

Working Group 34 - An Evaluation of the Roles of women farmers in East Asia: A comparative study between Korea and Japan

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Mother- and Daughter-in-law Dyad in Farming Families Executing the Family Management Agreement in Current Japan

Abstract

The aim of this study is to clarify the generational relationship of farming women within a stem-family household focusing on the mother- and daughter-in-law dyad in current Japan, according to a case study of farming families executing the Family Management Agreement.

In Japan, the farming unit has been a family, which is to be succeeded by the first son of the farm manager. Following the traditional stem-family system, the farm successor was supposed to continue living with his parents even after his marriage. Thus, it has been necessary for the successor's wife to obey her parents-in-law in terms of farm work and daily family life. As a new family member she was expected to adjust to the family traditions under the guidance of her mother-in-law. The complicated relationship between the mother- and daughter-in-law has been one of the classical topics for family studies.

However, the stem-family system is now being replaced by the conjugal-family system in current Japan. Although the composition ratio of stem-family households is still relatively high in rural areas, the inner structure of the stem-family household has acquired several new aspects, deviating from the tradition.

In this study, the current mother- and daughter-in-law dyad in farming families are analyzed according to the nationwide survey of farming families executing the Family Management Agreement. The Family Management Agreement had been introduced to establish the personal position in a farming family, especially women's status, and to modernize farm management by carrying out partnership among family members.

In order to examine the generational relationships between the mother- and daughter-in-law, three model cases are shown where the mother and daughter-in-law are present, the latter still engaged in childbirth/child-raising, and the data from semi-structured interviews both with mother- and daughter-in-law were obtained.

The relationships between mother- and daughter-in-law can be seen from a life course perspective. The course of one's life is a chain of events dependent on age and determined by when and what event one experiences. The mother- and daughter-in-law have passed across different life courses according to historical and social conditions. Besides their life course, the degrees of generational integration in a co-residence and in farming are analyzed.

The results of their comparative studies are as follows: The mother- and daughter-in-law dyad within a farming family pioneering in the Family Management Agreement shows partnership and that they are able to fulfill their needs complementally. This mutual relationship between the mother- and daughter-in-law involves integrated family ties.

1. Introduction

In Japan, the farming unit has been a family, which is to be succeeded by the first son

of the farm manager. Following the traditional stem-family system, the farm successor was supposed to continue living with his parents even after his marriage.

In traditional stem-family households based on the *Ie* institution, there was a hierarchy. The male household members were more dominant than that of female and the senior household members were more dominant than that of junior. Thus, it has been necessary for the successor's wife to obey her parents-in-law in terms of farm work and daily family life.

There was a woman in a stem-family household who exercised headship as a housewife, and this status was transferred from the mother to her daughter-in-law some years after the daughter-in-law's marriage. Before the succession the daughter-in-law had to learn the family traditions and communal duties under the guidance of her mother-in-law. The complicated relationship between the mother- and daughter-in-law in stem families have been one of the classical issues for family studies in Japan.

However, the stem-family system is being replaced by the conjugal-family system in current Japan. Although the composition ratio of stem-family households is still relatively high in rural areas, the inner structure of the stem-family household has acquired several new aspects, deviating from the tradition. In an aged society, the prolonged life-expectancy extends the period that a married couple lives together with the parents. Therefore, each married couple needs to be more or less independent in order to avoid any conflicts. Moreover, declining birthrate decreases the number of siblings, sometimes leading to a lack of a brother among the successors in the family. A female successor is therefore not unusual nowadays¹.

The change in the inner structure of the stem-family household shifted the mother- and daughter-in-law dyad from dominance of the mother-in-law to equality between the mother- and daughter-in-law or dominance of the daughter-in-law². In this study, the current mother- and daughter-in-law dyad in farming families are analyzed according to semi-structured interviews with farming families executing the Family Management Agreement.

The Family Management Agreement had been introduced for establishing the personal position in a farming family, especially women's status, and modernizing farm management by carrying out partnership among family members. The mother- and daughter-in-law dyad within a farming family pioneering in the Family Management

¹ According to the National Survey on Family in Japan, in rural areas the more traditional institution based on paternal family line is still dominant. In spite of this tendency, more than 10% of married women are living with their own parents even in rural areas. Behind this figure, we can assume that bilateral family line is rising deviating from tradition. (The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Japan. 2000.)

² The following factors advanced the status of the daughter-in-law within the stem-family: conjugal-family system taking the place of stem-family system, farm successors having a disadvantage in finding a partner, farm managers having much difficulty keeping their successor within the agricultural sector, the younger generation of farming women having more chances to manage their own accounts, and the parents expecting to receive care from their daughter-in-law. (Sato 2007, 173-174).

Agreement shows partnership and that they are able to fulfill their needs complementally. This mutual relationship between the mother- and daughter-in-law involves integrated family-ties.

2. Method

The relationships between the mother- and daughter-in-law can be seen from a life course perspective. The course of one's life is a chain of events dependent on age and determined by when and what event one experiences. The mother- and daughter-in-law have passed across different life course according to historical and social conditions. Women's life course patterns are deeply related to family career as well as occupational career; i.e. whether her occupational career has been consistent or interrupted considering her family career. In order to compare life course between the mother- and daughter-in-law, the early life stages of the mother-in-law are focused on.

The Family Management Agreement is contributing to the career formation of farming women. Most of the farming families executing the Family Management Agreement have signed an agreement on the field of farm management such as decision-making policy in farm management, working hours and holidays, farm labor allocation and remuneration for farm work. Moreover, half of them have made an agreement about their family life covering issues such as family life allocation, farm management rights transfer, sanitary cleanliness, working condition, health care, etc. Each Family Management Agreement is composed of several clauses which cover issues from farm management to family life, according to the family condition.

This study is based on the nationwide survey of farming households executing the Family Management Agreement³. The interviewed were introduced by the local Extension Service Centers, which were evaluated as regions with well-promoted Family Management Agreement by the Regional Agricultural Administration Offices staff in charge and by the Expert Extension Workers at the prefectural level. In this study, in order to examine the generational relationships between the mother- and daughter-in-law, three model cases are shown where the mother and daughter-in-law are present, the latter still engaged in childbirth/child-raising, and the data from semi-structured interviews both with mother- and daughter-in-law were obtained.

The role allocation in farm work and in family life concerning the manager's wife and the successor's wife is analyzed in addition to their life course. Moreover, in order to indicate the generational relationships in stem-family households, the degrees of

³ Thanks to the generous support of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and their 2005 and 2006 Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research, I conducted an authorized interview with the staff at the Regional Agricultural Administration Offices Agricultural Extension Service, Women and Youth Affairs in different locations throughout Japan: Sendai, Saitama, Kanazawa, Nagoya, Kyoto, Okayama, Kumamoto and Sapporo. The main purpose of this interview was to find out the regional trends with regards to the Family Management Agreement and its specifics, and development in each area under consideration. Although the access to original documentation of the Family Management Agreement became difficult after the enactment of the Act on the Protection of Personal Information in 2005, we could still see some valid samples, obtainable thanks to the Extension Worker's collaboration and assistance.

generational integration and separation in a co-residence are measured in terms of housing, facilities, i.e. kitchen and bathroom, and living expenses⁴.

3. Cases of the mother- and daughter-in-law dyad

The table shows basic information about three comparative farming families executing the Family Management Agreement, from which the data from semi-structured interviews both with mother- and daughter-in-law were obtained.

These three cases for this study are located in various regions in Japan: Hokkaido, Miyagi and Aichi. The type of farm management is different in all these cases: dairy, rice and vegetable, and horticulture. However, these stem-families are almost on the same life-stage, i.e. on the childbirth/child raising stage, because these successors' wives are of the same generations (b.1970, 1970, 1973) and these managers' wives are also of the same generations (b.1947, 1944, 1941). These mother- and daughter-in-law dyads reflect some aspects relating to career formation of farming women and development of partnership among family members.

3-1. Family A in Aichi

3-1-0. Family Management Agreement

The first document was signed in 1996. The manager's wife was a rural-life advisor certified by the local government, and because of that this farming family was the first to sign the agreement in this region.

The following year the successor got married, and therefore the agreement was revised among four family members, i.e. the manager, the manager's wife, the successor and the successor's wife.

3-1-1. Farm management

This family farm has 4 hectares of cultivated land for horticulture. Its sales amount is 100 million yen per year in 2006. There are 17-18 part-time workers.

In 2007, the manager and the successor were engaged in planting seedlings for flower beds, and the manager's wife was engaged in planting Hydroculture.

In the document, it was stated that book-keeping and personal management are allotted to the manager's wife and her working hours are from 9 to 18 o'clock, matched with the starting hour of part-time workers.

The successor's wife was not engaged in farming and felt isolated from the other family members, and she let this frustration out on her children. The manager's wife noticed some unusual behavior in her grandchildren's actions. Therefore, she assigned sowing as farm work for the successor's wife, which she could begin easily. In 2006, the manager was sent to the hospital due to an injury, and currently the successor's wife is in charge of sowing independently.

⁴ The former studies on the incidence of the co-residence of parents and the married child referred to the concept of 'family solidarity' used by Vern L. Bengtson (Morioka (ed.) 1985, Sugaya 1985, Sato 2007).

Table Basic Information

	Family A	Family B	Family C
Location	Aichi	Miyagi	Hokkaido
Interview	March 7. 2007	February 23. 2006	September 7. 2006
Number of Family members	7	8	8
Family composition	3 Generations	4 Generations	4 Generations
Family members	Manager (b.1938)	Manager (b.1941)	Manager (b.1946)
	Manager's wife (b.1941)	Manager's wife (b.1944)	Manager's wife (b.1947)
	Successor (b.1971)	Successor (b.1968)	Successor (b.1972)
	Successor's wife (b.1973)	Successor's wife (b.1970)	Successor's wife (b.1970)
	Successor's son (b.1997)	Successor's daughter (b.1996)	Successor's son (b.2004)
	Successor's son (b.1999)	Successor's daughter (b.1997)	Successor's son (b.2005)
		Successor's daughter (b.2000)	
		Manager's mother (b.1920)	Manager's mother (b.1920)
	Manager's daughter (b.1972)		Manager's daughter (b.1977)
Agreement signing	1996	2002	2002
Agreement revision	1997	-	2005
Farm management	4 hectares of cultivated land for horticulture. Sales amount 100 million yen per year in 2006.	1.3 hectares of rice fields, 70 ares of cultivated land for around 40 kinds of organic vegetables, processing and selling handmade box lunches and apartment management when the agreement was signed in 2002. The cultivated land under management area for the rice planting had expanded to ten hectares when the interview was conducted in 2006.	90 milking cows and 35 heifers, milk production 660t per year in 2006.

In 2006, the manager's wife handed over her accounting tasks for the wages of the part-time workers to the successor's wife exactly as scheduled. When the interview was conducted, a year had passed. The successor's wife needed one more year to take over accounting tasks completely.

It is written in the document that the income is 200,000 yen for the wife, 170,000 yen for the successor and 50,000 yen for the successor's wife per month. However, currently their salary has gone up.

In the document, it was planned that the farm management transfer would be when

the manager turns 63 and his wife turns 60. The manager actually handed over his management right to his son when he was 65 years old because of the farmer's pension⁵.

3-1-2. Family life

There is a detached building on the premises for the successor, his wife and children. However, it has neither a bathroom nor a kitchen. The bathroom and the kitchen in the main building are shared by all family members.

In the document it is stated that the successor's wife is the main person in charge of cooking, washing, cleaning and kitchen gardening, and the manager's wife assists her. In 1997, the manager's wife fractured her hand and it caused some difficulties for her to perform household chores. She determined this occurrence to be a good opportunity to hand over her domestic role to the successor's wife.

The manager's wife hands the successor's wife between 150,000 yen and 200,000 yen as household expenses every month. In the manager's wife's opinion, household expenses should be given to the successor's wife independently from her own salary because the successor's wife has to learn how to save household expenses.

There is no information in the document about child care because it was signed before the children were born. In fact, overall child care is allotted solely to the successor's wife.

3-1-3. Life course of the manager's wife

The manager's wife was born as the fourth daughter of a school teacher in the neighboring district. Her father was sick, and therefore her eldest brother engaging in family farming supported her economically. She went to the agricultural high school to help her eldest brother's work. However, after graduating from high school, she worked as a telephone operator that was one of the prestigious jobs at that time.

Her current husband was a salesman of an agricultural machinery company before his marriage. Her eldest brother was one of her husband's customers. Her eldest brother helped with setting her up with her current husband. In the 1960s, more full-time farm households converted to part-time farm households in which husbands were engaged in off-farm work and wives were engaged in farming with her parents-in-law. To avoid working in the family farm with only her parents-in-law, she asked her husband to resign from his company. She began to engage in farming with her husband right after their marriage in 1963.

Because her mother-in-law died four years after this, she has been engaged in book-keeping and personal management since the beginning of her marriage. At that time, her husband's three siblings lived with them and there were always more than two interns working in her family farm. She had been in charge of their meals in addition to household chores.

She gave birth to her children in 1968, 1971 and 1972. Her three children entered the day nursery around the age of three. She raised her first daughter on her own but she

⁵ Although the management right was transferred in 2003, we call here the former manager "the manager" and the current manager the successor.

asked her father-in-law to take care of the other two. He was a man of strict morals and inflexibility. However, grandparents generally find that their grandchildren are very pleasant to be with, and therefore he became a gentle person to his daughter-in-law.

3-1-4. Life course of the successor's wife

The successor's wife was born as the first daughter of an office worker in this district. She went to high school, where she learned home economics and achieved licenses for cooking and sewing.

After graduating from high school, she worked as a medical office worker for five years. One of her colleagues asked her to attend an event organized by a group of farm successors, where she became acquainted with her current husband. In 1996, she resigned from her job for her marriage at the age of 23. She had no anxiety in living with her husband's family and in engaging in family farming in the future because her father's family ran a vegetable farm.

Right after her marriage, she undertook overall domestic chores from her mother-in-law. She gave birth to two sons in 1997 and 1999. Overall child care is allotted solely to her.

In the greenhouse, the manager's wife regularly held a tole painting class inviting an instructor, and the successor's wife attended as a student. The manager's wife offered her daughter-in-law a chance to obtain the qualification to teach tole painting. She spent three years preparing for the exam and achieved it in 1999. She teaches tole painting monthly in her class.

In 2006, she began to engage in farming as mentioned above (3-1-1).

3-1-5. Characteristics of this mother- and daughter-in-law dyad

The mother-in-law was born and brought up in a large farm family; therefore, it was easy for her to live with her husband's parents and many siblings right after her marriage. However, the daughter-in-law grew up in a small nuclear family. This difference between their home environments before their marriage has driven the mother-in-law to give her daughter-in-law extra consideration. Because of that the daughter-in-law has concentrated on housework and child care, and has not been engaged in family farming. The degree of generational integration in this co-residence is high, and this is supposed to cause more conflicts. Division of labor between the mother- and daughter-in-law is one of the measures against conflicts. For example, the manager's wife could be in charge of farm work and the daughter-in-law in charge of housework. However, this causes the daughter-in-law to be isolated from the other family members. In general, the manager's wife's duties in farming tend to be handed over to the successor's wife earlier than the farm management right is handed over to the successor. However, it is not clear when and how the manager's wife's duties should be transferred, since it depends on the mother-in-law's decision.

3-2. Family B in Miyagi

3-2-0. Family Management Agreement

This farming family signed the agreement in 2002 because the manager's wife was a core member of the Agricultural Cooperative of Women's Part in the city. The manager's

wife was the main person to sign it and she focused on the decision-making policy for farm management.

3-2-1. Farm management

When the agreement was signed in 2002, the farm management of this family was as follows: 1.3 hectares of rice fields, 70 ares of cultivated land for around 40 kinds of organic vegetables, processing and selling handmade box lunches, and apartment management. The cultivated land under management area for the rice planting had expanded to ten hectares when the interview was conducted in 2006.

The manager and the successor are engaged in rice farming, the manager's wife is engaged in planting organic vegetables and the successor's wife is in charge of processing and selling handmade box lunches.

In the document, it is stated that the monthly salary amounts to 50,000 yen and the bonus amounts to 80,000 yen twice a year, which are paid to each family worker, i.e. the manager, the manager's wife, the successor and the successor's wife. However, each person is drawing their own income from the apartment management. Therefore, only the successor's wife receives her monthly salary and her bonus from her mother-in-law. The profit from the direct sales store is deposited into the manager's wife's account because the seller's name belongs to her, while the producer's name belongs to the successor's wife.

There is no information about farm management transfer in the document. The current manager will not retire on a pension at 65. He has not set up his farmer's pension⁶.

3-2-2. Family life

The successor and his wife share a residence and its facilities with parents since right after their marriage. This is the traditional co-residence of parents and the married child. The manager said that the result of too much democracy would fall into individualism, and therefore a three generation family was the best, even if there was some degree of hierarchy within the family. Moreover, the manager's wife added that it was the way of her family to have the eldest son live with his parents even after his marriage.

House-keeping is allotted to the successor's wife and the manager's wife is a helper.

It was written in the document that taking children to and from the day nursery was allotted to the successor and his wife, and the manager's wife helped them in addition to taking charge of the house cleaning. However, the successor's wife became busy at her new business cooking and selling handmade box lunches. Therefore, currently the manager is in charge of taking children to and from the day nursery and their piano lessons, and the manager's wife of having the children eating breakfast.

3-2-3. Life course of the manager's wife

The manager's wife comes from a farming family in a neighboring town. She studied home economics in high school, and then before her marriage, she learned sewing in a

⁶ The farmer's pension system is private in Japan.

private class while working part-time in a bookstore.

When she was 21 years old, her marriage was arranged. Her husband was the eldest son of a farm manager; therefore, she began to live with her parents-in-law, three sisters-in-law and a brother-in-law right after her marriage. Soon after, she gave birth to the eldest daughter at the age of 22 and the eldest son at the age of 24.

Her husband's family introduced sericulture at that time in order to improve cash earning. The sericulture needed more labor forces. The current manager's wife had to be engaged in family farming as a young diligent unpaid worker. She could not get her own account, although it was common in this community that young farming women earned their pocket money by peddling vegetables cultivated by themselves.

Around 1995, the manager's wife set up her vending counter of bags packed with 30 kinds of vegetables. Her unique vending counter rose to fame in the region.

The family changed its main farm products from cocoons to rice with a large management scale under the contract with other landowners around 2005.

She is very satisfied that she can have her own account thanks to the direct sales store and she can contribute to her family's income.

3-2-4. Life course of the successor's wife

The successor's wife was born as a daughter of an office worker in this region. She graduated from a commercial high school, and was working in a company. One of her friends asked her to attend a party organized by young farm successors, and there she got acquainted with her current husband.

In 1994, she resigned from her company in order to get married at the age of 24, which was the standard age to marry in this rural area at that time. It was unusual for young women to willingly marry a farm successor, and thus her marriage received a lot of attention. She had no hesitation in getting married with a farm successor and living with his parents because she was brought up in a three-generation household.

Following her marriage, she gave birth to three daughters in 1996, 1997 and 2000. Her family role has been household chores and childcare. Thus, she doesn't have any knowledge of agriculture.

In 2002, the Agricultural Cooperative in this region opened a direct sales store. The manager's wife advised her daughter-in-law to cook and sell her handmade box lunches by using organic vegetables cultivated by her. In the manager's wife's opinion, her daughter-in-law was skillful at cooking. The manager built a kitchen for her. The successor's wife was willing to begin taking part in the processing and selling division of her family farm. Currently, she occasionally serves as the lecturer in the cooking school in her community. She found her new talent.

3-2-5. Characteristics of this mother- and daughter-in-law dyad

The farm work of this family is divided by sex, i.e. the males are engaged in rice farming, and the females are engaged in planting, processing and selling organic vegetables. Therefore, the mother- and daughter-in-law are cooperative, and they fulfill their needs complementally. This generational relationship between the mother- and daughter-in-law is due to their new business in the direct sales store. They could achieve their own personal position in a family farm. Moreover, the parents-in-law came

to be more helpful to the daughter-in-law in taking care of her children, and the degree of generational integration in this co-residence developed.

However, the profit from the direct sales store is deposited into the manager's wife's account. The daughter-in-law cannot achieve legitimate position in family farming just yet. It depends on the timing of the farm transfer from the manager to the successor, although the manager has no specific plans for retirement.

3-3. Family C in Hokkaido

3-3-0. Family Management Agreement

This dairy farming family signed the first agreement in 2002 because the manager was a chairman of the City Chamber of Agriculture. In 2004, the successor's wife gave birth to the first son, and therefore the agreement was revised.

3-3-1. Farm management

The founder of this dairy farm is the grandfather of the current manager. He settled in Hokkaido and started dairy farming with a milking cow in 1934. When the current manager married in 1970, the management scale had been enlarged as follows: 60 cows including 40 milking cows, and milk production 200t per year. The current management scale has reached as follows: 90 milking cows and 35 heifers, and milk production 660t per year in 2006. Its working force consisted of the manager, his wife, the first son and his wife. However, currently the successor's wife is on child-care leave. There is no special information about farm work allocated to the manager's wife in the document, because she is engaged in farming almost as much as the manager and the successor.

In the document, it was planned that the farm management transfer would be in 2009 when the current manager turns 62.

3-3-2. Family life

Each couple has its own independent residence on the same premises. However, before the birth of the successor's first child in 2004, they shared the bathroom and the kitchen of the manager's residence. In the manager's wife's opinion, the young mother would benefit from this independence by acquiring better domestic skills.

The agreement provides that all family members cooperate in the child care. However, it is also added that the successor's wife is the main person in charge. According to the manager's wife's suggestion, the child care is allotted mainly to the successor's wife, i.e. the child's mother.

Monthly salary for the young couple is 150,000 yen. It is for their pin money, foods, commodities and child-care expenses. The expenses for electricity, heating, insurances, gasoline and automobile inspection are excluded.

3-3-3. Life course of the manager's wife

The manager's wife is from the same district. Although her parents ran a small-scale dairy farm, she disliked helping farm work. Because her younger brother was a farm successor, she had lived in a store as a salesgirl away from her parents since she was a junior high school student.

After graduating from high school, she worked at the shoe store and took charge of

accounting for 5 years. She grew tired under the strain of daily overtime work, and assumed that farmers would be able to work in their family farm at their own pace. She was introduced to her current husband who was a graduate from the same high school by a friend and she got married at the age of 23.

Her husband entered the agricultural technical college after graduating from high school, and following this he went to the U.S. and studied dairy farming under the large management scale for a year. He married at the age of 25, three years after he returned from abroad and began to engage in family farming.

Her marriage, co-residence with parents-in-law, initiation into the dairy farm and giving birth to the eldest son almost coincided. She had never worked in her father's farm before her marriage, and therefore she left the child care to the mother-in-law, and made an effort to learn dairy farming under her husband's guidance. The farm work was hard enough for her to have a miscarriage twice. Five years after the birth of the eldest son, the eldest daughter was born when she was 29 years old.

She has not taken care of children. The daughter-in-law said that she was a so-called sandwich-generation woman, i.e. her mother-in-law brought up her children, and her daughter-in-law is bringing up her grandchildren.

In spite of her lack of childrearing, she has secured her personal position in producing more than 30 kinds of vegetables for her family and friends independently. She prefers vegetable farming to child care.

3-3-4. Life course of the successor's wife

The successor's wife was born an office worker's daughter in Osaka. After studying English in a two-year college, she worked in a company in Osaka. However, she gradually realized that she was not suited for office work and she did not want to marry an office worker.

She had a dream to marry a fruit farm successor because peaches were her favorite fruit. When she was 26 years old, she participated in an excursion in Hokkaido which was organized in order to introduce single women to farm successors to consider marriage. During the excursion she saw cows nearby for the first time. She was overwhelmed by their huge size and attracted to dairy farming. Next time, she tried to stay at a dairy farm in Hokkaido. There, a calf sucked her fingers and she was enchanted by its charm. This occurrence made her determined to change her occupation. The day after getting back from this farm stay, she resigned from her company.

At the age of 27, she began to work on a dairy farm in Hokkaido as a live-in temporary worker for 6 months, and then looked for a dairy farm successor as her partner. A principal of an elementary school in the region introduced her to her current husband. She got married at the age of 30 in 2000.

Right after her marriage, she began to engage in the family farm. Due to hard work in the dairy farm, she had a miscarriage 3 times and at last gave birth to the first son at the age of 34 in 2004. Following this, she gave birth to the second son at the age of 35, and she is currently on child-care leave.

It is written in the document that the successor's wife will be engaging in farming again after her children enter nursery. She intends for them to enter pre-school after they turn 4.

3-3-5. Characteristics of this mother- and daughter-in-law dyad

In this case, the degree of generational integration in farming is high. The manager, the manager's wife, the successor and the successor's wife are all engaged in dairy farming, although the successor's wife is currently on child-care leave. The successor's wife selected dairy farming as her occupation after engaging in office work. The manager's wife was also engaged in office work before her marriage and she recognizes that farming is preferable to office work. This mother- and daughter-in-law is sharing an occupational preference. In addition to this, both of them suffered a miscarriage two or three times. Their similar life experiences made them closer.

The degree of generational separation in the co-residence is nevertheless high because the manager's wife wishes her daughter-in-law to be independent within the family as well. Furthermore, the manager's wife prefers vegetable farming to child care because of her lack of childrearing. She has established her personal position in planting vegetables. This mother- and daughter-in-law keep a moderate distance.

4. Comparison and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to clarify the generational relationship of farming women within a stem-family household focusing on the mother- and daughter-in-law dyad in current Japan, according to a case study of farming families executing the Family Management Agreement.

In this study, the current mother- and daughter-in-law dyad in farming families were analyzed based on the nationwide survey of farming families executing the Family Management Agreement. The Family Management Agreement had been introduced for establishing the personal position in a farming family, especially women's status, and modernizing farm management by carrying out partnership among family members.

In order to examine the generational relationships between the mother- and daughter-in-law, three model cases were shown where the mother and daughter-in-law were present, the latter still engaged in childbirth/child-raising, and the data from semi-structured interviews both with mother- and daughter-in-law were obtained.

The relationships between the mother- and daughter-in-law can be seen from a life course perspective. The course of one's life is a chain of events dependent on age and determined by when and what event one experiences. The mother- and daughter-in-law have passed across different life courses according to historical and social conditions. Besides their life course, the degrees of generational integration in a co-residence and in farming were analyzed.

The main findings from the comparison of these three families are as follows:

- 1) These mothers-in-law had achieved their personal positions in farming⁷. Their

⁷ Based on the interviews with farm families executing Family Management Agreement, Nishiyama stated as follows. In the traditional integrated stem family, married women, especially young women, could not state their own opinion, they had to repress their desires and be tolerant of collective views, and they had neither free time nor free space, i.e. they could not go out freely because they had to dedicate all of their time to their family life and farm work under the patriarch. However, farming

daughters-in-law should also be able to follow them.

2) In a traditional stem-family household, the mother-in-law was expected to keep her commodity management right until her retirement even though other household chores were handed over to her daughter-in-law right after her marriage (Kamiko & Masuda 1976). However, these three daughters-in-law have been in charge of domestic duties including the commodity management right after their marriage.

3) When the mother- and daughter-in-law do not share home environments before their marriage like Family A, the mother-in-law is expected to give her daughter-in-law extra consideration. In the case of Family A, the mother-in-law is engaged in farming and her daughter-in-law is in charge of domestic duties. This division of labor between the mother- and daughter-in-law isolates the daughter-in-law from the other family members.

4) The daughter-in-law of Family C is one of the new types of farming women who selected farming as their occupation. In this case, the mother- and daughter-in-law are able to share an occupational preference.

5) Even though the mother- and daughter-in-law do not share an occupational preference, it is possible for them to be cooperative in their farming and fulfill their needs complementally like Family B. In the case of Family B, the daughter-in-law's domestic skills contribute to the development of new business in their family farming and generational integration in their co-residence.

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women are able to keep and to join a wide range of social activities in the community, and they achieved freedom and independence in terms of money, time and space currently.(Nishiyama 2004)

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