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**The Political and Social Economy of Care:  
Japan Research Report 2**

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## Introduction

This paper analyses time use surveys carried out in Japan, focusing on how people distribute their time between work and care. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has carried out the Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (*Shakai Seikatsu Kihon Chōsa*) every five years from 1976. Using this time survey, we firstly analyze how people spend their time on paid and unpaid work by sex, age, household type, work status and household income. Secondly, we examine how the amount of time Japanese women and men spent in child and elderly care changed between 1991 and 2006. Furthermore, we discuss how these changes may have been influenced by child care and elderly care policy in this period.

The Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (STULA) aims to obtain comprehensive data on daily patterns of time allocation. The latest survey (the seventh) was conducted in 2006. From the 2001 survey (the sixth), Questionnaire B (which uses the post-coding approach) was introduced in order to obtain more detailed results concerning people's time allocation. The pre-coded form used in former surveys was retained and named Questionnaire A. Therefore, from 2001 respondents were divided into two groups. The first group, which comprised the majority of the total sample, answered Questionnaire A while the second much smaller group answered Questionnaire B.

The sample consists of around 70,000 to 100,000 households (around 200,000 to 250,000 total household members) selected from lists of households prepared by enumerators before the survey. All persons aged ten and over (15 and over up to the 1991 survey) in the sample households are asked to respond to the survey. The respondents are asked to report their time use on two consecutive days during nine days in September or October. For more detail on the survey from 1991 to 2006 see Appendix 1.

In Questionnaire A, the kinds of activities are classified into 20 categories: sleep; personal care; meals; commuting to and from school or work; work; schoolwork; housework; caring for adults; child care; shopping; travel; watching TV, listening to the radio, reading newspapers or magazines; rest and relaxation; study and research; hobbies and amusements; sports; volunteer and social activities; social life; undergoing medical examination or treatment; other activities. In Questionnaire B, the respondents record their activities by 15-minute intervals, and the activities are subsequently classified into 62 categories during tabulation. In this paper, we collapse these 62 categories into ten categories,<sup>1</sup> paid work, services for income and other production of goods not for establishment, household maintenance, care of persons, community service, learning, social and cultural activities, mass media use, personal care and others, in order to compare the results with those of other countries participating in the UNRISD project. For the details of these activities see Appendices 2 and 3.

In the first half of our analysis, we utilise the data of Questionnaire B in the micro data set from the 2001 STULA.<sup>2</sup> These data are extracted from 80% of the households (all family members are included in the sample households) to which Questionnaire B was administered by random sampling. The sample size is 3,129 households (7,822 household members). The second half of our analysis uses data from Questionnaire A from the surveys carried out from 1991 to 2006. The data are

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<sup>1</sup> Other countries participating in this UN project classified time use into ten categories; employment for establishment, primary production activities; service for income and other production of goods not for establishment; household maintenance, management and shopping for own household; care for children, the sick, elderly and disabled for own household; community service and help to other households; learning; social and cultural activities; mass media use; and personal care and self-maintenance. There is no activity corresponding to primary production activities in STULA. Further, STULA includes an "other" classification for otherwise unclassifiable items.

<sup>2</sup> These data were anonymously-processed micro data provided by the Research Centre for Information and Statistics of Social Science, Institute of Economic Research, Hitotsubashi University. The micro data of STULA surveys conducted in 1991, 1996 and 2001 were provided by the centre.

weighted by region, sex and age.

## I. Gender distribution of paid and unpaid work in Japan: Analysis of the micro data in the 2001 time use survey

### 1. Attributes of the respondents

Tables 1 to 6 show the attributes of the respondents. They are 7,822 males and females aged ten years and over. In terms of age groups, the respondents aged ten to 17 comprise 10% of the total, those 18 to 49 years 47%, those 50 to 64 years 24% and each of the 50 to 64 years and 65 and over groups 19% (Table 1). In terms of sex, the percentage of males aged 18 to 49 is 49%, which is larger than that of females in the same age group (46%). The percentage of females aged 65 and over is 21%, which is larger than that of males in the same age group (17%) (Table 1).

**Table 1. Distribution of sample by age group and sex (%)**

	10-17	18-49	50-64	65+	Total
Male	10.1	48.8	24.1	16.9	100.0
Female	9.9	45.7	23.5	20.8	100.0
Total	10.0	47.2	23.8	18.9	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by marital status. In this survey, “single” refers to those who have never married and “married” denotes those who had a partner (including common-law marriage) at the time of the survey. “Widowed/divorced” covers those whose partner has died or who are separated from a former partner and are currently single. The single group makes up 30% of the total, married 60% and “widowed/divorced” 10%. In terms of sex, the percentage of widowed/divorced is higher for females (15%) than males (5%) due to longer average life expectancy for females and the fact that wives tend to be younger than husbands.

**Table 2. Distribution of sample by marital status and sex (%)**

	Single	Married	Widowed/ Divorced	Total
Male	32.8	61.9	5.3	100.0
Female	28.2	57.1	14.7	100.0
Total	30.4	59.4	10.1	100.0

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by age of the youngest child in the household. Of all the respondents, 83% lived in households which had no children under 18 years of age, 8% co-resided with a child under seven and 9% lived in households in which the youngest child was aged seven to 17 years.

**Table 3. Distribution of sample by child status and sex (%)**

	No children*	7-17	<7	Total
Male	82.1	8.9	9.0	100.0
Female	83.8	7.8	8.4	100.0
Total	83.0	8.4	8.7	100.0

\*No children means no person aged 17 or under in the household.

Table 4 shows the employment status of the respondents. Here the respondents aged 15 and over are classified by their work status. Respondents aged 10 to 14 are excluded from this table. Those who are working for an income are employed, as are family workers who are working continuously, even if

they are unpaid. The remainder are classified as not employed. Among the respondents, 71% of males and 49% of females were employed. In total, 60% of the respondents were employed and 40% are not employed.

**Table 4. Distribution of sample by work status and sex (%)**

	Employed	Not employed	Total
Male	71.1	28.9	100.0
Female	48.8	51.2	100.0
Total	59.7	40.3	100.0

Table 5 shows the annual income of the households to which the respondents belonged. Here annual income is the sum total of pre-tax incomes of all members of a household in the year spanning October 20th, 2000 to October 19th, 2001.<sup>3</sup> Of the respondents, 22% belonged to households with an annual income below three million yen, 24% to households with an income of three million to 4.99 million yen, 21% to households with an income of five million to 6.99 million yen, 19% to households with an income of seven million to 9.99 million yen, and 14% to households with an income of ten million yen and over. In terms of sex, the percentage of those belonging to households with a low annual income of below three million yen was higher for females (23%) than males (20%).

**Table 5. Distribution of sample by household income (10,000 yen) and sex (%)**

	0-299	300-499	500-699	700-999	1000+	Total
Male	20.4	24.2	22.0	19.4	14.0	100.0
Female	22.6	24.4	20.1	19.2	13.7	100.0
Total	21.5	24.3	21.0	19.3	13.8	100.0

Table 6 shows the distribution of the respondents by household composition. Here we follow Budlender (2009), categorizing those under 18 years of age as children, those 18 to 49 years of age as adults, and those 50 and over as old. We find that 22% of all respondents belonged to households composed of children and adults, 17% to households comprised of children, adults and elderly persons, 11% to households comprised only of adults, 28% to households with adults and elderly persons, 22% to households comprised only of elderly persons and 1% to households with children and elderly persons. The respondents in this type of household are too small in number to analyze, thus we exclude these households from the following tables. In terms of sex, the percentage of households comprised only of adults is higher for males (13%) than females (8%). The percentage of households comprised only of elderly persons is higher for females (23%) than males (20%).

**Table 6. Distribution of sample by household composition (%)**

	Child + Adult	Child + Adult + Old	Adult	Adult + Old	Old	Child + Old	Total
Male	21.6	16.7	13.0	27.8	20.0	0.9	100.0
Female	21.5	18.1	8.2	28.2	23.2	0.8	100.0

<sup>3</sup> In the case of self-employed workers, annual income is operating income, obtained by deducting expenses from sales.

Income includes wages, salaries, dividends, allowances and benefits such as pensions, and excludes income from the disposal of assets, and withdrawal of deposits and savings. Non-recurring incomes such as inheritances, gifts and retirement allowances are also excluded.

For those who were newly employed during the year, the annual income is estimated as the amount of income which they would have earned if they had worked for a full year, based on their income since the time they were employed.

Total	21.5	17.4	10.6	28.0	21.6	0.8	100.0
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## 2. Distribution of time spent on paid and unpaid work by respondent attributes

This section analyses the time use of Japanese males and females, concentrating on time allocation in paid and unpaid work, using the micro data from Questionnaire B in the 2001 STULA.

Time use analysis can be based on either mean population time or mean actor time. Mean population time is the average of time spent by all persons on a particular activity, including those who did not perform the activity. Mean actor time is the average time spent by persons who actually performed the activity. The participation rate is the number of persons who performed the activity divided by the full population with specified respondent attributes.

In the analysis in this section, the daily mean population time will be presented for each of the ten categories of activity by Budlender (2009). We will also present an analysis which classifies the activities into broader categories of paid and unpaid work. We define paid work according to the narrow production boundary of the System of National Accounts (SNA) which includes all kinds of activities in the categories paid work, primary production and non-establishment work.<sup>4</sup> We define unpaid care (UCW) as activities in the categories of household maintenance, care of persons and community services.

Table 7 shows the daily mean population time spent by males and females on each kind of activity. The time spent on all activities adds up to 1440 minutes (24 hours). The male-female differential is large in respect of time spent on paid work, household maintenance and care of persons. While males spent 337 minutes on paid work, twice as long as females (166 minutes), they spent less than one hour on household maintenance and care of persons combined. Females spent 218 minutes on household maintenance and 26 minutes on care of persons. Mass media use shows the next biggest contrast in time use between males and females, with males spending 17 minutes longer (175 minutes) than females (158 minutes).

**Table 7. Distribution of activities over the day by sex**

Activity category	Male		Female	
	Minutes	%	Minutes	%
Paid work	337	23.4%	166	11.5%
Non-establishment work	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
Household maintenance	45	3.2%	218	15.2%
Care of persons	8	0.6%	26	1.8%
Community service	5	0.4%	4	0.3%
Learning	70	4.9%	67	4.6%
Social & cultural	93	6.5%	89	6.2%
Mass media use	175	12.1%	157	10.9%
Personal care	674	46.8%	682	47.3%
Other	31	2.1%	31	2.2%
Total	1440	100.0%	1440	100.0%

The relevant items in Table 7 are categorized into UCW and SNA work in Table 8. While females spent 17% of the day on UCW and 12% on SNA work, males spent only 4% on the former and approximately one-fourth of the day on the latter.

<sup>4</sup> Note that, among the activity categories in the individual data of STULA used in this chapter, there is no item that corresponds to primary production, and only building and repairing falls under the category of non-establishment work.

**Table 8. Time spent on paid and unpaid work per day by sex**

	Mean minutes per day		% of day	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
UCW	59	248	4.1%	17.2%
Of which: Care of persons	8	26	0.6%	1.8%
SNA work	338	166	23.5%	11.5%
Of which: Paid work	337	166	23.4%	11.5%

Table 9 shows time spent on UCW and SNA work by sex and age. Females in every age group spent more than males time on UCW, while males spent more time than females on SNA work. Although the male-female differential in SNA work is relatively small among those under 18 years of age, in other age groups males spent approximately twice the amount of time spent by females. As for UCW, the difference in time use is considerable among those between the ages of 18 and 64.

**Table 9 Time spent on paid and unpaid work by age group and sex (%)**

	Male				Female			
	10-17	18-49	50-64	65+	10-17	18-49	50-64	65+
UCW	1.2	3.8	4.2	6.7	2.4	18.7	20.9	17.0
Of which: Care of persons	0.0	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.1	3.0	0.9	0.8
SNA work	0.9	30.3	28.4	10.2	0.4	16.1	14.1	3.9
Of which: Paid work	0.9	30.3	28.3	10.1	0.4	16.1	14.1	3.8

Table 10 shows time spent on UCW and SNA work by sex and marital status. Regardless of marital status, females spent more time on UCW and males spent more time on SNA work. This tendency is especially strong among married males and females. Married males spent 65 minutes (5% of the day) on UCW, while married females spent 344 minutes (24%). Married males spent 398 minutes (28%) on SNA work, while married females spent 167 minutes (12%).

**Table 10 Time spent on paid and unpaid work by marital status and sex**

	Male			Female		
	Single	Married	Widowed □ Divorced	Single	Married	Widowed □ Divorced
Minutes						
UCW	39	65	107	79	344	203
Of which: Care of persons	1	12	5	2	42	9
SNA work	243	398	236	188	167	120
Of which: Paid work	243	396	235	188	167	120
Percentage of day						
UCW	2.7%	4.5%	7.5%	5.5%	23.9%	14.1%
Of which: Care of persons	0.1%	0.9%	0.4%	0.1%	2.9%	0.6%
SNA work	16.9%	27.6%	16.4%	13.0%	11.6%	8.3%
Of which: Paid work	16.8%	27.5%	16.3%	13.0%	11.6%	8.3%

Table 11 shows time spent on UCW and SNA work by sex and presence of children of different ages. Regardless of the presence and age of children, females spent more time on UCW while males spent more time on SNA work. Those who have children under seven years of age spent much more time, compared with those who have children aged between seven and 17, not only on care of persons, including child care, but also on UCW as a whole, and this applies to both males and females. On the other hand, while females with children aged seven to 17 spent more time on SNA work than those with children under seven years of age, there is little difference among males by age of children.

**Table 11. Time spent on paid and unpaid work by child status and sex (minutes)**

	Male						Female					
	No children		7-17		<7		No children		7-17		<7	
UCW	58	4%	44	3%	83	6%	58	4%	280	19%	433	30%
Of which: Care of persons	4	0%	4	0%	36	2%	4	0%	16	1%	129	9%
SNA work	292	20%	447	31%	458	32%	292	20%	206	14%	130	9%
Of which: Paid work	290	20%	446	31%	457	32%	290	20%	206	14%	130	9%

Table 12 shows time spent on UCW and SNA work by sex and employment status. Those who are not employed spent more time on UCW than those employed, and this applies to both males and females. The difference between males and females in the time spent on UCW was about four times in every case, which was much more evident than in the case of SNA work.

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