

学位論文題目 Shifts in the Roles of Mothers Due to Child Independence

氏 名 HANAGATA Mio

This study aimed to reveal shifts in the roles of mothers that occur through childcare practices in order to examine the relationships between children and their mothers by focusing on such shifts as children become independent. To accomplish this, conflicts were examined from the viewpoint of the mother. A considerable number of studies have been conducted on the acquisition of mothers' roles. However, little attention has been given to the changes or losses involved in these roles. This paper includes an empirical study and a case study. The research provides an overview of the stages of mothers' roles from the period of childrearing to the point at which children leave home. A case study was also conducted on mothers whose children had left home.

Chapter 1 presents a literature review and reveals the two sides involved in the mother's role (i.e., the side regarding family life, in which children are encouraged to become independent, and the side engaged in school life, in which responsibility is taken for the education of children).

Methods are discussed in Chapter 2. This study's findings extensively relied on both the survey and interview. Survey data were collected in 2013 through an online questionnaire conducted on 356 mothers who had children living in the Greater Tokyo Area. A case study involving semi-structured interviews was conducted on a total of 16 mothers. The interviews were conducted from December 2008 to March 2010 in the respective homes of these mothers or a coffee shop. The interviews lasted anywhere from 50 to 90 minutes; they were audio-recorded and then transcribed for analysis.

Chapter 3 explains the first part of the research involving how mothers participate in developing the independence of their children and the affects this process has on the positive feelings mothers have toward childrearing. This chapter also examines how the involvement of both the mother and father facilitates the child's performance of household chores, the mother's work, the child's age and gender, and how the child's level of participation in household chores is related to the mother's positive feelings about childrearing. A path analysis showed that children performed a larger share of the household chores when their mothers increased their facilitation of the children's self-help. In this study, daughters helped with chores more often than sons. In addition, the eldest child was more likely to perform chores than younger children. Children with many siblings performed more household tasks. These results showed a strong positive effect of children's

household chores on mothers' employment when the mothers prompted their children to perform household tasks. Mothers may require children to perform household chores because they desire more personal time. Higher scores in variables regarding the father's involvement were likely to increase the scores of variables regarding the mother's positive feelings about childrearing.

Chapters 4 and 5 reveal the states of the mothers' lives after children had left the family home and indicate which changes were recognized. Children left the family home for a variety of reasons, including advancement to university, job procurement, and marriage. The case study interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. The responsibility of mothers to ensure the education of their children involves the arrangements that are made to promote an ideal learning environment. Stressful events in which children leave the home include the loss of the mother's role, anxiety in the child's life, disease, and elderly care. When mothers have resources outside their roles in childrearing (e.g., work or hobbies), the negative influences involved in the forfeiture of their roles as mothers are less likely to result in crises. The mothers' satisfaction and feelings of accomplishment due to childrearing alleviates their concerns about the loss of this role. When mothers establish a good relationship with their children, they achieve new parent-child relationships and changes in their roles as mothers. Mothers observe their children grow and learn; when children express appreciation, mothers are greatly rewarded.

Few studies have examined the conflicts of mothers involved in childrearing and the shifts that occur in their roles as mothers, especially during middle age. This study is significant from a sociological perspective because it reveals shifts in the roles of mothers that occur from supporting the lives of their children regarding education and the development of new roles.