

Special Feature: Attitudes of Young People Living in the Present

~ Insights Gleaned from International Comparisons ~

Introduction

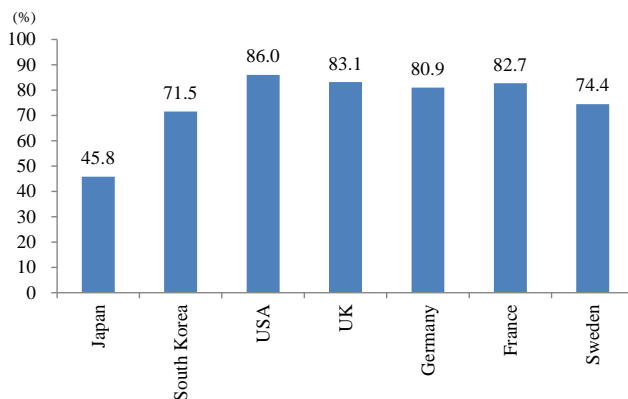
- The children who will be responsible for the future of Japan are our country's most precious treasure. One of the goals that our society must achieve is to make our society vigorous by protecting the lives and futures of children, and letting young people, who are filled with infinite potential and are willing to take risks to succeed, flourish and shine.
- It is important to precisely understand what children and young people living in the priceless present are thinking of themselves, their families and their society.
- This study analyses the characteristics of Japanese young peoples' attitudes as revealed in data obtained from the results of a survey of young people who are 13 to 29 years old in seven countries including Japan (International Survey of Youth Attitude (FY 2013)) on six items: self-perception, home, school, relationships with friends, workplace and marriage/parenting, and discusses suggestions for measures to develop and support children and young people.

1. Self-perception

(1) Self-esteem

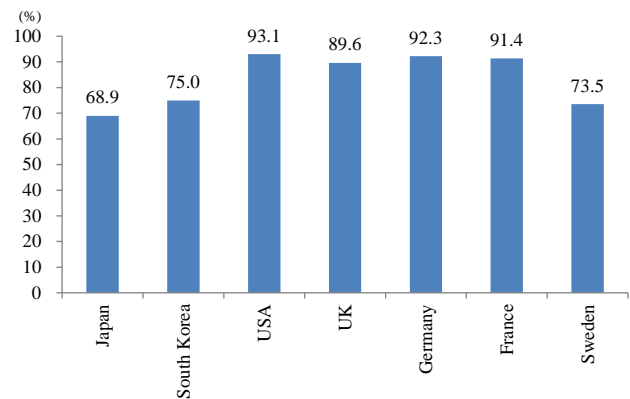
- The percentage of young people who have positive views of themselves is lower than that in foreign countries. (Figure 1 and Figure 2)

Figure 1 I am satisfied with myself



Note: The total number of young people who chose "I agree" or "I kind of agree" regarding the statement "I am satisfied with myself" in answering the question "How much do each of the following descriptions apply to you?"

Figure 2 I have my own unique strengths

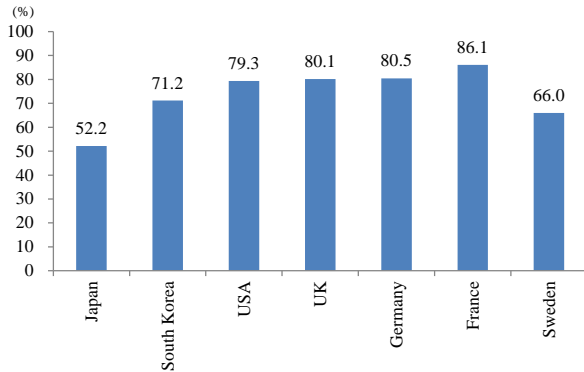


Note: The total number of young people who chose "I agree" or "I kind of agree" regarding the statement "I think that I have my own unique strengths" in answering the question "How much do each of the following descriptions apply to you?"

(2) Enthusiasm

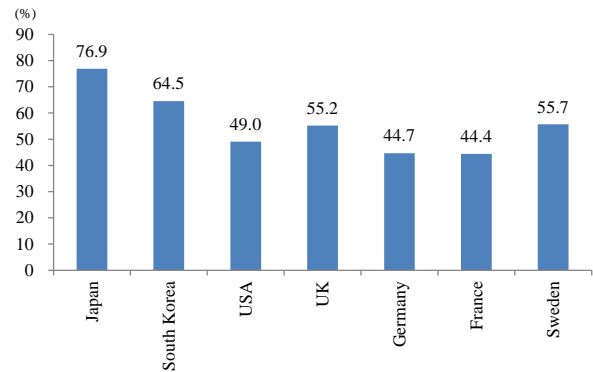
- Young people are less willing to work on anything they might not be able to handle well and fewer young people feel excited or motivated than in foreign countries. (Figure 3 and Figure 4)

Figure 3 I am motivated to engage in things even if I am not sure they will turn out okay



Note: The total of young people who chose “I agree” or “I kind of agree” regarding the statement “I am motivated to engage in things even if I am not sure they will turn out okay” in answering the question “How much do each of the following descriptions apply to you?”

Figure 4 I felt bored and unmotivated

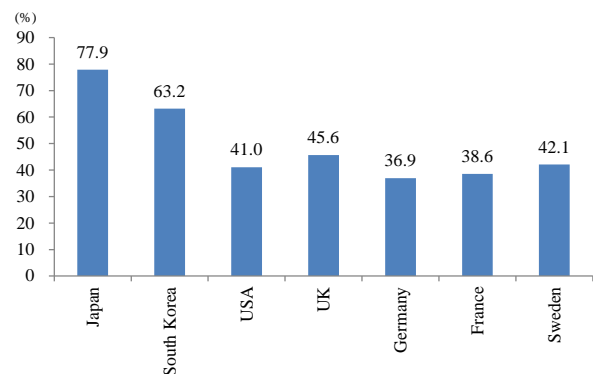


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I did” or “I kind of did” regarding the statement “I felt bored and unmotivated” in answering the question “This is a question about your state of mind over this previous week. Please choose one that best describes your feelings for each of the following.”

(3) State of mind

- A higher percentage of young people feel sad or depressed than in foreign countries. (Figure 5)

Figure 5 I felt depressed

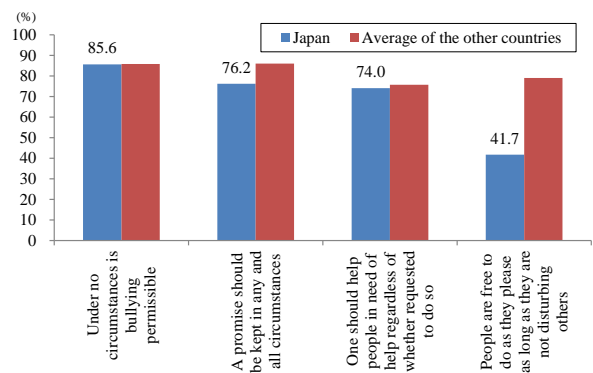


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I did” or “I kind of did” regarding the statement “I felt depressed” in answering the question “This is a question about your state of mind over this previous week. Please choose one that best describes your feelings for each of the following.”

(4) Social Norms

- Young people have norm consciousness to the same degree as or more than those in foreign countries. (Figure 6)

Figure 6 Social Norms

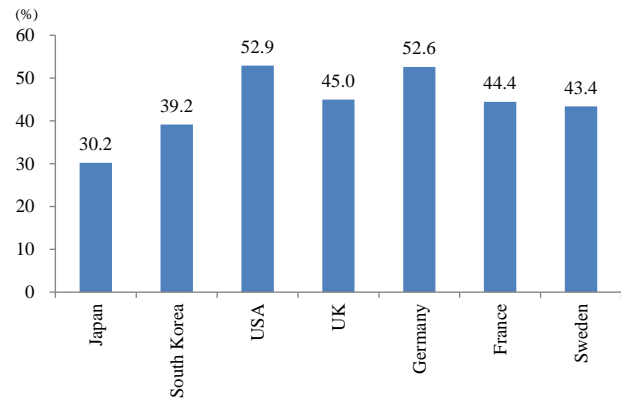


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I agree” or “I kind of agree” in response to the question “Please indicate how much each of the following statements/opinions apply to you.”

(5) **Social development/social participation**

- Young people have less awareness about involvement in social issues and their social participation than in foreign countries. (Figure 7)

Figure 7 My participation may be able to change social phenomena

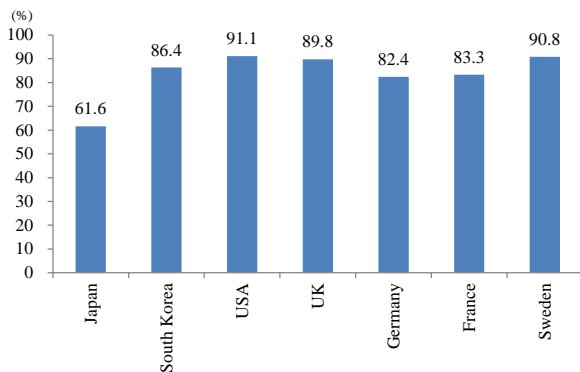


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I agree” or “I kind of agree” regarding the statement “My participation may be the catalyst for some change in social phenomena that I want changed” in answering the question “How do you feel about the following opinions?”

(6) **My envisaged future**

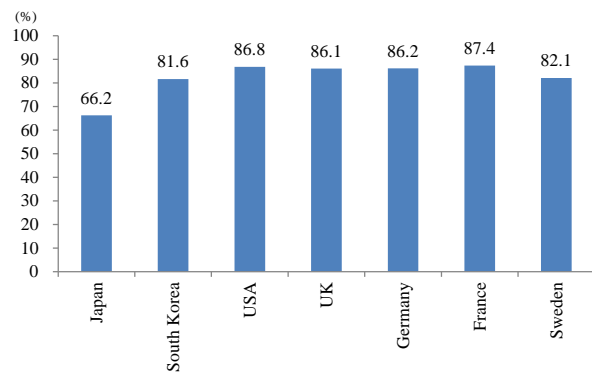
- Young people do not have such bright hopes for their future as those in foreign countries. (Figure 8, Figure 9)

Figure 8 Hopes for the future



Note: The total number of young people who chose “I have hope” or “I have some hope” in response to the question “Do you have bright hopes for your future?”

Figure 9 When I am 40 years old (I will be happy)

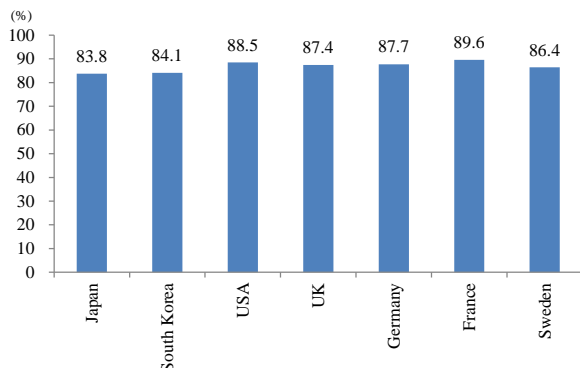


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I think so” or “I kind of think so” regarding the statement “I will be happy” in answering the question “What do you think you will be when you are about 40 years old?”

2. Family and Home Life

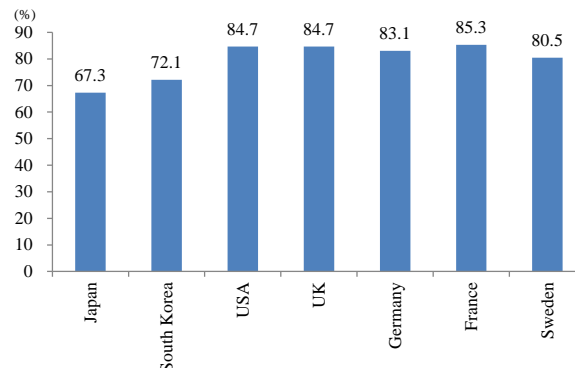
- Levels of awareness of affection from one’s parents are not so different in Japan and the other countries. (Figure 10)
- Meanwhile, Japanese youth have a relatively low sense of fulfillment when they are with their family and a low satisfaction with their home lives. (Figure 11)

Figure 10 Parents love me/Parents care about me



Note: The total number of young people who chose “I agree” or “I kind of agree” regarding the statement “I think that both my parents love (care about) me” in answering the question “How much do each of the following descriptions apply to you?”

Figure 11 Sense of fulfillment (when with family)

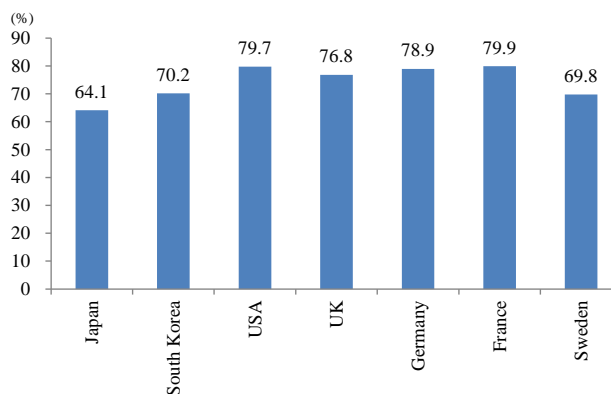


Note: The total number of young people who chose “This applies to me” or “This more or less applies to me” regarding the statement “When with family” in answering the question “At what sorts of times do you feel fulfilled?”

3. Friends

- A relatively low percentage of Japanese youth are satisfied with and feel assured of their friendships. (Figure 12)

Figure 12 Satisfaction with friendships

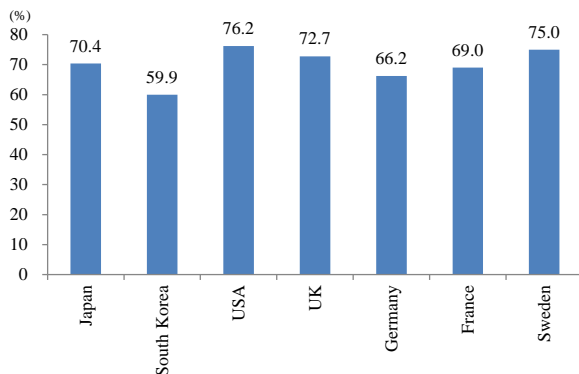


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I am satisfied” or “I am more or less satisfied” in response to the question “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the relationships that you share with friends?”

4. Attitudes toward own country

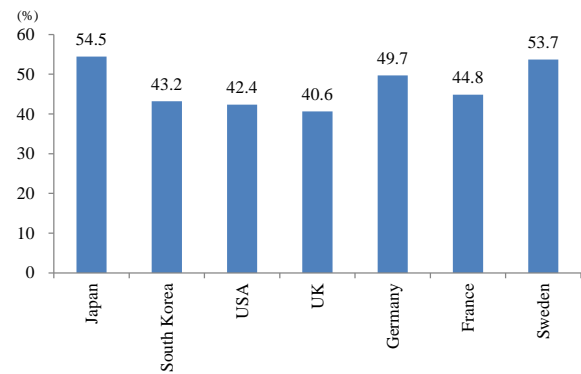
- The percentage of those who are proud of being a citizen of their country is almost the same as in other countries. (Figure 13)
- A higher percentage of young people want to do something to serve their country than in foreign countries. (Figure 14)

Figure 13 Proud of being a citizen of my country



Note: The total number of young people who chose “Yes” regarding the statement “I am proud of being a citizen of my country” in answering the question “How do you feel about the statements about to be given?”

Figure 14 I would like to do something to serve my country

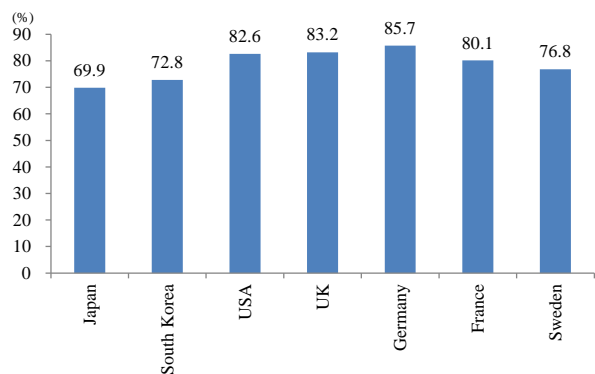


Note: The total number of young people who chose “Yes” regarding the statement “I would like to do something to serve my country” in answering the question “How do you feel about the statements about to be given?”

5. School

- A lower percentage of young people have a sense of satisfaction with their school life than those in foreign countries. (Figure 15)

Figure 15 Degree of satisfaction with school life

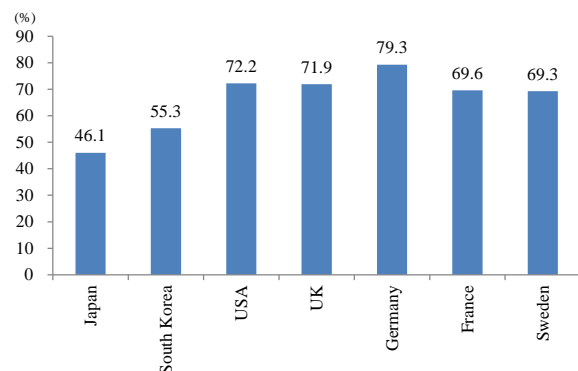


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I am satisfied” or “I am more or less satisfied” in response to the question “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with school life?” People who are not currently going to school answered about when they were going to school.

6. Workplace

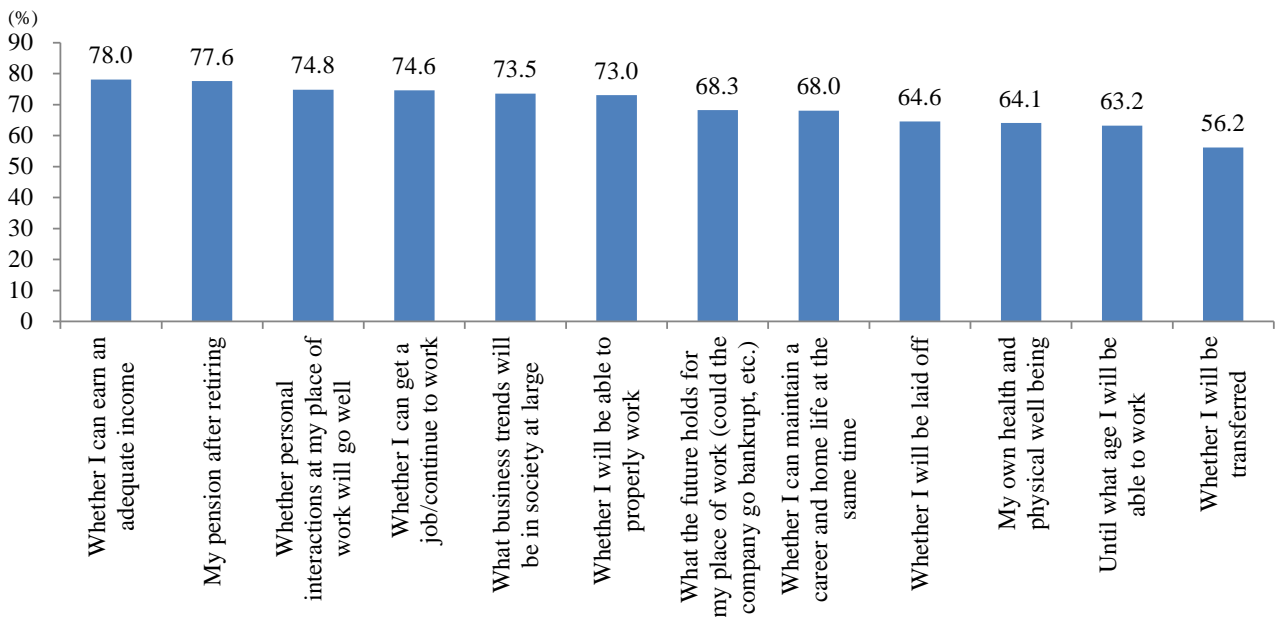
- A lower percentage of young people are satisfied with their workplaces than in foreign countries. (Figure 16)
- Concerns about working in the present or future are high for many items. (Figure 17)

Figure 16 Degree of satisfaction with life at workplace



Note: The total number of young people who chose “I am satisfied” or “I am more or less satisfied” in response to the question “Are you satisfied with your current workplace?”

Figure 17 Concerns about working in the present or future

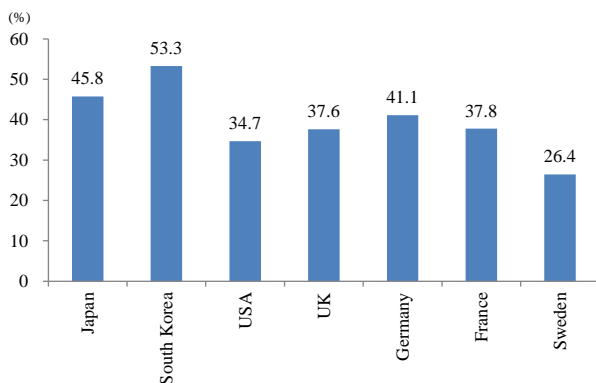


Note: The total number of young people who chose “I am concerned” or “I am kind of concerned” for each item.

7. Marriage/Parenting

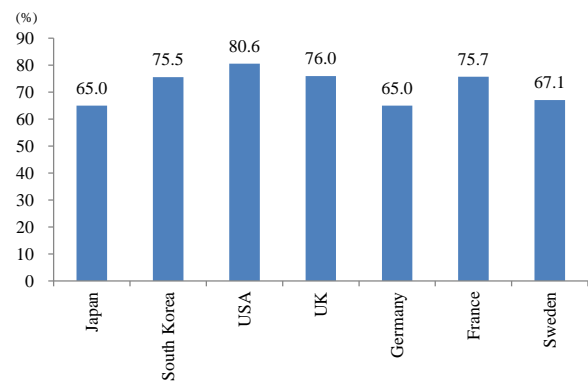
- Compared with the Western countries, a relatively high percentage of Japanese youth think they want to hurry up and get married to have a family of their own. (Figure 18)
- Meanwhile, a lower percentage of young people think they will be married and raising children when they are 40 years old than in foreign countries. (Figure 19)

Figure 18 I want to hurry up and get married to have a family of my own



Note: The total number of young people who chose “I agree” or “I kind of agree” regarding the statement “I want to hurry up and get married to have a family of my own” in answering the question “How much do each of the following descriptions apply to you?”

Figure 19 When I am 40 years old (I will be married)



Note: The total number of young people who chose “I think so” or “I kind of think so” regarding the statement “I will be married” in answering the question “What do you think you will be when you are about 40 years old?”

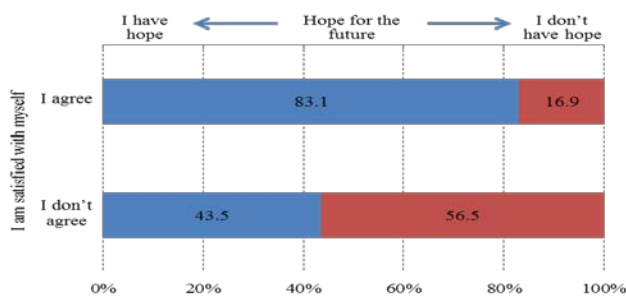
8. Suggestions for measures that can be derived based on the attitudes of young people

(1) Future hopes

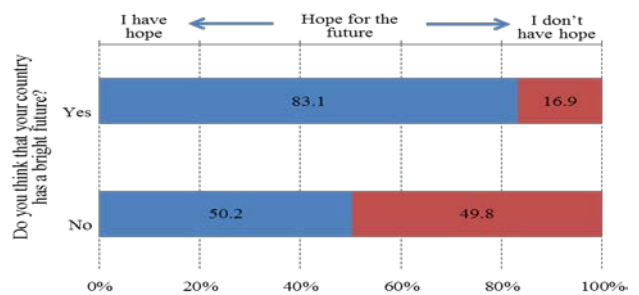
- Compared with those in the other countries, Japanese youth do not have bright hopes for their future.
- Whether they can have bright hopes for the future is related to (1.) whether they see themselves positively (internal factor) and (2.) whether they have a positive image of the future of their country (external factor).
- Among young people with high self-esteem or young people who have a bright vision of the future of their country, there tends to be a high percentage with hope for the future. (Figure 20)

Figure 20 Correlation between hope for the future and self-esteem, etc.

(1) Correlation with sense of satisfaction with self



(2) Correlation with image of future of own country



Note: The relationship between “sense of satisfaction with self”/“image of future of own country” and “Hope for the future” (correlation factor) shows that “sense of satisfaction with self” is more closely related (high correlation) than “image of future of own country.”

Correlation factor between “Hope for the future” and “Sense of satisfaction with self”: 0.45

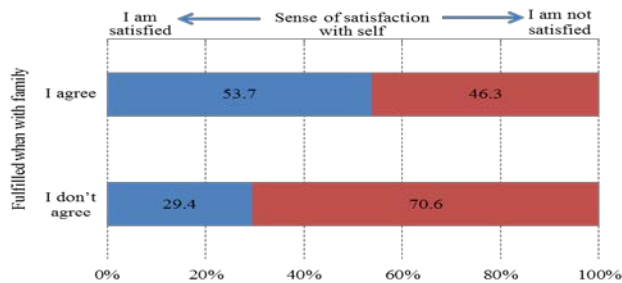
Correlation factor between “Hope for the future” and “Image of future of own country”: 0.26

- When examining the characteristics of young people who have high self-esteem, it was found that those who felt fulfilled in their family relationships, school life, and life at the workplace are likely to have greater self-esteem¹. (Figure 21)

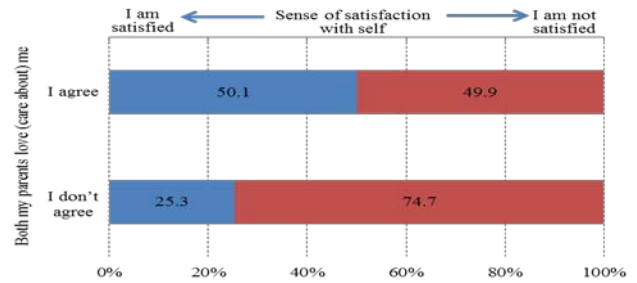
¹ Previous studies have also pointed out that there is more likely to be self-confidence among those who have a trusting relationship with their parents and that young people become more confident as they confirm their own abilities and the meaning of their existence through opportunities to experience being of service at home, at school and in the community.

Figure 21 Correlation between self-esteem and family relationships/school life/life at workplace

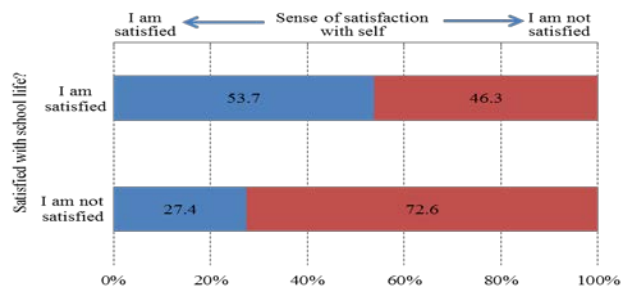
(1) Correlation with sense of fulfillment when with family



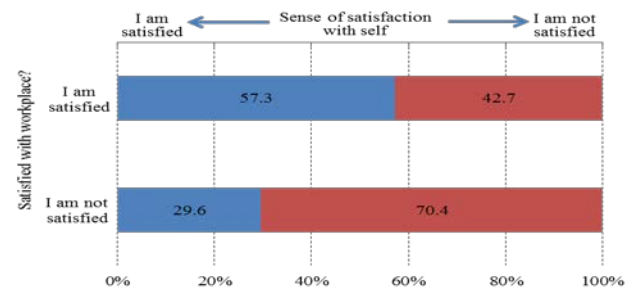
(2) Correlation with love from parents



(3) Correlation with degree of satisfaction with school life



(4) Correlation with image of future of own country



Note: 1. "(2) Love from parents" was a question only for those whose father or mother is alive.
2. "(4) Degree of satisfaction with life at workplace" was a question for workers only. The answer "Don't know" has been excluded.

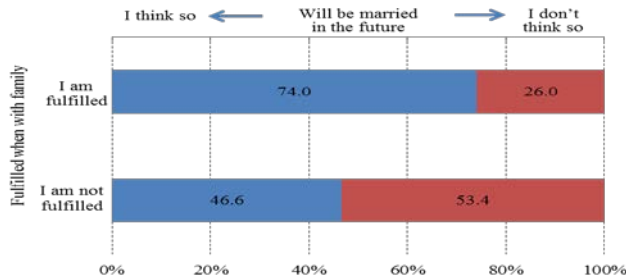
- Therefore, it is important to provide support for parenting and home education, to create an environment conducive to the realization of a fine-tuned and high-quality education and to support schools, with the cooperation of the whole community.
- Further promoting the creation of an environment where homes, schools, and the community work together to warmly and sometimes sternly watch over the growth of children and young people, and to support them, will lead children and young people to become aware of their relationship with society and foster their self-esteem, which will eventually contribute to giving them bright hope for the future.

(2) Attitudes toward marriage/parenting

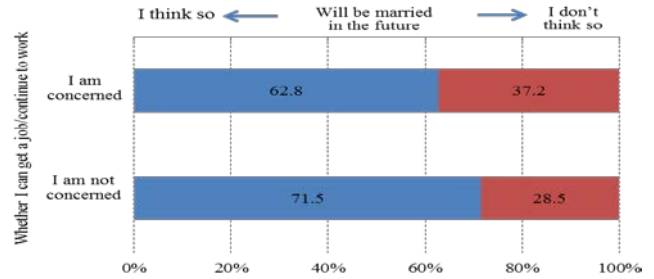
- Although a high percentage of Japanese youth feel they want to hurry up and get married to have a family of their own, they do not imagine marriage and parenting in their futures.
- Those who have a good relationship with their parents or have few concerns about working are more likely to have a positive image of marriage and parenting in their futures. (Figure 22)

Figure 22 Correlation between attitudes toward marriage/parenting and parent-child relationships/concerns about working

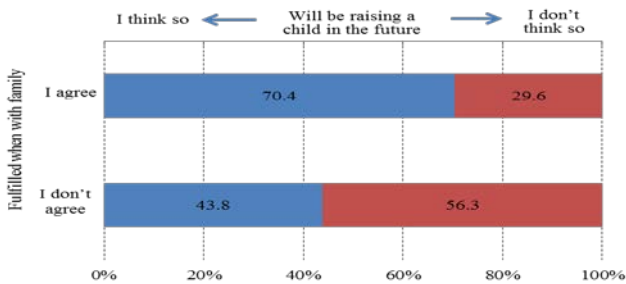
(1) Correlation with sense of fulfillment when with family (Marriage)



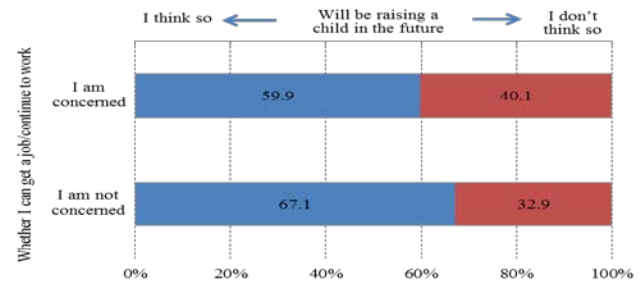
(2) Correlation with concerns about working (Marriage)



(3) Correlation with sense of fulfillment when with family (Parenting)



(4) Correlation with concerns about working (Parenting)

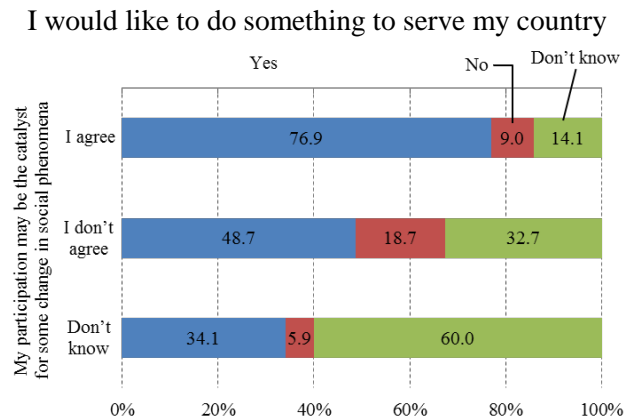


- Further enhancing support for families through measures such as parenting support and home education support and promoting the appreciation of the importance of family will make it easier for young people to envision a bright future for their own families.
- With regard to work, in order to secure the economic stability of young people, it will be necessary to support career education and vocational independence and dispel their concerns about working.

(3) Attitudes toward own country

- Although Japanese youth feel they want to do something to serve Japan, they aren't clearly aware of how they can specifically become involved or whether they can concretely change society through their social involvement.
- Those who think their participation may be the catalyst for some change in social phenomena are more likely to feel they want to do something to serve their country. (Figure 23)
- Further promoting support for the participation of young people in social development, including education about social development/social participation so that young people can shape their attitudes toward proactive engagement in the formation of society and in the contribution to its development will eventually help them fulfill their desire to be of service to their own country they are proud of.

Figure 23 Correlation between their desire to serve their country and attitudes toward social participation



Conclusion

- Currently, an overall review of the policies based on the Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People is being conducted. Based on this, new policies will be considered in the future.
- When considering new policies in the future, the results of this survey and the suggestions derived from the results will be fully utilized.