it to the public agency. Another cultural characteristic such as the emphasis on family problem solving rather than relying on the professionals may also prevent the neighbors from reporting the suspected child abuse to the child consultation centers. In addition, the *amae* relationship described in Chap. 1 may also be applicable in explaining the reluctance of the third party to report the abuse cases. That is, if the neighbor does not have *amae* (interdependent) relationship with the suspected perpetrator of child abuse, then he/she may feel hesitant to report the case to the public agency because their relationship is only superficial as characterized by *soto* and *giri*.

## 2.7 Future Tasks

There are several tasks concerning child abuse that need to be done in the near future. First, as elaborated by Kumagai (in press, Sect. 1.6.1), we need to collect data on the extent of child abuse using instruments such as the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al. 1980; Straus and Gelles 1990). The data from the child consultation center help us understand the increase in reported cases of child abuse. However, the “real” prevalence of child abuse cannot be assessed using these data. Second, we also need to assess the working conditions and environment of the child consultation center staff who directly deal with abused children and their families. Third, the Japanese government needs to make citizens aware of the revisions made in the

Child Abuse Prevention Act. The disclosure concerning these revisions may be particularly useful at the neighborhood level because the neighbors' involvement will contribute to the initial identification of the abused children. Fourth, in order to stop child abuse, it is important to empower our children so that they, too, will be informed about where to go to protect them. In order to facilitate this, early childhood education about abuse and neglect as well as early intervention are necessary.

In this chapter, we defined child abuse and presented the brief history as well as the current state of child abuse in Japan. We also reviewed the literature about the causes and consequences of child abuse. Problems of the current laws and systems of treatment and prevention of child abuse were further described. Our life course perspective was also presented in relation to child abuse. Some unique characteristics of the Japanese culture were also discussed as they may influence the effectiveness of the legal approach to child abuse prevention. In the next chapter, another type of family violence, those between intimate partners, will be discussed. Perhaps, we can examine the differences and similarities between child abuse and intimate partner violence as they occur within Japanese family context.

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# Chapter 3

## Intimate Partner Violence: Domestic Violence from Japanese Perspectives

Takayo Sasaki and Masako Ishii-Kuntz

What Western scholars of family violence call “intimate partner violence” (IPV) is usually referred to as “domestic violence” in Japan. This is somewhat confusing, and thus we need the standardized terminology for the common ground of discussion. The objectives of the current chapter are fivefold: First, various forms of IPV are defined; second, IPV is explained through a life course perspective; third, historical development of IPV is explained in light of sociocultural characteristics of Japan; fourth, recent development of social policies for IPV in Japan is highlighted; and finally, the importance of interdisciplinary studies is emphasized by suggesting the research agenda for the future.

### 3.1 Defining Intimate Partner Violence

#### 3.1.1 *Domestic Violence (DV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)*

In Europe and the USA, domestic violence means any type of violence that occurs in families. Violence among couples, in particular, is often called “intimate partner violence” (hereinafter called IPV) (Cui et al. 2013). This chapter uses the word IPV, although DV has been used in previous research and laws in Japan. IPV includes physical, economic, psychological, sexual, and verbal violence by spouses or those in intimate relationships.

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### ***3.1.2 Defining Various Forms of Intimate Partner Violence***

In this section, we explain seven forms of IPV, physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, economic violence, social violence, stalking, and dating DV.

The physical violence includes scratching, pushing, struggling, swatting, hitting, kicking, slapping, throwing an object, suffocating, and shaking the partner. The damages of this form of violence include partner's physical injury or even death.

Sexual violence includes forcing others to see pornography, not cooperating with contraception, and sexual intercourse against the will of the partner.

Psychological violence refers to ignoring, abusing, threatening, shaming, embarrassing, and humiliating the partner. It also includes controlling others, and preventing the partner from leaving, and socially isolating that person from family and friends.

Economic violence is forcing a partner to give money, not paying the cost of living, and forcefully extorting money. In addition, it includes not allowing the partner to work outside of the home, not giving money, and not allowing the partner to seek financial support from other relatives and friends.

Social violence is monopolizing a victim, limiting the partner's interaction with his/her acquaintances, limiting visits to the parents' house, and ignoring the basic human rights of the partner by monitoring his/her relationships with others.

What is common in these definitions is the desire of the perpetrator to control his/her spouse and intimate partner, as well as seeing their partners as their own possessions (Okamoto 2012).

Stalking is frequently accompanied by all or some forms of violence mentioned above. Recently, the DV between dating partners known as date DV has caught an attention of the younger people in Japan. The date DV includes an infringement on the independence of will, a control over the relationship, and the abuse against the partner (Ida 2010). The date DV is more difficult to be detected compared to the violence between married couples (Aono 2010). The date DV often begins with the verbal abuse and bullying, but these actions may lead to more serious acts of violence such as sexual assault.

According to a 2011 nationwide study in the USA (Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2011), 9.4 % of high-school students are swatted, slapped, and psychologically wounded by boyfriends or girlfriends. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey also reported that approximately 1 in 7 males and 1 in 5 females who were raped, physically abused, and stalked by a close partner experienced or witnessed some forms of IPV during the ages between 11 and 17 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2010). In Japan, the Gender Equality Bureau (2005) reported that 26.7 % and 13.8 % of females and males, respectively, experienced physical violence in dating.

### ***3.1.3 Intimate Partner Violence from a Life Course Perspective***

It is important to consider the problem of IPV from a life course perspective. This is because IPV can be reproduced from one generation to another. Furthermore, within the same generation, a husband influenced by gender stereotypes uses violence

against his wife at home and has a serious negative effect on the development of his children.

There is a possibility that the perpetrators of IPV, usually men, were raised by abusive parents or grew up witnessing their fathers' violence against their mothers in childhood. Likewise, the victims of IPV, usually women, may have been abused in childhood. As discussed in Chap. 2 by Ishii-Kuntz, these children grow up thinking that violence is the most "effective" and perhaps only way to solve the conflict. It is thus necessary to investigate intergenerational factors to better understand violence between intimate partners.

In addition, it is necessary to elucidate IPV as a social problem from (1) personal, social psychological, and social cultural theories (Kumagai 1980); (2) biological, psychosocial, and social cultural theory (Kumagai 1984); and (3) the life cycle which is from birth to death (Kumagai 2005; Nonoyama and Shimizu 2001; Shimazaki 2008). Therefore, to prevent reproduction of IPV for a child, a welfare policy that saves children who are experiencing violence from their families and an educational program on preventing violence are necessary.

## 3.2 History of Intimate Partner Violence

### 3.2.1 History of Domestic Violence

In Japan, wife-beating by husband has existed since the *Meiji* period, and it was more or less justified because of the patriarchy that gave a husband an absolute power over his wife. Radical feminism defines the patriarchy as a structure of rules reproducing women's subordination to men (Ueno 1990). Japanese concept of the patriarchy was exemplified in the premodern feudal family system known as "*ie*" which was included in the *Meiji* Civil Law (Fukutake 1981). In the *ie* system under the Civil Law, the head of a household had rights to control the family members. This tradition was carried on only by the eldest son of the family.

Under the patriarchy, women's human rights were completely ignored (Yoshikawa 2007). In the patriarchal family system, a husband considered his wife as his "possession," and she was seen as an incapable and helpless person. When a wife did not obey her husband's orders, he was justified to use violence as a method to control his wife. Marital rape also occurred because husbands thought that they were entitled to engage in sexual acts even if their wives resisted. In addition to the macrostructure of the patriarchy, several factors at the individual level can be considered as the causes of IPV. These include alcoholism, drug addictions, and stress (Bancroft 2002).

In the 1947 Constitution of Japan, gender equality and a respect for family members were stipulated in the Articles 14 and 24, respectively. Though couple's equality in inheritance and rights were legally recognized, husband's dominance continued with respect to family decision-making; thus, wife's economic dependence on her husband largely remained. This unequal spousal relationship gave a rise to

IPV. Although the perpetrators of IPV were thought to be in lower social class with less education, husbands with higher income and educational attainment were also abusing their wives. Indeed, Yunomae and Yoshihama (1998) found that these men in upper social class, whose outward appearance is gentle and free of violence, were likely to be abusive as much or even more than working class men. If violence is occurring at home, wives in upper social class are less likely to report it to the authority. Instead, they may try to keep calm appearance outside (*soto*) despite the abuse inside (*uchi*) of their homes, as pointed out by Kumagai (in press) in Chap. 1.

### ***3.2.2 Intimate Partner Violence in International Context***

In the 1970s, many countries made reports to the Convention of the UN General Assembly on the violence and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. These reports triggered further understanding of husband's violence against his wife.

Since the late 1980s, the UN began disseminating information about IPV to its member countries. In 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted an accord to abolish the violence against women during the World Human Rights Meeting held in Vienna. The focus of the 1995 World Assembly in Beijing was the human rights of women (Kaino 2002). The declaration was made during this meeting for each country to support women's human rights, including those of full-time homemakers. Throughout these world meetings, we came to recognize that IPV is not just a problem at home but a problem needing special attention and intervention in the whole society.

### ***3.2.3 Intimate Partner Violence in Japan***

From the late 1970s to early 1980s, due to school violence and child abuse cases which caught the public attention, violence within families came to be named as "domestic violence." For example, in the 1980 Kanagawa metal bat killing case, a 20-year-old man, a graduate of an elite high-school and a prep school student at the time, ended up killing his parents with the metal bat because he failed in passing the entrance exam. His father was a graduate of Tokyo University, and his brother graduated from an elite private university. In the media, the cause of these murders was reported to be the assailant's inferiority complex. Similar murders occurred in Okayama and Yamaguchi in 2000, where sons used metal bats to kill their mothers.

In addition to these cases, a father of a son who was violent against his mother ended up killing the son with a metal bat. These cases made the public aware of the domestic violence in Japan. After these murders, the Japanese public began paying

more attention on the violence between couples, and subsequently, the spousal abuse was named as “domestic violence” or DV for short.

In Japan, IPV was once legitimized under the patriarchal family norms. Additionally, Japanese structure of *amae* (dependence), as Kumagai (in press) (Chap. 1) described, may be related to IPV. That is, we can see that, based on *amae*, the wife “allows” her husband to do whatever he wants to do, including the act of physical and verbal violence against his wife. Therefore, it is important to investigate intergenerational factors to better understand violence between intimate partners.

### 3.3 Development of Legal Measures and Social Policies in Japan

#### 3.3.1 *The Domestic Violence Prevention Law (The DV Prevention Law)*

In Japan, policy concerns toward the violence by a husband or an intimate partner against a woman were included in the Basic Plans of Gender Equality (Cabinet Office 2000). This plan emphasizes the importance of improving policies and implementing laws which, among others, protect women from their husbands’ violence by providing them with the shelters. Consequently, in April 2001, the DV Prevention Law was established and was put into effect in October 2001. The significance of the DV Prevention Law in 2001 was that, for the first time, the Japanese government offered the systematic assistance for the victims of IPV. In particular, spousal violence, especially committed by husbands, was internationally recognized as problematic (Kaino 2008). It was considered as an epoch-making action in which the principle that the law should not get involved in family affairs was largely abandoned (Kaino 2013).

The DV Prevention Law states that everyone can become either a perpetrator or a victim, regardless of gender. Under this Law, spousal violence is a criminal act and the perpetrator is penalized. It is also important to note that this law was enacted by the female Diet members from various parties, and it became possible partly because of the pressure from the international community such as the UN. The first revision of the DV Prevention Law was made in 2004 by reflecting the voices of the abused and the support group members.

The DV Prevention Law, for the first time, established restraining and deportation orders against a spouse who commits violence. The perpetrator who does not obey these orders is faced with the penalty. The Law also established support centers for the victims and assistance from the police. The victims are also given resources by the Social Welfare Center to be independent from their perpetrators. For details of this Law, refer to Appendix 3.1 at the end of the current chapter.

The police officers have a duty to take necessary measures to prevent the victims from further damage of spousal abuse. For example, the head of local police must

provide refuge to those who are abused and a place where partners can negotiate about the restraining orders. The police officers are also obligated to report the incidence of abuse to the court, who then may or may not issue the Protection Order. This order stipulates the conditions surrounding restraining and deportation of the perpetrators. It should also be noted that all of the above measures are effective only for the victims who are exposed to the same or similar violent situations for at least 6 months in duration. This length of “waiting time” is often considered too long given the possible risk of serious injury and even the death of the victim.

### ***3.3.2 The Stalker Regulation Law in Japan***

The following eight acts of stalking are included in the Stalker Regulation Law: (1) pursuing, ambushing, and thronging the victim; (2) informing the victim about the stalking via telephone and/or email; (3) leaving memo in a bicycle basket; (4) demanding to meet and have sexual relationship; (5) acting violently; (6) silently calling the victims and repeating phone calls; (7) sending the filth, livestock corpus, and other unpleasant objects; and (8) shaming sexually.

There were several incidents of stalking that necessitated the government to establish the Stalker Regulation Law. Okegawa stalker murder in October 1999 was the first case of a crime committed by a stalker in Japan. In this case, a female college student who had been a victim of stalker’s monitoring, threatening, and slandering was killed by her former boyfriend who had been stalking. Prior to this killing, the victim and her family submitted many complaints to the local police station. The police, however, did not conduct any investigation into the case. Only after the murder, the police formally apologized to the victim’s family. There have been other cases where the police involvement could have prevented the incidents such as Tochigi lynching murder case (December 1999) and Niigata case of an imprisonment of a girl that lasted for 10 years until January 2000 (Yabusaka 2014).

The lack of police involvement to prevent these cases from occurring was criticized by the media as well as the general public. These criticisms led the government to establish the Stalker Regulation Law. The website of the National Police Agency (2014) emphasizes their efforts to strengthen this law by assuring the public that they will take serious actions to protect the victims. It is important to note that the police will not take any actions unless the victim officially files a charge against the perpetrator. It is also problematic that the stalkers are not detained for a long period of time. Therefore, the victims may feel scared to bring the charges because they may have to live in fear of the stalkers after they are released.

### ***3.3.3 Shelters and Counseling Centers for Victims of Intimate Partner Violence***

The Tokyo Rape Crisis Center was established in September 1983. This center was the first private volunteer group set up by women in Japan. The center not only created the telephone crisis line for the victims of abuse but also disseminated information about the rape and sexual assault.

Most private shelters began consulting female DV victims in the early 1990s, when there was no legal support for the victims and little recognition of IPV in Japan. The shelters triggered the law enforcement, medical facilities, and welfare offices to improve support systems and provide safe environment for the victims.

Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Center established in 2011 provides support for female IPV victims. Kaino (2013) pointed out the following three problems related to this Center: First, 72 % of women enter this center for a temporary refuge from their perpetrators. Unfortunately, the services at this center were limited in duration; thus, the victims faced difficulties to get support for rebuilding their lives. Second, the contents of support cannot be openly discussed with those who need them due to the hidden nature and locations of the temporary shelters. Third, 82.2 % of women who came to the temporary shelter reported being the victims of violence by husbands, parents, children, relatives, and dating partners. The envisioned functions of temporary protection system are to provide safe places for the victims and their families and to continue support to rebuild their lives. However, these functions have not been fully realized so far due mainly to the insufficient number of these centers.

### ***3.3.4 Evaluation of the Domestic Violence Prevention Law***

According to Kaino (2013), the following are the effects of the DV Prevention Law after 10 years of its enactment:

First, the general public came to know more about sexual violence which may have increased the number of DV victims' reporting. The Gender Equality Bureau began tri-annual investigation into the sexual violence. Additionally, a national investigation entitled "Investigation about the Violence between Men and Women" was carried out to examine damages experienced by the victims of dating and sexual violence.

Second, Kaino (2013) argues that unmarried women are more likely to be the targets of IPV because the Stalker Regulation Law does not protect them as fully as the DV Prevention Law would protect married women.

Third, approximately 6 % of children in families of IPV experience sexual abuse by fathers. Thirty percent of the women who went to the center have been involved in prostitution. Furthermore, women who are victims of IPV were likely to have run

away from their parental homes. Therefore, it is possible to view IPV as a consequence of accumulative life course events.

Fourth, it was pointed out by Kaino (2013) that victims of IPV are more likely to experience many hardships such as divorce, economic downturn, mental illness, and problems related to child rearing.

### **3.4 Demography of Intimate Partner Violence in Contemporary Japan**

#### ***3.4.1 Survey Findings concerning Violence between Men and Women***

Japan's first nationwide investigation entitled "Nationwide Survey on Husbands' Abuse" was carried out in 1992. This research team consisted of lawyers, researchers, shelter counselors, and social workers. Questionnaires were distributed in 1992 to those consented to participate by mail and direct delivery. Respondents were identified randomly by adult educational institutions and social welfare agencies (Domestic Violence Mutual Help Society 1992).

In this study, feminist action research was used as a main method of the investigation. Feminist action research allows intensive and subjective interaction between the researcher and the researched. This interaction may be helpful for the IPV victims to talk about their difficult experiences. About 80 % of 796 women suffered violence committed by their husbands and lovers. More than 40 % of the women simultaneously experienced physical, mental, and sexual violence. Less than 25 % of these women experienced violent episode only once, and more than half of the women experienced violence continuously (Violence Investigation Meeting for the Study by a Husband (Lover) 1998). Nearly 60 % of the respondents completed a junior college. Approximately 30 % of the respondents' annual household income was 10 million yen or over. These findings contradict the image that IPV occurs only in families with lower income and educational background (Yunomae and Yoshihama 1998).

#### ***3.4.2 Current Situation of IPV in Japan***

In the 2011 investigation by the Gender Equality Bureau (2012), it was revealed that approximately 1 out of 3 woman was injured by her spouse. Approximately 1 out of 20 women felt that their lives were in danger. In this section, we will present the extent of IPV and dating violence in Japan.



### 3.4.2.1 Intimate Partner Violence Between Husbands and Wives

According to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's "Reports of Violence against Women in 1998," one out of three women was the victim of physical violence by their husbands or partners. As for judiciary statistics, approximately 30 % of the wives in divorce mediations stated that the reasons for the divorce were violence and alcoholism of their husbands. About 55.9 %, 33 %, and 20.9 % were victims of mental, physical, and sexual violence, respectively. Three out of 100 women received "severe violence of punching and kicking until they could not stand up" once or twice or several times. Approximately 64 % of women with children reported that their husbands were also violent toward their children.

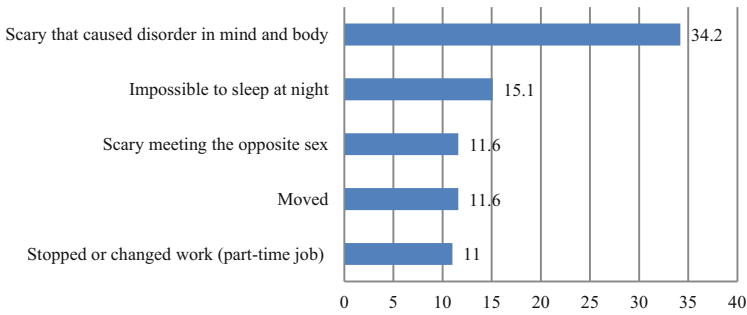
Yokohama City conducted a questionnaire survey and interviews on DV in 2008. According to the reports of Yokohama City Gender Equality Promotion Section (2009), whereas 80 % of the respondents knew about the DV Prevention Law, only 20 % knew the contents of the law. An investigation on the violence between male and female was carried out by the Prime Minister's Office in 1999. The subjects of this survey were men and women over 20 years of age (1773 females and 1632 males). It was found that 37.7 % of the respondents experienced being shouted at by their partners. Although much smaller percentage, 2.7 % of the respondents felt that their lives were in danger and 2.6 % needed treatment by doctors.

The Gender Equality Bureau conducted an investigation about the violence by spouses in 2002 and found that approximately one out of six women experienced some forms of physical violence (Cabinet Office 2003). The investigation about the violence between men and women has been conducted every 3 years since 2002. The 2008 investigation reported that 24.9 % of women were physically assaulted by husbands or partners, and 33.2 % of women had more than one experience of physical and mental violence.

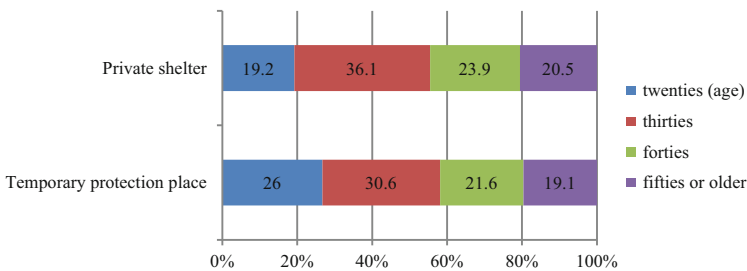
According to Crime Statistics (National Police Agency 1995), there were 550 injuries and 128 murders where the husband was the perpetrator and the wife (including common-in-law marriage) was the victim. In contrast, there were 79 murder and 64 injury cases in which wives were perpetrators. In a national investigation by the Prime Minister's Office (1999), more than 10,000 women annually cited physical violence as the primary cause that led to divorce.

With respect to dating violence, approximately 1 in 10 women had been assaulted by their partners. About 20 % of these women reported that they stayed in the violent relationship because they thought this was just a one-time episode, and the equal proportion of women thought that their partners did not want to break up the relationship (see Fig. 3.1). About 1 in 30 women felt that their lives were in danger. In addition, 60 % of these women reported a change in their lives such as quitting their jobs and moving out of the current residence. The most frequently reported damage was mental disorders caused by the violence.

Furthermore, 8 % of the women were raped, and of these victims, 3 in 4 women knew the assailants. About 70 % of these victims reported changing their jobs and moving out of the current residence, among others (see Fig. 3.2). 20.1 % of these women feared encounters with the opposite sex, and 15.7 % labeled themselves as being worthless.



**Fig. 3.1** Proportions (%) of changing life patterns in the battered woman (multiple answers): 2012 (Source: Investigation 2011 Report (2012 summary version) about *Josei ni taisuru Bouryoku ni kansuru Chousa Kenkyu* [Research about the violence against the women] Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office 2012)

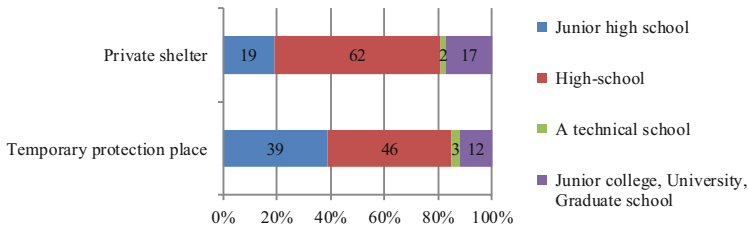


**Fig. 3.2** Proportions (%) of shelter residents by the type of the shelter and age-group: 2012 (Source: Fact-finding of the shelter resident; Tamie Kaino (Ed) 2013. “Kiki wo norikoeru onnatachi [Women over a crisis- ten years after DV method to the new horizon of the support]” investigation against temporary protection places and private shelters from November, 2011 to January, 2012)

According to National Police Agency crime statistics in 2009, 184 couple-related murders were reported and 114 of these involved female victims. The same statistics in 2011 reports that there were 89 or 56.3 % of the wives were killed by husbands, and 69 or 43.7 % of the husbands were killed by their wives.

Ten years have passed since the establishment of the DV Prevention Law. However, many women are still forced to live with violent husbands (Kaino 2013). Thus, they suffer from a variety of distress ranging from social isolation to severe anxiety in which they fear that they may be killed or that they may kill their husbands.

According to the statistics of stalker cases in 2013 (National Police Agency 2014), there were 21,089 stalking incidences. As shown in Fig. 3.3, this was the highest record after this legislation was inaugurated with an increase of 1169 cases (5.9 %) from the previous year. It is also clear that the victims were most likely to be in their 20s (34.8 %).



**Fig. 3.3** Proportions (%) of shelter residents by the type of the shelter and the educational attainment: 2012 (Source: Fact-finding of the shelter resident; Tamie Kaino (Ed). 2013 “Kiki wo norikoeru onnatachi [Women over a crisis- ten years after DV method to the new horizon of the support]” investigation against temporary protection places and private shelters from November, 2011 to January, 2012)

### 3.4.2.2 Dating DV

According to the 2012 survey about the dating DV in Kyoto, nearly 30 % of men and women were injured because of the violence by their dating partners. In addition, the 2010 survey about gender equality awareness and dating DV among the younger generation in Kochi Preference found that approximately 20 % of high-school students with dating experience reported that they have suffered from physical and mental damage as a result of dating violence (Kochi, Danjo Kyoudou Sankaku Keikaku 2010).

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government, in order to prevent spousal violence from occurring, conducted a survey to 18–29-year-old men and women (n=2000) residing in Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Government Life Culture Bureau 2012). It was found that 88.2 % of the respondents knew both the word and content of spousal violence and 65.2 % knew what the dating DV was. Furthermore, 22.7 % heard about dating DV at school. Among the people who had dating partners, 37.4 % were victims of dating DV and 29 % were perpetrators. Additionally, 33.4 % were victims of mental violence and 25.4 % were perpetrators of mental abuse. About 35.7 % of the respondents experienced dating DV for the first time when they were in college. Further, 37.5 % saw and heard about the dating DV of their friends. Of these respondents, 42.2 % talked with the person, 31.1 % did nothing, and 24.0 % did not know what they should do although they wanted to help.

Despite the increase in dating DV, it is not included in the DV Prevention Law. The protection order, therefore, does not apply to the victims of dating violence. In addition, there is no domestic restraining order against the perpetrator of dating violence. The Sexual Violence Prohibition Enactment is an emergency measure to prevent IPV after marriage and the dating DV (Yuzawa et al. 2013).

### 3.4.3 Private Shelters for Battered Women

According to the survey by the Gender Equality Bureau of Yokohama City about private shelters in 1994, most private shelters protect women who are otherwise not protected by the public offices. Little efforts have been made to publicly support shelters, and there has been a lack of cooperation among the shelters (Ogawa 2008).

Ogawa (2008) examined the cooperation between administrative organizations and other organizations (private shelters) in 2006. Her findings reveal that, first, many private shelters are cooperating with organizations related to the enactment of the DV Prevention Law. Second, more than 50 % of the private shelters cooperate with the local governments. Third, private shelters work together with local support networks for the DV victims.

Yuzawa (2013) conducted a survey in order to understand the actual situation of shelter residents. The subjects of this survey were administrators of 47 shelters as well as 457 women living in these private shelters. The respondents' ages at the time of their entrance to the temporary protection place ranged from 30s (30.6 %) to over 50s (19.1 %).

In the temporary protection place, educational background of users was as follows: high-school graduates (46 %), junior high-school graduates (39 %), and junior college graduates (12 %). In the private shelter, 62 % of the users were high-school graduates, 19 % were junior high-school graduates, and 17 % graduated from junior college.

About 61.7 % and 17.1 % reported worsening relationships with their husbands and relatives, respectively, as reasons for their use of the temporary protection place. About 86.4 % of the women who entered the private shelter cited their husbands' violence as a reason to use this facility. From the results of this investigation, violence between couples significantly affects the child and has the potential to reproduce violent relationships in the family.

### **3.5 Research Review: Intimate Partner Violence in Japan**

Many articles about IPV are presented in books and magazines in law, medicine, human science, psychology, and sociology. In order to search IPV-related articles in Japan, it is necessary to use the word, DV, instead of IPV. In addition, many IPV-related articles are published in women's magazines. Many readers of these articles are asking questions about IPV. Why do people become IPV perpetrators? Under what situations, do people become IPV victims? What is the impact of IPV on children? In this section, psychological and sociological studies on IPV are reviewed.

#### ***3.5.1 Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence***

Bancroft (2002), a counselor specializing in IPV, described two characteristics of IPV perpetrators: First, the mental problems have little to do with the committing of IPV. Instead, these perpetrators abuse their intimate partners because of their values and faiths. Their sense of values about close relationships is affected by the environment in which they were raised such as family members, neighbors, TV programs, books, and other adults.

Second, the media may play an important role in encouraging children to be violent. For example, Japanese children are exposed to violent video games, magazines, and

the Internet sites. Through these violent media, children may learn to become violent themselves, which, in turn, may increase the possibility of abusing their partners.

Bancroft (2002) also describes the characteristics of the IPV penetrators as follows:

1. They want to control their family by being an authoritarian parent.
2. They have a sense of entitlement and feel that they are at no fault.
3. They blame others for their wrongdoing.
4. They have a tendency to blame their partners when their children are in trouble.
5. They have unstable feelings and attitudes which confuse their partners and children.
6. They threaten their partners and children to keep secret about their own violent behaviors.
7. They may have problems of drug abuse and/or alcohol dependence, but they seem to be elite in their workplace and public.

The IPV perpetrators behave as tyrants to their wives and children in the secret place called the house. These perpetrators are most likely to be medical doctors, owners of businesses, and public servants, who make up the majority of those who abuse their partners (*Otto/Koibito kara no Bouryoku Chousa Kenkyukai 1999*).

### ***3.5.2 Research Review of Victims of Intimate Partner Violence***

Endo (2007) explained how the IPV victims try to make sense out of their partners' violence. These victims are likely to be confused because the perpetrators usually mix their violent and loving feelings. For example, the victims may think that their partners' violence comes from their true love for them. According to Endo (2007), this thinking is derived from the traditional gendered ideology because in these situations, women are most likely to misunderstand that their partners' violence is a form of love and affection. It is important, then, for women to be objective about what is happening in IPV and make them realize that no partners would be violent if they truly love them.

Most women who become victims of IPV are full-time homemakers who are economically dependent on their husbands. They are also likely to be isolated from the society except for a few friends and relatives. Victimized women are less likely to ask for help and, as a result, end up leaving the house for the fear of their husbands' violence. They may eventually blame themselves for their husbands' violence and take responsibility for their actions. This can lead to wives' depression, to more violence, and ultimately to being killed by their husbands (Endo 2007; Kaino 2008).

IPV victims often become obedient to their husbands for the fear of reprisal. Additionally, these victims misconceive that their husbands became violent because they themselves were bad. Many IPV victims mentally and physically suffer from their partners' violence (Bancroft 2002). Thus, these victims are not able to work and might have the mental problems because of a sense of fear or the distrust for their husbands. We are certain that there are some exceptions to this general rule.

Furthermore, the IPV victims are psychologically hurt because of the lack of understanding in the society and prejudice (Kaino 2008), which may increase criticisms against them. Victims cannot talk about the violence because of the fear for the perpetrators. Because the principle of the law makes it rather difficult for the authority to intervene family matters, victims of IPV receive insufficient public attention. When these wives report the abuse to the authorities, they may be misunderstood, which can be said as the twofold blame. Thus, it is necessary for the police as well as the public to better understand the situations surrounding the IPV victims.

### 3.5.3 *Research Review of Dating Partner Violence*

Like those who abuse their wives, the perpetrators of dating DV have the distorted recognition that their partners are to be blamed for their violent behaviors. According to Endo (2007), the following are several examples of dating DV:

1. A daughter whose mother warned her about the possibility of dating violence because of the jealousy of the daughter's date. But the daughter did not listen to her mother, and ended up being caught in a violent relationship with her boyfriend.
2. As soon as the relationship was broken, the boyfriend became a stalker and began committing violent act to monopolize the woman.
3. A woman misunderstood that her boyfriend was kind because he was picking her up after work every day, but after the marriage, the husband's violence began.

Recently, another form of dating violence has become a major problem. These are the cases where the cell phones are used by male partners to control their female victims (Endo 2007).

Cui et al. (2013) pointed out that the dating violence in adolescence was an important predictor of the dating violence in young adulthood. Being the victims of childhood abuse is also a significant predictor of dating violence. Thus, it is important for the victims of dating violence to report the violent incidents to others around them, and this may stop the dating violence in early stages.

Recently, many cases of female-to-male violence have been reported (Matsuno and Akiyama 2009; White 2009). The *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported on August 20, 2014, that there is a rapid increase of the consultation by men experiencing DV. According to the data of the National Police Agency, there were 3281 cases of men's consultation in 2013, which is an increase by 4 times more from the data in 2010 (National Police Agency investigation). Men who are the victims of dating DV are rarely recognized because, in many case, they do not want the criminal charges against their violent partners.

There has been research on dating violence among university students, as well as those that examined the relationship between dating DV and the gender ideology. Akazawa et al. (2011) investigated the dating violence among the university students in Japan. Applying the equity theory, they found that the unequal relationship

between the dating partners increases the level of anxiety, depression, and jealousy, which, in turn, may increase the possibility of dating violence. Okamoto (2012) also suggested that the main factor causing dating DV was power relationship between the partners. These power relations are determined by the amount of financial resources and physical ability, among others.

Okamoto's study also yielded the following findings:

1. Gender ideology of younger people today is not significantly associated with the incidence of dating violence.
2. Those who possess greater level of social power are more likely to be the perpetrators of dating violence.
3. If men recognize uneven balance in terms of age, height, physical strength, and economic power, then they are more likely to be the perpetrators of dating violence.
4. If women feel that they are receiving less reward than her partner in their relationships, then they are more likely to be abusive toward their partners.

### ***3.5.4 Intimate Partner Violence and Its Effects on Children***

Whether the target is his wife or child, the father's violence has a serious effect on children. According to the survey of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (1998), it was found that 64.4 % of fathers have committed both IPV and child abuse. Children of these fathers experience such emotions as hatred and fear. They then may become violent against siblings or friends. In addition, they are likely to be emotionally unstable, refuse to go to school, and stay indoors all the time. The child whose father abuses him/her is not only physically hurt but also mentally damaged. Exposure to father's violence may be also related to children's committing violence and crimes against others. Because the traditional gender role awareness that men should work outside and women should do housework and the patriarchy that gives husbands an absolute power over their wives and children are deeply rooted in Japanese society, these fathers may not have a sense of guilt over their violence against wives and children. Thus, it is necessary to separate children from the perpetrators when there is IPV in the family.

Bancroft (2002) found that a father who is violent against his wife was 7 times more likely to abuse his child. This is because these fathers want to satisfy their emotional desire to be in control over their children. The IPV perpetrators gradually diminish the mother's authority, and intervene in the wife's child care. He also uses children as a weapon of abuse and decides how children must confront the abuse. Furthermore, the child experiences unpleasant thoughts brought on by the violence of the father. Also, Bancroft (2002) identified the following main effects of IPV on children: (1) Perpetrators of IPV are likely to look down on their wives, and as a result, their children are also likely to look down on their mothers. (2) Perpetrators of IPV tend to think of their wives and children as their belongings. As a result, they

do not recognize the rights of children. (3) Perpetrators pretend to be soft-spoken in public to hide their violent tendencies at home. Their children are confused between these dual appearances of their fathers and come to think that their mothers are doing something wrong.

Such compulsion by the IPV perpetrator distorts the perspectives of IPV victim and the child. When the child grows up in the family of IPV, they are psychologically damaged, and as a result, they come to feel worthless. When fathers use violence against their wives and children, daughters, in particular, develop a hateful relationship with the fathers (Endo 2007).

### ***3.5.5 Intergenerational Transmission of Intimate Partner Violence***

Social norms of different period have influenced the way we think about our intimate partners. The norms accepting certain amount of violence against women and children were once widely accepted in families. However, since not all men are IPV perpetrator, it is not fair to blame social norms and structures as causes of the violence. Nevertheless, we are influenced by the norms and social structures that are created by the media, which may contribute to the intergenerational transmission of IPV. Furthermore, a child whose awareness has been distorted by growing up in a home with IPV is most likely to reproduce IPV in the future against his/her lover, wife, and children (Bancroft 2002; Wallace and Roverson 2013).

## **3.6 A Future Perspective of Intimate Partner Violence**

### ***3.6.1 Toward the Elimination of All Forms of Gender Discriminations***

The report generated from the meeting of the Gender Equality Bureau (2009) pointed out the following:

1. The persistence of traditional gender ideology is behind several social problems.
2. Lack of education on gender equality and on building self-esteem is associated with the distorted sense of values.

Most of the IPV victims are women. Of these women, approximately 57.3 % are hesitant to divorce their husbands because there is a child, and 18.9 % for economic reasons (Gender Equality Bureau 2014). If the society can help the victims of IPV to become economically independent, they can escape from their husband's violence, and they are able to make a fresh start with their children.



Due to the Japanese cultural concept of *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) which is discussed by Kumagai (in press) in Chap. 1 of this book, it is considered shameful to talk about negative events in the house to outside. Dividing the home into outside and inside is described in Japanese cultural anthropology, and this situation results in concealment of the family violence. Therefore, people tend to talk only their positive stories to the outside in order to keep their pride and the good appearance of their house. Therefore, IPV is totally hidden inside the family (*uchi*). It is necessary to openly discuss this problem if there is violence in the home in order to create solutions. It is also important to teach children not to confuse love in intimate relationships with the control over the partners. These can be accomplished in elementary and secondary education.

It is difficult to spread gender equality among the general public in Japan. Therefore, it is essential to include gender equality in part of the early educational efforts. That is, it is necessary to teach young children to respect every human right and that violence is never permitted.

### ***3.6.2 Reducing Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence***

Through early education, children should be taught about human rights and nonviolent ways of handling conflicts. Since violence is frequently shown on TV, we need to watch our children not to be exposed to constant violence in the media. In addition, the child brought up in the family whose father is violent is more likely to encounter physical and psychological damage as a result of the abuse compared to those children who never experience the abuse (Gender Equality Bureau 2009). They may also grow up to be abusing their own partners and children. Therefore, the support from the social welfare system needs to focus on the breaking of the cycle of violence by providing a safe family environment for children.

The approach to assist the abusers to stop the act of violence can be a step toward rebuilding family life (Nobuta 2008). Educational programs and counseling for both abusers and the abused victims have the potential to change the couples' relationships that had been violent in nature. The substantial support including the counseling system for the victimized family is important for the abusers' reintegration program. This program will also help mothers and children restore their relationships.

Research findings on dating DV (Endo 2007; Kochi 2010) suggest that educational efforts are necessary to teach children about the problems of restraint and jealousy in the dating relationship. The potential victims of dating DV also need to be aware of the changes of how their partners are treating them. They also have to be informed that they should not be hesitant to seek help from the adults around them when there is an episode of violence.

Psychological treatment and consultation are necessary to prevent further violence by the perpetrators. First, abusers need to be aware of all mental, sexual, and physical violence and know that violence is wrong no matter what. Second, they

must admit that they chose to become violent, rather than failing to control their emotions. Third, they must realize the pain experienced by women and children (Bancroft 2002). The perpetrators need to make efforts to increase their respect for their partners and the affirmation of their partner's rights. The perpetrators must take responsibility for their own actions now and in the future, need to make a promise not to be violent again, and be ready to abandon a sense of entitlement and act on this (Bancroft 2002).

### ***3.6.3 Intimate Partner Violence Law***

The comprehensive legislation that can deal with the violent crimes for all women including the dating DV is necessary. Women between the ages of 18 and 19 may experience dating DV and sexual violence. These victims, however, are not protected by the Child Welfare Law, which only provides legal protection for people less than 18 years of age. Therefore, child shelters for older teenagers were established by lawyers in several areas in Japan (Yuzawa et al. 2013).

In addition, sexual violence is defined as “sexual crime” in the criminal law, but DV and child abuse are not. IPV is a criminal offense for the first time when the Protection Order of the DV Prevention Law is enforced in 2001. The Japan Federation of Bar Associations' questionnaire survey reported the use of the Protection Order system and identified the following problems of judges, lawyers, and secretaries (2009~2010 investigation):

1. Underestimation of the extent of violence.
2. Denial of the perpetrator's level of violence.
3. Long time it takes to issue the Restraining or Deportation Order against the perpetrators.
4. Lack of understanding of the risk associated with the abused

Given these problems, it is essential to find more about how the abused are treated by the judges, lawyers, and secretaries and to study the effects of these problems on the victims of IPV (Yoshida 2013). Thus, it is essential to carry out a study on the judges, the secretaries, and the lawyers assigned to DV cases and to study the influence on the victims of the DV (Yoshida 2013). It is difficult to enforce a Protection Order because the victim lives while evacuating and rebuilding her life. Therefore, support from the DV centers, private sectors, neighbors, relatives, and friends are necessary. Improvement of the law is necessary for women who need support, but fell through the cracks of the legal system (Yoshida 2013). Securing a proper safety net for the rehabilitation of victims is possible with cooperation, collaboration, and utilization of the private sector and local governments (Kaino 2013).

Collaborative efforts are needed to establish the rehabilitation facility and programs for the victims of IPV (Kaino 2013). Kaino suggests, first, that there is a need to devise a basic policy that will influence gender equality policy and the protective services. Second, there is a need to encourage the local communities to promote gender equality in order to eliminate any form of violence against women. Third,

there is a need to perform the familiar gender equality in the area and to exterminate all violence against the woman and the correspondence to people in various difficult situations.

### ***3.6.4 Necessity of Interdisciplinary Research on Intimate Partner Violence***

From this chapter, it became clear that IPV has been influenced by social systems and structures. In terms of law, it is apparent that the legal system protecting the victims of IPV is insufficient. Furthermore, sociological and psychological research on IPV identified several causal factors of IPV and its effects on the victims and their children. From the viewpoint of a life course perspective, the risk of the reproduction of the violence by the child who witnessed IPV of the parent was discussed, and we found that the legal system concerning IPV in Japan was insufficient, and thus, many problems still remain.

In family sociology research, fathers' childcare involvement was found to positively influence children's self-esteem, affection, and high evaluation of their fathers and conjugal relations, among others (Ishii-Kuntz 2007, 2009; Sasaki 2009a, b, 2010). Therefore, paternal involvement in childcare and housework may contribute to reduce the incidence of IPV and may facilitate good relationships between couples in Japanese families.

We described how an IPV perpetrator conveys hatred against a family member. In the future, it will be necessary to investigate what kind of system and education are important to prevent IPV from occurring and how not to become perpetrators and victims of IPV. Thus, it is necessary to continue the interdisciplinary study as suggested by Kumagai (in press) in Chap. 1. These studies will contribute to improve agencies that offer consultations and other services for the victims of violence.

In this chapter, the violence in close relationships was discussed from a life course perspective. It was shown that IPV was a result of complex interaction of the social structure, unique Japanese national traits, and structure of the dependence within the family. In the following chapter, another type of family violence, namely, filial violence which includes child-to-parent abuse as well as sibling violence is covered from historical and a life course perspectives.

### **Appendix 3.1.: The DV Prevention Law Summary (Establishment in 2001, Partly Revised in 2004)**

The Prime Minister, the National Public Safety Commission, the Minister of Justice, and the Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare shall establish a basic policy concerning measures for the prevention of spousal violence and the protection victims.

This law system is the following: System of the protection orders such as domestic restraining orders, Spousal Violence Counseling, and Support Centers for prevention of the violence from a spouse and the protection of the victim, psychological and medical guidance, security performance in emergency and temporary protection, performance of independence support for a victim and performance of various information.

When receiving a request from a victim, the Superintendent General of the Metropolitan Police Department or the Chief of Prefectural Police Headquarters or the Chief of Police Station shall advice the victim on measures to prevent the harm on his/her own behalf offer other necessary assistance to prevent him/her from suffering harm by spousal violence pursuant to the provisions of the regulations established by the National Public Safety Commissions.

A protection order: The court shall render a judicial decision promptly with regard to cases pertaining to a petition for a protection order by the statement from a victim from a spouse. When the spouse as the assailant is against a protection order, the effect of the protection order by the penal regulations that is less than penal servitude is less than 1 year or 1 million yen. In the interrogation date, the court asks an opponent about the claim fact of the listed petitioner. When he does not compete for a fact of the violence and the petitioner insists on in evidence even, the court announces a protection order to an opponent.

Other orders are the following:

A domestic restraining order: an order to forbid someone from following the personal life of the victim for 6 months and strolling around the neighborhood such as a house (the house living together is excluded) or the office of the victim.

A withdrawal restraining order: an order to prohibit to leave against a spouse for preparations moving for 2 months from the house where victims live together when couples live together and to loiter around the neighborhood of the house for the same period.

The approach restraining order to a child: a 6-month order prohibiting a spouse from following the personal life of a child living together with a victim and to stroll around a house or a school of the neighborhood of the place.

The domestic restraining order to relatives: an order to forbid a spouse from following the personal lives such as the relatives for 6 months, and loitering around the neighborhood such as a house (except the relatives of the house living together with a spouse) or the office; the injunctions such as telephones; requirements of the order above prohibiting constant nuisance acts such as the demand of the meeting for victims; the late-night telephone and FAX transmissions; and the email transmissions from a spouse for 6 months.

*Source:* DV Prevention Law Summary

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# Chapter 4

## Filial Violence: An Unrevealed Problem for Decades

Rie Okamura

What is meant by “filial violence” is uncertain. Thus, the current chapter attempts to discuss the following five issues: first, filial violence is defined; second, filial violence in Japan is viewed from a life course perspective; third, the fact that no legal restriction for penalizing the abusive youth against their own parents is highlighted; fourth, causes and consequences of filial violence in Japan are discussed; and finally, several effective measures for the prevention of filial violence are suggested.

### 4.1 Children at a Risk of Violence

#### 4.1.1 Introduction

Today, the abuse of parents by their children is recognized as a worldwide phenomenon as seen in the definition given in several governmental publications. In the past, however, parent abuse was considered as a unique phenomenon only applied to Japan, not common in other countries (Kumagai 1983; Fujimoto 2005).

Academically parent abuse is defined as filial violence or child-to-parent violence/abuse. According to Walsh and Krienert (2009), child-to-parent abuse has been explored by scholars since the discussion on “battered parent syndrome” (Harbin and Madden 1979) as a new type of family violence in the late 1970s. Kumagai (2005) pointed out that it was common to describe child-to-parent violence as domestic violence in the past and suggested to Japanese scholars that it is more suitable to express it as filial violence. That is because, outside of Japan, domestic

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violence is actually referred to various types of violence occurring in the family. However, her suggestion was not well received at the time because the traditional parent-child relationship emphasized parental power over the child; thus, the idea of children's use of violence against their parents was hardly acceptable.

In this chapter, child-to-parent violence in Japan is mainly focused. Also sibling abuse is discussed as a type of filial violence in the family. Some readers may confuse child-to-parent abuse and elderly abuse. In the case of Japan, child-to-parent violence and elderly abuse are distinguished by the age of parents who are victims of child-initiated violence based on "Act on the Prevention of Elder Abuse, Support for Caregivers of Elderly Persons and Other Related Matters" since 2006 (Ministry of Justice, Japan 2015). If the victimized parents are 65 or older, it may be categorized as elder abuse, not child-to-parent abuse.

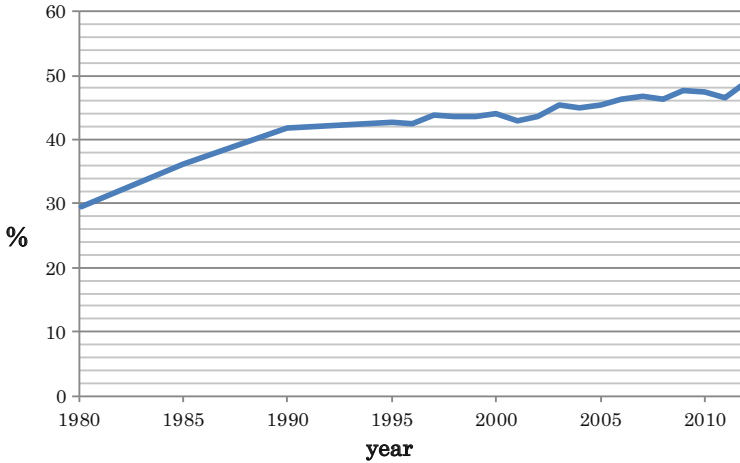
Today the discourse about violence between intimate partners in Japan shifted from "*kateinai boryoku*" (domestic violence) to DV, and at the same time, it received a broader social interest. Meanwhile, child-to-parent abuse and sibling abuse are still expressed as "*kateinai boryoku*" (domestic violence), and most Japanese people are unfamiliar with child-to-parent abuse and sibling abuse. Therefore, if we hear new expressions such as *oya gyakutai* which literally means child-to-parent abuse used in Japanese media, it can be an indication of growing public interest in this topic.

### 4.1.2 *Child-to-Parent Abuse*

Child-to-parent abuse in Japan is an issue that has been left behind today (Saito 2013), compared with other types of family violence such as the one between intimate partners and the child abuse, which are often discussed by the citizen, scholars, and policymakers pragmatically.

In North America and Europe, teenagers are considered to be the main perpetrators of child-initiated violence. However, as will be explained later, the Japanese situation is not to that extent. When we make an effort to understand why child-initiated violence occurs, the following question arises, "If the parents and children are not living together under the same home, Do children use violence against parents?" Kumagai (2005) points out that the more people interact with each other, the more people have the risk of violence between them as increasing conflicts. In Japan, there are a large number of younger adults who are not working and who are still depending on their parents for basic living arrangements. This "closeness" is a factor for causing child-to-parent abuse. Thus, it is not appropriate to consider teenagers are the solo perpetrators of the violence in Japan. In the case that a 28-year-old son hits his 52-year-old father, it is not considered legally as elder abuse already explained above. This is because the father has not reached 65 years old.

Figure 4.1 presents change in proportion of unmarried people who live with the parent (20–34 age group). There are a growing number of younger adults who remain unmarried and live with their parents in Japan (see Fig. 4.1). Yamada (1999) coined the phrase, "parasite single" referring to these younger adults who are unable



**Fig. 4.1** Changes in the proportion (%) of unmarried people (20–34 age group) who live with parents: 1980–2010 (Source: Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications 2013)

to become financially independent from their parents. Despite “parasite single” being a Japanese expressed in English words, the phrase has caught an eye of the Japanese general public.

Child-to-parent abuse tends to be associated with the problem of the socially withdrawn (*hikikomori*) (Watabe et al. 2010). These *hikikomori* people include not only teenagers but also young adults in their 20s and 30s. Therefore, child-to-parent abuse is not limited to the problem of teenagers and their parents in Japan.

Generally, the older and physically stronger children are at a greater risk of becoming perpetrators. Child-to-parent abuse is defined as any harmful act against parents to gain control and power, and it is classified as below (Cottrell 2003: 1):

- Physical abuse “includes hitting, punching, slapping, and pushing and is the most visible form of abuse.”
- Psychological abuse “includes name calling, criticizing and put-downs, creating fear, running away from home, and threatening to hurt or kill a parent or themselves.”
- Financial abuse “includes stealing or taking things without permission, damaging the home or possession of the parent, and demanding things that parents cannot afford.”

### 4.1.3 Parents’ Protection of Violent Children

The birth of a baby is usually one of the happiest moments of the family. However, “having a child” could also present a greater risk of the family violence. Parents who experience violence from their child could have never imagined to be victimized when a child was born. In modern Japanese society, children are thought to be

powerless and need to be protected by parents. This idea is socially shared, especially when children are small. Therefore, child abuse is critically blamed in the society because of this conception.

Today's prolonged duration of parent-child co-residence keeps their offspring remain as a "child" for a longer period of time in Japan. Yamada and Miyashita (2007) divided adolescence autonomy into three aspects: physical autonomy, psychological autonomy, and financial autonomy. Japanese adolescents, however, do not have any of these autonomies because they are expected to fulfill filial piety that has been derived from the Confucianism. Under the Japanese *ie* system, parent-child relationship is based on interdependency (*amae*) as described by Kumagai (in press) in Chap. 1 of this book. Additionally, the oldest son in a Japanese family is expected to live with his parents to eventually be the head of the household, whereas in Europe and North America, leaving home is necessary for adolescents to gain autonomy from their parents (Yamada and Miyashita 2007).

As a famous Japanese saying states, "No matter what happens, children remain as children forever for parents." Reaching certain age does not mean that children are totally free from the parental protection. For example, it is quite common for a divorced daughter to return to her parents' home and become financially dependent on parents. Also nowadays there are many older people suffering from a fraudulent scheme called "*ore ore sagi*" (this is me, your son fraud). In these cases, the criminal, pretending to be someone's son on the phone, asks for money with a totally fictitious story, such as he had lost his company's money and needed to return it immediately (National Police Agency 2015). These cases show that Japanese parents believe that parental protection and support for children are necessary no matter how old their children are.

Looking from the outside in, it is difficult to find child-to-parent abuse. Many victimized parents hardly report this type of violence to the authorities because they want to keep their children away from the legal punishment (Walsh and Krienert 2009). In addition, the victims tend to believe that the violence is just a temporary behavior of children and that their children are actually kindhearted. Tragically, however, these beliefs of the victims are more likely to be illusionary (Robinson et al. 2004).

#### **4.1.4 Parental Responsibility**

One of the reasons why child-initiated violence tends to be unnoticed is that children are thought to be protected by parents in Japan (Ito 2012) regardless of their age. According to Mochizuki (1985), Japanese *ie* system which was maintained by blood relations explains the situation that family members must take responsibility if the child commits a crime or deviance act. He noted that under the group orientation based on *ie* system, individuals behave as part of *ie*, not being allowed to act totally independent from the *ie*. Thus *ie* system demands an excessive amount of parental responsibility (Mochizuki 1985).

In 2014, there was a news release about a 64-year-old father who killed his 28-year-old son. The son had been abusing his family including his father. When the

news was posted (Nihon Keizai Shinbun 2014), there were many anonymous Internet posts, which supported the behavior of the father, such as “He did what he could as a father.” At the same time, an expert’s opinion in one article that “there were other ways (than the killing) to solve the problem of (son’s) violence” (Sankei Digital 2014) was strongly opposed by the readers. Despite the public sympathy toward the father’s dilemma and eventual murder that he committed, the article does not address the real problem – the fact that Japanese parents have a distorted responsibility to protect their children, which does not allow them to escape from the child-to-parent abuse.

### ***4.1.5 Sibling Abuse Including Sexual Abuse***

Not only are parents victims of violence but siblings of the violent children are also prone to be harmed. In 2012, Japanese police department reported that there were 1625 cases of family violence involving juvenile perpetrators and of that 119 cases or 7.3 % of the victims were siblings (Police Department 2013).

Similar to child-to-parent abuse, sibling violence is divided into physical, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse. In this section, we mainly discuss about sibling physical abuse and sexual abuse.

First, many parents must deal with sibling rivalry in the course of upbringing. While interaction with one’s sibling promotes social and cognitive development and creates strong emotional ties between brothers and sisters (Furman and Buhrmester 1985), children experience conflicts in such a relationship. These conflicts occur mainly because of competition for limited family resources, such as parental attentions, and they are presented as sibling rivalry that often includes squabbles and rough physical contacts (Boyse 2012). Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish what constitutes sibling abuse. According to Boyse (2012), possible signs of sibling abuse are a static role of the victim/abuser, increase in violent acts, avoiding of the brother/sister on the part of the victim, changes in sleeping patterns and eating habits, nightmares, and so on.

Second, sibling sexual abuse is more common than other types of sexual abuse occurred within a family (Thompson 2009) and is most likely to be hidden and kept as family secret (Ballantine and Soine 2012). The most frequent type of sibling sexual abuse is between brother and sister, occurring where a brother abuses his sister (Carlson et al. 2006). Parents tend to deny if a child reports sibling sexual abuse. They may even convince the abused child that it was just playing rather than blaming the perpetrating child. In the research by Carlson et al. (2006), it was found that 24 % of the victims of sibling violence thought that their mothers knew about the abuse, and 19 % of them informed their mothers of the abuse. Moreover, eventually the abused child is not able to report the incident to parents or other adults because he/she tends to think reporting such an episode is sinful. In the case of dysfunctional family where parents do not supervise the children in a proper way, small children are likely to misunderstand that the abusive and violent relationship

with older sibling is “normal” and thus cannot realize that they are victimized (Ballantine and Soine 2012).

According to the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2013), there were 66,701 requests for advice about child abuse recorded by child consultants all over Japan. The main perpetrators of those abuses are biological mothers, which is about 60 %. The other 40 % of perpetrators are biological fathers, step parents, and relatives. However, there was no category presented for sibling perpetrators. A concern in Japan is that not only is the actual number of sibling abuses not grasped at all but also that sibling abuse is beyond expectation of Japanese authorities.

Carlson et al. (2006) reported that 61 % of 41 adult survivors of sibling sexual abuse received counseling by professionals, and half of them had “clinically significant distorted beliefs” which may cause depression, low self-esteem, and guilt. This may lead to the victims’ confusion which can be an obstacle in establishing favorable relationships with others and positive self-evaluation (Klassen and Gazan 1986).

To prevent sibling sexual abuse, children should have the opportunity to learn about what constitutes the “adequate” physical interaction with their siblings (Ballantine and Soine 2012). Although it is critical, it is not easy to address this problem in a conservative climate of Japanese primary education where sexuality issues are never discussed. Furthermore, although several studies on sibling abuse exist in the USA, there are few studies in Japan. Japanese scholars should note that many victims of sibling abuse in Japan seek recovery help on the Internet forums.

## 4.2 Old and New Problem

### 4.2.1 *Historical Change in Child-Initiated Violence*

Child-initiated violence in the family is not a new phenomenon in Japanese society. Since the 1970s, we have seen a rise in media-reported incidents of child-initiated violence (Kumagai 1981, 1983). In these incidents, the media tended to focus on the characteristics of family members such as social status and personality. Initially, child-initiated violence was thought to be a part of delinquent acts such as drinking, smoking, and stealing. However, while there was child-initiated violence against other family members which is continuity of juvenile delinquency, prior studies and incidents revealed that this type of violence could happen separately from juvenile delinquency.

The Prime Minister’s Office conducted a nationwide research covering 1051 cases of child-initiated violence reported by 800 youth guidance leaders (Sourifu Seisyounen Taisaku Honbu 1980). In this study, typology of the violence was given as the following:

1. Violence only: Children use violence only at home and have no problem of going to school. It is hard for outsiders to discover that children use violence against the family.

2. Violence and school truancy: Prior to the violence, refusal of going to school is observed. The violence appears as a way of resistance against parents. In many cases, parents tend to insist that the children go to school, but the children use violence against parents for the purpose of resistance.
3. Violence, refusal of going to school and delinquency: In addition to the violence and refusal to go to school, juvenile delinquency such as stealing is observed.
4. Violence and delinquency: Both violence and delinquency happen together, but children go to school mostly with irregular absenteeism. Prior to violence, delinquency is observed, and children may have records of admonishment resulting from gang activity and other inappropriate behaviors. Parental guidance can trigger the violence.

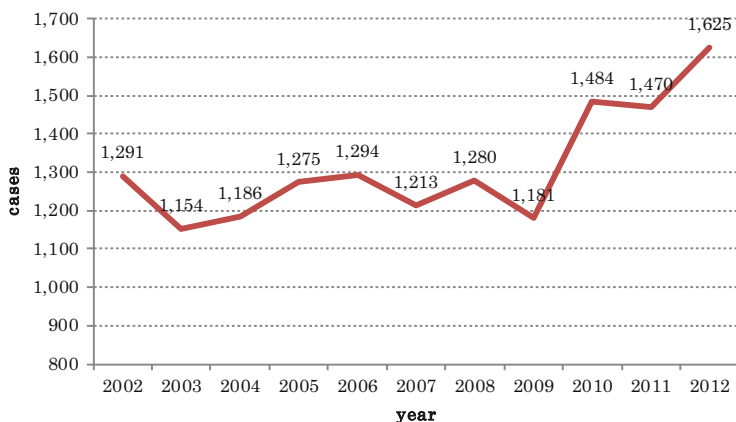
During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the media disclosed that the rate of juvenile delinquency was at its worst since the World War II (Hiroi and Kodama 2010). At the same time, juvenile gang delinquency including inhaling paint thinner was considered as “modern” type of juvenile delinquency. Therefore, only those “bad boy (girl)”-looking children had been associated with the violence in the family. This image, however, was challenged when we began hearing about some elite students committing acts of violence, including murders of parents and siblings. We now know that child-initiated violence is committed more frequently by children who are not associated with juvenile delinquency than those who are (Fukuizumi and Okawara 2012). Kumagai (1983:264–265) expressed the former group of children as “lions at home and mice abroad.” Below, percentages of the reported 1051 child-initiated violence cases in 1978–1979 were classified into the 4 categories (Sourifu Seisyounen Taisaku Honbu 1980).

(1) Violence only	19.1 %
(2) Violence and refusal to go to school	20.8 %
(3) Violence, refusal to go to school, and delinquency	17.5 %
(4) Violence and delinquency	42.6 %

This research was conducted from 1978 to 1979, and the most frequent type of child-initiated violence case was “violence and delinquency.” Stated another way, the children who commit the violence against family member(s) are most likely to be associated with juvenile delinquency. However, it was also found that today’s child-initiated violence is associated with children’s social withdrawal and other types of isolation (Watabe et al. 2010).

### 4.2.2 *Difficult to Grasp*

Is child-initiated violence increasing or decreasing in Japanese society today? According to the Japanese Police Department data (2013), in 1980 there were 1025 cases of such violence, but it increased to 1625 cases in 2012 (see Fig. 4.2 for more recent numbers of child-initiated violence).



**Fig. 4.2** Changes in the number of recognized family violence cases by juveniles younger than 20 years old: 2002–2012 (*Source*: Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 2014)

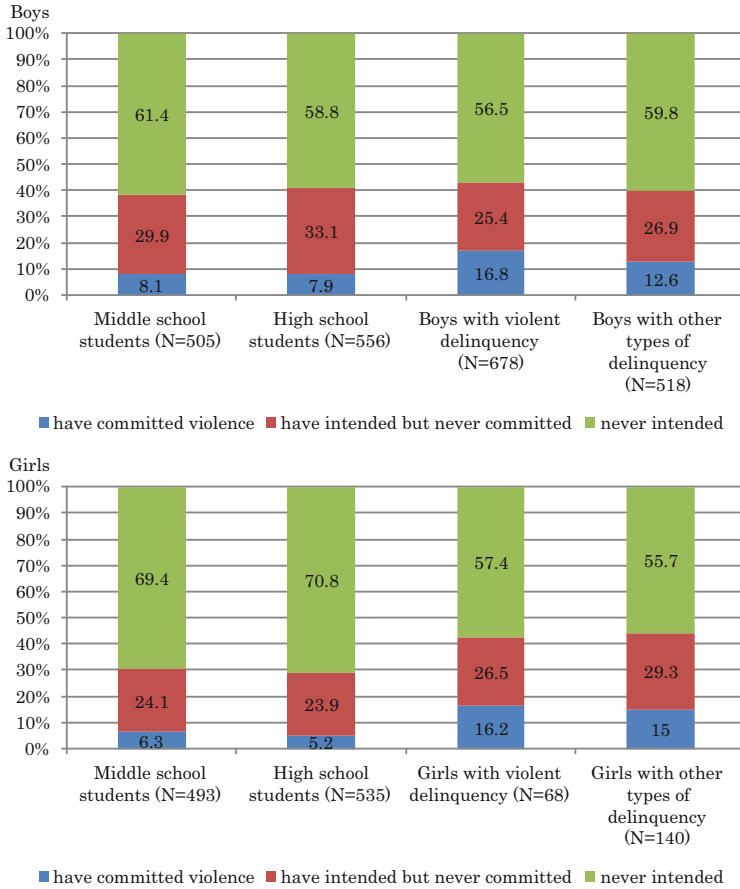
Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (2000) conducted a survey which included such a question of child-initiated violence as “Have you ever hit your parents or have you want to?” The 1999 sample included 2089 juvenile delinquents in the Classification Office and 1483 middle and high school students (see Fig. 4.3). It is noted that while the survey is not up-to-date, this is the only one conducted by the government, having a large sample and focusing on juvenile aggression against parents today.

According to the survey, it was found that even nondelinquent children either committed or wanted to commit violence against their parents in the past. The following is a brief summary of findings from this study;

1. Among male middle and high school students, 8.1 % and 7.9 %, respectively, have hit their parents in the past. Likewise, among female middle and high school students, 6.3 % and 5.2 %, respectively, answered that they had hit their parents.
2. Among the male middle and high school students, 29.9 % and 33.1 %, respectively, reported that they had wanted to hit parents but never did. The comparable percentages for female middle and high school students were 24.1 % and 23.9 %, respectively.

Overall, these results show that even many nondelinquent students have committed or have a potential to commit violence against their parents.

Futagami (2007) has pointed out that there are no accurate statistics about child-initiated violence against parents and other family members in Japan. The police department releases an annual report (white paper) concerning the amount of recognized family violence committed by juveniles. However, “juveniles” refer to those who are under 20 years of age; thus, the child-initiated violence committed by those children in their 20s or 30s is not included in the report. Since most families who



**Fig. 4.3** Proportions (%) of committing violence against parents by sex of juveniles: 2010 (Source: Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 2010)

consulted with NPOs have experienced problems with adult children in their 20s and 30s, the extent of child-initiated violence is largely unknown (Futagami 2007). As previously stated, child-initiated violence is thought to be a shame of the family (Condry and Miles 2103); thus, those incidences are kept hidden within the family.

According to Futagami (2007) who runs an NPO aimed at promoting job opportunity for young people, about 20 % of families that came to the NPO had problems concerning their child’s social withdrawal and NEET (not in education, employment, or training) that were associated with the child-to-parent violence. Based on this figure, approximately 0.5–1 million young adults are estimated to be abusing their own parents. A parental association in which the children of members are *hikikomori* released a report in 2007. In the total of 545 parents whose children are *hikikomori* participated in a study, and it was shown that aggressive behavior is the most reported externalizing behavior of *hikikomori* children, more than distorted living hours, depression, and anthropophobia (Sakai et al. 2007).



## 4.3 Isolated Children Creates Anguished Family

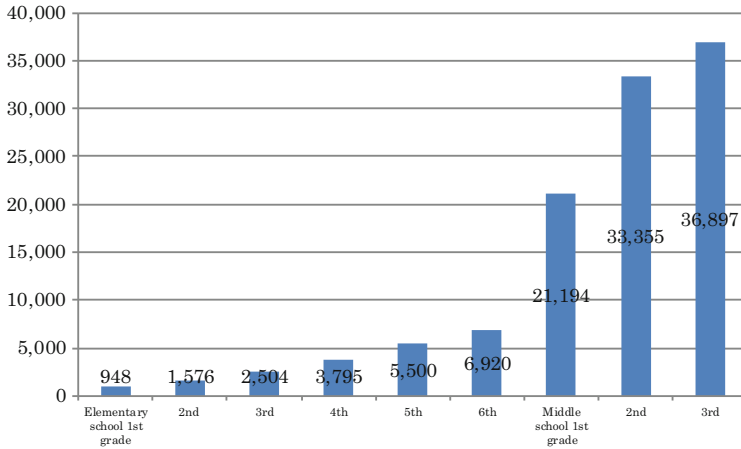
### 4.3.1 *Isolation and Violence*

After the public recognition of the amount of child-initiated violence increased in the 1980s, a nationwide survey revealed that children who commit violence also have a greater risk of being truant from school. Refusal to go to school (*toukou kyohi*) has been a social problem since the 1950s. In late the 1980s to early 1990s, refusal to go to school was considered a pathological phenomenon which is limited to a smaller number of children. Today the government reports that every child has a chance of refusing to go to school (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology 1992). In addition, the expression, “*toukou kyohi*,” is now changed to “*futoukou*” because the latter has more comprehensive nuance (Hiroi and Kodama 2010). Since the term *toukou kyohi* has a strong sense of refusal, there was an argument in the 1990s that *toukou kyohi* is not a suitable expression for formal use because of the fact that there are a certain number of students who cannot go to school even though they want to (Souma 2007).

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (2012) defines *futoukou* (refusal to go to school) as the following: “*futoukou* is the situation where students do not attend school or are unable to go to school because of some reasons such as psychological, emotional, and physical problems, or other backgrounds except for economic reasons and sickness.” According to the Ministry’s data, in 2012, 21,243 students in elementary school, 91,446 students in middle school, and 57,664 students in high school were recognized as *futoukou*. Figure 4.4 shows the escalating number of *futoukou* from the 1st to the 9th grade. The reason why there are more *futoukou* children in middle schools compared to high schools is that *futoukou* middle school students are less likely to proceed to enroll in high school or may drop out of high school. This may also reflect the fact that Japanese mandatory education is completed at the end of middle school; thus, middle school *futoukou* children may see no need to continue on to high school.

Today, the number of *futoukou* students has been on the rise every year. It is pointed out that 2 out of 1000 students in elementary school and 25 out of 1000 students in middle school are *futoukou* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2012). Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2012) presented reasons for *futoukou* by types of school. For elementary school children, emotional confusion including anxiety (33.2 %), lack of motivation (23.8 %), and problem with parents (20.2 %) are listed. In middle school, lack of motivation (26.4 %), emotional confusion including anxiety (25.1 %), and problem with friends (15.7 %) are included. In high school, lack of motivation (30.1 %), emotional confusion including anxiety (16.2 %) and problems with teachers (14.8 %) are listed.

Overall, from elementary to high school levels, lack of motivation, lack of future prospect, physical unfitness, poor academic performance, and pessimism are



**Fig. 4.4** Number of students by grade who refused to go to school in 2012 (Source: Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications 2014)

associated with *futoukou* (Shimosaka 2001). In Japan, competitiveness is introduced in school system in early stage, and it creates a structure of winners and losers. Whereas there are students who try to meet the expectation to become a winner, certainly there are students who fail to fulfill the expectation such as failing to pass the competitive entrance examinations and receiving higher grades. As a result, these students may become apathetic toward pursuing further education, thus are at a risk of becoming *futoukou*.

Souma (2007) has revealed that *futoukou* is a fundamental problem in the Japanese compulsory school system. In this school system, students barely have chances to be held back or to skip grades (Sasaki 2008). Furthermore, neither attending alternative schools nor home schooling is authorized to satisfy the compulsory education requirement, under the “Basic Act on Education.” Lacking for flexibility, the structure of the Japanese compulsory school system partially causes *futoukou* students. However, in the USA, if there is a *futoukou* student, immediate intervention will be provided by the concerned school and other educational institutions. Many Japanese people will be shocked if they know that in the USA, leaving a student as *futoukou* is considered educational neglect. Penalties can be imposed for causing such educational neglect in the USA.

To prevent the occurrence of child-initiated violence, efforts should be made to ensure children are not socially isolated (Tewelde and Olawoye 2013). It is assumed that *futoukou* is a gateway leading them to social isolation. In 2004, a Japanese elementary and middle school for *futoukou* students was established in Tokyo under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. However, initiatives to build more schools of this type have stagnated in Japan.

### 4.3.2 *The Ambiguity of Language*

In Japan, “DV” (domestic violence) usually refers to the violence between intimate partners. The Japanized expression, DV, is also used in our daily conversations but in somewhat different expressions. For example, “moral harassment” was once used in a limited realm. However, today, it is not a technical term anymore and developed into new words widely used such as “*morahara-otto*” (a husband who morally harasses) and “*kajihara-tsuma*” (wife who complains about husband’s housework<sup>1</sup>). There are many articles about “*morahara-otto*” in popular magazines targeting married female readers. These articles are well received by those who are frustrated with their husbands whether or not they are harassed. Also the expression, “*kajihara-tsuma*,” which appeared in advertisements of a house building company, indicates wives’ dissatisfaction with their husband’s housework (Asahi Kasei Homes Corporation 2015). Because of “*kajihara-tsuma*,” husbands have supposedly lost their motivation to participate in housework.

Like these newly formed words, if the term parental abuse gains a more general sense of meaning in the expression, the range of violent acts by children is to be wider in Japan. In fact, when teenagers leave home without a parental permission, it is considered child-to-parent abuse in Canada (Cottrell 2003).

It is not unusual that children use harsh words against their parents. However, if we treat all the rebellious behaviors observed in children’s developmental stages as child-to-parent abuse, then we will end up overestimating the cases of child-initiated violence. Therefore, to avoid the misconception and misunderstanding, parents should be given an opportunity to learn what child-to-parent violence is.

### 4.3.3 *Life Course and Child-Initiated Violence*

When family studies are examined from the life course perspective, we emphasize time transitions focusing on sociohistorical events, individual biographies, and relationships across generations (Bengtson and Allen 1993). The dynamics of the life course perspective are produced by those interactions. When discussing child-initiated violence, as Elder and Giele (2009: 9) note, we must ask that “the early years of childhood are relevant to understanding social adaptations in later life.” This aspect significantly restricts to analyzing only the temporal feature of the violence.

Socioeconomic status such as poverty and education is known to be transmitted through generations (d’Addio 2007). In addition, parent’s behaviors including violence are frequently modeled by their children. According to studies (McCloskey and Lichter 2003; Gershoff 2002), the exposure to violence at home leaves a sense

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<sup>1</sup>Japanese husbands hardly take part in housework. Husbands’ challenge to do housework is encouraged by wives. However, husbands’ involvement in housework may trigger another conflict between couples.

of fear in children and negatively affects their development. These effects also remain over the life course, thus influence the interaction between and among family members including their spouse and children.

Bandura (1965) conducted an experiment in which kindergarten children aged 3–5 were shown a video clip of a grown-up man beating up a “Bobo” doll. He observed that those children exposed to violent scenes immediately started mimicking the violent behavior. This phenomenon of learning social behavior through mimicking others is called social learning theory. This theory is one of the dominant theories that explains the reason why domestic violence is generationally transmitted. According to a study by McCloskey and Lichter (2003), children who have witnessed their fathers use violence against the mothers tended to show a greater level of aggression toward peers, dating partners, and parents in their adolescence. These findings suggest that even if children are not the subjects of violence, they can become violent by watching the violent scenes.

Additionally, there is a report that childhood spanking induces children’s problematic behavior in developmental stages. Based on a longitudinal study on 1874 mothers and children in the USA, MacKenzie et al. (2015) found that if mothers spank their children from infancy, then they were likely to continue spanking longer time, which eventually triggered problematic behaviors of children when they became adolescents. In this survey, 12.7 % of mothers who have 3-year-olds reported to spank their children frequently and 44.0 % did so occasionally.

In Japan, Lee et al. (2012) report that 77.7 % of mothers have spanked their preschool children in the course of upbringing. This study concludes that spanking preschool children is considered to be socially accepted in Japan despite recent public attention on child abuse. It was also pointed out that many mothers in Japan were not clear about the distinction between spanking and abusing a child (Lee and Yasuyama 2002). It is important to note that many studies in the past relied on their respondents to define what constitutes “abuse.” Therefore, it is highly possible that more severe case of violence such as beating up children with a belt was considered as a form of spanking (MacKenzie et al. 2015).

Bringing up children is exhausting for many parents, and spanking is chosen as a last resort because of its immediate effect (Gelles and Straus 1979). Many studies, however, show that spanking is effective only for that incidence, and when looking from the life course of the children, only negative effects of spanking can be found including filial violence (Gershoff 2002; McCloskey and Lichter 2003; MacKenzie et al. 2015).

## 4.4 Lack of Legal Aid

### 4.4.1 *Lack of Legal Aid*

In the 2000s, several laws were enacted in an attempt to prevent child abuse and elder abuse. However, there are neither laws nor efforts to legalize preventive measures concerning child-to-parent violence.

When people suffer from violence, the police are usually involved. In the case of child-to-parent violence, until desperate situation such as either a parent or a child is killed arises, what the law enforcement can do is quite limited (Kumagai 1983). Additionally, it is important to note that Japanese police are not willing to intervene in civil affairs (*minji fukainyu*). According to Matsuda (2006), without a formal accusation, the police will not take up any cases dealing with domestic violence.

If there is a phone call by a victim of domestic violence, the police may not arrest a perpetrator immediately and may leave the crime scene because of *minji fukainyu*. The principle of *minji fukainyu* is unwritten in any laws and regulations, but it is deeply rooted in Japanese police activities. This “passive” police intervention in family violence is resulted from (1) the victims’ withdrawal of accusations and (2) the acceptance of family violence as something that is commonly experienced by many people including the police officers (Matsuda 2006).

In the past, killing a parent was the crime associated with the most severe punishments than other murder cases in Japan. For murdering a parent, the sentencing was either a death penalty or a life imprisonment. However, Article 200 of Japan Penal Code was eliminated in 1995 after the Supreme Court judged that severe punishment against murdering a parent is a violation of the Constitution in 1973.

Yamamoto (2014) pointed out the severe punishment against parricide reflects the value of respect toward the elder family members. This value, however, weakened with the spread of the democracy in Japan and because of the murder cases involving parent-to-child abuse. For example, in Tochigi Prefecture murder case in which a daughter killed her father, the history of sexual abuse by her father was considered an important factor in the sentencing. It is not clear whether or not severe punishment was a deterrent factor for any parricide in the past. What is clear, however, is that the child-to-parent violence has escalated as a result of passive police intervention. Therefore, the principle of *minji fukainyu* should be reevaluated and possibly eliminated.

## 4.5 Invisible or Pretending Not to See?

### 4.5.1 Perpetrator, Victim, and Bystander

When discussing child-initiated violence, people have different concerns depending on their positions. These positions consist of whether he/she is a person who commits violence against parents, or he/she is a person who was beaten by his/her child, or he/she is just a bystander who had heard someone yelling next door.

Today, even the position of a bystander is not static. That is, it is possible for those bystanders or witnesses to become the targets of child-initiated violence. This is especially a serious concern for those who have children. Makino (2006) pointed out that anxiety and fear of becoming a target of a crime have increased due partly to the increased media reports about juvenile crimes such as the 1997 murder of two

elementary school children in Kobe by a 14-year-old boy. Interestingly, there has been an increase in media reports of juvenile crimes since the late 1990s, but the number of juvenile crimes has actually declined (Makino 2006).

### **4.5.2 *Perpetrators in Fantasy***

In 2014, a 16-year-old high school girl brutally murdered her female classmate. Dismembered remains of victim's body were found in a room where the perpetrator lived alone. This murder by the student who attends a highly ranked Nagasaki high school shocked many people in Japan. Media reports focused on her personality, the death of her mother from cancer, and her father's second marriage. Later, it was found that she lived alone, and she had attacked her father while he was asleep with a baseball bat. International media reported that such a crime was relatively rare in Japan known for good public security (Mckirdy and Wakatsuki 2014).

After the above news being subsided and media attention waned, another murder occurred in Hokkaido. An honor student killed her mother and grandmother. Japanese media reported that she was registered as being abused at a child consultation center when she was in kindergarten. Despite the fact that local child consultation center recorded the childhood abuse, the abuse apparently continued for more than a decade. She was forced to live in a barn next to her house without air conditioner and she had to do almost all the housework like a slave. Since juvenile court recognized her PTSD, she was placed for probation and sent to the medical reformatory (Asahi Shimbun Digital 2015).

The fact that the perpetrators were high school girls in both crimes was shocking for many people in Japan. From the media reports, it is understood that those girls had unpleasant family backgrounds, and they had hardships to live because of that. However, a complicated family environment is not the only explanation for the seriousness of these crimes. The Japanese media and the public have a tendency to find something extraordinary about these two perpetrators. With those information about the perpetrators, the public may feel that these two girls were living in a totally different world from them. This is a misconception, however, because children who abuse or even murder their parents come from all types of backgrounds, healthy or unpleasant.

### **4.5.3 *Conclusion***

In this chapter, child-initiated violence in Japanese context was discussed. Even if child-initiated violence has been recognized to exist for a long time, there are still numerous families facing this type of violence with fear. Everyday life that is surrounded by the violence is nothing more than an agony. It may be difficult for people who never had experienced the violence to imagine how it is like to be the victim of abuse. The child-to-parent violence is totally hidden within a family, and

the repeated violence makes victims feel powerless so that they feel that they cannot seek outside help. Systems of prevention, intervention, and aid targeting victims and perpetrators of child-initiated violence are sorely needed as follows:

First, it is necessary to make laws that directly target child-initiated violence. In other countries, there are such laws, and they function to prevent child-initiated violence from occurring. Passive method of intervention used by Japanese police is obviously ineffective to rescue the victims. It is usually the case that when the victims ask for help from the institutions, they are already in extremely desperate situations. Therefore, institutional intervention must take these calls seriously and come up with the concrete plans to protect the victims.

Second, similar to legislating the laws, temporary housing facilities for the victims of child-initiated violence are desperately needed. Like mother-child shelters, places for the family members who flee from the offending child are critically important for stopping the violence and protecting the victims' lives.

Third, supervised group homes should be set up for the perpetrators as correctional treatment centers. There are similar private facilities that provide treatment for the perpetrators, but they are costly and many parents simply cannot afford to place their violent children. In addition, some "accidents" were reported in these facilities including the death of a child because of the so-called excessive "training". In this case, the trainer of the facility was blamed for using violence against the child.

Finally, more research on child-initiated violence is requested regarding the increase in unmarried children living with their parents for a long time, even into their adulthood years. Future studies should also investigate children who belong to "high-risk" groups of child-initiated violence, such as those refusing to attend school and those who are neither employed nor enrolled in any social activities.

In this chapter, we defined filial violence and presented the brief history as well as its current state in Japan. It is a type of family violence less likely to be approached by concerned authorities in Japan. Power balance between parents and children changes over time throughout our life course. Parents are barely threatened by the external behavior of their children until they gain enough physical strength. It enables children to compete with parents. Should there be no relief measures for parent abuse, with aging of parents, some of the violence continues to become elder abuse in the final stage of our life course. In the next chapter, therefore, let us discuss the issue of elder abuse, another type of family violence, through a life course perspective.

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# Chapter 5

## Elder Abuse and Family Transformation

Yoko Hayashi

The problem of elder abuse in Japan has existed historically for a long period of time, but not brought into the public until recently. We are uncertain why and what factors account for it. Thus, the objectives of the current chapter are fivefold: first, various forms of elder abuse in Japan are defined; second, a life course perspective for the study of elder abuse is discussed; third, the Elder Abuse Prevention Act enacted in 2005 is elaborated; fourth, factors generating elder abuse are highlighted; and finally, as a way for the elder abuse prevention, the review on the changing trends of academic publications in the field is presented.

### 5.1 Elder Abuse and the Life Course Theory

The new family policy under the Constitution of Japan after World War II changed Japanese family relationships with the abolishment of the patriarchal *ie* system. Most older adults over 75 were educated during the years of pre-WWII; therefore, they experienced the changes in their new relationships with their offspring. They felt ambivalent between what they did for their parents and what they want their children to do for them. For seniors, these rapid changes in society may have brought about uncertain family situation which could at times lead to them being mistreated. The sociocultural conflicts in their life course are reflected in family relations and individual psychological and socioeconomic problems.

As we are going to discuss in detail, the problem of elder abuse in Japan has existed historically for a long period of time, but not brought into the public until recently. We are uncertain why and what factors account for it.

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This chapter discusses elder abuse through a life course perspective. This view is essential when explaining the causes of elder abuse. Because many parts of society are greatly affected by elder abuse, it is critical for us to understand its causes since this might hopefully lead to a reduced risk of elder abuse in the future.

## 5.2 Definition of Elder Abuse in Japan

The definition of elder abuse in Japan was first given publicity in the Elder Abuse Prevention Act for the first time in 2006. Kanno and Ai (2011) defined elder abuse in this Act as “any of the following acts committed by family caregivers in the home or by professional workers in nursing homes: (1) physical violence (inflicting an injury or an assault that may lead to injury; (2) neglect (preventing older adults from eating nutritionally; ignoring older adults for a long time; failing to interrupt physical psychological, or sexual violence against older adults);(3) psychological abuse (communicating with violent language, or using injurious speech or behavior towards older adults); (4) sexual abuse (committing an act of obscenity toward an elder or forcing the elder to commit an act of obscenity) and (5) economic abuse (improperly distributing an older adults’ property or unjustly obtaining benefits from such property)” (Kanno and Ai 2011:525).

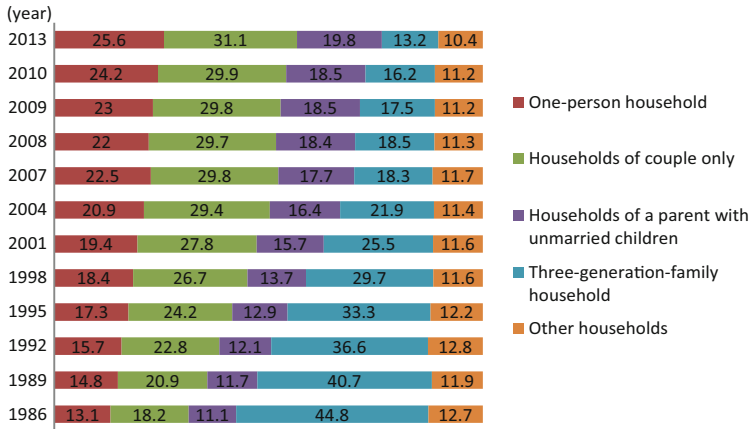
In the USA, the Elder Justice Act as a Federal Law was created by the National Center on Older Adults, Abuse in 2010.<sup>1</sup> This law includes, in its definition of elder abuse, self-neglect which consists of neglectful actions by older adults resulting in health damage. However, Japanese government did not include self-neglect in its definition of elder abuse. Some researchers speculate that one reason for this omission is the cultural belief of Japanese people (Tsumura et al. 2006). Additionally, Japanese people are likely to think that the management of their own health and well-being is a private matter. Therefore, when they are old and need assistance, they may expect their family member or relatives to provide care. The Japanese government may expect this also. However, recently a number of older adults living alone or with their spouse only has been increasing, especially in urban areas (see Fig. 5.1). Given the isolation of older adults, it seems important to include self-neglect of older adults in the Elder Abuse Prevention Act.

## 5.3 Historical Background of Elder Abuse

Throughout Japanese history, the concept of elder abuse has been influenced by the changes occurring in the social environments, institutional situations, and ideologies of each period (Tatara 2001). Japanese pioneer researcher in elder abuse (Kaneko 1987) described the history of such abuse from *Asuka* period (592–710)

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<sup>1</sup><http://ncea.aoa.gov/Library/Policy/Law/Federal/index.aspx> Accessed 31 July 2015.



**Fig. 5.1** Changes in the proportion (%) of household types with older adults 65 and over: 1986–2013 (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry, Government of Japan, 2013. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author)

through *Nara* (710–794) to *Edo* period (1603–1868). He states that “In all countries, the average of life span of people in the past was shorter than that of people today. The social structure surrounding the older people in the past was qualitatively different from the present because of their very short life span. Older people in the past, therefore, were rarely abused” (translated by the author) (Kaneko 1987:180).

From antiquity, in the West and the East, older adults thought of as possessing much wisdom. For example, “senex” in Latin means “wise.” Members of congress are called “senators” which were positions historically held in ancient Rome by experienced senior officials. They advised or consulted younger and less experienced functionaries. Older people were well taken care of by the society and family members. They themselves used to help each other if they were physically weakened. After the Industrial Revolution began, however, older adults could not keep abreast of new knowledge and technology; thus, their possession of wisdom was no longer considered valuable and many older people fell into poverty (Eastman 1984:19–20). This seems to have helped to give rise to elder abuse in modern times (Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002:75–77).

We can, however, trace the signs of elder abuse even further back to the ancient times in Japan. Kaneko (1987), for example, pointed out that *Onibaba* (a pitiless hag) and *Ubasute* (older adults abandonment: granny dumping) phenomena were common in *Heian* era (794–1192). *Ubasute* is the custom of abandoning older people, and it can be considered as a form of elder abuse. *Ubasute* folklore in *Shinano*<sup>2</sup> is perhaps the most well known in Japan. Similar incidences existed during *Sengoku*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*Shinano* was one of local administration divisions of Japan; now, they are called *Nagano* and *Niigata* Prefecture.

<sup>3</sup>The age of provincial wars was from 1493 to 1573.

and Edo period<sup>4</sup> in Shinshu,<sup>5</sup> Chikugo,<sup>6</sup> Imari,<sup>7</sup> Amami,<sup>8</sup> Okinawa, Michinoku,<sup>9</sup> and Kiso<sup>10</sup> Districts. The same pattern was seen in most regions. First, in many regions, there was the custom of *Ubasute* which was forced by the domain load or economic reason. Second, the eldest son who could make family decisions did not engage in *Ubasute*. Instead, he hid his older parent (especially, his mother) from the people living in the same region. Third, the people of the region or the domain load faced some difficult predicaments. Fourth, the dutiful son could solve these predicaments with the help of his parent. Gradually, those in the village understood the importance of the elders, and as a result, *Ubasute* was discontinued. Overall, *Ubasute* folktales seemed to have a message for unfilial children about the importance of respect for older parents.

Many of these stories also chronicled the problems related to the population and economic hardship. When there were droughts or harsh winters, families often left behind older parents in the mountains in order to reduce the number of mouths to feed (Kaneko 1987). In sum, elder abuse seems to be influenced by historical background and socioeconomic structures and other sociological realities of each period.

### 5.3.1 *The 1950s and the 1960s*

After World War II that ended in 1945, the Japanese government began to create a new social welfare system under the instructions of the Occupation Army's General Headquarters (GHQ). As a result, three Social Welfare Acts were established in 1950: Law for the Welfare of People with Physically Disabled in 1946, Child Welfare in 1947, and the new Public Assistance Act in 1950. For the welfare of older adults, "the welfare facilities for older adults" were included under the new Public Assistance Act (*Koreisha Fukushi Gaisetu* Kuroda et al. 2014). This Act targeted those older adults who had neither relatives nor jobs and incomes.

In 1950, the Japanese average life span was about 58 (80.5 in 2014) and 61.5 (86.8 in 2014) for men and women, respectively (see Fig. 5.2). The aging of the population was not recognized as a social problem until after the mid-1960s. With the 1968 investigation of bedridden older adults by the National Council of Social Welfare, the public became more aware of the problems associated with the aging population (Kitaba 2005).

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<sup>4</sup>Edo era was from 1603 to 1868.

<sup>5</sup>Shinshu was located at the central part of Honshu: Chubu District.

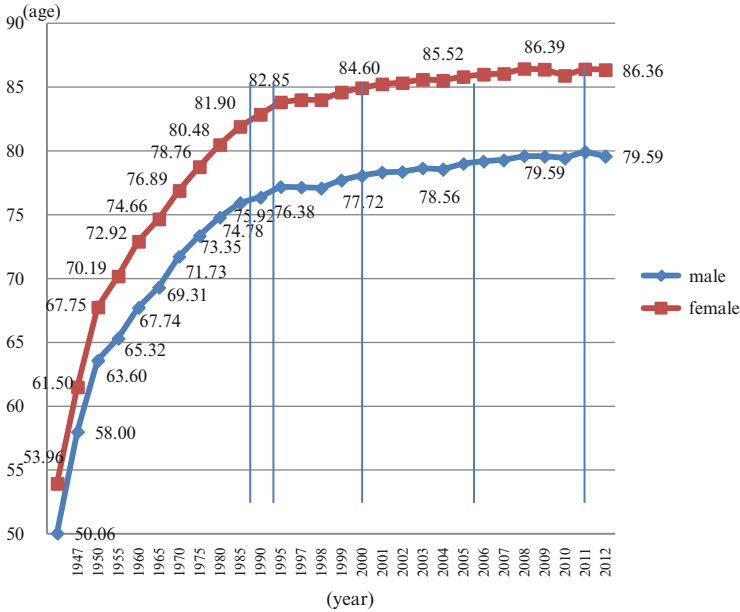
<sup>6</sup>Chikugo was the southern part of Fukuoka Prefecture of the present. Fukuoka Prefecture is northern part of Kyushu District which is southern part of Japan.

<sup>7</sup>Imari was the western part of Saga Prefecture which is northwest part of Kyushu District.

<sup>8</sup>Amami is the island which is the southern part of Kyushu District.

<sup>9</sup>Michinoku was located on the Pacific Ocean side of northern part of Honshu: Tohoku District.

<sup>10</sup>Kiso was southern part of Nagano Prefecture which is located on Chubu District.



**Fig. 5.2** Changes in life expectancy at birth of Japanese male and female: 1947–2012 (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry, Government of Japan, 2010 & 2013. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author).

In the 1960s, many Japanese older adults assumed that their *yome*, daughter-in-law or wife of the eldest son, would eventually take care of them. This can be seen as one of the legacies of *ie* system that Kumagai (in press) described in Chap. 1 of this anthology. In the *ie* system, the eldest son inherits the majority of his father’s assets and family property, but he also has duty to take care of his aged parents and a responsibility to continue running family business. Under the *ie* system, only one child was allowed to inherit parent’s assets. In contrast, under Japan’s postwar Civil Code, the general practice of inheritance has been to equally divide the property as well as the care of older parents among heirs. However, until recent times, the practice of the eldest son’s wife providing care for the frail aging parents was continued, thus ignoring the newly emerging social norms.

If the relationship between the parent-in-law and the son’s wife were not so good, then the possibility for elder abuse committed by the daughter-in-law might increase. This may have been particularly true with the full-time housewives who were given a heavy burden of caring for their husbands’ parents. Sawako Ariyoshi, a best-selling author in *Showa* era, released a novel entitled *Kokotsu-no-Hito* (person suffering from senile dementia) in 1972. In this novel, the author described the difficulties associated with a housewife in a nuclear family who lived in a big city. She took care of her husband’s father who suffered from dementia. It was not the intention of the author to discuss elder abuse in this novel, but the difficulty of care work by *yome* was vividly described. Though it was abolished by the postwar Constitution of Japan, the element of *ie* can be seen in *yome*’s caregiving for older



parents. According to the Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report (1998), 30 % of the family elder care was given by *yome*.

### 5.3.2 After High Economic Growth (The 1970s and the 1980s)

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the “aging society” as one having more than 7 % of the population over the age of 65 (Kuroda et al. 2014:11). Based on this definition, Japan became an aging society in 1970. In response to this changing demography, the Japanese government established, in 1973, the medical expense supply system for older adults 65 and over, thus this year has been called “the first year of welfare society” (Kuroda et al. 2014). Despite this, however, since the first oil crisis that occurred in October 1973, Japan’s economy entered a period of low growth.

With the restructuring of welfare system in 1975, the Ministry of Health and Welfare (today’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) placed an importance upon cooperation among self-help efforts, families, neighbors, and other communities. This system was named as the *Nihon-gata-Fukushi* (welfare in Japanese style) (Annual Health, Labor and Welfare Report Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 1979), which, in essence, designated family members as “hidden assets” in the provision of care.

Despite the increase in the number of nuclear families, the family was built in a social welfare plan as a main provider of the care. As a consequence, the care burdens on the family continued to increase. Under these situations, families caring for older adults with dementia become united socially to establish the Alzheimer’s Association Japan<sup>11</sup> in 1980.

After the oil crisis, many housewives began to work in order to help with their family budget; thus, it became more difficult for them to care for older parents at home. However, there were not enough public nursing homes at the time to accommodate the increasing demand for such homes. Therefore, many older people were forced to enter into the so-called social hospitalization. At this time, a number of older patients are hospitalized for a long time for nonmedical reasons, such as family circumstances and a shortage of nursing care facilities. Such cases are dubbed “social hospitalization” patients, first surfacing in 1973 with the advent of free medical care for the older adults (Kuroda et al. 2006). This social hospitalization might be considered a form of neglect. In 1988, a documentary fiction entitled *RupoRoujin-byoutou* (*The reportage of older adults ward in mental institutions*, Okuma 1992) was released. This report revealed that older people with dementia were often treated poorly in the hospitals, sometimes suffering neglect and body restraint. After the publication of this report, the Japanese public became aware of the miserable conditions of the social hospitalization used by many older adults with dementia. As a result, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare put out the ministerial ordinance in 1999 that prohibited senior citizens from constraining on hospital beds (Kuroda et al. 2006).

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www2f.biglobe.ne.jp/boke/fcg.htm> Accessed 16 Sept. 2014

### ***5.3.3 Before Introduction of the Long-Term Care Insurance System (The 1990s)***

In 1995, 14.6 % of the Japanese population was over 65 years of age. The projection of the White Paper (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2000a) was that this population aging would continue for some time to come. With this increase, it was expected that the care for senior citizens would become one of the major social problems in Japan. In 1997, the number of households with double earners exceeded the number of single worker households for the first time. Those with married couples without children were increasing, and at the same time, the proportion of older adults living together with their children was decreasing.

After the late 1980s, the proportion of people who thought it was natural for children to take care of their older parents started to decrease (Cabinet Office 2006). Therefore, the need for socialized care was expected to be on the rise. In 1997, the Long-Term Care Insurance Act was finally passed and enacted in 2000.

### ***5.3.4 Public Long-Term Care Insurance System (After 2000)***

With the introduction of the Long-Term Care Insurance System and the subsequent participation of the third party in care provision, professionals such as care managers began to better understand the situations surrounding family caregiving (Taguchi 2013). As a result, the following points were observed (Tatara 2001). First, families often could not cope with the care for older adults by themselves. Second, the neighbors found it difficult to intervene in family caregiving. Third, it was difficult for families to resolve the problems of nursing care for the aging parents only by using the professional care services.

The Long-Term Care Insurance also generated advocacy efforts for the rights of older adults. For years, older adults were regarded as disproportionately using the country's resources for pension and medical insurance (Kuroda et al. 2006). Furthermore, some older people were unable to decide their own care plans; thus, their family stepped in as the Japanese proverb says, "When old, obey your children." However, the "independence" and "dignity" of older people were addressed in the Long-Term Care Insurance System, and the optimal forms of protection of older adults finally were seriously discussed.

The abuse of older adults in their own homes has been hidden for a long time because it is considered shameful and a private affair of the family. Even today, people outside of the family hesitate to meddle in the private affairs of the family. Furthermore, police did not intervene in civil affairs. Therefore, when people discovered elder abuse, they did not know how and to whom they could contact. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, which took the matter seriously, partially revised the Long-Term Care Insurance System in 2005. This revision included the establishment of the Community Support Service Center that gives advice for

preventive care and care managers, makes care plan for the support required, and does right protection for older people including elder abuse. In the Community Support Service Center, reports on elder abuse are received, and consultation projects for elder abuse are established.

## 5.4 Trends of Elder Abuse in Japan

Ever since the Elder Abuse Prevention Act was implemented in 2007, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been conducting research to assess the current state of elder abuse. In this section, several major findings from this research are presented.

### 5.4.1 *Statistical Trends of Abuse Cases Assessed as Abuse*<sup>12</sup>

When there is a report of elder abuse, local authorities (Municipal Older adults Welfare Division) carry out a fact-checking investigation. The number of cases which were officially assessed as elder abuse has been increasing since the research began. In 2007, the number of abuse cases was 12,569 out of 18,390 reported cases, and in 2013, the abuse cases were 15,202 out of 23,843 reports.<sup>13</sup> Over 40 % of informants were specialists in long-term care support such as care managers whose service fees are covered under the Long-Term Care Insurance (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2006–2012).

As for the form and the pattern of elder abuse, there have been few changes since the beginning of the investigation. In 2012, 65 % of the victims were physically abused, followed by psychological abuse (40.4 %), economic abuse (25 %), neglect (23.4 %), and sexual abuse (0.5 %). Additionally, 70 % of the battered were women, and 75 % were older adults over 75 years of age living with the perpetrators (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2006–2012).

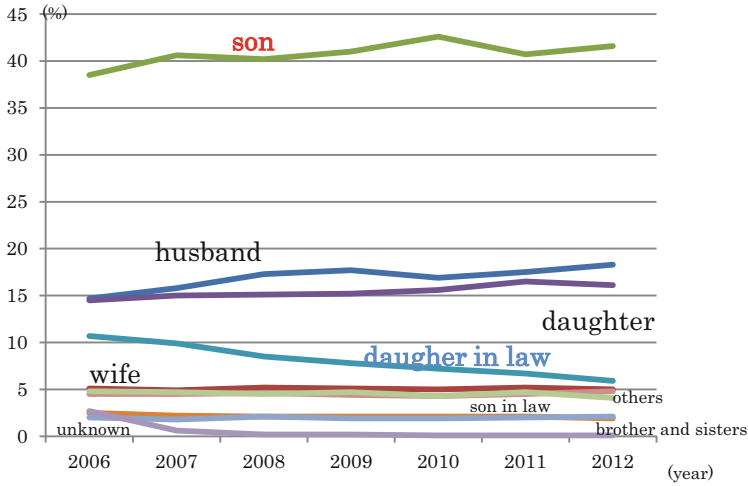
After the Long-Term Care Insurance System was introduced, the number of daughters-in-law who mistreated older parents was on the decline, but also was the number of daughters-in-law who cared for older parents as shown in Fig. 5.4. Approximately 50 % of the caregivers were daughters-in-law, and their risk of elder abuse was 4.7 times higher than those of other caregivers (Suzuki and Ariyoshi 1998). The reason for this will be given in Sect. 5.4.2.2. In contrast, 41.5 % of the perpetrators in 2012 were sons of older parents (Fig. 5.3).

Figure 5.4 also shows that the number of caregivers has been increasing after the Long-Term Care Insurance System was introduced (Hayashi 2010a). It was also speculated that the proportion of male perpetrators abusing older adults' family members would not go down significantly, at least in part because the murders of

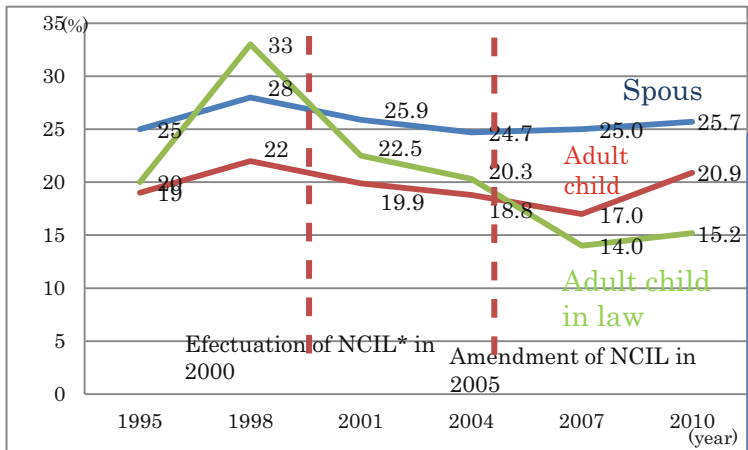
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<sup>12</sup>The number of the reports of abuse is different from those of actual abuse cases.

<sup>13</sup>People came to report the cases suspected of abuse. Some reports were found to be non-abusive cases.



**Fig. 5.3** Changes in the proportion (%) of perpetrators in elder abuse: 2006–2013 (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry, Government of Japan 2006–2012. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author).



\*NCIL=Nursing Care Insurance Law

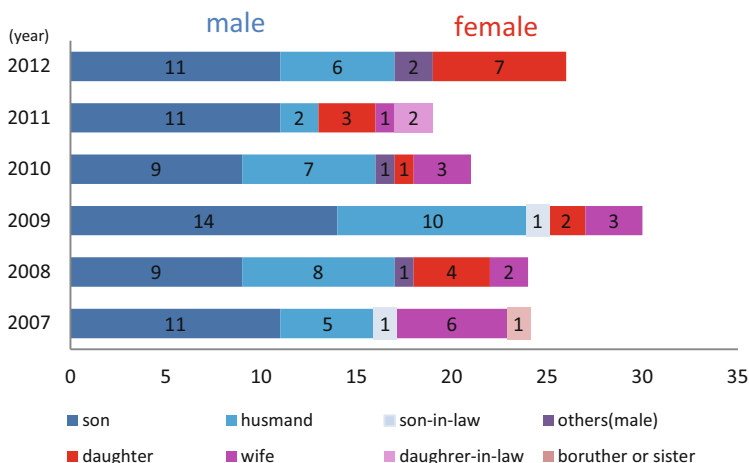
**Fig. 5.4** Changes in the proportion (%) of caregivers to frail elderlies: 1995–2010 (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Government of Japan, 1995–2010. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author).

older adults are much more likely to be committed by males than females (see Fig. 5.5). Needless to say, there were other reasons for murdering their older parents. One such reason was that of economic hardship. Japan was in a severe economic condition from 2007 to 2009 and from 2011 to 2012 (jijicom<sup>14</sup>), and these periods coincide with an increase in the number of murder of older adults by family members (see Fig. 5.5). The details of the reasons for abuse will be given in the next section.

The reality of abuse found in quantitative research represents just the tip of the iceberg (Tatara 2001; Kumagai in press: Chap. 6). Thus, it is necessary to increase the opportunities to connect with older adults who are abused in order to grasp more accurately conditions surrounding the victims. In addition, more research needs to be conducted on self-neglect and on *Koritsu-shi*<sup>15</sup> (death in isolation without being known by somebody), both of which have been increasing recently (Cabinet Office 2010).

### 5.4.2 Causes of Elder Abuse in Japan

It has been pointed out that elder abuse is caused by multilayered factors (Takasaki 1998; Ueda et al. 1998; Umino and Kanno 2003). Tatara (2001) stated that it was “necessary to analyze causes of elder abuse based on each situation of the abuser



**Fig. 5.5** Changes in murder cases of frail elderlies by sex and family relations of the perpetrator: 2007–2012 (Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Government of Japan, 2006–2012. The figure was constructed and drawn by the author.)

<sup>14</sup>Jijicom: Website to cover the current issues [http://www.jiji.com/jc/graphics?p=ve\\_eco\\_current-diffusion](http://www.jiji.com/jc/graphics?p=ve_eco_current-diffusion) Accessed 21 Nov. 2014.

<sup>15</sup>*Koritsu-shi* is different from *Kodoku-shi* (death in isolation). “*Kodoku-shi* of elders” resulted from the inability of elders who lived alone and kept from contacting with communities to ask for help even at the last minute. *Koritsu-shi* resulted from elders choosing little access to communities on purpose till their death.

and the abused person, family relationships and problems, regional and social situations and backgrounds, and culture and norms of the society (Tatara 2001: 127)", and these factors caused abuse in a multilayered way. These co-occurring factors can be classified into the following four categories: (1) factors caused by older victims, (2) factors caused by family perpetrators, (3) family relationships, and (4) cultural and social factors (Kato and Yabuki 2012; Ono et al. 2013). In this section, each category of the factor will be reviewed.

#### **5.4.2.1 Factors Caused by the Abused**

Older adults with dementia often have difficulties communicating with others. They often ask and say the same thing repeatedly. Many of them come to think that their spouses are strangers and are unable to recognize their own children. These older adults may also disappear from home and are often found wandering around in the neighborhood. Older adults suffering from dementia also show symptoms of delusion, and, as a consequence, they may resist care by their family members. Because of this, elder care often causes stress for the family (Kato and Yabuki 2012).

These burdens are frequently strongly linked to the caregiver's ill-treatment of older adults, which then causes the physical disorder, stress, anxiety, and confusion of older adults (Tsumura et al. 1999). As a result, the symptoms such as dementia and the problematic behavior may be worsened, which, in turn, increase the stress of a family caregiver. Thus, the elder abuse occurs in such a vicious circle (Kato and Yabuki 2012). This is an important notion of the life course perspective.

As is true of many other types of family violence, personality traits and the behavior of the battered older adults may also cause the abuse. Examples of such potentially problematic personality traits include stubbornness, resistance, geocentricism, and arrogance (Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002). In addition, older adults are often less likely to express their appreciation to the family caregivers (Kuroda et al. 2000), which may also cause or worsen the abuse.

#### **5.4.2.2 Causal Factors Associated with Perpetrators**

Many perpetrators may not recognize that they are actually abusing older adults (Kato and Yabuki 2012). Personality characteristics of the perpetrators are often quite similar to those of the abused. They are likely to be egocentric, persistent, well organized, nervous, restless, and immature (Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002:45). Additionally, male abusers are likely to be violent, mentally immature, and dependent (Unuma and Sekine 2007). For example, a nervous caregiver may physically punish his/her mother with dementia. As another instance, an egocentric caregiver may be irritated and hurt a parent with dementia.

The lack of knowledge about care and its techniques can also lead to abuse. Single male caregivers especially have neither care nor housework experiences. They were once taken care of by their parents when their parents were well. For these single male caregivers, it was the first time to care for parents, but they were

not familiar with the care techniques. Therefore, they felt severely burdened which may lead to the neglect of their older parents.

Often, family caregivers cannot face the reality that their parents have dementia (Kato and Yabuki 2012). In extreme cases, family caregivers who experience large amounts of distress because of long-term caregiving responsibilities become severely depressed themselves (Inoue 1999) or even fatally violent in some instances.

In the case of *rou-rou-kaigo* (old-to-old caregiving in which those who give and receive care are both older adults), older caregivers often have chronic disorders, and they may feel like they have reached the limit of their strength and energy to care for their spouses. Sometimes, these situations end up in the double suicide of the caregivers and receivers. When family caregivers themselves are in poor health, caregiving may well cause further stress (Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002; Kato and Yabuki 2012).

Like a workaholic person more generally, some caregivers could fall into “care-holic” category (Inoue 1999). This could be explained as a result of valued Japanese personality traits, *amae*/interdependency as discussed by Kumagai in Sect. 1.10.7 of this book (Kumagai in press). Care-holic persons are likely to provide care in their own ways, and this egocentric care may sometimes take the form of abuse. For example, some male caregivers ignore the feelings of care-receivers and forcibly move older adults in a way that might hurt them during the rehabilitation process (Inoue 1999; Hayashi 2010b). Male caregivers often tend to consider caregiving as a main purpose of their life more strongly than female caregivers and to think far more positively about their caregiving role (Yuhara 2010). But at the same time, when they face problems such as when aging parents’ physical and mental states decline, these men may not be able to continue caregiving for their parents, and they may thus lose their purpose of life. Therefore, they would be in danger of committing murder or double suicide (Yuhara 2010). As for female caregivers, especially wife-caregivers, elder abuse takes place in an isolation because they are providing care all by themselves (Fujisaki 2000). For these women, their caregiving role becomes one of her most important identities; however, without any support from others, their care burden would be likely to increase, which might then leads to the abuse.

The economic situation of a family is also likely to be one of the causes of abuse. Though the revised Child Care and Family Care Leave Act which helps workers balance their work with family care came into force in 2009, some family caregivers have lost their jobs because of the time spent on caring for their aged parents. Several studies have reported that unmarried son-caregivers were coerced into resigning from their jobs because of their caregiving role for older parents (Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting 2013).

Several cases were reported on unmarried and unemployed sons financially mistreating their disabled parents (Ueda et al. 2007). These sons exploited not only their parents’ pensions but also they had stolen money from their disabled older parents. Sometimes, they had used the Adult Guardianship System<sup>16</sup> to exploit resources of

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<sup>16</sup> See next Sect. 5.5.1 Adult Guardianship System.

older parents. One case in which a son withdrew all of his parents' money without permission and used his parents' pension for activities that has nothing to do with caregiving caught the public attention (Nippon-Keizai-Shinbun July 28, 2014). This is a typical example of economic abuse. As a consequence of this form of elder abuse, some older parents become too poor to pay for their health insurance.

#### 5.4.2.3 Family Relationships of Older Adults

It has been found that the care burden was influenced by the past relationships between older adults and family caregivers (Hayashi 2000). That is, the occurrence of abuse is related to the history of family relationships. As stated in Chap. 1 of this book (Kumagai *in press*), elder abuse is often associated with life history of each actor. Kaneko, a pioneer in elder abuse research, tried to place the abuse in the history of family relationships.

According to the data from the Institute for Health Economic and Policy, an adult son who lives with his parents and cares for them is more likely to abuse his parents if the past parent-child relationship was problematic (Kanno and Ai 2011). As for the aged spousal abuse, earlier family history of domestic violence is likely to continue into older age (Katsumata and Tukada 2014). Interestingly, some of these couples tend to think that abuse is an expression of affection (Inoue 1999). On the other hand, a wife who was a victim of spousal violence in the past possibly would abuse her husband when he needs care out of vengeance as discussed by Kumagai in Fig. 1.1, in Chap. 1 of this book (Kumagai *in press*).

A reversed situation of power relations between parents and their children may also lead to elder abuse. That is, those children who were abused by their parents in childhood may become abusers when their parents need care. These cases are examples of "learned violence" and the generational transmission of family violence (Finkelhor 1983; Straus 1974; Straus et al. 2013; Wallace and Roberson 2013).

The framework of cycle of abuse that is so central to the life course perspective is important in studying elder abuse. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law might be a good example of how to apply this perspective. The abuse of an aging parent by a daughter-in-law may be caused by the hostility between them which may have accumulated over the years. If the mother-in-law mistreated her son's wife in early years, then the daughter-in-law may feel like retaliating when the mother becomes frail and in need of help (Hayashi 2010b; Kato and Yabuki 2012).

As discussed above, elder abuse is not only caused by the characteristics of the individual, but also by the relationship in the past with the battered person. It thus stands to reason that it is possible to reduce elder abuse by observing a family relationship of the older adult and her/his life history (Inoue 1999; Riley 1998).



#### 5.4.2.4 Cultural and Social Factors

Japanese cultural characteristics which may be related to elder abuse are traditional norms of the caregiving role and the gendered division of labor found in Japan. The traditional norm of the caregiving role is that the *yome* (daughter-in-law) of the eldest son assumes the responsibility for caring of their older parent at home. This norm of a gendered division of labor refers to the way of thinking that holds “a man works outside, and a woman works at home.” As mentioned earlier in this chapter (Sect. 5.3.2), the full-time homemaker often takes care of her parents-in-law instead of relying on the paid formal care services. This tradition placed the heaviest burden and most stress on the older son and his wife (Yamamoto 2010). These stresses and burdens have to be considered as the major factors contributing to the occurrence of elder abuse (Fukutake 1981; Nakane 1967, Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002, Yamamoto 2010, Tanaka 2005). These two norms persisted in Japanese culture for a long time.

In the 1990s, those norms weakened with the spread of the knowledge about gender equality. As discussed earlier (Sect. 5.3.2), *yome* began to free themselves from the caregiving role of their older parents-in-law. Instead, an eldest daughter or an unmarried daughter was “selected” as a caregiver. If there are sons in the family, they did not generally help their sisters, and they may even have stayed away from their older parents. As a result, the caregiving daughters often felt angry at their brothers and took out their frustration on the weak parents. Consequently, older parents became the victims of abuse once again, but this time being abused by their own daughters.

Although many Japanese men are likely to depend on women in the family to provide care for older parents, they sometimes find themselves being the caregiver for their parents. Many times these men feel helpless and frustrated and, as a consequence, become abusive toward their parents. Aging husbands usually do not expect to assume the caregiving role for their wives. In one study (Hayashi 2010b), a husband said that he would have liked to be taken care of by his wife. This husband also thought that it would be “natural” for a man to be cared for by his wife, especially because he was older than his wife (Hayashi 2010b: 90). Apparently, he was afraid of losing his position as the patriarch. And this feeling led the husbands to abuse their wives (Fukutake 1981; Hayashi 2010b).

One of the social factors that is associated with older persons’ abuse is the absence of social policies related to the healthcare and welfare of older persons and the lack of the healthcare and welfare services in the communities. On the other hand, even if these services are available, they may be underutilized. For example, many battered older adults as well as their abusers have never used any of these services (Inoue 1999; Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002; Tatara 2001). Additionally, the number of men who take leave from work to care for their older parents remains extremely low, despite the revision of the Child Care and Elder Care Leave Act in 2009. Much attention has been paid on men’s participation in child care (Ishii-Kuntz

2013). But the men who care for their older parents have not received much public attention. This is because Japanese men often quit working without telling their companies the reasons for such actions. Recently, however, men's caregiving for their older parents has gained much more public attention, as the obstacle for men to balance between work and family.

#### **5.4.2.5 Composite Causal Factors of Elder Abuse from a Life Course Perspective**

When elder abuse occurs, it may not be because of a single factor that may be causing it, but rather it can be due to the combination of factors. According to the investigation by *Netakiri Yobou Kenkyukai* (2002), actual abuse occurred due to the problems of interpersonal relationships between the perpetrator and the abused as well as family problems. To prevent elder abuse from occurring, it is necessary to understand multiple factors such as an older adult's life history, various problems that the perpetrator is faced with, and various relationships in their families. The mechanism of these interactions is too complicated to be analyzed in this chapter. Personal factors of an older adult combined with his/her family and social factors such as economic problems, loss of job, and poverty are intricately interrelated. This results in elder abuse. However, it is important that both the older adults and family are supported by the society's preventive efforts for elder abuse.

### **5.5 Prevention of Elder Abuse: System and Policy**

After the Long-Term Care Insurance Act was established in 1997, several preventive measures of elder abuse began to be created. The "Gold Plan 21" of 1999 began to present the directions of health welfare measures for older persons for the next 5 years. It was also intended to introduce the Long-Term Care Insurance System which was to start in 2000. Under the Gold Plan 21, the following four agendas were established as goals: (1) the securing of dignity and the independence support for older persons, (2) the construction of the vibrant image of older persons, (3) the building of the supportive communities, and (4) the providing of care services trusted by older person's users (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 1999). The Long-Term Care Insurance System can be seen as a contract between older persons (user) and service providers.

Before the Long-Term Care Insurance System was introduced, care services were legally provided for the low-income older adults. The qualified older adults were able to receive these services without contracts. Under the Long-Term Care Insurance System, recipients must have contracts with service providers. Older adults, especially those with dementia, are unable to sign the contract with service providers by

themselves. Furthermore, they might have the risk of being deceived by dishonest dealers and thus at a risk of losing their wealth. Therefore, the quality of the services and older person's advocacy were important agendas (Kuroda et al. 2014). *Netakiri Yobou Kenkyukai* (Bedridden Prevention Society) (2002) pointed out that the existing laws were too weak to protect older persons, more specifically, to guarantee their rights to life (Article 25) and to personal dignity, liberty, pursuit of happiness (Article 13), and the International Covenant on Human Rights (adopted in 1966).

In addition, these authors above had insisted upon the necessity of a system in which people could eliminate the impediments to the right for older persons (Netakiri Yobo Kenkyukai 2002).

### ***5.5.1 The Adult Guardianship System***

The Adult Guardianship System is a system in which a nominated adult will act on behalf of older persons with dementia to manage their property, the contract of the welfare services, and the division of inherited property. This system guarantees for disabled persons including older adults with dementia that guardian will help to make the right judgment in order to manage their wealth. Since April 2006, the consultation counters for the "Adult Guardianship System" were opened in the new Community Support Centers which had been built throughout the country.

Because property management is included in the role of guardianship, an adult child of older persons often becomes the guardian. The system is designed to protect the rights of older persons and is intended to prevent the economic abuse of older adults. Recently, however, an incident in which the guardian (the son) economically exploited older parent was reported in the newspaper (*Yomiuri Shimbun* dated July 6, 2012) (*Yomiuri* online, column blog, 2012). Her son used the savings of his mother suffering from dementia to pay off his debt. According to the *Yomiuri Online*, allegations of the fraudulent use of the Adult Guardianship exceeded the average of 30,000 yen a year.

According to the Supreme Court, there were 550 cases of adult guardians' embezzlement of the property owned by older persons from June 2010 to March 2012. The gross amount of the loss is approximately 50 million US dollars. In 98 % of these cases, the guardians were the relatives of older persons (*Yomiuri Online*, column blog, 2012). Indeed, the misuse of the Adult Guardianship System has become the latest social problem. Another economic abuse case of a woman in her 80s was reported in the newspaper.

### ***5.5.2 The Elder Abuse Prevention Act***

For a long time, little has been known about elder abuse, its effects, and possible methods of prevention. Under these circumstances, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare carried out a national investigation. Then the Ministry established the

Elder Abuse Prevention Act in November 2005 on the basis of the results obtained by this investigation (Association for Health Economics Research and Social Insurance and Welfare 2003).

In the Elder Abuse Prevention Act (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2005), not only was elder abuse clearly defined, but the support for the perpetrators was also stated along with the citizen's obligations for the reporting of such incidence. Obligations in terms of the reporting are described as follows:

Article 7: Citizens who discovered the elder abuse should report it to the municipal government.

Article 11: The municipal government which received the information from the citizens should make on-site inspections.

The Act also states that the abused older adults will be provided with temporary protection, and the perpetrator could be prevented from visiting the abused. The Act clearly indicates the responsibility of the municipal government to consult and advise the perpetrators. It is also the duty of the municipal government to request assistance from the chief of the police when necessary. The Act also states that, in care facilities, if the workers thought that an older adult life is in serious danger, they need to immediately contact the authorities. In addition, the employee who reports the abuse in facilities cannot be fired (*Koreisha Gyakutai Boshi no Kihon* Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2006a).

From 2006, the report about elder abuse in Japan has been published by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare every year. The report includes not only the situations of abuse in the homes and institutions but also the efforts of the local governments to establish the support system. The items of the investigation for the local government are as follows:

- (i) The number of the local governments which established the consultation counters for the residents
- (ii) The training for handling the abuse case in the Community Support Service Center
- (iii) The educational campaign about the abuse to the residents
- (iv) The creation of the original manual about elder abuse
- (v) The existence of the guideline concerning the duties of the community
- (vi) The creation of the correspondence flow
- (vii) The construction of network for the early detection and monitoring
- (viii) The construction of the intervention support network of the medical care and welfare services
- (ix) The construction of the intervention support network of the related professional agencies

The establishment of the Elder Abuse Prevention Act greatly raised the public interest in and knowledge about the topic of elder abuse. As a result, it is believed that the abuse cases are discovered and reported to the public office early in its stage.

### 5.5.3 *The Fundamentals of the Prevention of Elder Abuse*

In 2006, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare published *Koreisha Gyakutai Boshi no Kihon* (The Fundamentals of the Prevention of Elder Abuse: Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2006a) to explain what the Elder Abuse Prevention Act was all about. In this publication, the Ministry gives a basic viewpoint for the prevention of elder abuse as follows (Ministry of Health and Labour and Welfare 2006a: 13–14):

#### **(Basic Viewpoints)**

- (i) Provide the continuous support to prevent the abuse and to build the stable environment for the ill-treated older adults
- (ii) Respect the will of older adults
- (iii) Provide an active approach to prevent abuse including:
  - The awareness of rights in the home
  - Facilitate better understanding and care knowledge for dementia
  - Diminish care burden by promoting the use of community and/or professional services by utilizing the Long-Term Care Insurance System
  - Reduce risk factors by consulting with the concerned people related to the isolated older adults
- (iv) The early detection of and correspondence with the abused by:
  - Coordination and cooperation among community organizations such as local welfare officers, residents' associations, and the neighborhood associations
  - Spreading awareness about the elder abuse among local residents
  - Establishment of a network for cooperation with health and medical care professionals, public health, social public aid service, and other relevant resource

“The Fundamentals of the Prevention of Elder Abuse” defines the duty of the national government and local governments (Article 3), the duty of the people (Article 4), and the duty of a health, medical care, and welfare-affiliated professionals (Article 5) based on the above viewpoints. Furthermore, it explains the role of national, prefectural, and municipal governments.

Before this Act was established, pioneer researchers (Kaneko 1987; Takasaki 1998; Tanaka and others 1997; Tatara 2001) on elder abuse were pointing out that the law that prevented the elder abuse should be founded (Tatara 2001). They pointed out that the law to prevent the elder abuse directly was as necessary as the Child Abuse Prevention Law (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2000a). Moreover, conducting a nationwide fact-finding survey (Okuni 1997; Zaidan Houjin Chouju Shakai Kaihatsu Center 1997), educating people, training specialists, and developing the information system of abuse were necessary to prevent elder abuse. “The Fundamentals of the Prevention of Elder Abuse” included all these matters, as mentioned above.

## 5.6 Studies in Japan

Earlier studies on elder abuse in Japan were greatly influenced by research carried out previously in the USA and UK (Tatara 2001). In the USA, elder abuse came to be recognized as a social problem in the beginning of the 1980s (McEwan 1981; Kumagai 1985, 2004, 2005). On the other hand, in Japan, elder abuse problem was recognized socially in 1990s (Tatara 2001).

This section summarizes the publications included in DiaL<sup>17</sup> which is the database of social gerontological research in Japan (DiaL website<sup>18</sup>). “The Elder Abuse” was used as a keyword to search the articles in this section. Ichushi-Web,<sup>19</sup> CiNii Articles,<sup>20</sup> and EBSCOhost<sup>21</sup> were used as a reference.

Before the establishment of the Long-Term Care Insurance System in 2000, most articles presented only descriptive information about the extent of elder abuse. They discussed how necessary the Elder Abuse Prevention Act for prevention of elder abuse was.

After the Elder Abuse Prevention Act was enforced, the methods of elder abuse prevention were discussed in many articles. For example, some studied methods of early detection (risk assessment) and coping methods for the abused older adults who do not use the services provided under the Long-Term Care Insurance system (Komiya and Nagano 2008; Soeda and Tsuchiya 2011). They discussed how difficult it was for people to detect the domestic abuse against the elders and suggested that the community’s greater awareness of such abuse will be needed. Some studied the coping methods utilized by professional caregivers for the abused older adults (Komiya and Nagano 2008; Soeda and Tsuchiya 2011). Some papers (Mochiduki 2010; Okuda 2010) presented the intervention model and emphasized the need to construct networks to prevent elder abuse in their communities.

Most of these articles discovered the need for a partnership and information sharing among professional staffs in the community’s comprehensive care center (Nagashima et al. 2010; Yamamoto et al. 2009). Furthermore, they advocated the necessity of the construction of the local support network involving the people in neighborhoods where older adults live (Minakami and Kuroda 2010; Nakajima, and Nakanishi 2011; Hatta et al. 2012). However, other than a few case studies, no research on the method for the construction of the support network existed.

Though the Japanese government did not include self-neglect in its definition of elder abuse, about one study on self-neglect was found in each year from 2006. In

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<sup>17</sup>DiaL is a document retrieval service specialized gerontological researches.

<sup>18</sup>(<http://www.dia.or.jp/dial/>): <http://dia.or.jp/dial/english/>. The result of this section was searched on June 11, 2014.

<sup>19</sup>Ichushi-Web is the paid database of medicine, dentistry, and pharmaceutical by Japan Medical Abstracts Society.

<sup>20</sup>CiNii Articles (<http://ci.nii.ac.jp/>) is the paid database presented by National Institute of Informatic. The information in this section was accessed 17 May 2014.

<sup>21</sup>EBSCOhost (<http://www.ebscohost.com/>): EBSCO Information Services is the worldwide paid research databases, e-books, and e-journals. The information in this section was accessed 11 July 2014.

2013, a nationwide research on self-neglect was carried out for the first time (Kishi 2013; Konagaya et al. 2013). In recent years, topics concerning single older adult households, households of older adult couples only, deaths in isolation, *nin-nin-kaigo* (a husband and a wife, both with dementia, taking care of each other), and self-neglect have gained prominent attention as social problems (Masuda et al. 2010; Hasegawa et al. 2009).

The aim of the research on elder abuse in Japan is not only to analyze the abuse contexts and factors but also to establish methods of support for older adults. Progress is made in various aspects of this issue related to human services such as medical treatment, health, and social welfare.

## **5.7 Proposal for the Future: The Empowerment of Older Persons and Regional Network**

### ***5.7.1 Toward the Reduction of Elder Abuse***

It is difficult to completely wipe out the elder abuse cases. However, some important suggestions can be made to reduce elder abuse, and to this end, following life course's four perspectives could be useful for encouraging and supporting the autonomy of older adults. They are provision of assistance for older adults households, understanding the family situation of older adults today, the need to construct the regional network and an empowerment approach for the abused older adults.

#### **5.7.1.1 Provision of Assistance for Older Adults Households**

As the number of households consisting of single older adults and older adult couples has increased (see Fig. 5.1), the abuse generated by *rou-rou-kaigo* (the elder-to-elder nursing and long-term care that a very older caregiver gives to an older-care-receiver) and *nin-nin-kaigo* (a husband and a wife, both with dementia, taking care of each other) can no longer be ignored.

Because of the increase of older adults living alone, the number of those who are isolated from their families, relatives, and communities is also on the rise. These isolated older adults are found to be neglecting themselves, intentionally or because they have no real choice. As mentioned earlier, self-neglect is not included in the Elder Abuse Prevention Act in Japan. However, with a continued increase of the older population, it can be expected that self-neglect will become more widely recognized as a problem in the near future.

### 5.7.1.2 Understanding the Family Situation of Older Adults Today

According to the intergenerational transmission of family violence and the life course perspective more generally, the chain of domestic violence could lead to the elder abuse. This is highly probable when older parents are weakened as time advances (Yamanishi and Yamazaki 2004). The adult child abuser of older persons may have once been abused in childhood by his/her parent.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, if elder abuse is to be successfully detected, it will be necessary to examine the life and family history of older persons as well as the relationships with the family members. It is important to provide a safe setting and facility for older adults who were abused to talk about their past and current problems without hesitation. The support then will be provided not only for the abused older adults but also for their families, especially family caregivers.

Furthermore, in direct accordance with the basic principles of the life course perspective, it is certainly important to find out whether there was domestic violence (child abuse or spousal abuse) in order to prevent elder abuse from occurring. However, Yamanishi (Yamanishi and Yamazaki 2004) makes the important point that today, or, at least, as of 11 years ago, each related organization of domestic violence acts independently. Therefore, information exchange between organizations may be necessary to better understand family situations surrounding elder abuse victims.

### 5.7.1.3 The Need to Construct the Regional Network

In recent years, not enough support for the family except for the family caregiver of older persons is provided (Morioka and Mochiduki 2014). Citizens of older adults who are not authorized by the primary nursing care requirement (a 7-level graded system under the health insurance) but have difficulties living by themselves because of their age cannot be provided with public assistance. In addition, their families (especially older spouses) also do not physically and economically have power to care them. Therefore, they may need help from their neighborhood volunteers. In the Elder Abuse Prevention Act, the cooperative relationship between the family and the welfare commissioner in the region is emphasized because the family would not abuse older adults if the welfare commissioner should find their needs. Welfare commissioners cover a broad array of tasks, including regularly checking in on older adults and disabled residents, looking for signs of child abuse, providing local residents with information about services, and even helping them dispose of garbage (Aoki 2012).<sup>23</sup>

Because of the hidden and private nature of elder abuse, it is difficult to identify such abuse without the cooperation of neighborhood associations and residents. To

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<sup>22</sup>There is no correct statistical result. Some say 9 % abused people abuse their children. The statistic results vary from 9 to 40 % (Yamanishi and Yamazaki 2004).

<sup>23</sup><http://www.japantimes.co.jp/tag/welfare-commissioner/> Accessed 31 Mar. 2015.



**Table 5.1** Checklist to catch the symptoms of elder abuse

[[Elder abuse perpetrator]]	[[Caregiver]]
People should report the suspected abuse	People should report the suspected abuse
(i) If old persons have bruises and scratches, even if they will reply vaguely when asked	(i) if caregiver refuses to meet old person people when visiting caregiver
(ii) If their clothes are dirty	(ii) If they try to avoid to the topic of old persons people
(iii) If their hair is messy	(iii) If they look exhausted from the caregiving
(iv) If they cannot make eye contacts when they are talked to	(iv) If they talk badly of old persons person that they are taking care of
(v) If they walk around alone for a long time	(v) If they sometimes complain about their caregiving role
(vi) If they talk badly of the caregivers	(vi) If they do not seem to have a person to talk to about caregiving
(vii) If they were not seen outside very often	

Source: Nationwide Human Rights Volunteers' Organizations (2010)  
<http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000122122.pdf>. Accessed 16 Dec 2014

that end, the municipality needs to construct the local network with a designated key person as an informant.

The local welfare commissioners, the formal supporters, and the investigators of the abuse will have to jointly recognize the regional agendas for the abuse prevention (Minakami and Kuroda 2010). Table 5.1 is a list of items to be checked for the local residents in order to be able to catch the symptoms of elder abuse (Nationwide Human Rights Volunteers' Organizations<sup>24</sup> 2010).

Each local government<sup>25</sup> should prepare various actions, such as creating an environment where the social welfare councils and the local volunteer groups can work together on a broad range of problems of older persons who do not use any formal services.

<sup>24</sup>Human rights volunteers are private citizens appointed by the Ministry of Justice. This system was established based on the concept that it would be effective for people in various fields in the local community to work to encourage respect for human rights, to make an effort to avoid infringements of the rights of the residents, and to protect human rights. This system is unparalleled in any other country. At present, there are approximately 14,000 volunteers in all of the municipalities of cities, towns, and villages across the country, and they carry out proactive activities. Human Rights Volunteers' Organizations have subcommittees which deal with individual problems such as children's rights counseling services not only at the Bureaus but also at temporary counseling offices set up at public facilities such as municipal offices, social welfare facilities, and department stores. <http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000122122.pdf> Accessed 16 Dec.2014.

<sup>25</sup>The local government has a fixed insurer, and it can establish an original support method in the Long-Term Care Insurance System. The government only established a rough basic policy.

#### 5.7.1.4 An Empowerment Approach for the Abused Older Adults

Many older adults in Japan have been dependent on the caregiving provided by family members for a long time (Sodei 2008). With the changes occurring in Japanese families, however, older persons are expected by the next generation of families to live independently as long as they can. Therefore, in recent years, an empowerment approach<sup>26</sup> for the provision of older caregiving became important. That is, the support for older persons should be provided based on their degree of ability to live independently. Even if an older person is physically weak, it is possible for him/her to live independently with a minimum of formal or informal support. This was an idea incorporated in the Long-Term Care Insurance System (The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2000b).

On the other hand, even though the government intended older adults to be empowered, as mentioned above, older persons today are still hesitant to give their own opinions. Most older Japanese people still believe that it is the best if they are guided by their children. In addition, Japanese families are still reluctant to invite outsiders into their homes. Many older people do not want to tell others about their abuse by their own family members. Because of the fear about alienation from the family, the abused older adults may be afraid to talk about the abuse to outsiders. Besides, there is a strong tendency of Japanese older adults to depend on the younger people. This is considered as *amae* or “the anatomy of the dependence” peculiar to but characteristic of Japanese society.

#### 5.7.2 Reducing the Elder Abuse

Two main suggestions can be made to reduce the elder abuse in Japan. First, it is important to support older persons so that they are able to maintain their abilities to be independent. To accomplish this, supporters need to understand what older persons want and what their thinking and habits. Early education can help people to prepare for independent living in older age. It is also imperative that the Japanese people learn to cooperate and communicate with support agencies to prevent and intervene in elder abuse. Second, there is a need for the expert elder caregivers to learn about the life course perspective.

The life course perspective is useful to better understand the background and history of older persons themselves as well as their families. Thus, we need to develop measures to combat elder abuse by taking into consideration the social setting including family relationships. The surrounding of older adults changes every

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<sup>26</sup>An empowering approach is about working in ways which empower people: ways which mean that people feel confident, that they and the groups or organizations they are involved in are inclusive and organized, and that networks are formed, are cooperative, and support each other. <https://creativecollaborationdudley.wordpress.com/we-are-creative/engaging-together/empowering-approach/> Accessed 25 Feb. 2015.

day with the increases in the number of single-person households who have no family, the number of senior citizens who needs assistance, the urban concentration of the population, and the number of those receiving pensions. On the other hand, the number of the working-age population decreases. In the near future, senior citizens who do not have the chance to receive private and public care assistance are likely to increase. Consequently, therefore, the extent of elder abuse is likely to change based on these transitions.

In discussing the issue of elder abuse through a life course perspective, it is imperative to identify factors of abuse at an early stage from various angles. They include social settings and interpersonal relationships that have been surrounding these older adults throughout their entire life span. Senior citizens need to be supported. Such support, however, might come late in their old age. Therefore, lifelong empowerment is necessary to decrease the degree and the intensity of elder abuse in Japan as a whole.

In the final chapter to follow, the topic of “Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective” will oversee the entire theme of this anthology. That is, the critical issue of family violence in Japan will be seen by wider perspectives from childhood to old stage that have been discussed in each chapter through the life course perspective. Furthermore, it will also give some suggestions for prevention and intervention of family violence in Japan.

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## Chapter 6

# Conclusion: Prevention and Intervention of Family Violence in Japan

Fumie Kumagai

Discussion carried out in this concluding chapter of the anthology, *Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective*, is based on the following four major points: First, a summary is given concerning the major findings, implications, and limitations of four different types of family violence in Japan studied in the book; second, the unresolved issues, both methodological and substantive as well, of family violence studies in Japan are highlighted; third, the importance of studying family violence through a life course perspective is emphasized; and finally, with all this information in hand, measures for the prevention of family violence in Japan are discussed.

For good or bad, we are moving toward a global society, ushered in by the Information Age. Owing to this inevitable worldwide social trend, our knowledge of family violence has been enhanced significantly over the past few decades. But the true state of family violence in Japan is not necessarily reported correctly by the global media and/or those in Japan as well. Although the media is partly at fault, so is Japan, for its inability to clearly state its realities to the global society. This inability, in turn, is partly because the Japanese people themselves lack a fair knowledge of their own history.

The issue of family violence in Japan is no exception. How much is known about the various forms and types of violence in Japanese families by people in the global society is questionable. Thus, this anthology, *Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective*, is an attempt to remedy this situation. It does so by two means: by applying what is known in the social sciences as “a life course perspective” and by focusing explicitly upon different types of family violence in Japanese society. The preceding five individual chapters have looked extensively enough and in sufficient depth on each topic. Nevertheless, for those who are reading this chapter independently online, let us summarize each of these five chapters briefly.

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## 6.1 Summary of Major Findings, Implications, and Limitations of the Book

In Chapter 1 (*Introduction: Toward a Better Understanding of Family Violence in Japan*), Fumie Kumagai addressed five major issues. First, Kumagai defined family violence for this book as the use of abusive behavior to control and/or harm a member of one's family or someone with whom one has an intimate relationship. This anthology confined the discussion to four major types of family violence in Japan: child abuse, intimate partner violence (IPV), filial violence, and elder abuse.

Second, she also emphasized the importance of viewing family violence as a social issue rather than a personal defect.

Third, she explained that a life course perspective on family violence suggests viewing the various types of abusive conduct that any individual might experience in her or his family life, as part of a generational cycle which is sometimes referred to as "the intergenerational transmission of family violence."

Fourth, she presented and discussed seven major characteristics of Japanese society, culture, and personality that might affect family violence in Japan. These characteristics are (a) the vertical social structure, (b) the patriarchal-hierarchical family structure, (c) group orientation, (d) interdependence in human relations, (e) *Giri-Ninjo*, (f) the "mind-to-mind" Japanese style of communication, and (g) the existence of diverse regional variations in the tiny island country of Japan. These seven factors are one of the focal aspects of discussion applied across the different chapters of this book.

Finally, for the future development of family violence studies in Japan, she suggested that we pay attention to three unresolved issues. First, samples for the study should be randomly selected, not just considering the families in which violence has surfaced publicly but all families. The measurement for family violence should be objective, such as found in the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). Second, the field of study should be viewed throughout one's entire life course to see if violent experiences at one stage of life may result in more violence, later in life. Furthermore, the regional variation framework which comprises one of the essential components of Japanese society and culture should also be applied for the study of family violence in Japan.

Chapter 2 (*Child Abuse: History and Current State in Japanese Context*) by Masako Ishii-Kuntz discussed five major issues.

First, the definition of child abuse was broken down into four different forms, i.e., physical abuse, psychological or verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Second, a life course perspective was applied to examine various generational factors surrounding child abuse. These factors can be seen to apply to both abusive parents and abused children as well.

Third, the history of child abuse in Japan was discussed, starting with the practice of *kogoroshi* (infanticide). Various episodes of *kogoroshi* folklore are found in *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters: 712) and was practiced as a way of population control, especially the killing of female children. It lasted until the enactment of the

Eugenic Protection Law in 1948. Yet, data collected by child consultation centers reveal that child abuse is actually becoming a major social problem in the twenty-first century. Legal efforts to prevent child abuse in Japan in recent years were discussed.

Fourth, based on our basic premise for the intergenerational transmission of family violence, the causes of child abuse were analyzed by applying three of the many possible sociological and social psychological theories of family violence, namely, resource theory, social exchange theory, and social learning theory. Special attention was paid to Japanese sociocultural characteristics as possible factors which induce and/or suppress child abuse. Some examples of these factors, such as the vertical social structure, the patriarchal-hierarchical family structure, Japanese group orientation, and inside (*uchi*) and outside (*soto*) differentiation were discussed.

Fifth, problems that public centers face today were presented. They suggest that government and private funds need to be allocated to hire more staff members and to increase housing facilities for abused children.

Chapter 3 (*Intimate Partner Violence: Domestic Violence from Japanese Perspectives*) by Takayo Sasaki and Masako Ishii-Kuntz presented five major findings.

First, seven forms of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Japan were defined: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, economic abuse, social violence, stalking, and dating violence.

Second, IPV was explained through a life course perspective. This perspective allows us to understand that IPV may stem from the childhood experiences of each partner.

Third, some historical literature reveals that IPV has existed since ancient times and has been more or less legitimized and “justified” by Japanese society. IPV was discussed in relation to such sociocultural characteristics of Japan as patriarchy, the male-dominated society, interdependency (*amae*), and the dichotomy of true intention (*honne*) and superficial intention (*tatema*).

Fourth, it is important to note that social policies for IPV in Japan have come into effect relatively recently. The Domestic Violence Prevention Law was enacted in October 2001. Under the 2004 revision of this law, for the first time in Japanese history, those who abuse their partners can be charged with a crime. The DV Prevention Law is significant, because it made it possible for the government to intervene to stop IPV rather than leaving it up to the families to “solve” the problem.

Finally, the chapter emphasized the importance of an interdisciplinary approach for the study of IPV. Such an approach needs to take into account sociological, psychological, cultural, and biological viewpoints.

Chapter 4 (*Filial Violence: An Unrevealed Problem for Decades*) by Rie Okamura defined filial violence as abusive conduct of adolescent children against their own parents. The study delineated four major findings.

First, filial violence is viewed as the result of family interactions and the intergenerational transmission of violence.

Second, the traditional hierarchical *ie* system affects parent-to-child relationship resulting in the hidden nature of filial violence in Japan. An adolescent child might

have learned as a victim of child abuse that violence is acceptable in the course of family interactions, either as a continuing victim or as an adult abuser.<sup>1</sup>

Third, there is no legal restriction whatsoever to penalize abusive conduct of children against their own parents, perhaps due to Japanese sociocultural characteristics such as patriarchy and group orientation.

Finally, the *amae* concept explains the prolonged dependency of youth on their parents. Such prolonged dependency of youth on their parents has helped generate what is called NEETs (not in education, employment, or training), a group with a high risk of filial violence. This parent-to-child relationship emphasizes the importance of applying the life course perspective for the study of filial violence. Thus, building an effective parent-child relation throughout the entire process of childhood socialization would be the key to alleviate the problem of filial violence and of elder abuse, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5 (*Elder Abuse and Family Transformation*) by Yoko Hayashi highlighted four major findings.

First, the study viewed elder abuse in Japan from a life course perspective based on the historical development of family interactions over time. Elder abuse was considered a family disgrace (shame) and was hidden from others, affected by the dual nature of Japanese *uchi-soto* interaction patterns. For example, there were many *ubasute* folktales – stories of “granny dumping” – in various regions and times throughout Japan. This custom of abandoning old people was commonly practiced in Japan until the end of WWII.

Second, the Elder Abuse Prevention Act enacted in 2005 excludes self-neglect from the definition of elder abuse due to the cultural beliefs of Japanese citizens.

Third, factors generating elder abuse are multilayered: including the frailty of older adults themselves, problems of caring family members, family relations, and cultural norms (such as the traditional care role and gender division of labor), and social factors (the longevity revolution, population aging, enactment of the long-term care insurance system, and the declining Japanese economy.)

Finally the chapter reviewed changing trends in the field of academic articles published in Japan.

## 6.2 Unresolved Issues of Family Violence Studies in Japan

It is not realistic to seek a society without *any* family violence, at least in the near future. Nevertheless, progress toward achieving that goal can be made only if the Japanese people try hard to establish such a society. It all comes from improving Japanese family relations, reflecting macro-element of Japanese culture and social

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<sup>1</sup>AI-Anon Family Group (2015) meetings often report women, in particular, saying that they were victims as children and continued to view themselves that way and that it was the natural order to suffer. So they became willing victims with their husbands.

structure discussed throughout this book. More specifically, Japanese people should reevaluate their family relations by easing the vertical social structure, introducing more equality rather than the patriarchal-hierarchical family structure, individualistic rather than group orientation, more independent rather than interdependence in human relations, establish firm rules rather than taking the case-by-case stance, and more explicit rather than the implicit mind-to-mind style of communication.

In studying family violence in Japan, three issues need to be resolved. They are, namely, first, choosing who should be studied and how to measure the degree of family violence; second, focusing on comprehensive and interdisciplinary studies; and third, paying attention to regional variations in Japan. Although these three points were presented in Chap. 1 of this anthology, an active discussion in each of the chapters did not fully materialize. Thus, let us highlight them here again briefly.

### ***6.2.1 Methodological Issues to Be Resolved***

As we have witnessed, most family violence studies in Japan take samples from those found to be in trouble, not from samples representative of the population as a whole. Even if a large nationwide sample was used, studies only of problematic families will not show how prevalent the problem of family violence is in Japan. It is quite different from studying the population as a whole, through randomly selected samples. It is “the iceberg theory” (or “the theory of omission”) discussed by Ernest Hemingway in his *Death in the Afternoon* (Hemingway 1932).<sup>2</sup> Then we could generalize with some confidence about the extent and distribution of family violence in Japan.

In studying family violence in Japan, another methodological issue to be resolved must be pointed out, that is, how to measure the degree of violence in Japanese families. As we have discussed in Chap. 1 of this book (Kumagai *in press*), the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Straus et al. 1980; Straus and Gelles 1990) is one of the most widely adopted measurement tools of family violence. Similar to the sampling problem that we have just discussed, no objective and standardized measurement of family violence in Japan has been established yet. In our efforts to achieve scientific studies of family violence in Japan, we should consider seriously incorporating CTS in research questionnaires.

Family violence is one of the critical social problems today, not just among those families whose problems become public but also those families who seem to be leading their daily lives without any problems. Family violence is kept “behind closed doors,” as the seminal study on the topic by Straus and his associates suggested

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<sup>2</sup>“If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water. A writer who omits things because he does not know them only makes hollow places in his writing” (Oliver 1999, 322).

(Straus et al. 1980). It is especially true for Japanese families because they are intensely governed by the dual nature of outside-inside sociocultural orientations. Therefore, it took a long period of time before the issue of family violence has become highlighted as a social problem rather than of an individual family.

Violence does not just affect the individual family members but also societies as a whole. For example, children growing up in family violence, as victims of child abuse, as observers of IPV between parents, and as adolescent perpetrators of filial violence toward their own family members, might be deprived of their rights and duties to attend schools. Social pensions for the victims of elder abuse might be maliciously used by other family members, and these older adults are left alone in society, often times found dead, the so-called *kodokushi* (lonely deaths) of older adults in Japan.

Thus, it is important to identify families at risk and also to point out those families who are not at risk, and address questions about how and why they are different from at-risk families. It could be pursued by adopting methodology that allows us to study randomly selected samples.

### ***6.2.2 The Comprehensive Study of Family Violence***

Two methodological problems in the study of family violence in Japan could be identified. First, it has been primarily single-discipline oriented rather than interdisciplinary. Stated differently, there is a strong tendency in Japan that each type of family violence is studied by a certain discipline alone rather than in collaboration with different field of studies. Medicine, for example, studies child abuse, while sociology studies child abuse and IPV; education, filial violence; and social welfare, elder abuse. Samples to be studied, i.e., victims of family violence, exist within the reach of the researchers, hence are easy to obtain, and studies could be pursued with relatively little extra efforts. Each of the researchers is likely to feel that their respective field is the royal road for the study of family violence. Consequently, they isolate themselves from other disciplines. However, a complete study of family violence requires that each discipline cross its own boundaries to find links to the different disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, and medicine.

As discussed in this anthology, so far most of the family violence studies in Japan have been conducted segmentally. In other words, each type of family violence study stands independently of each other, i.e., child abuse, IPV, filial violence, and elder abuse are studied by themselves, as if not interrelated to the other fields. Yet the reports of family violence appear to be intertwined through the intergenerational transmission of family violence in that violence is a learned experience, transmitted from one generation to the next. Violence is learned in one's childhood and is transmitted generationally for use later in life (Barnett et al 2011; Finkelhor 1983, Hines et al. 2013; Lawson 2015; Levesque 2001; Straus 1994; Straus et al. 2013; Wallace and Roberson 2013:21; WHO 2005). In other words, childhood experiences of violence are not only limited to the victims of child abuse but also transmitted generationally later in one's life as the perpetrator of IPV, child abuse, and elder abuse.

If that is the case, we must adopt a research methodology tapping on various types of families and households for the study of family violence in Japan.

The second problem to be pointed out is that studies of family violence in Japan have been isolated at points in time with regard to the lives of particular individuals and their families, not over one's entire life course. Histories of the perpetrators of family violence and violent families are studied retrospectively as case studies based on autobiographies of individuals (Riley 1998). If we study the intergenerational transmission of family violence, it is necessary to study the same sample repeatedly rather than at one point in time. Trying to pursue a perfect longitudinal study would be difficult. It does not mean, however, that such a type of research strategy should be completely discarded. Instead, a longitudinal study for only some selected samples of case studies could possibly be conducted in Japan.

### ***6.2.3 Regional Variations in Family Violence in Japan***

Japan is a tiny island nation, so it is quite understandable that Western scholars hardly ever expect extensive regional variations in Japanese society and culture. But the historically unique nature of Japan, as discussed in Chap. 1 of this anthology, demonstrates comprehensive regional variations in the family and households from one region to another (Kumagai 2008, 2011, 2015, *in press*). If that is the case, we would expect to find regional variations in family relations and family violence in Japan. Nevertheless, regional variations in family violence in Japan were not really dealt with in any satisfactory manner in the present anthology.

It was hoped that some application of regional variation perspective for the study of family violence in Japan could be identified, but it was not. We must remember that our regional samples need to be large enough for the analysis of causal relationships. Unfortunately, however, such wishful thinking was not fully materialized in any of the different types of family violence discussed in this anthology. Despite the efforts made by authors of this anthology, we were not successful in discovering some existing family violence studies which adopt the regional variation perspective. Hopefully this will change in the future. Of course, it is possible that regional differences in family violence in Japan are not as substantial or as significant as we have thought them to be. We will not know until we are able to study regionally representative samples. Should we desire to alleviate family violence in Japan, it is essential to consider the issue through regional perspectives.

## **6.3 Toward a Better Understanding and the Reduction of Family Violence in Japan**

As we have witnessed throughout this anthology, family violence studies so far in Japan have been segmental, and each type of family violence has been examined independently. For Western researchers, it is confusing to know that the direct

translation of the English terms “family violence” or “domestic violence” in Japanese is “*kateinai boryoku*” or “intimate partner violence,” exclusively.

This reminds us of the significance of the classical concepts “conceptual equivalence and phenomenal identity” (Kumagai and Straus 1983; Straus 1969). They suggest caution in conducting cross-cultural studies in social sciences. Stated differently, use of identical procedures in different societies for eliciting and quantifying data (phenomenal identity) does not necessarily result in the measurement of the same variable (conceptual equivalence) since the stimuli (questions, tasks, items) used to elicit data are likely to have different meanings and connotations (Straus 1969: 233).

For this reason, therefore, in comparing family violence in Japan to the rest of the world, it is imperative for Japanese scholars and researchers to keep in mind a life course perspective, defined as “a sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time” (Giele and Elder 1998: 22), rather than the segmental approach. Otherwise, we will not be able to discuss the issues of family violence with colleagues outside of Japan based on mutually common ground. Moreover, the life course perspective frees us from single-factor explanations of a complicated problem, ignoring the intersection of social and historical factors with personal biography and development within which the study of family life can emerge (Elder 1985). Only through a life course perspective, is it possible to view an individual’s experiences in various types of family violence, such as child abuse, IPV, filial violence, and elder abuse, throughout the entire history of one’s ongoing and developing process of family interactions from childhood to old age. Thus, our attempts to see family violence in Japan through a life course perspective would be one of the most significant endeavors of our studies presented in this anthology.

One additional unique aspect of this anthology is the listing of the seven major sociocultural characteristics of Japanese society, culture, and personality as which could affect, positively or negatively, factors of family violence in Japan. Although these seven characteristics are not measured scientifically in this specific work, all of the authors who undertook the current project made deliberate efforts to apply these characteristics in their analyses of family violence. Chapter 2 on child abuse emphasized the *amae* concept; Chap. 3 on IPV highlighted patriarchy, *amae*, and the *honne-tatema* dichotomy; Chap. 4 on filial violence discussed *amae*, patriarchy, and group orientation; and Chap. 5 on elder abuse related *uchi-soto* and *ie* concepts in their analyses, respectively. For the Western audience, in particular those who are not familiar with Japanese sociocultural characteristics, it is hoped that these discussions of sociocultural characteristics and family violence in Japan will be informative and are one of the main contributions that we purport to make to those outside Japan. For this reason, we believe that efforts we made in this anthology addressing the issue of family violence in Japan would be appreciated by the global society.



## 6.4 Suggestions for the Future of Family Violence Studies in Japan

### 6.4.1 *Toward the Reduction of Family Violence in Japan*

As we have pointed out earlier in the current chapter, it may not be correct to deny Japanese family violence totally. We should take the inevitable situation of family violence positively and go forward from there. It is in a sense “after a storm comes a calm” and “adversity strengthens the foundations” as English proverbs go. Reasons for family violence come from the diversification of contemporary families and their isolation from the society and the community to which each family resides and belongs. Each family faces various problems, such as working mothers and work-life balance, raising children, care of elderly parents, financial problems, and single parent families, to name a few.

For this reason, we should not limit our attention only to those who are victimized, because it will not resolve the issue. Instead, it is necessary to have the structural revision from both the micro-level of family and home and the macro-level of society as a whole simultaneously. Public institutions could be built more effectively, including shelters; nurseries; child welfare institutions and programs; better programs for social workers; better nursing homes; more active involvement of police, medical, and legal professions; enforced family planning; individual and group counseling programs; and others.

### 6.4.2 *Steps to Be Taken for the Alleviation of the Problem*

In their classical studies of family violence in the United States, Straus and his associates suggested five steps to reduce family violence in the United States (Straus et al. 1980). There is no question that Japan and the United States differ significantly in culture, values, and attitudes. However, as the problem of family violence spreads across cultural boundaries, it would be appropriate to take what has been suggested in the United States as lessons for Japan. Let us list five steps to be followed (Straus et al. 1980: 221–244):

- Step 1: Eliminate the norms which legitimize and glorify violence in society and family.
- Step 2: Reduce violence-provoking stresses created by society.
- Step 3: Integrate families into a network of kin and community.
- Step 4: Change the sexist character of society and the family.
- Step 5: Break the intergenerational transmission of violence in the family.

With the progress of globalization in society, the family necessarily adjusts to it and changes the family's form, function, and sex roles, diverging from the traditional ones. Newly emerging forms of families in Japan, for examples, are called *katei no nai kazoku* (families without home) (Okonogi 1992), *kohabiteishon-dousei* (cohabitation and living together without marriage) (Kamimura 2015), *shinguru maza-shinguru faazaa* (single parents) (Nishi and Suga 2007), *dairi haha shusann* (surrogate mothers) (Ishii 2007), *ikumen kazoku* (stay-at-home fathers) (Ishii-Kuntz 2013), and *dokkyo setai* (living alone, one-person households) (Tachibanaki 2011). These changes in the family necessarily bring about alterations in its function, sex roles, and family relations. Family violence under these family changes is a social problem, rather than a pathology specific to certain families.

Thus, as a member of the family, each of us is expected to understand the true nature of family relations within the framework of family as a whole. In this way of looking at the family, we will hopefully be able to resolve family violence.

### 6.4.3 *The Future of Family Violence Studies in Japan*

We have suggested that the future of family violence studies in Japan should reflect two critical issues which have not been incorporated yet in the field. They are, first, the need for comprehensive study of family violence, and, second, consideration of regional variations in Japanese family violence.

It is undoubtedly evident that any research project to fulfill these two objectives will entail enormous resources in time and money. It is truly hoped that such an important and powerful research project would be organized and pursued, perhaps by our current project team, in the foreseeable future.

Now that we have a better knowledge of family violence in Japan, it is hoped that not only academics but also the general public will move forward with efforts to alleviate family violence, one of the most critical issues in global society. The authors strongly hope, therefore, that Japan's quest for the prevention and the intervention of family violence may become part of a larger process of learning from each other and sharing with our fellow societies all that we have come to know about family violence.

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