

MEANINGS OF GRADUATE EDUCATION FOR WOMEN IN JAPAN:
A STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO ALUMNAE
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

By

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Abstract

This study is about the significance of graduate education for women in Japan based on field research in the Kantō area in eastern Japan. In this dissertation, I examine what graduate education and graduate school experiences mean to female graduate degree holders in the humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious university in Japan according to both popular belief and objective rankings. The prestige of the University of Tokyo has been unshakable since it was established. The uniqueness of the status of the University of Tokyo should be noted because it is not comparable with any other universities in Japan because of its outstanding prestige. In that sense, experiences of the women I discuss are not representative of graduate degree holders in Japan, but indicative of the most highly educated women in the context of Japanese society. I study graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo because simply possessing graduate degrees is not considered to be highly educated in Japan as the number of graduate degree holders has increased, However, graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo are socially considered to be highly educated in Japan. By choosing female graduate degree holders from the most prestigious university in Japan, the women's experiences as highly educated women were expected to be shown more clearly than by choosing female graduate degree holders from other universities. Studying the alumnae of the University of Tokyo, the most extreme case of highly educated population in Japan, contributes to illuminating the significance of graduate education for women in the Japanese context.

For studying the significance of graduate education in the humanities and social sciences for women in Japan I present my own research framework, a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process. My research framework highlights how highly educated women who have a critical consciousness, defined as having multiple perspectives, find meanings of graduate education

in their lives in Japanese society in which higher education credentialing is gendered and regressive, showing how the macro phenomena of higher education policy is practiced and appropriated at the local level.

Higher education tends to be thought of as a means of empowerment for men and women. Graduates of the University of Tokyo are seen as elites in Japanese society. However, I find that graduate education for women in the humanities and social sciences at the University of Tokyo does not necessarily make life easier due to the regressiveness and genderedness of higher education credentialing in Japan. On the contrary, graduate education makes the lives of women more difficult and precarious. The value of education in humanities and social sciences is depreciated in the job market (except for academic job market) as one studies further to the master's level and then the doctoral level. In addition, the higher the level of education credentials women have beyond the undergraduate level, the greater difficulty they have finding partners and spouses in love and marriage market in general. At the same time, I find that graduate education is a critical engagement and highly educated women who received graduate education at the University of Tokyo were trained to be critical thinkers. I find that graduate education is significant in women's lives, including career and family, but the ways in which graduate education influences their lives varies.

In this study, I show how women who received graduate education at the University of Tokyo appropriate Japan's higher education policy to strengthen graduate education in order to enhance the competitiveness of the nation in the world by producing a greater number of highly professionals and researchers. For the women, graduate education provides a means of transcending their roles as wives and mothers by opening professional career opportunities, but at the same time, strengthens their traditional gender roles as housewives by narrowing career choices and as mothers by transposing graduate education into higher quality education for their children.

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Chapter 1: How did this study begin and where does this study go ahead?

The origin and the overview of the study

This dissertation aims to understand the significance of graduate education for women in various occupations and statuses in Japan by investigating how women find meanings of graduate education in their personal contexts, including love, family, childrearing, career, and other aspects of their lives. Their individual contexts are part of a larger social and cultural context in Japan. In order to understand the significance of graduate education for women in Japan, it is necessary to understand these larger social and cultural contexts. Therefore, I will first show the larger contexts in which women who received graduate education in Japan are placed.

This study is situated in the intersection of gender and education, which are not completely separable. On the one hand, considering gender, the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, a good wife and a wise mother, still persist and at the same time the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society, enacted in 1999, promotes “gender equality in every field in society”. Gender equality as a principle is not contestable in Japan, but men and women are often expected to play different roles. While women are often expected to be responsible in household tasks and child rearing as wives and mothers, men are often expected to support their family as breadwinners.

On the other hand, when considering education, the number of graduate students in Japan increased rapidly in the 1990s and is still increasing (Please see appendix 6 for the shift of the number of graduate students from the 1970s to 2010). The increase in graduate students has been brought about by the University Council’s proposal to MEXT for the purpose of enhancing Japan’s international competitiveness by producing a greater number of researchers and high-level professionals (University Council, 1991b). However, except for engineering majors, companies in Japan prefer new graduates from the undergraduate level

over those from graduate schools (Kaneko, 2004). The lack of employment for graduate degree holders is a serious social problem, as I will show later.

The gap in Japan between the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measurement (GEM) in the Human Development Report issued by UNDP show how little Japanese women participate in political and economic activities. HDI is an index measured by the following three aspects: life expectancy, educational attainment, and income. GEM is an index measured by some indicators, including the rate of women serving as legislators, senior officials, managers, and professional and technical workers as well as the estimated rate of women's income compared to that of men's income. Countries ranked high in HDI tend to be ranked high in GEM. However, Japan is not the case. Japan is highly ranked in HDI, which contrasts sharply with a poor ranking in GEM. Japan was ranked 10th in HDI, whereas it was ranked 57th in GEM in 2009 (UNDP, 2009). The gap between HDI and GEM indicates that high educational attainment and economic wealth do not necessarily enhance gender equality in economic and social participation. In the West, highly educated individuals were assumed to bring high participation rate in labor market (Shirahase, 2010), which is an important part of economic participation. However, this is not the case in Japan. Further investigation of the relationship between educational attainment (education credentialing) and gender in Japan is required to understand the significance of education for women in Japan.

How is the University of Tokyo situated in a context in which Japan is ranked high in HDI measured by aspects, including educational attainment? Since it was established, the University of Tokyo has maintained a very high level of prestige and as a result is not comparable with any other universities in Japan. In that sense, experiences of the women I discuss are not representative of graduate degree holders in Japan in general, but indicative of women reflecting particular qualities to be considered as the most highly educated women in Japan. I study graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo because in Japan

graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo are socially considered to be highly educated. Considering the fact that the number of graduate degree holders has increased, simply possessing a graduate degree is not considered to be highly educated. By choosing female graduate degree holders from the most prestigious university in Japan, women's experiences as highly educated women were expected to be shown more clearly than by choosing female graduate degree holders from other universities. These women are a minority in the University of Tokyo as well as in society. Studying the alumnae of the University of Tokyo, the most extreme case of the highly educated population in Japan, contributes to illuminating the significance of graduate education in a context of Japanese society. Even though the women I study received the highest level education in Japan in terms of the degree pursued (graduate degree) and overall ranking, my research shows some of them still face difficulties due to being women. By limiting research participants to women who graduated from the University of Tokyo, a possibility that their struggle is not attributed to the low rank of graduate school is eliminated. The gap between HDI and GEM is also seen in the gap between highly educated status of alumnae of the University of Tokyo and their difficult and precarious situations.

In this chapter, I present the social and cultural context in Japan in which my dissertation research project is situated. I also indicate how the University of Tokyo and alumnae of the University of Tokyo are situated in the context of Japanese society. I will then explain how this study was generated and took shape as a research project and what research questions this study aims to answer. I will also define terms and in particular an idiom used in this study. Lastly, I will present the structure of this dissertation. In the next section, I will explain how I became interested in the significance of graduate education for women in Japan. Because of the position of researcher is part of the important tools of research, I see that a research project and the researcher, as the creator of that research project, are inseparable since the research project was created by the researcher's research questions. Regarding

details of my view of seeing researchers as a tool of research please see chapter 3.

The origin of the research

The origin of this research project is in my personal experiences as a college student and my transition from college to career life. My experiences were not significantly different from many other women at that time. In other words, my personal experience is not a purely personal problem, but a social problem demanding attention from society. I graduated from college in the late 90s and upon graduation, was employed as a regular employee in a company. I studied in a political science department in which men outnumbered women. However, I did not have any inconvenient and discriminative experiences due to my being a woman until I started my job search in my junior year. When I had a casual conversation with a male student in the same department, I found that male students received many brochures and invitation letters to company information sessions, whereas I received few. This made me realize that men and women were equally treated in school, but the playing field was not level in the career market. I felt a stark difference in the treatment between male and female students in job market for new graduates as a kind of unexpected culture shock. The Equal Employment Opportunity Law between men and women (EEOC) was enforced in 1967. EEOC requests employers make an effort to hire men and women equally, but EEOC was not binding in this request to treat men and women equally in hiring. When I started to work after graduation in the late 90s, more than 10 years had already passed since EEOC had gone into effect; however, the expected roles of men and women in business were still different.¹

The first task of my first job was to serve tea for other employees in the morning, which was not because I was a new employee but because I was a woman. Because my educational background as a bachelor's degree holder was not lower than other male employees' educational background, my first task was not assigned by my educational

¹ EEOC was revised in 1991 to prohibit gender discrimination in hiring.

credential. I realized that a college friend of mine working for a different company also served tea to other employees. This confirmed to me that men and women were differently treated in their careers. These experiences showed me gaps between the value of the educational credentials of men and women in the career market and made me wonder what education meant for women.

The question of asking the meanings of education for women was generated in my mind in a transition from student to career life. Over the years my personal interest in the meanings of education for women has not been lost. On the contrary, as I am acquiring a means of elaborating my vague questions through graduate education, my questions based on my personal experiences grew into academic questions, while I also have a personal interest as a woman who has continued studying through the doctoral level. As I have learned more about higher education and women in Japan and, through a review of the literature, the larger Japanese society in which they live, I realized that my personal interest would translate into a social issue in a Japanese social context in which men and women are legally equal, but in practice different roles tend to be expected at home and in career.

My research participants' narratives reveal that the general tendency of the gender-based division of labor at home and in career has not changed much over the years. Not a few research participants have had difficulties because of their gender as woman on some occasions and because of their status as mothers on other occasions. Why have not many changes been brought about? Because gender discourse is too deeply rooted in Japanese society to the extent that legislation promoting gender equality cannot change societal practices. As Foucault argues, discourse in general is unconsciously diffused among people and is penetrated into individuals from childhood (Foucault, 1972). However, as Connell (1995, p.75) sees gender as "a way in which social practice is ordered", gender relationships are not fixed, but can be changed. As gender and gender relationships are constructed, we can possibly reconstruct the narrative. If individuals within the society would

change, gender relationships would change. As I will discuss later, the relationship between hegemony and ideology is not fixed, but rather is shifting. Hegemonic masculinity is not determined to be perpetuated. As I will show, graduate education enables students to become critical thinkers who can think and analyze from multiple perspectives and nurtures a consciousness of themselves as individuals who can exercise their agency. Graduate education instills in students a conscious sense of themselves as critically individualized yet as constrained by relationships with others. The narratives of my research participants show how highly educated women who received graduate education think critically and live their own lives as individuals, while they are constrained by gender-related struggles, including being torn between their role as researchers and the role of being mothers.

Research questions

This research aims to investigate how women who earned graduate degrees in the humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious university in Japan, find meanings in their graduate education and graduate school experiences in Japanese society. In order to investigate how highly educated women in Japan give meanings to their graduate education, the functions of education and school in society need to be discussed. On the one hand, some theorists see education as a function to hierarchize people in different social strata in accordance to kinds and levels of education (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). In other words, education is a mechanism to reproduce an existing social order by reproducing social classes in accordance with educational credentials. In their arguments, the education credential society is considered to be genderless. Japan is called a “credential society”, which is defined as “a society where people’s education or academic qualifications are more important than any other factor in determining their social position” (Amano, 2011, p.1). If Japan were a complete education credential society, men and women who earned graduate degrees from the most prestigious university in Japan would be

highly rewarded in society irrespective of gender. However in Japan, graduate degrees are generally less valued than undergraduate degrees in the job market and education credentials work differently for men and women. On the other hand, Foucault (1975/1995) sees school as a social institution that trains students to be docile so that they serve to maintain the existing social order and social needs. If this view is right, graduates of the highest level of education at the most prestigious national university in Japan should be the most docile in the nation. However, they are not docile individuals.

Considering the situation in which education credentialing does not necessarily function perfectly and graduate education does not contribute to producing obedient individuals serving to maintain society, I ask the following research questions: (1) what is the significance of graduate education in the lives of Japanese women who hold graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences? (2) How do they find meanings in their graduate education and graduate school experiences in their lives, including career and family? I particularly examine what graduate education instills and does not instill in women, how highly educated women who received graduate education view graduate education in their lives and how they live in the private and public spheres, including love, marriage, and family, and career. I also ask why higher education credentials do not bring advantages to the degree holders above the undergraduate level in Japan and how education credentials function differently for men and women in Japan. In order to answer my above-stated research questions, I use a theory that I have developed and call “a higher education theory as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy practice” which I will explicate in the next section.

Theorizing higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process and expanding knowledge on graduate education in Japan as well as Japanese society

This study is significant in the following three points: first, this research analyzes the

significance of graduate education for women in Japan that cannot be explained by existing theories and provides an alternative view to understand the under-theorized phenomena through an ethnographic approach; second, this study would contribute to an extension of the literature on graduate education in Japan, the least investigated area within higher education in Japan (Hada, 2005); third, this study on highly educated women in Japan would contribute to expanding knowledge of a larger Japanese society beyond knowledge on higher education in Japan. Thus, this study contributes to knowledge of higher education in Japan and Japanese society. By focusing on the case of women who earned graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo, this research is aimed to reveal the significance of being unquestionably highly educated women in Japan in terms of the level of education as well as the rank of the university. I explicate the above-stated three points in detail as follows:

First, I present my own research framework, that I call a “theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process”. My theoretical framework is generated by examining social theories and educational theories mainly by Foucault, Bourdieu, Shore and Wright, and Levinson and Sutton. I will explicate details of the theory in chapter 2. Regarding Foucault and Bourdieu, I draw from these scholars’ works only that which pertains to my work. I discuss their works as they relate to individuals although Foucault and Bourdieu do discuss larger social phenomena.

In examining Foucault’s theory, I develop a contra Foucault’s theory that I call a “theory of higher education as critical engagement” in which I regard and will illustrate how pedagogic fields of graduate education enable students to view and analyze things from multiple perspectives and articulate their ideas, instead of accepting discourse in general, including gender norms, without considering what is behind the discourse. Foucault argues that educational institutions function to produce “docile bodies” instead of training students to be critical (Foucault, 1975/1995). Some may more metaphorically interpret docile bodies as a system in society to understand power relationships in a social system, but. I define his

term of “docile bodies” as docile individuals who are neither critical of the power and dominant gender discourse imposed on them nor do they critically exercise their individual agencies, but rather are docile individuals who ignorantly follow dominant gender discourse and powerless recipients of the power imposed on them. Although Foucault argues that educational institutions produce docile individuals, based on my research data, I argue that, instead of making them docile, graduate education trains students to think critically. Graduate education helps to raise an awareness of the conscious sense of self as individuals having agency and trains students to become critical thinkers.

In examining Bourdieu’s theory, I develop a contra Bourdieu’s theory, that I call a “theory of higher education credentialing as gendered and regressive”. It should be noted that my work does not draw from Bourdieu’s works broadly on larger social phenomena, including social structure and the mode of domination. I address only his idea that pertains to this study. As Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984) argues, education credentialing has a function to stratify people in different social classes and social classes are reproduced through education. I argue against Bourdieu’s idea that education credentials function as if these are fundamentally correct standards to stratify people in social hierarchy in accordance with education credentials. He overlooks the gendered aspect as well as the regressive characteristic of higher education credentialing. My research data show how higher education credentialing is highly gendered in the marriage market in Japan. Literature reveals that higher education credentials are expected to bring advantages for marriage up to a certain level (Hamana, 1990; White, 1987/1988; Yano, 1996), but too high an education credential would disadvantage women in the marriage market (Rohlen, 1983; Fujimura, 1985; Brinton, 1993; Science Council of Japan, 2005) because the husbands’ educational level tends to be equal to or higher than the wives’ (Shimizu, 1990; Shirahase, 2005; Yano, 1996). The increase of highly educated women these days partly explains the lack of highly educated men, potential partners (Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005; Shirahase, 2005). My research

data endorse the literature's findings.

As per Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001), I argue that higher education policy is a practice in a discursive process. Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001) argue that policy is a practice in a discursive process instead of a linear process. Shore and Wright (1997) see policy as a site to manifest power. Power is exercised through higher education policy and is negotiated among various actors at the multiple levels. Levinson and Sutton (2001) view policy as practice embedded in daily life. Policy is not necessarily accepted by its recipients as policy makers intend. Recipients appropriate the meaning of policy in their particular contexts.

In the case of my research, in response to the University Council's report (1991b) proposing that MEXT expand the number of graduate students as a means to enhance Japan's national competitiveness by producing greater number of researchers and high-level professionals, the number of graduate students rapidly grew in the 1990s and has still grown even into the 2000s although the growth rate is not as rapid as that in the 1990s. When the University Council was consolidated into the Central Council for Education in 2000, the intention to strengthen graduate education continued. The Central Council for Education views the function of graduate schools to be the production of high-level human resources that would move into leadership positions in the world and the Council considers this to be important (Central Council for Education, 2005). Graduate degree holders were expected to become high-level human resources contributing to the nation.

However, my research data show that female graduate degree holders find multiple meanings, which differ from what the University Council and the Central Council for Education expected. For example, for women, graduate education is transposed into higher quality child rearing by mothers, and the role of mother as the educator of children at home is strengthened. Another example is seen in an academic environment at the University of Tokyo in which women are a minority. Some women feel a sense of isolation as women and

have difficulty pursuing success in their academic career as well as in pursuing personal happiness in family life. Thus, this research is significant in its investigation of how meanings are being made by women in their personal contexts and how larger phenomena of promoting graduate education (the macro-level) are reflected and manifested in particular local contexts (the micro-level).

The second point of the significance of this study is that this study would contribute to extending the literature on graduate education in Japan. Graduate education is the least investigated area within higher education in Japan (Hada, 2005). This study would also contribute to the extension of the literature on highly educated women, especially focusing on graduate degree holders, who have been little studied in prior research.² As a growing number of women attend graduate school, especially after the 90s when the University Council suggested the need to increase the number of graduate students in Japan (The University Council, 1991b), it is important to examine the significance of graduate education for women from their own perspectives. While there is existing literature on graduate education, graduate students' and graduate degree holders' perspectives are not sufficiently examined.

One of this study's unique contributions to highly educated women is that the target of this research is not limited to women who pursue academic career. By investigating the significance of graduate education not only for women pursuing academic career but also for women pursuing a career in other fields, this study is intended to extend the knowledge on views and experiences of under-investigated highly educated women who hold graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences.

The third point of the significance of this study is that this study on highly educated women in Japan would contribute to the expanding knowledge of a larger Japanese society

² In a context of Japan where nearly half of women go to four-year universities, shifting the definition of "highly educated women" to the graduate level would be appropriate. 45.8% of women go to four-year universities in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a).

beyond knowledge on higher education in Japan. The meanings of graduate education cannot be understood without understanding the society in which the education is provided and in which the students live. My research participants indicated issues with marriage and career that go beyond their personal experiences; instead, problems that my research participants faced can be seen as larger structural and societal issues. For example, the value of a graduate education at the most prestigious university in the country in the marriage market and job market is highly dependent upon the nature of society. Thus, how graduate education and credentials are evaluated in the marriage market and job market in Japan shows how difficulties and distress are structurally and deeply rooted in larger structural societal issues.

Defining terms

Meaning

Meaning is a key term in this research because this research aims to investigate how women who earned graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo find meanings in their graduate education and graduate school experiences in Japanese society. Meaning is a general term that has multiple meanings. In this research, I use “meaning” as importance or value, but I see meaning as fluid and shifting in time and context, as Riessman says, “Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal” (Riessman, 1993, p.15). I consider individuals as having an agency to contextualize meanings in their lives. Therefore, it is natural for women who receive a graduate education at the same university to have multiple meanings of issues and experiences. Personal meanings are not unrelated to a larger social structure, as any individual is a part of society and does not exist without relating to that society.

As Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw say, “The task of the ethnographer is not to determine ‘the truth’ but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others’ lives” (Emerson et al, 1995, p.3). I do not aim to investigate the universal meaning of graduate education in this research

as “the truth”. Instead, I investigate the multiple truths of extremely highly educated women who majored in humanities and social sciences, who have different factors, including specialties, occupations and family backgrounds, and who are at different stages in their lives.

The meanings of graduate education for women’s lives are found by each woman. Some researchers argue that an interview is a meaning-making process (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; Sakurai, 2002). However, my position is different from theirs. Although researchers influence research participants’ words and behaviors, I do not think that meaning is generated by the collaborative communication between a researcher and research participants because research participants and a researcher neither share the same research questions and nor aim to answer these questions. While my position is constructivism, my position is different from Sakurai (2002) who argues that an interview is a construction created by the interaction of an interviewer and an interviewee. What I aim to do in this research is to understand how my research participants construct realities and find meanings of graduate education in their lives through the lens of my view. In other words, instead of exploring how research participants and I construct realities and find meanings together, I analyze and interpret what I see as the meanings of graduate education that highly educated women have found in their lives.

Ryōsai kenbo

Ryōsai kenbo are well-known gender norms in Japan. *Ryōsai* means a good wife and *kenbo* means a wise mother. *Ryōsai kenbo* is used as a fixed expression. *Ryōsai kenbo* is not directly related, but indirectly relevant to this study because gender roles of women as wives and mothers are still deeply rooted in Japanese society and especially as women tend to be expected to take the major responsibility to nurture and educate children. Literature and my research show that expected roles of mother constrain especially highly educated women.

The concept of *ryōsai kenbo* was created as an ideal for women in the Meiji period

(1868-1912) and was inculcated in women through education. The purpose of public education for women was to produce *ryōsai kenbo*, especially wise mothers who could educate their children to become excellent citizens who could contribute to the new nation of Japan (Koyama, 1991). While the concept of *ryōsai kenbo* is not inculcated as an ideal of women in current Japanese society, even after a century, gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* still persist into the present. I will explain how the idiom of *ryōsai kenbo* was created, disseminated, and shifted in the next chapter. Using Commaroffs' concepts of hegemony and ideology (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991), I argue that over time, the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* were ideologies and were turned into hegemony and then transformed back into ideology. Whereas hegemony is unconscious and uncontestable, ideology is conscious and contestable. For the Comaroffs, hegemony and ideology are interdependent. When hegemony becomes negotiable, hegemony changes to be ideological (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992). Neither hegemony nor ideology is fixed, but shifting in time and space. The gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* are not hegemony in Japan anymore. The hegemony of gender roles of *ryōsai kenbo* and gender-based lifestyles has been challenged in Japan. However, a new hegemonic order has not yet been established. Some highly educated women live as professionals without experiencing career interruption by marriage and childrearing, which transcends the existing gender roles of women as wives and mothers (Shirahase, 2010).

The structure of the dissertation

In chapter 2, I will show that no existing social and educational theory can perfectly explain the findings of my research. Drawing on multiple theoretical frameworks, and on findings of this research, I present a research framework what I call a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process. This theoretical framework highlights the following four important points in higher education in Japan: (1) an aspect of graduate schools as educational institutions to train

students to be critical thinkers, (2) and (3) genderedness and regressiveness in higher education credentialing linking higher education to marriage market and to job market, and (4) higher education policy as a discursive practice involving actors at multiple levels. I also explain how the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, a good wife and a wise mother, originated, were disseminated, and shifted.

In chapter 3, I will show the methods and methodology that I used for this study. First, I show methodology by discussing subjectivity. I value subjectivity in this research because the nature of ethnographic research values subjectivity. I argue in this study, that personal memory is social because any personal memory is not purely personal being. Personal memory is inseparable from society. I place the views of these highly educated women in the center of the subject of analysis in this research. Related to subjectivity, I then present positionalities of a researcher to explain how I place my position as a researcher who has multiple identities and show how I became a tool of this study. Second, I show what methods I used and how I used these methods in order to answer my research questions. I did fieldwork in the Kantō area in eastern Japan, developing my data by employing multiple methods, including interview, observation, and document analysis.

In chapter 4, I will present a literature review to provide background knowledge to help understand the experiences and ideas of my research participants as well as the situations and overall contexts in complex contemporary Japanese society in which my research participants are placed. This chapter mainly provides background knowledge on education (particularly higher education), but also covers employment from various perspectives, including historical, social, cultural, and economic perspectives. I provide background knowledge on employment because education and career are closely related each other. The education part consists of the following three categories: (1) the history of higher education in Japan, (2) the overview of current higher education, and (3) the overview of the University of Tokyo. Employment part covers gender-related employment policy and practice. The aim of

this chapter is to give an understanding of the larger social structure in Japan in which these highly educated women are placed.

In chapter 5, I will first introduce the family backgrounds of my research participants and show that overall social class is reproduced through education based on a finding that most research participants are from a high socio economic class. I will then show how genderedness and regressiveness of higher education credentialing in Japan can be seen not only in women's motivations for studying in graduate school, but also in their parents' attitudes to their daughters' decision to go to graduate school. Through research participants' narratives, I show how graduate education in humanities and social sciences is not valued in Japanese society and is seen as jeopardizing employment opportunities in the future. I will also show that gender roles significantly affected parents' attitude toward their daughters' decision to study in graduate school. The generally known gender roles of women are wives and mothers, instead of breadwinners, were a part of the reason for approving or opposing the daughters' decision to go to graduate school. This chapter illuminates the complex relationships between education credentials and gender roles.

In chapter 6, I will show how women who received graduate education have experienced love, marriage, and child rearing and how they think of the situation. I investigate how they have negotiated power in protecting and developing themselves as critical thinking, highly educated individuals, yet as a gendered selves, women, wives, and mothers. I show how women graduating from the most prestigious university in Japan are disadvantaged in love and the marriage market because of their extremely highly educated status as women. As in chapter 5, their disadvantaged status in love and the marriage market shows how higher education credentialing is gendered in Japan. In child rearing, some highly educated women struggle trying to balance their role as mothers with their role as individuals pursuing their research or career. I indicate how highly educated women internalize practice based on the gender-based division of labor and how they resist and take critical actions to

live as individuals irrespective of gender. Thus, this chapter shows how graduate education strengthens the roles of women as wives and mothers, and at the same time helps individuals to transcend the generally accepted gender roles of women by allowing them to pursue careers as professionals. This chapter shows how graduate education enables students to be critical thinkers, yet they explore their lives in situations in which they are not free from social, cultural, and economic constraints.

In chapter 7, I will show how women who received graduate education find meanings in a graduate education during their graduate student life and, after graduation, during their careers. Some of them had difficulties in graduate school and during the transition from graduate school life to career for multiple reasons. Some women experienced difficulties due to the lack of a systematic step-by-step program guiding students toward graduation in graduate school. Other women encountered gender-related difficulties. In either case, women critically sought solutions, while they struggled to overcome the difficulties they faced. The significance of graduate education for highly educated women does not necessarily match the significance of graduate education expected in policy. Highly educated women appropriate the meaning of policy in their particular contexts. The way in which they appropriate the significance of graduate education partly indicates that they were trained to be critical thinkers in graduate school. Although graduate education was promoted for the purpose of strengthening national competitiveness (Cabinet Office, 2007, 2008; Central Council for Education, 2005; University Council, 1991a, 1991b), research participants appropriate meanings of graduate education that do not necessarily match with the goal of strengthening national competitiveness.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are the chapters in which I will discuss and analyze collected data using the theory of higher education that I explicated in chapter 2. These three chapters show how graduate education is a critical engagement, how higher education credentialing in Japan is gendered and regressive, and how higher education policy is a practice in a

discursive policy process. Each chapter discusses different aspects of graduate education with different foci. Each chapter illuminates how extremely highly educated women who received graduate education are placed in society in which they face structural constraints (genderedness and regressiveness of higher education credentialing). However, they view things critically and act in ways so that they carve out their own lives as highly educated women.

In chapter 8, I review the whole study and summarize important findings and confirm that “a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process” works to explain and analyze my research data.

Chapter 2: Toward a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process

This research draws on multiple theoretical frameworks, and on Japanese women's insights into graduate education to develop what I will call a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process. To answer my research questions, I draw ideas from several theorists whose foci and arguments are not necessarily similar, but are related. These theories are helpful to understand and analyze the significance of graduate education for women in Japanese society in which the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, a good wife and a wise mother, persist and transform. In Japan, the social expectations of men and women, and employment practices are not necessarily supportive of women who pursue self-actualization through their careers. The theories that I review are helpful in analyzing the meanings of graduate education in the lives of Japanese women who hold graduate degrees in the humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo by providing multiple analytical lenses through which to view the data. I primarily address the theories of Foucault, Bourdieu, and Shore and Wright, and Levinson and Sutton: Foucault's argument concerning discourse and power in education and sexuality, Bourdieu's argument concerning social reproduction and educational credentials, Shore and Wright's, and Levinson and Sutton's arguments concerning the discursive aspect of policy practice. However, Foucault's and Bourdieu's theories do not necessarily adequately explicate my research data. And, though Shore and Wright's, and Levinson and Sutton's theories explain some of my research data, not every aspect of my research data is well explained by these theories. Therefore, building on these theories which points of issues include "criticalness", "genderedness", "regressiveness", and "discursiveness", I present my own research framework for studying the significance of graduate education in the humanities and social sciences for women in Japan. I shall call this "a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process". My research

framework highlights how highly educated women who have a critical consciousness find meanings of graduate education in their lives in Japanese society in which education credentialing is gendered and regressive, showing how the macro phenomena of higher education policy is practiced and appropriated at the local level. My theory is particularly applicable to higher education for the following reasons: first, the enrollment rate of high schools in Japan is greater than 98% (98.0% for men and 98.6% for women) (MEXT, 2012a). Although high school education is not part of compulsory education, going to high school is almost taken for granted by men and women in Japan. Regardless of gender, men and women who do not have high school education credentials are disadvantaged in a Japanese society. In this sense, education credentialing up through the secondary education is neither gendered nor regressive. Second, there is greater room for higher education to promote critical thinking than education at other levels in Japan because memorization is important for university entrance examinations. High school students and graduates who take entrance examinations for universities are required to accumulate an enormous amount of knowledge. Despite more relaxed entrance examinations in general and the decline of the population of 18-year olds (Amano and Poole, 2005), entrance examinations for top-level universities are still competitive (Amano and Poole, 2005).

In the following pages, I present my research framework built on several theories. First, contra Foucault, I develop what I shall call a “theory of higher education as critical engagement” in which I will illustrate how pedagogic fields of graduate education enable students to view and analyze things from multiple perspectives and articulate their ideas, instead of accepting discourse in general, including gender norms, without considering what is behind the discourse. I will also illustrate how the pedagogic fields of graduate education instill in subjects a conscious sense of themselves as authorized yet potentially stymied, as genderless yet potentially gendered, as individualized yet as a condition of relationships with others. Foucault delineates how power is exercised through social institutions, including

educational institutions, and major discourse permeates the individual. As he argues, education can be used to disseminate power and norms. An example of this was how gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* have been inculcated through education in Japan. Foucault argues that educational institutions function to produce a “docile body” instead of training students to be critical (Foucault, 1977/1995). For him, individuals are powerless recipients of major discourse. However, I argue that individuals have agency and graduate education does not weaken their conscious sense of themselves as individuals. On the contrary, I argue that graduate education helps individuals become aware of a conscious sense of self. Therefore, the power of individual agency of highly educated women should not be underestimated, though they are constrained by major discourse and social and cultural practices based on major discourse.

Second, contra Bourdieu, I develop what I shall call a “theory of education credentialing as gendered and regressive” in which I illustrate how highly educated women are disadvantaged in the marriage market as well as the job market and how they strategize in pursuing their personal happiness and professional success in an ostensibly genderless, but in reality a highly gendered society. Academic credentials carry weight in Japanese society, though, when compared with undergraduate level education, graduate level education in the humanities and social sciences is not much appreciated, a situation that I shall call “regressive”. For Bourdieu, school functions to maintain the existing social order by reproducing social classes through ostensibly “equal” academic competitions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984). Rather than enhancing critical thinking ability, Bourdieu sees educational institutions as being reproductive agencies of social classes. His reproduction theory has little room for individuals to exercise conscious agency or for education to enhance critical thinking. For Bourdieu, the value of higher education in the job market is evaluated in proportion to academic credentials, which means that the higher the level of education, the higher the value of education becomes in the job market. However,

in Japan this is true only up to the level of the undergraduate degree, while the value of education is depreciated in job market (except for academic job market) as one studies further to the master's level and then the doctoral level. In Japan graduate degree holders are not attractive human resources compared with bachelor degree holders except for the field of engineering. Graduate education could even narrow career opportunities for men and women in Japan due to the lack of need of graduate degree holders in the job market. In addition, neither Foucault nor Bourdieu have any space to consider the unsymmetrically "balanced" marriage relationship in terms of educational credentials between men and women. In Japan wives are often expected to have equal or lower educational credentials than husbands, which disadvantages highly educated women. Neither Foucault nor Bourdieu discuss regressiveness of higher education in their argument. For Bourdieu, academic credentials are used to classify people as if academic credentials are fundamentally correct standards. He assumes that the higher the level of education is, the higher the position in the educational hierarchy. Foucault also thinks that educational institutions have a function to hierarchize people. However, Foucault, just as Bourdieu, does not consider regressiveness of higher educational institutions. Based on my research data, I will argue that education credentialing is gendered as well as regressive in higher education.

Third, I apply the arguments of Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001) on policy as a discursive process to my higher education theory. They argue that policy should be viewed as a practice in a discursive process. Shore and Wright (1997) see policy as a site to manifest power. According to Shore and Wright's argument (1997), one can see that power is exercised through higher education policy in Japan, which affects how the graduates construct themselves. The number of graduate students and graduate degree holders has increased due to Japan's higher education policy to strengthen graduate education by

expanding the number of graduate students and improving the quality of graduate education.³ The drastic increase of the number of graduate students caused a serious problem of unemployment of graduate degree holders. Strengthening graduate education was intended to produce a greater number of professionals to enhance Japan's competitiveness as a nation in the world. However, graduate education does not necessarily expand career opportunities for professionals. My research data reveal that graduate education contributes to transcending women's roles beyond wives and mothers; at the same time, graduate education contributes to strengthening of traditional women's roles as wives and mothers by (1) narrowing career choices, (2) enhancing economic dependency to husbands, and (3) transposing graduate education into providing higher quality education as educators at home. Highly educated women who participated in my research developed their own meanings of higher education in their lives and constructed themselves by labeling themselves as professional, faculty member, company employee, part-time teacher, freeter⁴, quasi-housewife, etc. Kondo (1990) says that people "craft themselves and their lives within shifting fields of power and meaning" (Kondo, 1990, p.10) in her research (1990) of men and women in the Japanese workplace. As highly educated women play as actors in the policy process, appropriating the meaning of a graduate education in their own contexts, I argue that policy process is discursive, involving diverse actors' practices, which link the macro-level phenomena and the micro-level appropriation.

In the next section, before discussing the above-stated four factors, I provide an historical background showing how the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* were generated and functioned and how and for what purpose girls' education was provided in Japan through

³ It is notable that although the expression *daigakuin jūtenka seisaku*, policy of strengthening graduate school, is well known to the parties concerned and graduate education has actually been strengthened, there is no statutory form of such a policy (Kobayashi, 2004). Reflecting the University Council's proposal to expand the number of graduate students issued in its 1991 report, the number of graduate students rapidly increased in the 1990s.

⁴ Please see glossary for a definition of freeter.

which I can situate highly educated women of present day in an historical context. Gender norms are shifting as time passes. After presenting a historical overview of gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, I will use Bourdieu's theory to show how gender norms have been shifted through the actors negotiating power.

The gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* and education for women in Japan

- invention and dissemination

In this section, I provide historical background of *ryōsai* (a good wife) *kenbo* (a wise mother), the norm of womanhood invented in the Meiji period, and the history of education for women in Japan after the Edo period, the last period governed by samurai.⁵ Studies by Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) provide historical backgrounds of the present gender norm by showing how the government used education to integrate women into a new modern nation by producing gender norms known as *ryōsai kenbo* and by inculcating these gender norms into women.

In the past, the gender norms and ideal of womanhood represented by *ryōsai kenbo* were inculcated through education. At present *ryōsai kenbo* are not inculcated through education, but becoming a mother is considered to be socially important in Japan due to the decline of the fertility rate, *shōshika*. Recently new issues concerning marriage, including *bankonka*, the increase of those who are getting married later in life, and *mikonka*, the increase of those who never marry, have emerged in Japanese society. However, for the purpose of showing the historical background of gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, I will not discuss these new issues at this time.

Historically in Japan, gender norms and the ideals of womanhood were inculcated through gender-segregated educational systems and curricula as supervision or a part of surveillance by schools however, today the gender norms and employment practice

⁵ Masanao Nakamura coined the phrase of *ryōsai kenbo* in the 1870s (Holloway, 2010).

interactively direct women's lives. In order to understand gender norms in Japan, it is important to learn when and how these norms were created.

Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) analyze the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* in Japanese history. According to Koyama, *ryōsai kenbo* is the created and imposed ideal of the women formed by the nation in the Meiji period (1868-1912).⁶ Furthermore, Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) report that in the Edo period (1603-1867) the most important role for women was to be obedient wives and daughters-in-law in samurai society in which inheritance and the reinforcement of family lines, or in Japanese *ie*, were required. (*Ie* means "the family as the weight of history and obligation"). (Kondo, 1990, p.120)⁷ It emphasizes continuity from generation to generation and the obligation of people and organizations in different positions. As Fukaya (1966/1998) indicates, women did not affect the maintenance of the regime in samurai society in which the inheritance of the paternal family line was significant. Women's roles as mothers were not much discussed in the Edo period (Koyama, 1991).

In contrast with the Edo period, women's roles as mothers became prominent in the Meiji period in order to establish a modern nation and nurture citizens who contributed to the national development. Women were expected to contribute to the national development indirectly by supporting their husbands and educating their children (Koyama, 1991), while men were expected to contribute to national development directly by productive work and serving in the military (Koyama, 1991). Fukaya (1966/1998) also argues that women needed to be educated to be inculcated with nationalism. Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) agree that the role of education of women was to train women as mothers. This suggests that

⁶ The name of an era is used to represent the reign of emperors in Japan in contemporary history after the Edo period. However, the Edo period does not represent the reign of an emperor. Instead the Edo period is the period that was governed by the Tokugawa *shogunate*. Tokyo where the Tokugawa *shōguns* lived was called Edo before the Meiji period.

⁷ Ueno (1987) maintains that *ie* system is not a traditional Japanese system, but it was only seen in samurai class. *Ie* system was expanded to the nation in the Meiji period when the system of four classes, with the samurai placed at the top, was dissolved.

women's primary value was in motherhood. Women were seen as an instrument to produce and educate the next generation as loyal members of imperial Japan (Uno, 1993)⁸.

Currently women are not seen primarily as an instrument to produce and educate the next generations in policy. However, even at the present time, the importance of the education of girls is still argued for on the basis of mothers still playing a major role in educating the next generation⁹. Prior research indicates that there are undeniable differences in the quality of education at home depending on the mothers' educational levels. Highly educated mothers have rich resources, especially cultural capital, which benefits their children's education (Honda, 2008). This is endorsed by my research data. Junko, one of the research participants, acknowledged the benefits of graduate education for women because it is good for mothers to have wider perspectives.

In Japan, as a result of the Meiji Restoration (1867), the political system shifted from feudal, governed by samurai in the Edo period (1603-1867), to monarchical government centered on the Emperor in the Meiji period (1868-1912). The Meiji government actively adopted Western ideas and systems in order to strengthen the new nation. In the Edo period, men and women were hierarchically ranked into four groups known as *shinōkōshō*, consisting of samurai (*shi*), farmer (*nō*), craftsman, (*kō*) and merchant (*shō*)¹⁰. Basically, occupations were taken over from generation to generation. The class system called *shinōkōshō* was abolished in the Meiji period. Men and women in these four classes were simply categorized as Japanese citizens. Therefore, education for citizens was an urgent task to unite the nation of Japan. Education was viewed as a means of protecting the nation from the threat of

⁸ According to Motomori (2009), the idea of children existing as different from adults was developed when Japan was being centralized. She indicates that educating children was inseparable from nationals and nations [See Okubo (1972) for the suggestions of Arinori Mori, the first Minister of Education in Japan].

⁹ According to Uno (1993), in 1990 in the UN summit for children, Prime Minister Kaifu declared that education for girl is important because they will become mothers in the future. This opinion was not reflected in policy, but this expresses how strongly motherhood has been emphasized as a women's norm in Japan.

¹⁰ In addition to these four classes, there are outcastes called *eta* and *hinin*.

Western imperialism by producing quality citizens (Koyama, 1991).

At that time, Japan had a national goal of *fukoku kyōhei*. (*Fukoku* means enriching the nation and *kyōhei* means strengthening the military.) Therefore, the goal of education was to produce citizens who contributed to *fukoku kyōhei*.¹¹ Women's education was necessary to produce wise mothers who could educate their children to contribute to the nation in the future (Kim, 2003). This goal was clearly stated by Arinori Mori, the first Minister of Education in Japan, "Strengthening the nation is founded in education. The foundation of education is in girls' education. Girls' education affects the national security" (Okubo, 1972). He regards girls' education as significant for the new modern nation of Japan because it affects the nation's security. Education for women was required to produce mothers to educate their children so they would build a modern nation after the end of the Edo period governed by samurai.

Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) claim that since the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the government used public education to integrate women as citizens into this new modern nation. They argue that nationalism motivated the government to provide education for women to produce *ryōsai kenbo*. Today it is not nationalism that motivates the government to promote graduate education, but there are similarities between the government's past and present motivation to educate its citizens. The motivation of providing education commonly seen in the past and present is to win the competition with other developed countries. For instance, the current higher education policy to promote graduate education is motivated by a goal to become a globally competitive nation.

Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) agree that nationalism promoted education

¹¹ Education for boys and girls was motivated by the same goal of *fukoku kyōhei*, but in different ways. On one hand, education for boys was aimed at producing citizens who directly contributed to the nation. On the other hand, education for girls was aimed at producing *ryōsai kenbo*. Girls' education was different from education provided for boys in terms of years and curriculum. Girls had fewer years of education than boys and the curriculum for girls was less academically oriented (Koyama, 1991).

for women and that *ryōsai kenbo* is a different concept from Confucianism¹². Fukaya summarizes gender relationships in Confucianism; the gender relationship between men and women is a dominating relationship in which women are subordinate to men (1966/1998). For Fukaya (1966/1998) *ryōsai kenbo* is different from the teaching of Confucianism. While obedience is the most important for women in Confucianism, obedience is not sufficient for *ryōsai kenbo* in situations in which women were expected to contribute to the nation as good wives and wise mothers.

However, Fukaya and Koyama have different views of *ryōsai kenbo*. On the one hand, Fukaya, who sees *ryōsai kenbo* as a gender norm unique to Japan. Fukaya (1966/1998), argues *ryōsai kenbo* as an ideological concept that supported the view of the nation as a family in which the emperor is a father and people are his children. Each family, *ie*, consisting of the head of a family and other members, is the epitome of this relationship. According to Fukaya, Japanese nationalism is not based on individuals, but on family. Therefore, due to this family-based nationalism, Fukaya (1966/1998) claims that women were expected to contribute to the state by serving the family. On the other hand, Koyama (1991) criticizes Fukaya (1966/1998) by arguing that *ryōsai kenbo* was invented at the advent of the modern family in which men worked outside the home and women worked at home. For Koyama, the advent of the modern family in which the roles of husband and wife are segregated by gender is not unique to Japan.¹³ As Koyama (1991) argues, expecting a woman to fulfill the roles of a wife and a mother in a domestic sphere is not unique to Japan, though emperor-centered family-based nationalism was unique to Japan.

Although *ryōsai kenbo* tends to be viewed as a traditional gender norm, this ideal of

¹² Although Confucianism has influenced gender roles in Japan since the Edo period (Seki, 1987; Sekiguchi, 2010), Confucianism is not the only source of gender roles in Japan. According to Nitobe (1904/1912), in *Bushidō*, the unwritten code of ethics of samurai and their family, developed under feudalism during the twelfth century, while women were not valued in the sociopolitical domain, they were respected as wives and mothers at home.

¹³ The similar gender norm, *kenbo ryōsai*, wise mother and good wife, are also seen in Korea (Kim, 2003).

womanhood was intentionally created. As Williams (1977/1994) argues that tradition is “the expression of dominant and hegemonic pressures and limits” (Williams, 1977/1994, p.600). Tradition does not naturally emerge but is intentionally created by those who are in dominant positions. Williams claims that tradition is an “intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present” (Williams, 1977/1994, p.600).

Koyama (1991) and Fukaya (1966/1998) demonstrate how gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* were intentionally created by men in the dominant class and how the meaning of the term was contextually produced as time shifted in accordance with the needs of the different times and the convenience of a dominant discourse. However, this also means that men in the dominant class were also constrained by the dominant gender norms and roles they internalized. Whereas women were expected to contribute to the nation indirectly as *ryōsai kenbo*, men were expected to contribute to the nation directly by productive work and military service (Koyama, 1991). Men who were not able to meet these expectations were likely to feel the disfavor of society.¹⁴

Shifting gender norms in Japan-the negotiation of power

Gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* have been shifting as time has passed. Bourdieu’s theory of the relationship between doxa and opinion is helpful to understanding this shift. Using the concept of habitus, Bourdieu explicates the relationship between doxa and opinion. He defines habitus as “the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.78). He calls habitus “the immanent law” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.81) because these practices are unconscious and hence not governed by strict rules. Bourdieu argues that habitus is formed from earliest childhood and is constantly formed

¹⁴ Japan had been militarized from the Meiji period to the end of the World War II. Ohnuki-Tierney, an anthropologist who writes about the militarization of aesthetics in Japanese history, introduces a definition of masculinity from that time. “Masculinity was defined in terms of men’s valor in sacrificing their lives for the emperor” (Ohnuki-Tierney, 2002, p.14).

“from restructuring to restructuring” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.87). According to Bourdieu, habitus is automatically acquired through repeating practices in daily life, not by drilling. However, the habitus integrates past experiences. Although habitus is transformable, the habitus acquired in school and other fields is not unrelated to that acquired in early childhood but rather based on the habitus first acquired, thus further *habitus* is added (Bourdieu, 1972/2007).

Using the concept of habitus, Bourdieu (1972/2007) analyzes the mechanism of the reproduction of power by demonstrating that the relationship between structure and practice is interactive and that each reinforces the existing conditions of the other. According to Bourdieu, “objective structures are themselves products of historical practices and are constantly reproduced and transformed by historical practices” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.83). At the same time, Bourdieu claims that objective structures provide “the social conditions of operating habitus” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.78).

Bourdieu argues that habitus has the effect of creating a taken-for-granted world (Bourdieu, 1972/2007). Bourdieu defines the commonsense world as *doxa*, “the universe of the undiscussed” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.168). The line between *doxa* and opinion, “the universe of discourse (or argument)” (Bourdieu, 1972/2007, p.168) is not fixed. For Bourdieu, drawing the line between *doxa* and opinion depends on the power relationships between the dominant class (that does not question *doxa*) and the dominated class (that questions *doxa*).

The Comaroffs’ concept of hegemony and ideology shares some similarity with Bourdieu’s concept of *doxa* and opinion. The Comaroffs’ view of hegemony and ideology as interdependent (1991) is helpful in understanding of interchanging relations between ideology and hegemony. Foucault’s idea of discourse is similar to the Comaroffs’ idea of hegemony in that discourse is unconsciously internalized. For the Comaroffs, the distinction of hegemony and ideology is as follows: hegemony is a set of constructs and conventions that have become natural throughout a political community; ideology is “the expressions and

ultimately the possession of a particular social group” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991, p.24). Whereas hegemony is unconscious and uncontestable, ideology is conscious and contestable. For the Comaroffs, hegemony and ideology are interdependent. Once ideology becomes hegemony, it does not appear as ideology any more. When hegemony becomes negotiable, hegemony changes into ideological (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992). There are varieties in the hegemonic proportion in any dominant ideology (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991). Neither hegemony nor ideology is fixed, but is shifting in time and space. By defining contradictory consciousness, the Comaroffs explain how a new hegemonic order is established (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991). Contradictory consciousness is the conflict between the world that is hegemonically constructed and the world that is ideologically represented by the subordinate class (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991). What is not subsumed in hegemony creates ideological struggle. A new hegemonic order is established in this struggle. However, the mere existence of ideological struggle does not automatically result in creating a new hegemony although ideological struggle opens the possibility of changing the existing hegemonic order. Considering the influence of prevalent hegemony, recognizing what is taken-for-granted as domination is not easy.

I argue that gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* were ideologies and were turned into hegemony and then transformed back into ideology as time shifted. The hegemony of the gender roles of *ryōsai kenbo* and gender-based lifestyles has been challenged in Japan. However, a new hegemonic order has not yet been established. The same social expectations for mothers and fathers are not yet a hegemonic order in Japan. Some women in this research pursue their studies in graduate school and in an academic career, which has begun to be accepted as doxa. However, if these women are mothers of young children, the social attitude is closer to what the Comaroffs would call opinion. For example, the academic advisor of Chika, a doctoral student who participated in this research, assumed that she would take a three-year leave to focus on childrearing after the birth of her child.

Koyama (1991) explains how definitions of *ryōsai kenbo* shifted in accordance with needs in society. For Koyama, the national experience of World War I that required the concerted efforts of every citizen expanded the definitions of *ryōsai kenbo* (Koyama, 1991). In order to survive the competition against imperialism, the roles of women moved beyond the requirements to serve the family at home: women were expected to serve in wider society so that they could directly contribute to the state (Koyama, 1991). However, new roles of women outside home did not change the principle that the first priority of women was home. The added roles of women merely created added burdens on women (Koyama, 1991). Koyama rightly indicates the similarity of women's roles defined as *ryōsai kenbo* after World War I with those at present. She indicates that women at present play double roles at home and in society: educating children and taking care of senior citizens at home as well as having occupations in society (Koyama, 1991). It is not unusual for married women to have occupations outside home in Japan now, but the expected roles of women as wives supporting husbands and as mothers educating children have not changed. This is reflected in the words of some women participating in this research as well as international comparisons. When they talk about their husbands' doing housework, they use the verb of "*tetsudau*" which means assist, which implies that those who bear a major responsibility of housework are the wives. The time husbands spend doing housework and childrearing in Japan is the lowest in the world (Cabinet Office, 2009b).

While gender norms and their definitions have changed as historical and social contexts have shifted, a concept of *ryōsai kenbo* still persists at present (Roberts, 2005)¹⁵. Gender roles still strongly persist in Japan compared with other countries. This is endorsed by survey results. An international comparative survey regarding gender equality in society

¹⁵ In 2003 Prime Minister Mori said that the government should not provide a retirement pension to women who do not have children because they did not fulfill their civic duty (Holloway, 2010). This opinion was not reflected in policy, but this expresses how strongly motherhood is emphasized as women's norm in Japan.

conducted in 2002 indicates that a higher proportion of Japanese people agree with the idea that the husband should be the breadwinner and the wife should stay at home than do people in other developed countries.¹⁶ In a nationwide survey regarding the employment type and life style conducted in 2007 by the University of Tokyo, a greater number of men than women raised an economic reason for not being married (Shirahase, 2010). The social security system and unsupportive environment for working parents of small children also contribute to the gender-based division of labor. The national tax and pension policies designed to benefit housewives gives incentives to women to stay at home. Demands of work, especially for professionals, and the lack of nurseries make it difficult for women to continue working after giving birth.

Gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* and employment practices based on the division of labor by gender roles are still seen in Japanese society. Women are disadvantaged in the job market in Japan, which prefers men because they are expected to be more dedicated to work as breadwinners. While housewives are socially accepted in Japan, househusbands are not as common as housewives. As Ogasawara (1998) and Lo (1990) explain, it is common that large Japanese companies have a two-track employment system: *sōgōshoku* (career track) and *ippanshoku* (clerical track). Career tracks are gendered in Japan. The majority of the population in managerial career track is men, while the portion of women in managerial career track is not limited by policy in Japan.¹⁷

Theory of education as critical engagement, contra Foucault's theory

In this section, I will discuss Foucault's theory as well as Bourdieu's theory, and then

¹⁶ The percentages of those who agree with the idea that the husband should be the breadwinner, and the wife should stay at home in this international comparison are as follows: Japan 41.1 %, Korea 16.7 %, Philippines 48.0%, The U.S.A. 19.9%, Sweden 6.3%, Germany 19.4%, and Britain 9.5% (The Cabinet Office, International comparison study regarding gender equal society, 2003a).

¹⁷ The percentage of women who are in managerial positions in companies of which employees over 100 is 6.6% (Cabinet Office, 2009b).

I will present my counter argument to these two ideas. Both Foucault and Bourdieu view the individual agency as powerless.. They also argue that social institutions and the practice in daily life systematically wield power over the individual. They regard society as if it functions like mechanics, in other words, they see society is beyond human agency. While Foucault delineates power using the concept of discourse and discusses sexuality, Bourdieu explicates the reproduction of power using the concept of habitus. Foucault expands his ideas with the following two points: (1) the way in which power penetrates and controls individuals (2) the way in which sexuality is constructed and controlled. Since the second point is highly related to the first point, I do not separately discuss these two issues. Foucault's analysis of the way in which power penetrates and controls individuals is helpful in analyzing the form and method of power penetration and control of the gender norms of women, *ryōsai kenbo*, in Japan. Foucault views sexuality and gender norms are constructions. Although Foucault's idea that sexuality is constructed examines phenomena in the West, it is helpful in analyzing context in Japan. His argument is applicable to past and present cases in Japan. Ideal gender roles within the family and of womanhood have been constructed in Japan as well as in the West. Foucault (1976/1990) delineates how sex has been administered by authority and how the discourse of sexuality has been produced. For Foucault, discourse in general is unconsciously diffused among people through "their [people's] history, their economics, their social practices, the language (langue) that they speak, the mythology of their ancestors, even the stories that they were told in their childhood" (Foucault, 1972, pp.210-211). For Foucault, social institutions, such as schools function as a "machine for supervising and hierarchizing" (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.147) people. Supervising can be interpreted as surveillance in this context. According to Foucault, "a relation of surveillance, defined and regulated, is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching" (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.176).

Power and sexuality are inseparable for Foucault. For Foucault, sexuality is a site

where power is diffusely exercised.¹⁸ His main concern is to know in what forms and through what channels power is exercised and “how it penetrates and controls everyday pleasure” (Foucault, 1976/1990, p.11). For Foucault, sex has a public nature that influences individuals. For Foucault, “sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing one administered” (Foucault, 1976/1990, p.25); therefore, for Foucault, sex needs management procedures. According to Foucault, in the eighteenth century the government policed sex not through taboos but through public discourse, as the government innovated the concept of “population”, which can be expressed as quantitative data, such as life expectancy and fertility, as a technique of exercising power for its governance.¹⁹ Foucault argues that the sexual conduct of the population became the object of analysis and the target of intervention (Foucault, 1976/1990). For Foucault, “sex is located at the point of intersection of the discipline of the body and the control of the population” (Foucault, 1980, p.125).

Foucault’s view helps one understand how gender norms and ideal womanhood have been inculcated into women through public discourse in Japan. However, he underestimates the power of individual agency. Rather he emphasizes the “docile body” (Foucault, 1975/1995). Foucault argues that “a form of power comes into being that begins to exercise itself through social production and social service. . . . power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes and modes of everyday behavior” (Foucault, 1980, p.125). Foucault sees school as a significant method to manipulate and condition children as docile objects (Foucault, 1980).

Foucault does not value individual agency, nor does he think of higher education as critical engagement to enhance consciousness as individuals who can think and act on one’s judgment. However, I argue that individual agency should not be underestimated while it is

¹⁸ Abu-Lughod (1990) has a similar view to Foucault. For Abu-Lughod, resistance should be seen as a site to demonstrate how structures of power which intersect at different levels (local, national, and global) influence ideology.

¹⁹ See details of Foucault’s concepts of governmentality in Foucault (1978/1991).

inevitable that individual agency is highly influenced and limited by social system and institutions. Highly educated women have a conscious sense of themselves as genderless, yet as gendered selves constrained by cultural and social norms, as empowered, yet as stymied selves. The highly educated women in this research exercise agency in their lives. While Foucault regards educational institutions as the disciplinary institutions that produce docile bodies (Foucault, 1975/1995), my research data indicate that graduate education does not produce docile bodies. On the contrary, some research participants acknowledged that graduate education has made them critical thinkers. Some said that through graduate education they were able to delineate their ideas. One does not necessarily succeed in exercising one's agency as one intended and the number of options one can take in one's life is limited, but individuals are not just passively nor unconsciously disciplined as docile bodies. My research data show how my research participants exercised agency. Many of them exercised their agencies in deciding to receive graduate education for their career aspiration. Some of them aimed to become researchers so that they could balance career and family. They expected that long hours of work required for managerial track would make it difficult for them to strike the balance between career and family. However, they did not have any intention of choosing the clerical track for the purpose of balancing career with family. They desired to pursue lifetime career. Their decision to go to graduate school reflects their resistance in being docile in job market in which employment practices require them to make career choices between clerical and managerial tracks.

My research data also show how highly educated women think critically and act in graduate school. The dominant gender expectation in society that mothers have the major responsibility to care for children is reproduced even in graduate school as is shown by the fact that Chika's academic advisor expected her to take three year's leave of absence for childrearing after the birth of her child. However, Chika did not unquestioningly take three year's leave of absence as expected. When I met her, she was an active doctoral student and a

mother of two small children. She even was an active member of a club activity for students and researchers who aim to pursue research and childrearing. Although Foucault and Bourdieu do not see individual agency to be a powerful driving force that directs the lives of men and women and do not acknowledge education as critical engagement, my research data show that higher education does not produce monolithic docile individuals though individual agency is significantly restricted by structure.

Theory of education credentialing as gendered and regressive, contra Bourdieu's theory

In this section, I will discuss Bourdieu's social reproduction theory, and then I will present my counter argument. For Bourdieu educational institutions are a mechanism to reproduce an existing social order by reproducing social classes through ostensibly "equal" academic competitions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984). Bourdieu sees hierarchically ordered educational institutions as reproductive agencies of social classes. Bourdieu argues "the School is better able than ever, at all events in the only way conceivable in a society wedded to democratic ideologies, to contribute to the reproduction of the established order, since it succeeds better than ever in concealing the function it performs. The mobility of individuals, far from being incompatible with reproduction of the structure of class relations, can help to conserve that structure, by guaranteeing social stability through the controlled selection of a limited number of individuals." (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.167) In Bourdieu's analysis, results of academic competition are accepted as results of equal competition. Differences in socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of students are not considered in academic competition; however, economic, social, and cultural background of students in hierarchically ordered schools basically coincides with those in hierarchical ordered social classes. Bourdieu also maintains that "misrecognition of the social determinants of the educational career – and therefore of the social trajectory it helps to determine – gives the educational certificate the value of a natural right and makes the

educational system one of the fundamental agencies of the maintenance of the social order" (Bourdieu, 1979/1984, p.387). Bourdieu indicates that the value of educational credentials is judged by society and its judgment is treated as if it is fundamentally correct and justifies the existing hierarchically social order.

Bourdieu's analysis is helpful in understanding how school functions as a mechanism to maintain the existing social order in general in Japanese society, considering the students' socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds in different types of school placed in different places in school hierarchy. Japan is called a "credential society", which is defined as "a society where people's education or academic qualifications are more important than any other factor in determining their social position" (Amano, 2011, p.1). The large representation of the University of Tokyo graduates in government ministries and bureaucracy in Japan (Rohlen, 1983/1988; Strober & Chan, 1999) is symbolic of this. In some ministries, graduates of the University of Tokyo accounted for 70-80% of the personnel (Chan, 1994). According to Bourdieu's argument, the educational certificate from the University of Tokyo works as if it is a natural right or privilege in the existing social order.

However, Bourdieu does not discuss how academic credentials work (1) for men and women, and (2) at different levels in higher education (undergraduate and graduate). Bourdieu's theory does not explain how women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo struggle while they obtained degrees from the most prestigious university in Japan or why undergraduate degrees are more attractive than graduate degrees in the Japanese job market.

I argue that education credentialing in higher education in Japan is gendered and regressive. First, I explain how education credentialing is gendered. While Bourdieu argues that academic credentials are used to classify people as if academic credentials have natural right to do so, he does not note that educational credentials might work differently for men and women in marriage market. Some women in this study who earned graduate degrees state

how they are disadvantaged in marriage market due to their prestigious academic credentials. Other researchers also indicate that the first-class education will be a disadvantage for women in marriage market in Japan (White, 1987; Rohlen, 1983; Fujimura, 1985; Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005). A wife's educational credential is commonly equal or lower than a husband's educational credential (Shida, Seiyama, & Watanabe, 2000). Very highly educated women are likely to face difficulty in finding men who have equal or higher educational credentials. Therefore, very highly educated women are in a disadvantaged position in marriage market due to their educated status. Yuka, a university faculty member, describes how she was disadvantaged in marriage market due to her prestigious academic credentials. A marriage agency declined her registration because the agency was not likely to be able to introduce suitable partners. Details of the relationship between education and marriage market are discussed in a later chapter. Neither Bourdieu nor Foucault has any space to consider this kind of marriage market/marriage agency relationship. Bourdieu would think that highly educated men and women are equally advantaged due to their highly educated status. However, this is not the case in marriage market/marriage agency relationship in Japan. Foucault argues that the sexual conduct of the population became the object of analysis and the target of intervention (Foucault, 1976/1990). While his argument could explain that marriage can be the target of intervention, Foucault cannot explain how educational credentials of men and women work in the marriage market/marriage agency relationship. According to Foucault, school is an institution that supervises and hierarchizes people. However, his theory cannot explain the disagreement between the hierarchy in educational credentials and the hierarchy in marriage market/marriage agency relationship.

Second, I explain how education credentialing is regressive in Japan. For Bourdieu, academic credentials are used to classify people as if academic credentials are fundamentally correct standard. He assumes that the higher the level of education is, the higher the position in educational hierarchy. Foucault also thinks that educational institutions have a function to

hierarchize people. However, neither Bourdieu nor Foucault considers the regressiveness of higher educational institutions. My research data, including document analysis, observation, and interviews, show that education credentialing in higher education in Japan is regressive. Literature on graduate education outlines a tendency of companies in Japan preferring new graduates with undergraduate degrees over graduate school graduates, except for students majoring in engineering, (Kaneko, 2004). The difficulty in finding employment for graduate degree holders, especially those with a doctorate, was an issue in meetings of the Central Council for Education regarding graduate education that I observed. Generally, graduate degrees are not valued in the job market in Japan except for the academic job market. Doctorate holders are even less attractive than master's degree holders in non-academic job market, partly because their knowledge and skills tend to be regarded as too specified and they lack flexibility (Ushioji, 2009), and partly because they are older. Due to the oversupply of doctorate holders in academic job market, finding employment in academia for doctorate holders is also difficult. In a previous section, I explained that female graduate degree holders are disadvantaged in marriage market. However, going to graduate school could endanger marriage not only for women, but also for men for different reasons. For men, the difficulty in finding employment prevents men from getting married due to their inability to play the role of breadwinner. For women, having higher education credentials could be a factor in the decrease suitability as wives in well-balanced married couple. Considering all these potential disadvantages in career development and possibilities of endangering marriage, going to graduate school could be considered to be a significantly risky decision in Japan. Keeping these risks in mind, it is important to investigate the significance of graduate education for women in this research.

Theory of policy as discursive process, per Shore and Wright, and Levinson and Sutton

In this section, I will discuss theories regarding policy, mainly Shore and Wright, and

Levinson and Sutton, and how I apply their theories to my research as this constitute my research framework. Policy has not received attention from anthropologists as a subject of study until fairly recently. Referring to some anthropologists' theories regarding policy is helpful in understanding the aim of Japanese gender and educational policy and how it influences women who study at the graduate level at the University of Tokyo.

Shore and Wright (1997) demonstrate how anthropology can contribute to analyzing the process of how power is exercised through policy and its effects on culture in everyday life. Shore and Wright (1997) view policy as cultural texts, cultural phenomena, and devices that classify people with various meanings and empower some and disempower others. Policy diffusely exercises power. It influences how people construct themselves, by labeling, such as citizen, professional, criminal, or deviant, how people behave, and how they build social relations in unconscious ways. Policy functions as a significant symbol that produces the standard of justice and evil and dictates who protects whom from whom. Shore and Wright refer to Lukes, who discusses the governing power of policy. Even though “‘imposed’ on individuals, once internalized, [these norms] influence them to think, feel and act in certain ways” (Lukes, 1973, p.15 in Shore and Wright, 1997, p.9). Once certain ideas are manifested in official policy, the intention of the policy makers is hidden by generalized terms and anonymously diffused in an unconscious manner. They argue that ideas that are formalized and justified in policy should be scrutinized to seek underlying intentions of policy, what and how language is used in the policy, and what discourses²⁰ are produced through policy. Shore and Wright (1997) draw upon the ideas of Foucault (1976/1990). While Shore and Wright see policy as a site to manifest how power infiltrates into practice in everyday life and controls individuals, Foucault sees sexuality as a site to manifest power to control individuals. Shore and Wright claim that anthropology has relevance for analyzing

²⁰ Shore and Wright refer to Seidel and Vidal's definition of discourse as : "a particular way of thinking and arguing which involves the political activity of naming and classifying, and which excludes other ways of thinking" (Shore and Wright, 1997, p. 22).

“how ideologies infiltrate the institutions and practices of everyday life” (Shore and Wright, 1997, p.24).

As Shore and Wright (1997) do, Levinson and Sutton (2001) also argue for the need to incorporate ethnographic research into policy processes. They do not see policy as a linear process but a discursive process constructed by the negotiation of diverse actors in diverse contexts. For them, policy is not a linear process consisting of distinctively separate processes of formulation and implementation, which implies the top-down approach of policy process in which government action is placed at the top and grassroots daily practice at the bottom. They see policy “as a practice of power” (Levinson and Sutton, 2001, p.1). Shore and Wright and Levinson and Sutton all view policy as practice embedded in daily life. Its recipients do not necessarily accept policy as policy makers intend. Recipients appropriate the meaning of policy in their particular contexts. Levinson and Sutton argue that how people appropriate meanings in multiple sites should be investigated.

While studies of Japanese women who study at graduate school exist (Kano, 1988; Kashiwagi, 2005; Sudo and Shibuya, 2009), ethnographic studies of these women are missing. This research aims to present how these women create and interpret the meanings of their graduate education, a missing part in previous studies. Observing activities in which they participate provides an understanding of how these women appropriate meanings variously in multiple sites. Their stories will be presented later.

Levinson and Sutton (2001) claim that discursive practices at the local level and structures at higher levels should be linked in policy analysis. For this purpose, they advocate that policy should be analyzed through the sociocultural perspective to learn about local contexts and how people interpret issues in policy at the local level. The sociocultural policy analysis that incorporates ethnographic research that informs a local view on policy process contributes to “democratizing policy processes” (Levinson and Sutton, 2001, p. 15). Shore and Wright also share this view with Levinson and Sutton. Abu-Lughod’s has developed the

argument (1990) that anthropologists can contribute to enhancing the understanding of how global phenomena are manifested in different localities, Appadurai (1991) also argues that ethnographic research can contribute to investigating how larger phenomena (the macro-level) are reflected and manifested in particular local contexts (the micro-level).

Viewing policy as practice in a discursive process and linking the macro-level phenomena and the micro-level appropriation is relevant to analyzing how educational and gender policy in Japan is practiced by diverse actors. It is also relevant to exploring how global and/or national educational and gender policy influence practice in local contexts in Japan. In this research, I look at highly educated women's lives in local contexts and explore how highly educated women in Japan construct themselves, as professionals, job-seekers, and mothers, through actual daily practice within the context of graduate education reform designed to win the global competition, which is part of the university reform for global competition in Asia (Uchida, 2007).

Instead of viewing policy as an objective site, the theorists referred to above, view policy as a site to manifest power. Policy per se should not be understood as a framework because policy is a part of broader stages of negotiating power among diverse actors. As Shore and Wright see it, policy is a site to manifest how power infiltrates into practice in daily life and controls individuals. The Japanese government infiltrated its power and ideology into educational practice. This view is also helpful in exploring how policy is locally appropriated in modern Japanese history as well as in current contexts. Education policy related to gender norms in Japan should be understood in the historical context of a nation's modernization policy implemented in the Meiji period that replaced the Edo period governed by samurai. *Fukoku kyōhei*, a basic policy in the Meiji period in Japan, was not a gender policy, but by providing different types of education to men and women, ideologies of manhood and womanhood were inculcated through educational practices. Education opportunities for women were expanded, but this was not aimed to expand women's career

opportunities, rather was aimed to produce *ryōsai kenbo*.

The various meanings of graduate education for female graduate degree holders in the present day also need to be analyzed through a sociocultural perspective to learn of local contexts and practices as well as structures at the higher levels. I will first give an outline of graduate education policy at the macro level, followed by an outline of practices at the local level. In response to the University Council's report proposing to strengthen graduate education by expanding the number of graduate students and improving the quality of graduate education (University Council, 1991b), standards for the establishment of graduate schools were made less severe and universities were given financial incentives to increase the number of enrolled graduate students. As a result, the number of graduate students rapidly expanded in the 1990s (Inoki, 2009; Yoshimi, 2011). However, the drastic increase in the number of graduate students created a serious problem of unemployment for graduate degree holders. The supply of graduate students has outnumbered the demand in Japanese society. While the government did not intend to increase the number of female graduate students specifically, it is notable that the rate of increase among graduate students is higher for women than that for men. The outcome of my research indicates that the increased number of female graduate students expands career opportunities for women as well as strengthening their role as mothers to provide quality education for their children

While the University Council's intention of promoting graduate education is different from the education policy promoting girls' education in the Meiji period, which aimed to produce *ryōsai kenbo*, my research data indicate that graduate education could be valued from the point of view of benefitting women's childrearing rather than developing their career. Some women who earned graduate degrees became tenure faculty members and other women became professionals in business. These graduate degree holders' contributions to society are in line with the government's expectation of the role of graduate school to produce high quality human resources contributing to enhancing the competitiveness of Japan

(Cabinet Office, 2007b). The University Council expected that graduate schools would train and produce excellent researchers and professionals who have advanced knowledge and skills (University Council, 1991b). Educating women as wise mothers to educate excellent citizens who contribute to the nation in the future was not part of the government's intention in encouraging universities to increase the number of graduate students, while the policy's expectation of benefitting career development did not materialize, due to the difficulty in finding employment for graduate degree holders. Graduate education could reinforce the role of mothers who educate their children, while not denying that graduate education also contributes to expanding women's career opportunities, as seen in some women's lives in my research. As this example reveals, meanings of graduate education are appropriated at the local level in ways unexpected by the policy makers, which shows the discursiveness of policy process.

As stated-above, building on these theories, of which points of issues include "criticalness", "genderedness", "regressiveness", and "discursiveness", I will present my own research framework for studying the significance of graduate education in humanities and social sciences for women in Japan. I shall call this a "theory of higher education as critical engagement in a society in which education credentialing is gendered and regressive, which is seen in higher education policy as discursive practice involved by actors at the multiple levels". Highly educated women participating in my research develop their own meanings of graduate education in Japanese society in which the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, which used to be hegemony (doxa), but has shifted to ideology (opinions), and still persist. The power of gender norms are penetrated into social custom, as Foucault argues major discourse is unconsciously penetrated into individuals. Foucault maintains that school has a function to discipline students and train them to be docile and Bourdieu insists that the educational system has a function to justify the reproduction of the existing hierarchical social order. However, pedagogic fields of graduate education have a function to train students to be

critical thinkers. Highly educated women critically view gender norms and their own norms, and carve out their way independently. Bourdieu does not consider genderedness and regressiveness of education credentialing in higher education, but my research shows that it is genderedness and regressiveness. I argue that education credentialing has significant cultural and social aspects. Higher educational credentials create difficulty in the marriage market in Japan, due to cultural expectations of well-balanced married couples. Wives' education credentials are expected to be equal or lower than husbands'. Because of the fact that the job market in Japan does not need human resources who received graduate education, as the level of education higher than the undergraduate level in higher education, the probability of finding employment is lower. Practices at the micro level and phenomena at the macro level should be linked, as Levinson and Sutton (2001) and Shore and Wright (1997) argue. They see policy as a discursive process. I incorporate their theory valuing reappropriation of meanings at the local level into my research framework investigating meanings of graduate education for women in Japan. Observing the micro level practices shows how highly educated women construct meanings of their graduate education as actors in society in which gender norms and social positions of highly educated women are negotiated.

Theoretical framework and research methods are related each other. Therefore, the research methods that I present in the next chapter value my research participants' voices as critical individuals who have multiple selves. Narrative interviews and participant observations show how the meanings are given to graduate education by highly educated women who have critical awareness about genderedness and regressiveness of higher education credentialing in Japan as well as the significance of graduate education for themselves. Integrative analysis of interview, observation, and document analysis indicate how meanings of graduate education are constructed by highly educated women in negotiating power among actors who have different intentions at multiple levels.

Chapter 3:
On methods and methodology:
How and Why Ethnographic Research Rests on a Theory of Subjectivity

This research examines the significance of graduate level education in the lives of Japanese women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in the humanities and social sciences. It explores what Japanese graduate degree holders think about graduate education, love, marriage, family, and career as well as ways of living as individuals. In order to investigate the significance of graduate education for women in Japan, I did fieldwork from November 2009 to July 2010 in eastern Japan by employing multiple methods, including interview, observation, and document analysis. The following is a description of my research methods; ethnographic methods, I argue, must rest on a methodological theory of subjectivity.

Subjectivity in research – memory as social

I value subjectivity in this research because the nature of ethnographic research values subjectivity. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw say, “The task of the ethnographer is not to determine ‘the truth’ but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others’ lives (Emerson et al, 1995, p.3)”. Riessman says, “Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal” (Riessman, 1993, p.15). Yamada (2005) says, people cannot change what happened, but they can change meanings how they interpret what happened. Thus, Yamada continues saying, it is people that define the significance of events rather than the events define the significance in lives of people. Koyama (2008a) also values subjectivity in autobiography by saying that personal memory which is seen as subjective is not purely personal because it is not unrelated to others’ memory and society. In that sense, personal memory is social. Koyama (2008a) says that autobiography is subjective in that it is a result of memory and selected stories by the speaker, but this does not damage the value of autobiography as historical material

because it is subjectivity that clearly transmits how one wants to tell one's life to others. As subjectivity constructs past events and experiences for Koyama, human agency and imagination do for Riessman. Riessman says, "human agency and imagination determine what gets included and excluded in narrativization. ...Individuals construct past events and actions in personal narratives to claim identities and construct lives" (Riessman, 1993, p.2). Riessman (1993) aims "to learn about the general from the particular" (Riessman, 1993, p.70) in narrative analysis. Through the narrative analysis of highly educated Japanese women I aim to learn about structural difficulties that Japanese highly educated women face and benefits that they gain as highly educated women in Japanese society. What an interviewee narrates naturally is not separated from the culture and history in which narrator lives (Riessman, 1983). As Koyama (2008a) argues, subjectivity does not damage the value of autobiographies as historical materials and Riessman (1993) argues that narratives are not separable from the history in which narrators live, subjectivity does not damage the value of the validity of data in this research. Data regarding facts are checked by other sources, but it is views and feelings expressed by highly educated women that are in the center of the subject of analysis in this research. Subjectivity is valued in the following approaches: life history, life story study, and narrative (Sakurai, 2002).²¹ This research overlaps life story approach aiming to understand the individuals' subjectivities in their lives.

Subjectivity to which I refer here is mainly about highly educated women's subjectivity, but my subjectivity is also reflected in this research. Even transcribing interviews could be interpretive because different ways of transcribing produces different interpretations, as Riessman (1993) indicates. As Emerson et al (1993) claim, even writing descriptive field notes is interpretive by selecting what is included and what is excluded.

²¹ Life history and life story are used interchangeably, but accurately these are distinguished. Sakurai (2002) distinguishes their difference that life story sees interviewers as a part of subject of study, while life history does not. However, life history and life story are considered to be in the same category in this research because the distinction does not affect this research and they are in the same type of study broadly speaking.

Positionalities of a researcher

Narayan (1993, pp.678-679) says, a “native” anthropologist does not mean that he or she knows everything about his or her society and the “native” anthropologist can still make many discoveries about his or her society through research. As a highly educated Japanese woman who is educated in graduate schools, I share much with my research participants, but this does not mean that I am familiar with everything of my research participants. Unfamiliarity with cultural contexts of graduate students and graduate degree holders in Japan, and the University of Tokyo, has led me to many discoveries about my society through this research. The fact that I do not have any experience of studying in a graduate school in Japan and the University of Tokyo in particular, gave me fresh eyes to learn about perspectives and lives of my research participants. Spradley (1979), an anthropologist who writes about ethnography, indicates that familiar cultural scenes should be avoided as research subjects due to its difficulty to find unfamiliarity, but he does not limit culture to national culture.

Narayan (1993) also argues against the fixed distinction between native (insiders) and non-native anthropologists (outsiders) because other factors, such as gender and education, may contribute to shaping our views to a greater extent.²² Kondo (1990) also argues that people have complicated and multiple identities. Nationality may significantly influence researchers’ views, as some ethnographic studies demonstrate, but it is only one of the factors that influence researchers’ views. Thus, the origin or nationality of the researcher should not be used to decide the researcher’s qualification. As Kondo (1990) does, Reinharz (1997) maintains that people have multiple identities. She argues that being a researcher is one of the multiple selves in the field and argues that “the self becomes the key fieldwork

²² Kelsky (2001, 1999) criticizes that “native” ethnographers who study their culture in non-Western fields are problematized, while Western ethnographers who are native of the globally disseminated Western modernity are not. She argues that Western modernity and universalism should not be regarded as the standard.

tool” (Reinharz, 1997, p.4). For her, self is brought to the field; at the same time, self is created in the field.

It is certain that I am a tool of this research that influences research participants’ attitudes and words. As a field instrument, being aware of the multiple identities of a researcher and his or her influence on the research is important. In this research, I brought myself as a Japanese Ph.D. student studying at a university in the U.S.²³ Being a graduate student studying at a U.S. university seems to have given me the privilege to create a comfortable atmosphere to ask the participants about their graduate student life and other issues related to graduate school. Some issues may not have been spoken about by my research participants if I had been a student studying at a Japanese university because these issues may have been considered to be taken for granted. These issues include struggles created by being doctoral students whose positions are not highly valued in Japanese society as well as doctoral programs that are not designed to progress study in a step-by-step manner.

Being a graduate student pursuing research created a common background with my research participants. Having the common background as ones who pursue research motivated research participants to share their experiences. As research participants appreciate the value of research, they were very cooperative. They were willing to share their experiences and thoughts. For example, Yuka told of her experiences in her graduate school days, which were filled with struggles and stress, including gender related issues. She told me that she had never shared this story with others except for very close friends, but she told me the story because the purpose of sharing her stories was research. Mayumi was also very cooperative and even encouraged me to earn a doctorate. Mayumi told me that she would do what she could to cooperate because she also had experiences of having interviews and doing fieldwork for her research. Because of her experiences as a researcher, she understood the

²³ As Senda (2005) says, identity is not a static object but “a process continually being constructed” (Senda, 2005, p.285), Being a Japanese doctoral student in a U.S. university was a part of my multiple identities in a particular point of my life when I met research participants.

importance of interviews for my study.

Being a woman seemed to help me hear about negative comments concerning men. Other women indicated what they perceived or experienced to be the negative characteristics of men. For example, Chika complained about her husband who did not understand the value of conducting research at all. Although the quality of data does not depend on a researcher's gender, if I were a man and not affiliated with any academic institution, listening to these highly women's *honne*, real intensions and feelings, to the level that I heard would have been difficult.²⁴ These *honne* included complaints about Yuka's struggle as a highly educated woman and Chika's complaint about her husband who lacked the understanding of how research is important for her. Being a woman also helped me observe highly educated women partly because I was accepted relatively naturally in a group of women. Observations in some occasions are women's groups, including a gathering of female graduate students who have a child or children and a gathering of divorced women. Participants of these gatherings were all women. Although my status was different from them since I was neither a mother nor divorced, being a woman still helped me avoid being conspicuous, at least on the surface. The fact that I am a woman helped me observe activities in relatively natural environment for the above-stated reasons.

As a way of learning more about my research participants' view of my research theme, when they were interested in it, I shared my own situation with participants, including the plan for the rest of my graduate study toward graduation. I also shared my personal information with participants whenever they would like to hear about it, such as my career background, age, and marital status. In this type of research, research participants are more likely to open their minds and share their experiences and ideas to a researcher who is willing

²⁴ *Honne* is the opposite word of *tatemae*, the declared principle. The declared principle does not necessarily express actual intentions, feelings, or opinions. Actual feelings and opinions are categorized as *honne* in Japanese culture. People are expected to judge which is *honne* and which is *tatemae* through relationships and contexts. For example, when one is invited to someone's house, one should judge if the invitation is *honne* or *tatemae*.

to share his or her own situation and backgrounds. For those who were interested in graduate study in the U.S., I was also willing to tell about graduate study and graduate school life as a doctoral candidate in graduate school in the United States. For example, differences in graduate education system between the U.S. and Japan were clearly indicated through conversation in interviews between Megumi and me, which helped me learn about the academic environment in graduate school in Japan and how she viewed the graduate education system and academic environment in graduate school in Japan and the U.S.

As I am a field instrument, my observations and interview data are analyzed through my lens. For example, Junko, a research participant, is a research student who is a mother of three small children. She studies to be admitted to a doctoral program. She gave up her research for a while to prepare her daughter for her entrance examination for a private elementary school. Although she never wanted to be a housewife, she said that it was extremely difficult for a working mother to send a child to a private elementary school in Japan. She said that she felt the lifestyle that she had denied was imposed on her. Based on the fact that Junko gave up her research for childrearing for a while, one could analyze that Junko is a powerless recipient of a major discourse on parenting and does not have enough agency to control her life as Foucault (1980, 1975/1995) negatively views the power of individual agency. However, from my perspective, Junko is not a powerless recipient of a major discourse on motherhood in Japan that assigns a mother as a main caretaker and educator of a child (or children) at home. Instead, as a field instrument, I analyze that Junko is a woman who resists a major discourse on motherhood and actively exercises her agency to carve out her way using her critical thinking ability trained in graduate school. Instead of giving up research for focusing on childrearing until her children grow up, Junko has made an effort to search for the best way in which to strike the balance between research and childrearing. She resumed her research after her daughter's entrance examination was over. Furthermore, she actively learns how to balance research with childrearing from other women

in similar situations through participating in a club activity for parents who aim to balance research with childrearing.

Although I place myself as a tool of this research, my position is different from Holstein and Gubrium (1995) who argue that an interviewer and an interviewee are equally active and view an interview as a “meaning-making occasion” (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995, p.9). Holstein and Gubrium (1995) argue that “they (respondents) are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers” (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995, p.4). Although a researcher is a tool of this research and is likely to influence what and how the interviewees behave and answer in observations and interviews, seeing interviews as being constructed by equally active interviewer and interviewee is an overestimation of the role of the interviewer. As an interviewer, I attempted to play the role of a listener and refrained from insisting my views. Rather than creating meaning, I aimed to understand the interviewees’ views and experiences and how interviewees created meaning of graduate education and their graduate school experiences.

Lassiter (2005) has a similar view with Holstein and Gubrium. Lassiter (2005), argues for collaborative ethnography and regards informants as consultants who actively collaborate in the process of writing ethnography. I do not refer to them as consultants because it is not they but I who aim to search for the meanings of graduate education for female graduate degree holders who graduated from the University of Tokyo and aim to search for how these meanings have been made in particular historical and cultural contexts in Japanese society.

Sakurai (2002) has the view in common with Holstein and Gubrium (1995). Sakurai uses the life story approach for his studies. Sakurai (2002) introduces three approaches of life story study as follows: positivism, interpretive objectivism, and constructivism based on dialogue. The approach this research takes is constructivism. According to the explanation of Sakurai (2002), interpretive objectivism assumes the existing world of meaning that symbolizes institutionalized and normative reality. The purpose of interpretive objectivism is

to describe institutionalized and normative reality based on narratives. Because this study does not assume existing meaning, but is based on the position that meanings are created, this study does not take the position of interpretive objectivism. Constructivism based on dialogue is in common with Holstein and Gubrium's idea, which sees an interview as an interaction. Sakurai (2002) argues that an interview is more than telling the past, but is the construction by the interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee. While this research is based on constructivism in that a researcher's position is based on the view that multiple meanings and realities are created by individuals, research participants, or interviewees in cases of interviews, this research does not share the view that meanings and realities are created through interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee.

Research participants

Participants of this research are twenty highly educated Japanese women who hold graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences, including eleven master's and nine doctoral degree holders, two government officials working for related fields for this study,²⁵ and a former and a current staff working for the office for gender equality of the University of Tokyo. Among the master's degree holders, two of them are still enrolled in doctoral programs and another two of them are ABDs. Including them as research participants increased the diversity of paths that research participants are taking. One of the ABDs (Megumi) has taken a leave of absence and has a full-time job. The other ABD (Risa) is completing her dissertation. Considering the small number of female doctoral degree holders in humanities and social sciences, details of majors of women are not informed in order to protect their anonymity; otherwise they could be specified by those who are in the University of Tokyo academic community. Their broad majors, such as humanities and social

²⁵ Affiliations of the government officials are not specified in order to protect anonymity, which was requested by an interviewed government official.

sciences are informed.

In addition to the major participants of this study, the University of Tokyo alumnae, I include government officials and the University of Tokyo staff because the information that they provide is helpful in understanding the latest gender policy, graduate education policy and wider contexts in which highly educated women are situated. [For the list of interviewees (highly educated women), please see the Appendix 1-2. Due to the need to protect the anonymity of government officials and the University of Tokyo staff, I do not include them as the list.] The number of participants is limited to twenty in this research in order to understand their circumstances more deeply.

I limit research participants to female graduate degree holders to the University of Tokyo because the University of Tokyo is the most prestigious university in Japan. Considering the fact that the number of graduate degree holders has increased, simply possessing graduate degrees is not considered to be highly educated. However, graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo are socially considered to be highly educated in Japan. By limiting research participants to women who graduated from the University of Tokyo, a possibility that their struggle is not attributed to the low rank of graduate school is eliminated. By choosing female graduate degree holders from the most prestigious university in Japan, women's struggle as highly educated women was expected to be shown more clearly than by choosing female graduate degree holders from other universities.

The age range of highly educated women in this research is between 20s and 50s. The majority of the research participants are in their 30s. The composition of the age group of this research is as follows: four women in their 20s, thirteen women in their 30s, two women in their 40s, and one woman in her 50s. Age is not considered for recruiting research participants. By not limiting age range, this study can cover women who are in different stages of their lives. Instead of age, the year they started graduate study is considered. Because the size of graduate students was proposed to double at least by 2000 in the report

issued by University Council in 1991 (University Council, 1991b) and the number of graduate students rapidly increased in the 1990s, women are limited to those who entered into graduate school after 1990. Considering that the significance of graduate education has shifted since the expansion of the size of the graduate student pool, this criterion of selecting research participants is reasonable. Almost all women in this research graduated from university at the undergraduate level after the implementation of Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) in 1986, which recommended the gender equality in hiring. Only one woman graduated from university and was hired before 1986.

This research focuses on studying women who received graduate degrees in social sciences and humanities for the following reasons: first, in master's and doctoral programs a greater number of women major in humanities than do men. Although the number of women majoring in social sciences is smaller than men in master's and doctoral programs in this area of study, the ratio of women in social sciences is relatively higher than natural sciences, as appendix 6 shows (MEXT, 2012a). Second, the ratio of women majoring in humanities and social sciences in graduate school is relatively high (MEXT, 2012a), however relationships between their majors and occupational choices are little known and researched. Third, a survey study of graduate students in 2005 that studied problems of graduate education from the view of nurturing female researchers conducted by the Science Council of Japan indicates that women tend to encounter greater difficulties than men in obtaining employment. The employment rate of new female graduates of graduate school is actually lower than that of new male graduates (MEXT, 2012a). Fourth, until the 1980s, obtaining doctoral degrees in social sciences and humanities had been extremely difficult in Japan. However, the number of doctoral degree holders in non-natural science fields increased in the 1990s due to the expansion of the number of graduate students and university reforms under the government policy to promote graduate level education (Kariya, 1998). Doctoral degrees had not been required for employment as academics in Japan until recently (Amano, 2006). Receiving

doctoral degrees in humanities and social sciences is a new phenomenon in Japan. By shedding light on a new phenomenon, this study aims to contribute to filling in what was not covered in prior studies.

Major interviewees were Japanese women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo with various occupations in the Kantō area²⁶ because career paths of highly educated (graduate level degree) women other than the academic field are little known. Highly educated women's occupations and statuses are various, including university faculty, a researcher in an education-related company, part-time lecturers, part-time teacher of a private tutoring school (*juku*), part-time specialist for a local administrative office, researchers who continue to look for academic positions, a postdoctoral fellow, doctoral students, one who is preparing to apply to a doctoral program, professionals in business corporations, mass communication, and a foundation. No housewives participated in this study. However, some women, including Wakana and Kanako, may be socially seen as housewives due to their status as married women and part-time lecturers. Considering the vague and shifting statuses of a housewife and a professional researcher as my research data show in a later chapter, nonparticipation of housewives does not necessarily mean that no research participant has the aspect of a housewife.

I include both married and single women in order to learn how women in different marital status find meanings of graduate education. Because my study does not focus on either married women or single women, having both women is more appropriate for this research. By having both married and single women as participants, my study could better reflect diverse views of female graduates who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo. Seven women are single and twelve women are married. A divorced woman also participated in this research, which was unintentional. Her case shows the significance of graduate education for a single mother.

²⁶ *Kantō* area is an eastern area in Japan, which consist of six prefectures and Tokyo.

I also included women who have a child (or children) and who do not have a child (or children) in this research. Eleven women do not have children and nine women have. Four women gave birth as graduate students and Mayumi gave birth just before she started her graduate study. Mothers' experiences and viewpoints provide insight into how they managed to play the role of mother while they studied.

Considering the fact that the University of Tokyo is known for its prestige and its difficulty in being admitted at the undergraduate level, it is undergraduate degree holders that are acknowledged as the most elite. Highly educated women who participated in this research include women who hold undergraduate degrees from the University of Tokyo and from different universities. Nine women earned bachelor's degrees from the University of Tokyo and eleven women earned from other universities, including national and private, co-ed and women's universities. Interviews reveal that this affects the identities of graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo. Due to the increased quotas of leading universities, it became more common for students to change universities when they proceed to their master's and doctoral programs (Kobayashi, 2004).²⁷

Women who participated in this research live and/or work in Tokyo or prefectures nearby. It is common that people living in prefectures near Tokyo commute to Tokyo. Kae lives abroad for a certain period and visited Tokyo area for a short period of time while I did my fieldwork.

Research site

This research takes place in the *Kantō* area in eastern Japan, more specifically in *Shutoken*, the Metropolitan area of Tokyo. The considerable part of the fieldwork was

²⁷ The percentage of students who go to different universities when shifting graduate schools at master's and doctoral levels in 2008 are as follows: 45.1% in humanities for master's level, 27.2 % for doctoral level in humanities, 63.5% in social sciences for master's level, 32.8% in social sciences for doctoral level, 53.1% in education for master's level, 29.9% in education for doctoral level (MEXT, 2010, March 26) Education is not part of humanities in the statistics of MEXT.

conducted in Tokyo. The *Kantō* area is the most populated region in Japan (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2013a) and provides a great diversity of occupations, which brings diversity to the research participants' backgrounds. It should be noted that this study was conducted in urban areas, so life style and available occupational opportunities should be understood as reflective of lifestyles and occupational opportunities in contexts of urban areas of contemporary Japan.

Methods of data collection

I use interview, observation, and document analysis. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Glesne (2006) state the importance of using multiple methods of qualitative study: participant observation, interviewing, and document collection. I did not use a survey for this study because asking personal information, such as age and educational backgrounds of parents by survey could be threatening and could prevent building trusting relationship between female graduate degree holders and the researcher. A previous study of graduates of the University of Tokyo was solely based on survey (Chan, 1994). In this research, I used interviews and observations to complement her study. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) say that the combination of multiple methods enhances the validity of inferences of concepts from indicators. Oda (2009) also argues that the combination of narrative and ethnography is appropriate to narrate what happens in the field without neglecting contexts. I triangulate multiple methods in order to enhance trustworthiness and validity of my data analysis. Each method complements the others. Combining interviews and observations is appropriate to understand contexts in which the interviewees are situated. Some information and narratives can be confirmed by observing situations in which women are placed and vice versa. Employing multiple methods develops findings and helps to confirm findings. For example, Junko's eagerness and dedication to her children's early education expressed in interviews are confirmed by a concrete example of learning materials that I saw at her home. The learning

materials placed on the dining table at her home were designed for young children issued by a private educational service provider.²⁸

I also employ theoretical triangulation, which Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Glesne (2006) indicate as a way to enhance the validity of research results. In other words, although I had expected that Japanese highly educated women were in precarious positions to manage multiple roles expected at home and in the workplace because they are women, I was careful not to overlook remarks and behaviors of highly educated women that denied my expectation.

Interview

I selected interviewees from multiple categories. I interviewed twenty highly educated Japanese women who hold graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences, two government officials working for gender equality and higher education, and a former and a current staff working for the office for gender equality of the University of Tokyo.

Twenty highly educated women were recruited by the following ways: (1) sending a recruitment letter to the University of Tokyo alumnae association, Satsuki-kai, by e-mail through a friend who is the University of Tokyo alumnae, (2) attending activities for graduate students, including activities mainly for the University of Tokyo students and activities for graduate students in general and asking them to participate in this research, (3) asking friends, acquaintances, and research participants to introduce those who may be able to participate in this research (snowball sampling). When recruiting participants, I considered the variation of backgrounds of women, such as marital status, family status (having children or not), majors, ages, and occupations. Snowball sampling has the weakness of creating a homogenous

²⁸ I happened to learn about Junko's home environment when one of the interviews with her was held at her home. Although observation of home environment was not a purpose of an interview, the interview held at home provided me with a precious opportunity of observation.

sample. However, without using snowball sampling, recruiting the sufficient number of participants was likely to be impossible. In order to overcome this shortcoming of snowball sampling, I used multiple sources to find research participants through requesting acquaintances and friends in various affiliations. This resulted in having the well-balanced sample with participants with various backgrounds. Among the twenty women, two women participated in this research through Satsuki-kai, three women through activities mainly for graduate students, fifteen women through the introduction of friends, acquaintances, and research participants. Finding research participants was extremely difficult partly because the number of women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences is limited and partly because some women who met the criteria of research participants were too busy to participate. Difficulty in finding research participants resulted in having research participants mostly from snowball sampling.

I used two types of interviews for this research: descriptive interviews and narrative interviews. I used descriptive interviews for government officials and the University of Tokyo staff working for gender equality because the main purpose of interviewing them was to learn the latest about gender and graduate educational policy and practice.

I used narrative interviews for Japanese women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo because the main purpose of interviewing these women was to learn about how they found meanings of graduate education in their lives. Commonalities that were seen in narratives of interviewees showed structural issues, while differences in narratives showed their own contexts, which were not separate from social structure. I paid attention to not only the contents of the interviews, but also the interviewee's way of speaking, their tone of voice, facial expressions, and silences. These nonverbal expressions imply how they found meanings of experiences as graduate students and highly educated women, which helped understand messages behind their narratives. Riessman (1993) says that narrative analysis is appropriate to study personal experience and meaning systematically, so the narrative

interview is appropriate to learn about what and how highly educated women found the meanings of graduate education in their lives. Riessman (1993) quotes Schafer (1992), “[T]he idea of narration [invokes] the inevitability of alternative descriptions” (Schafer, 1992, p.xvi in Riessman, 1993, p.65).

The design of the interviews was semi-structured. On the one hand, if questions are strictly structured, interviewees cannot express any of their opinions that are not covered by questions, even if they have strong opinions they might want to share. This could miss significant data from the interview. On the other hand, if interviews have no structure, the interviewees could digress. Therefore, a semi-structured interview is most appropriate for this study. In semi-structured interviews, I added or modified questions that I prepared in advance, in accordance with responses, feelings, and facial expressions, tones of voices, gestures, and silence of the interviewees. In added and modified questions, I was careful to not to give a preoccupation by showing particular data. For example, when Keiko talked about a view on differences in aptitude between men and women, I did not show demographic data on gender component of faculty members in Japan so that I did not direct her to raise the low percentage of women in academia as the reason that men tended to be seen as better logical thinkers than women. Interview protocol is attached as an appendix.

Interviews were held twice for each woman because one interview was not sufficient to cover women’s narratives and a researcher could ask further questions based on the first interview and what could not be covered in the first interview.²⁹ Chika had one interview instead of twice due to her availability, but a longer time was spent in that interview. While it was unexpected, the tones of some interviewees in the first and second interviews were different due to the change of situations. If the interview had been held once, the analysis of

²⁹ I did not convene focus groups because participants were more likely to share their personal experiences and opinions in one-on-one interview in which their privacy was securely protected between each participant and me. In addition, because women are a considerable minority at the University of Tokyo, participants of this study happened to know one another, which could make uncomfortable situations in which they shared their experiences and opinions.

their interviews would be significantly different, either depressing or rather vigorous. This does not mean that either was correct or wrong. Instead, this experience indicated that meanings of graduate education for women are not necessarily static and what can be learned from interviews is the meaning at that particular point in their lives, which could be shifting later in life. The range of the time for an interview with highly educated women was between approximately one hour and three hours. Most interviews were approximately 1.5 hours long. As they read the recruitment letter before they had the first interview and decided to be interviewed, they were willing to be interviewed. The locations of interviews were selected depending on the convenience of women. Some interviews were held in their offices and meeting rooms in their work places. Other interviews were held at coffee shops and restaurants. One of the interviews with Junko was held at her home. Interviews held in offices and at home provided me with a deeper understanding about their work and home environment directly, although it was not part of the purpose of interviews.

In addition to having official interviews, I had informal conversations with some of the highly educated women that I interviewed on the way to and from the locations between places where we met and where interview sites were located. For example, I met some research participants at the closest train station to interviewees and then we walked together to cafes for the interviews. Sanae even organized an informal campus tour of the University of Tokyo for me after the interview. The informal conversations before and after the interviews were also sources for learning more about the significance of graduate education in their lives in informal settings.

The interviews with two government officials who work for related fields of this study were helpful for this research because they were sources of the most updated information on gender policy and graduate education policy. Although there are official documents regarding gender equity and graduate education, because of social situations, educational and gender policy are not static, so obtaining the most updated view in person

was valuable. Information provided through interviews with these people was helpful in understanding the macro level context in which highly educated women are situated. The length of time for interviews with government officials was one hour. The interviews were held at their offices. Partly because the aim of this research is to learn about how women found the meanings of graduate education in their lives and partly because the government officials agreed to be interviewed in the condition that the interview was personal and their comments and answers did not represent those of their affiliated organizations or the government, the interviews with the government officials were used as background information only.

I also interviewed a former and a current staff who used to work and work for gender equality at the University of Tokyo. Interviewing them was helpful in understanding how the University of Tokyo tries to enhance gender equality and in understanding how gender policy is implemented at the university level as well as their personal views of women studying and working at the University of Tokyo. The length of time for interviews with former and current staff of the University of Tokyo was 1.5 hours for a former staff and 40 minutes for a current staff. The interviews were held at a coffee shop and at the staff member's office, respectively. Because the current staff preferred expressing her view as a researcher instead of being interviewed as a current staff, the interview with a current staff was used as background information only.

Interviews were digitally recorded with a digital voice recorder and were transcribed word for word. I tried not to depend too much on recording and took notes during interviews; at the same time, I avoided focusing on writing too much so that I did not miss reading from facial expressions and pauses. Recording was permitted by the interviewees. Transcribing the interviews was extremely time-consuming, but it was worth doing not only to ensure the accuracy of the information that the interviewees provided but also to understand the whole story and some themes in the narratives. Some key words and expressions cannot be replaced

with other words and expressions without changing nuances. As Spradley (1979) recommends, it is important to learn from interviewees' words directly because significant clues to research may be missed in the process of paraphrasing. At the same time, I paid attention and was careful to unpack words and expressions that the interviewees used so that I did not misunderstand or overlook meanings the interviewees intended to transmit. Riessman (1993) indicates, "Language used in an interview can be scrutinized-'unpacked', not treated as self-evident, transparent, unambiguous" (Riessman, 1993, p.32). " Spradley (1979) has a similar view with Riessman (1993). He states, "people constantly exchange words,conveying elaborate meanings (Spradley, 1979, p.95)."

For the coding of interviews, I used similar approaches with open coding and focused coding that are recommended by Emerson et al (1993) to analyze interviews with major interviewees in this research. Instead of taking two steps consisting of open coding and focused coding, I combined them and employ coding one time. Although these coding methods are designed for analyzing field notes, I found it applicable to analyzing interviews. According to Emerson et al (1993), open coding is "to sift through and categorize small segments of the field note record by themes that identify and name specific analytic dimensions and categories" (Emerson et al, 1993, p.150). Focused coding is to categorize at the more abstract level to develop sub-themes (Emerson et al, 1993, p.160-162). I categorized small segments of each interview record by key words and phrases and integrate categories of the two interviews by the same person. I then compared and analyzed data of these twenty women and integrate categories of their interviews when it was possible. In this meta-analysis, new sub-themes and research questions emerged to bring new perspective to this research.

In the analysis of interviews with highly educated women, I paid attention to not only patterns but also variations. Regarding what the ethnographer seeks, Emerson et al (1993, p.162) says, "the ethnographer seeks to identify patterns and variations in relationships and in the ways that members understand and respond to conditions and contingencies in the social

setting” (Emerson et al, 1993, p.162). I note commonalities and differences among highly educated women and under what conditions differences are seen.

In the analysis of interviews with highly educated women, I paid attention to three patterns of narratives (Sakurai, 2002, 2009)³⁰: master narrative, model story, and personal narrative. Sakurai (2002) refers to dominant discourse in society (dominant culture) as master narrative or dominant story, which embodies social norms and ideology. He refers to dominant narrative at the community level as model story. For him, master narrative and model story can either overlap or conflict (Sakurai, 2002). Personal narrative is not unrelated to dominant story and model story because master narrative and dominant story are included in personal narrative to make a story by connecting events in life (Sakurai, 2009). In other words, master narrative and model story are included in personal life story as part of the layers in a multilayered personal narrative (Sakurai, 2005). Therefore, Sakurai (2005) sees narrating personal stories as placing oneself in a community as well as in a larger society.

I apply Sakurai’s three patterns of narratives to my study of highly educated women because these three patterns of narratives are helpful to analyze my research participants’ narratives. In this study, dominant story is a story dominating in society and model story is the story dominating in graduate school or in academia. For example, gender norms of men and women are categorized into dominant story. Examples of other women in graduate school at the University of Tokyo are categorized into model story. I place personal narratives in wider social contexts in order to understand contexts in which personal narratives are placed. Personal narrative cannot be understood without embedding it in dominant story and model story.

³⁰ Saskurai (2009) made the chart in which three modes of narratives are classified to show social space of narratives.

Observation/participant-observation

I observed both macro and micro contexts in order to understand their connection. For macro contexts of graduate education, I observed meetings of *daigaku bunkakai*, meetings on university education under the Central Council for Education held at MEXT, including *daigakuin buhai*, graduate education division, and *daigakuin buhai jinshakei wāking gurūpu*, a working group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences, a specialized group working for humanities and social sciences under *daigakuin buhai*. Although the general public, including the press, was not permitted to participate in meetings, meetings were open to the general public for listening. In other words, the general public was not allowed to speak, but was allowed to listen. Therefore, I only observed the meetings, but did not participate. Meetings were held on an irregular basis, so I observed meetings when these were held. In total, I attended two meetings of *daigakuin buhai* (which were held on November 18, 2009 and May 28 on 2010) and four meetings of *daigakuin buhai jinshakei wāking gurūpu* (which were held on January 25, 2010, March 4, 2010, March 26, 2010, and April 27, 2010). Attending *daigaku bunkakai* and *daigakuin buhai jinshakei wāking gurūpu* was helpful in learning the latest discussion on higher education in Japan. For macro contexts for gender policy at the University of Tokyo, I observed the meeting to present the outcomes of “supporting activities for female researchers” at the University of Tokyo funded by MEXT (which was held on March 29, 2010).

For micro contexts, in order to learn how highly educated women find meanings of graduate education in their lives, I observed some women in their daily life. In order to have “thick description” (Geertz, 1973/2001) of contexts, observing events in daily life is important. As Agar (1996) says, an ethnography is “necessarily partial and historical” (Agar, 1996, p.36), so observing highly educated women in this research was necessarily partial. Opportunities for observation were limited to selected events and scenes involving the participants and these showed only part of their daily lives. Although interview was used as a

major method in this research, observation played significant role in this research to understand research participants' lives and interviews better. Because it is not feasible to observe all women due to the lack of opportunities, I observed ten women. Criteria for this selection were their availability and willingness. As Spradley (1979) argues, in order to make research feasible it is important to choose research participants who have sufficient time to participate in research. Some observations were held at university, but other observations were held outside of university. I observed academic and non-academic activities. Examples of observations are as follows: classes, a lecture, presentations,³¹ a soccer game for children and their parents, an annual meeting of a peer supporting group for divorced women, a cooking class and a meal with class members, cherry-blossom viewing picnic,³² study meetings and gatherings over dinner and drinking alcohol followed by the meetings, and a club activity for students and researchers aiming to study and rear children at the same time. I observed and participated in activities whenever situations allowed. I only observed, but did not participate in some activities when participation was not appropriate.

I participated in activities as a doctoral student at a U.S. university studying highly educated women in Japan and showed my willingness to learn about observed activities in order to give my presence accountability and to learn about their views concerning issues related to my research. How I participated in activities is highly related to positionality. Presenting myself as a doctoral student studying highly educated women in Japan resulted in being accepted as a peer graduate student/researcher by study groups and gatherings of researchers (including a club activity for students and researchers aiming to juggle research and childrearing where I met Chika and Junko and a study group where I met Yuka), but being acknowledged as a peer that had different characteristics in that I was affiliated with a U.S. graduate school. For example, when I participated in lunch, which is a major activity of

³¹ Classes that I observed include classes that were taught by research participants and that a research participant took as a student.

³² Cherry-blossom viewing picnic is commonly held in Japan.

a club for students and researchers aiming to pursue research and to rear children at the same time,³³ members seemed to see me as their peer graduate student. I was able to feel a sense of being accepted in their group as their peer. Members of the club were cooperative maybe partly because we all shared life as graduate students. Chika, who coordinated the gathering on that day, introduced me to members as a guest and gave me a few minutes to introduce myself as well as my research. I was allowed to ask members if they could be my research participants. Chika and Junko, who participated in the gathering, agreed to participate in my research. I was also welcomed as a peer graduate student in a study meeting and a gathering over dinner for graduate students and young scholars where I met Yuka for the first time. Not only did she become a research participant in my research, she kindly asked her colleagues in her academic community if they could participate in my research. She showed her kind cooperative attitude to me despite her busy schedule. I think that she was willing to cooperate because she perceived me as a peer scholar. In a club activity for students and researchers aiming to juggle research and childrearing, some participants showed interests in my graduate school experiences in the U.S. In study meetings, academic training in a U.S. university influenced my comments and questions in discussions. Differences in types of graduate education and academic environment between what the research participants and I had experienced seemed to give those who attended in the study meeting the impression that I was a peer graduate student, but living in a different culture. Having studied in a foreign country seemed to give me a permission to ask about things that were common knowledge among Japanese graduate students in Japan, including how graduate students are perceived by the general public in Japan and how difficult it is for them to find employment. As Narayan (1993) argues against the fixed distinction between native (insiders) and non-native

³³ Although membership was not restricted to women, the majority of members in this group were female graduate students. They had a monthly lunch to discuss their research, childrearing, and career in an informal setting. Affiliations of this club activity were not limited to women studying or working at the University of Tokyo, but the majority was affiliated to the University of Tokyo when this fieldwork was conducted.

anthropologists (outsiders) because of other factors, the distinction between insiders and outsiders is blurred in my research. I seemed to be a partly insider and a partly outsider. For example, if I was not seen as an outsider, some research participants would not have told me about some things that are common knowledge for graduate students who studied in graduate schools in Japan, such as graduate education system.

I took notes during observations when it was possible or immediately after observation if it was not possible or not appropriate to take notes during observation. As Emerson et al (1993) indicate, field notes written immediately after observation will help to preserve vivid memories of observations and help to analyze data later. Though not exclusive, I included the following components: description, questions that emerged from observation, the analysis of observation, reflection that is similar to journals. Emerson et al (1993) strongly argue against separating field notes and journals because this separation is based on the assumption that descriptive data is objective and “can and should be controlled” (Emerson et al, 1993, p.12). Although I agree with Emerson et al (1993) in that even writing descriptive field notes is interpretive, it is still important to create sections in field notes for reflection, impressions, and emotions, which are distinguishable from mainly descriptive sentences so that I can be aware of the influence of these factors on my description. Spradley (1979) recommends the researcher make introspective records to consider the influence of biases and emotions on research.

Document analysis

To understand how highly educated women who received graduate level education are placed in Japanese society from wider perspectives than academia, I examined multiple types of paper-based and electronic documents regarding higher education and gender policy from multiple perspectives. These documents include academic and general articles and books. I collected these documents from various libraries including university libraries in

Japan and in the U.S., public libraries in Japan, and libraries in Japan that specialized in education and gender respectively. I also obtained documents distributed in meetings held by the Central Council for Education (*Chuō Kyōiku Shingikai*). I analyzed documents with a view toward trying to find similarities and gaps between documents and my findings from interviews as well as observations. In this way, I was able to compare how highly educated women were placed in Japanese society by different actors, including the national government, academia, and the general public, with how highly educated women view themselves in their career and personal lives.

I categorize the documents into four types as follows: the first category of documents is policy-related documents and materials regarding higher education and gender policy. These documents include statistics, reports, white papers, and distributed materials from meetings of the Central Council for Education, websites, and other relevant texts related higher education and gender policy. I particularly reviewed documents and materials issued by national government ministries (particularly MEXT and Cabinet Office), councils [the University Council (*Daigaku Shingikai*) and the Central Council for Education (*Chuō Kyōiku Shingikai*)], and the University of Tokyo.³⁴ Documents issued by the national government and councils provide major arguments of the national government policy in graduate education and gender. Reports issued by the University Council and the Central Council for Education are the primary sources of documents that influence the national education policy.³⁵ Documents issued by the Gender Equality Bureau in the Cabinet Office and gender-related laws are primary sources of official documents regarding gender policy. Documents distributed in meetings on university education under the Central Council for

³⁴ Cabinet Office is a national government ministry. Gender Equality Bureau is a part of Cabinet Office.

³⁵ The University Council was established in 1987 as “the organization discussing higher education in Japan and providing necessary advice and support. The University Council had the right to advise the Minister of Education” (The report of the Central Council for Education issued in August 1987 in Amano, 2006, p.56). However, it was integrated to the Central Council for Education in 2001 (Amano, 2006). The Central Council for Education is the highest national advisory body regarding education in Japan.

Education held at MEXT, including *daigakuin buhai*, graduate education division, and *daigakuin buhai jinshakei wāking gurūpu*, a working group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences, provide the latest information regarding graduate education in Japan. Some, but not all government documents are available at official websites. Collecting primary sources on higher education as well as gender is helpful in grasping the comprehensive pictures of graduate education and gender policy. Some documents issued by the University of Tokyo regarding graduate education and gender policy were also helpful in understanding particular contexts at the University of Tokyo.

The second category of documents includes academic books and articles on higher education and gender. As Hada (2005) indicates, graduate education seems to be the least explored sector in higher education. Therefore, collecting documents regarding graduate education helps to understand the historical shifts and present situations of graduate education to which not much attention has been paid. Gender is not discussed much in the literature on graduate education in Japan. However, documents on gender help to explain how gender has been discussed in higher education and employment, which contributes to understanding the situations in which highly education women live.

The third category of documents includes print media written for the general public, such as newspapers, magazines, and journals. These print media provide the latest issues and discussions regarding graduate education policy and gender policy and the impacts of policy. These print media also provide wider angles than academic books and articles that focused on higher education and gender to understand situations in which highly educated women are placed, which contributes to analyzing these situations more comprehensively.

The fourth category includes documents and illustrations provided by research participants. These documents provided me with precious information that was not obtainable by any other sources. I reviewed distributed materials prepared by research participants for classes, presentations and a lecture to learn about their work. I also reviewed distributed

materials for activities in which my research participants participated. For example, to learn about an activity that Sanae was involved in, I reviewed a meeting minutes distributed in an annual meeting for a peer-support group of divorced women in which I observed. I also read a newsletter for the peer-support group members that Sanae was in charge of, which was helpful in learning about how she was involved in that activity as well as how she placed that activity in her and her children's lives. I also examined documents that a research participant gave to me for my reference. When I had an interview with Natsuko, she printed her curriculum vitae and a chart showing the process of completing her dissertation, which informed me of her academic and professional backgrounds chronologically. When I had an interview with Yumi, she drew an illustration to explain her idea of career development, which helped me understand her idea of career development and how she views graduate education in career.

I collected literature written in Japanese and English. Collecting documents in Japanese expands the amount of literature that can be covered tremendously. Particularly, considering that every original official document is written in Japanese, in order to use original sources, it is significantly important to collect Japanese documents.

In this research, I aim to answer the following research questions: what is the significance of graduate education in the lives of Japanese women who hold graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences? How do they find meanings of graduate education and graduate school experiences in their lives, including career and family? In order to answer these research questions, I designed the research methods I have shown in this chapter. I did fieldwork in eastern Japan, employing multiple methods, including interview, observation, and document analysis. Some of the aspects of my research framework that I presented in chapter 2, consisting of the following four factors, "criticalness", "genderedness", "regressiveness", and "discursivity", are documented in my research methods. As I argue in chapter 2, pedagogic fields of graduate education instill in the

subjects a conscious sense of themselves as critical individuals who are not powerless recipients of existing social norms, but are existences that exercise agency. Criticalness is seen in interviews with highly educated women who participated in my research. Some of their own and their friends' stories about the difficulty in getting married as highly educated women show how gendered education credentialing is in Japan. Their narratives about the difficulty in finding a job because they were graduates of graduate school suggest regressiveness of higher education in job market. The value of education is depreciated in job market (except for academic job market) as one's education level gets higher over the undergraduate level. Discursiveness is seen in document analysis, observation, and interviews. I review reports issued by University Council and the Central Council for Education. These reports indicate macro-level phenomena and suggestions to MEXT. Meetings of the Central Council for Education that I observed several times also show how committee members of Central Council for Education discussed graduate education. Interviews with highly educated women indicate difficulty in developing career and pursuing personal happiness and problems that they face/faced as highly educated women who received graduate education in humanities and social sciences at the University of Tokyo. They construct themselves as critical and empowered individuals, yet as struggling individuals in the job market and marriage market, as actors of policy in which power is negotiated among diverse actors. Actors of policy at both macro and micro levels negotiate power, which is a discursive process.

In the next chapter, I provide literature review to help to understand the background to contextualize my research findings and argument. I review literature on the history of higher education and women as well as literature on the overview of graduate education and higher education reform in Japan. Considering its unique status as the most prestigious university in Japan, I review literature on the University of Tokyo. Lastly, I review gender-related employment policy and practice in Japan.

Chapter 4: Historical background and the current overview of higher education and women in Japan, and gender-related employment policy and practice

This chapter is meant to contribute to understanding of situations and contexts in which my research participants are situated. Research data presented in later chapters cannot be comprehended until one understands the historical, social, and cultural backgrounds in which these research participants are placed. Subjects of this literature review include education and employment. Most of this review's theme is education because the central theme of this dissertation is education. The education part includes (1) the history of higher education and women in Japan, (2) the overview of higher education, including graduate education and higher education reform (which is highly related to graduate education), and (3) the overview and prior studies of the University of Tokyo. I also review literature on gender-related employment policy and practice.

I not only provide the overview of higher education and women in the present, but also provide the historical background of higher education and women. In order to understand the significance of graduate education for women in Japan at present and social and cultural contexts in which they are situated, it is indispensable to understand the significance of education for men and women in the past, including the purpose and kind of education that has been provided to men and women. In Japan, the purpose of educating women until World War II was to create wise mothers to educate good citizens for the future. Because of this, the content of education for girls and boys was different, academic-oriented curriculum for boys, and practical-oriented for girls. The current purpose of education for women is not to produce wise mothers, but expectation that women will become mothers is still high, which makes it difficult for highly educated women to strike the balance between career and providing quality education for their children. Cultural gender norms that expect men to be breadwinners and women to be wives and mothers as well as employment practices that treat men as the core of the labor market and require long hours of work for managerial positions,

make it difficult for women to pursue both career and childrearing. These cultural gender norms and employment practices create differences in the meaning of education for men and women. In investigating meanings of graduate education for women, employment is not separately discussed from education, particularly higher education. Meanings of graduate education cannot be understood until we learn about employment policy and practices and how graduate education is valued in employment as well as how highly educated women are valued in the job market in Japan.

In addition to literature on higher education in general, this literature review has a section for the University of Tokyo and women in the University of Tokyo. Because the status of the University of Tokyo is unique in its incomparable prestige in Japan, learning about its unique status is essential to understanding meanings of graduate education for research participants in my study, female graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo. This section is meant to help the reader understand the differences that men and women give to graduating from the University of Tokyo. Prior studies indicate that men and women do not enjoy equal career opportunities as graduates of the University of Tokyo.

As the target of this research is female graduate degree holders, I have a section for graduate education and higher education reform which is related to graduate education. Due to the oversupply of graduate degree holders caused by the increase of the number of graduate students, finding employment has become difficult. It is especially serious in the humanities and social sciences. Society tends to believe that education helps both men and women to enhance opportunities. However, as my research data show in a later chapter, high educational background (graduate level education) provides a means of transcending roles of women as wives and mothers (*ryōsai kenbo*) and at the same time strengthens traditional gender roles of women as housewives by narrowing career choices.

The history of higher education in Japan: from the origin of the university up to World

War II

Universities in Japan started in the Meiji period (1868-1912), the era in which Western ideas and systems were introduced to Japan. As a move to modernize after the Meiji Restoration (1867), Japan adopted a centralized educational policy, which was highly influenced by nationalism (The Tsukuba Association for International Education Studies, 1998). The government established imperial universities, seen as indispensable institutions for the new modern nation to train elite students to serve the government ministries (Okada, 2005; Amano, 2009). Higher educational institutions have been hierarchically stratified in Japan, with imperial universities were placed at the highest. The pre-World War II university system was established in accordance with the government's Imperial University Ordinance of 1886 (*Teikoku daigaku rei*) (Amano, 2009). These imperial universities, including Tokyo, Kyoto, Tohoku, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Osaka, and Nagoya (Arimoto, 2007; Okada, 2005)³⁶ still maintain their prestige.³⁷ The University of Tokyo has been a place at the zenith of this hierarchy.³⁸ Imperial universities were based on the German university model (Amano, 2006).³⁹ While imperial universities were established as indispensable institutions, they did not provide the needs of the majority. It was private educational institutions that provided higher education to most Japanese students (Amano, 2009).

Private higher educational institutions called *senmon gakkō*, higher technical institutions or special (vocational) schools, were also established. However, the Meiji government did not provide the legal status of “university” to private institutions (Kaneko, 2004; Okada, 2005). Through the University Code of 1918, selected *senmon gakkō* were

³⁶ The Japanese government also established an imperial university in Korea and one in Taiwan, former colonies (Okada, 2005).

³⁷ See appendix 2. These seven universities originally established as imperial universities are ranked top 10 universities in grants from MEXT and external funding.

³⁸ The University of Tokyo was established as the first university in Japan in 1877 and was reorganized as an imperial university in 1886 (Amano, 2009, Kaneko, 2004).

³⁹ German university education has been research-oriented. This tendency has still influenced Japanese university education even after American model was introduced after World War II (Arimoto, 2007).

promoted to universities (Kaneko, 2004; Okada, 2005).

Higher education and women from the Meiji period to World War II

Before discussing higher education and women, I will provide a brief historical background of secondary education for women in order to provide better understanding of the history of higher education and women in Japan. Based on the assumption that men and women have different gender roles, post-primary educational tracks were differentiated by gender in Japan until the end of World War II. Equal educational opportunities were not provided for men and women. While the importance of education for women was acknowledged, different types and levels of education were considered to be desirable for men and women. Unequal educational tracks of men and women reflected this idea. While secondary schools for boys were referred to as “middle school” (*chūgakkō*), secondary schools for girls were referred to as “higher schools for women” (*kōtōjogakkō*) (Mizuhara, 2005; Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). There were two major differences between middle schools for boys and higher schools for girls: years and curriculum. While middle school was a five-year curriculum, most higher schools for women were four-year schools. While Chinese classics, natural history, physics, law, and economics were included in curricula of middle schools, these were not included in curricula of higher schools for women, which instead, moral education, home economics, sewing, and music (Koyama, 1991). This kind of gender-specific curriculum continued even after World War II. Home economics was mandatory for high school girls until 1989.⁴⁰

Opportunities for women to receive higher education were significantly limited before World War II. Women’s enrollment rate in higher educational institutions was less than

⁴⁰ Chan (1994) indicates that even after the provision of higher education became available in the early twentieth century, school still reinforced the traditional roles of women. Chan indicates the curriculum of one public women’s college curriculum. Out of 36 hours of classes, 33 hours were spent for sewing, housework, and handcraft.

one percent (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). In principle, university education was only provided for men (Amano, 1986; Kanda, 2005; Koyama, 1991; Mizuhara, 2005). Women were not allowed to study at imperial universities (Okada, 2005) though a limited number of women were accepted in universities as exceptions.⁴¹ Private institutions, rather than the government, contributed to the development of secondary and higher education for women (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). Higher education for women was provided through *senmon gakkō*, special schools (Koyama, 1991).

Higher educational institutions for women began to be established in the beginning of the 20th century by the private sector. University status was not conferred upon higher educational institutions for women or other private higher educational institutions (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). As referred to in the section of the history of university, private higher educational institutions were categorized into *senmon gakkō*, special (vocational) school (Okada, 2005). The first private higher educational institution for women in Japan, *Joshi Eigaku Juku*, (later called Tsuda College), was established in 1900. In 1901, a women's medical school, *Tokyo Josei Igakkō* (later called Tokyo Women's Medical University) and *Nihon Joshi Daigakkō*, later called *Nihon Joshi Daigaku* (Japan Women's University), both also private institutions, were established (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). The only public *senmon gakkō* were two normal schools (Koyama, 1991, p.125). Women who received higher education were in the minority at that time.

Later many other private higher educational institutions for women were established in big cities (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991; Amano, 1986). Amano (1986) attributes the rise of higher education for women to the necessity of nurturing appropriate wives for highly educated men in accordance with the development of higher educational

⁴¹ Seitarō Sawayanagi, the first president of Tohoku University, accepted women; however it was not because he believed that men and women needed higher education. He said, "opportunities for higher education should be given to women; however, it does not mean that higher education is necessary for women in general, but means that it is necessary for women from unfortunate family who are required to be independent" (Yukawa, 2003 in Mizuhara, 2005, p.95).

institutions for men. According to Amano (1986), the role of higher education for women before World War II was to transmit the culture of a particular status group to play the role of wife and mother in the middle class.

Amano (1986) and Koyama (1991) discuss how higher education before World War II was related to gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*. Amano (1986) indicates that higher education for women emphasized character development and reinforced the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, inculcated into women through secondary education. Amano (1986) claims that educational credentials have played different roles for men and women. For men educational credentials have created status, while for women educational credentials have symbolically represented the status that they already possessed.

However, autobiographies of three exceptionally highly educated women born in the late 19th century analyzed by Koyama (2008b) provide a slightly different view. Having received a higher education, these three women achieved social success through their educational background, which was extremely rare for Japanese women at that time. Koyama (2008b) says that meritocracy in school gave women opportunities to cross the gender affiliation and to obtain status through their own work. These women saw their lives like men, which included mixed feelings of pride of being active and shame of being deviant as women. They felt isolated from family who did not share their values. Although meanings of being highly educated women change with the times, these autobiographies are helpful to explore the meanings of graduate education for women at present. Yuka, a woman participating in this research struggled with balancing actively pursuing an academic career with living a “traditional” happy life of a woman as a wife and a mother. She felt that she was a deviant in the marriage market because she is too highly educated.

In 1918, the Temporary Council of Education, *rinji kyōiku shingikai*, discussed the establishment of women’s universities, but decided against it at that time (Amano, 1986; Koyama, 1991), though the University Code did promote some selected *senmon gakkō* to

universities in 1918 (Okada, 2005; Chan, 1994).

According to Koyama (1991), among those who advocated for women's education, the majority insisted on providing higher education for women not because higher education was important for women as individuals but for national development. In the Japanese educational system before the end of World War II, education for men and women was intended to contribute to the state rather than to the individuals (Okada, 2005). Those who advocated higher education for women did not deny the concept of *ryōsai kenbo* (Koyama, 1991). Through the lesson learned from World War I, in order to survive the competition against imperialism, women's roles were enhanced. In addition to the roles of women serving family at home, they were also expected to serve in the wider society so that they could directly contribute to state (Koyama, 1991). For this purpose, higher education was needed for women (Koyama, 1991). As reviewed literature presents, the history of higher education for women has been closely related to discussions about and conceptualizations of gender norms. The literature I reviewed shows that higher education did not necessarily liberate women from the dominant gender norms. These studies are helpful in investigating the significance that graduate education gives to women at present.

The overview of the present higher education

After World War II, the government integrated *kyūsei kōtō gakkō*, higher schools, *daigaku yoka*, the universities' preparatory schools, and high-quality *senmon gakkō*, special schools into universities. As a result, the number of universities had expanded (Kaneko, 2004). By the 1970s, the enrollment rate at university in Japan increased to over 17% and the development stage of higher education in Japan shifted from the development stage to the mass stage, which was brought about by the private sector (Amano, 2003).⁴² The percentage

⁴² Trow (1976, pp.195-196) categorizes higher education in accordance with developmental stages defined by the enrollment rate as follows: elite (<15%), mass (<50%), and universal (over 50%).

of students proceeding to higher education has continued to increase and is currently over 50 percent, which is considered the universal stage (MEXT, 2012a).

In Japan, higher educational institutions are categorized into the following types: (1) graduate schools (*daigakuin*), (2) universities (*daigaku*), (3) junior colleges (*tanki daigaku*, which literary means short-term university), (4) colleges of technology (*kōtōsenmon gakkō*, five years after graduating high school), (5) higher institutions established by ministries other than MEXT (*daigakkō*), and (6) special training schools or vocational schools (*senmon gakkō*) (The Tsukuba Association for International Education Studies, 1998).⁴³ Universities are categorized into three types: national, local, and private. While national universities are funded by the national government, local universities are funded by city or prefectural government. Private universities have been essentially self-supporting with little government subsidy, while the government has protected national universities with major financial support (Amano, 2006; Kaneko, 2004).⁴⁴ While national universities are a minority in terms of the number of students at the undergraduate level, national universities are at the center of gravity with regards to research and graduate education in Japan (Kaneko, 2004). The demographics of the undergraduate and graduate levels are different. While the majority of students at the undergraduate level go to private universities (73.5 percent in 2011),⁴⁵ the majority of students at the graduate level go to public universities (64 percent in 2011) (MEXT, 2012b). (As appendix 2 shows, only three public universities are ranked in top 35 for the number of students.)

In Japan, public expenditure for higher education as a percentage of total public

⁴³ Examples of higher institutes include the National Defense Academy of Japan (*bōei daigakkō*) and Meteorological College (*kishō daigakkō*). A bachelor's degree is awarded to those who meet requirements (The Tsukuba Association for International Education Studies, 1998).

⁴⁴ While national universities absorb less than 20 percent of the total population, they have 80 percent of the national budget (Goodman, 2005). In 1975, the government started to subsidize private universities in earnest (Amano, 2003).

⁴⁵ In the 1960s when economic growth was high in Japan, popular demand for higher education was met by the expanded enrollment in private universities (Kaneko, 2004).

expenditure is smaller than other OECD countries (OECD, 2012).⁴⁶ In their final report, Education Rebuilding Council (2008),⁴⁷ included the request for greater investment in higher education in order to enhance the international competitiveness of universities and graduate schools as one of the main items for implementation of the proposals made in their earlier reports. Compared with other OECD countries, Japan depends greatly on household expenditure for higher education (OECD, 2012).⁴⁸ The OECD has categorized Japan as a country with high levels of tuition fees but less-developed student support system (OECD, 2012).⁴⁹ This tendency is not only seen at the undergraduate level but also at the graduate level (Ushioji, 2009). It is not surprising that many of my research participants received financial support from their families.

In Japan the rank of universities is hierarchically ordered. National universities, especially former imperial universities, and some of the private universities are placed near the top of the hierarchy.⁵⁰ The private sector, especially newly established universities, absorbed the increase in student population. Therefore, the increase in the enrollment rate has not made a big impact on high-ranking universities compared with other universities (Amano, 2003).⁵¹ (Appendix 2 indicates that all imperial universities and two top private universities, Keio University and Waseda University, are ranked in top 13 in the number of full-time faculty.)

Entrance examinations are used to admit students. Although the entrance examination is believed to be fair and objective and to provide opportunities for open competition in Japan, family backgrounds still significantly affect the educational outcomes

⁴⁶ Public expenditure to higher education in Japan is the lowest among OECD member countries. Public expenditure on higher education as a percentage of total public expenditure for education in Japan is less than 10 percent, while OECD average is 13 percent in 2009 (OECD, 2012).

⁴⁷ Education Rebuilding Council had been established from 2006 to 2008.

⁴⁸ Household expenditure for higher education in Japan is 50.7 percent in 2009 (OECD, 2012)

⁴⁹ Only Japan and Korea are grouped in this category (OECD, 2012).

⁵⁰ Former imperial universities include the following seven universities: Tokyo, Kyoto, Tohoku, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Osaka, and Nagoya.

⁵¹ Amano (2003) indicates disparities in various aspects, including accumulation of study and facilities between former imperial universities and other national universities in the country.

(Rohlen, 1983; Holloway, 2010). Rohlen, an anthropologist who studies Japanese high schools, reveals that examination-based meritocracy in Japan actually does not ensure equality but subtly legitimates existing social and economic inequality. The socioeconomic backgrounds of students' families and the academic backgrounds of their parents are correlated with the school rank. As Rohlen (1983) indicates, students from wealthier families are in an advantageous position because the families can provide a more supportive environment for their children preparing for the entrance examinations, by sending them to *juku* and/or private high schools for example.⁵² Rohlen (1983) indicates that the majority of students who were admitted to the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious university in Japan, were graduates from private high schools. Rohlen's study of Japanese high schools shows that Bourdieu's argument on social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984) in education is right.

Educational reforms have made the entrance examinations less severe and more diverse, which has contributed to the reduction of pressures of entrance examinations. Changes have also been made due to the decreasing population of young people caused by the decline of the birth rate (Tsuneyoshi, 2004; Kariya, 1998; Amano and Poole, 2005). The educational reforms promoting *yutori kyōiku*, relaxed education, have encouraged a reduction in the number of required subjects on entrance examinations. The rate of new students admitted to university based on recommendations from high schools based on certain standards required by universities reached over 40 percent in 2007 (Tsuneyoshi, 2008). These changes have also affected other institutions. Since the late 1990s, the shortage of applicants has increased in some universities and junior colleges (Amano, 2006).⁵³

⁵² *Juku* are institutions that provide extra education beyond what the schools provide. There are two roles of *juku*: to provide private tutoring for supplementing regular school work and to provide training for preparing for entrance examinations. Some *jukus* focus on only one role, while other *jukus* provide both services. Hirao (2001) reports a survey result conducted in 1993 by the Ministry of Education (1994), that the *juku* enrollment rate of 9th grade students, the highest grade of junior high school in Japan, was 67 percent.

⁵³ Forty percent of private universities in Japan did not meet their admission quota in 2007.

The severe competition of entrance examinations for top-level universities does however persist (Amano and Poole, 2005), despite the relaxed entrance examinations in general and the decline of the population of 18-year olds (Amano and Poole, 2005). The gap in the levels of difficulty in admission between the top and bottom of university hierarchy has increased (Goodman, 2005).

Brinton (1993) indicates that university and employment have been associated and going to a good university makes life more predictable because of the connection between top universities and employers. The name of the university plays a significant role in hiring in Japan (Tachibanaki, 2008; Sasagawa, 2001). According to the literature, the University of Tokyo should be the most powerful in job market. However, judging from the fact that participants in this research who want to become researchers face difficulty in finding employment, the brand name of the university does not guarantee employment, at least not at the graduate level. I will discuss how gender works for employment in a later chapter. In this section, I provide the overview of contemporary higher education. In the next section, I will review literature regarding higher education and women from World War II to present in Japan.

Higher education and women from World War II to present

Before World War II, different types of education were provided to men and women. Secondary schools for women were called *kōtō jogakkō*, higher schools for women. Women were not expected to receive higher education. Provision of higher education to women was placed as exceptions (Mizuhara, 2005). After World War II, the American model of education was introduced. The gender-segregated Japanese educational tracks were transformed into the current single educational track, consisting of 6-3-3-4 years, elementary, junior high school, high school, and university education based on *Kyōiku kihon hō*, the Fundamental Law of

(Tsuneyoshi, 2008, p.5).

Education, promulgated in 1947 (Arimoto, 2007; Chan, 1994). Equality has been emphasized in Japanese educational policy in the Fundamental Law of Education.

After World War II, universities, that used to be only for men, became co-ed (Amano, 1986). *Shin kyōiku shishin*, a guide to new education issued by the Ministry of Education in 1946 states that “*ryōsai kenbo* should not be the only purpose of girls’ education, …a woman is a human before she is a wife and a mother” (Ministry of Education in Mizuhara, 2005, p.98). This statement implies that *ryōsai kenbo* should not be the only purpose of girls’ education, though it is still seen as a part of that purpose. Equal higher educational opportunities for men and women were legally ensured in postwar. However, society did not wholeheartedly accept women attending university. For approximately ten years, from the latter half of 1950s, the argument referred to as “*joshidaisei bōkokuron*”, which means that female university students ruin the nation, had been an issue in journalism (Koyama, 2009).⁵⁴ This argument is based on the gender specific social expectations and gender roles that state that the role of women is not in society but at home. This argument is similar to the argument supporting *ryōsai kenbo*. *Joshidaisei bōkokuron* shows how strong the idea of *ryōsai kenbo* persists in Japanese society. In 1962 Tanabe, a faculty member at the University of Tokyo, said that while men contribute to society by utilizing their university studies, women did not necessarily do so. Some women only contributed to home, which was the waste of tax at national universities (Koyama, 2009). Teruoka, a faculty of Waseda University, one of the most prestigious private universities in Japan, argued that it was not desirable that women go to co-ed universities because men needed to work after graduation. Therefore, he insisted that priority should be given to men over women, who study only for enriching their cultural level and women can go to women’s universities for this purpose (Koyama, 2009). It should be noted that those who argue against women studying at co-ed universities did not oppose

⁵⁴ Koyama (2009) says that although “*joshidaisei bōkokuron*” was first mentioned in 1962, articles to criticize women’s universities and female university students were issued in the latter half of the 1950s.

women studying at university as long as they do not compete with men, who needed the education for their career. Those who argued in this manner did not see typical gender roles assigning men as breadwinners and women as housewives to be a problem. They did not discuss the social structures in which female university graduates were situated. Women were generally excluded in the traditional seniority-based lifetime employment system developed in post World War II in Japan (Brinton, 1993; Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). Fujii, one of the contributors to the discussion over *joshidaisei bōkokuron* in Mainichi Newspaper, argued that the difficulty women have in obtaining and continuing employment, due to the industrial structure, should be understood before blaming female university students for taking up space from male students (Koyama, 2009). Although *joshidaisei bōkokuron* was a fairly extreme the argument of the past, different social expectations to men and women still exist in the present day.

Even after World War II, the gender gap had been infused through curricula in secondary education and the gender gap is clearly shown in the choice of higher educational institutions (Horiuchi, 2003/2005; Brinton, 1993).⁵⁵ While tendency that women usually attend two-year junior colleges has changed since the late 1990s, gender differences can be clearly seen in the choice of higher educational institutions (MEXT, 2012a). Brinton's says, "Prewar de jure sex segregation was replaced by post-war de facto segregation" (Brinton, 1993, p.193).

Statistics shows that a greater proportion of boys attend university, although the gender gap has become smaller in recent years. According to school basic survey, a national survey conducted by MEXT issued in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a), women's participation in higher education surpassed men's participation in 1989 for the first time; however, in universities the ratio of men is higher than that of women. The percentage of men who enter university has

⁵⁵ For example, home economics was a required subject only for girls until 1993 at the junior secondary level and until 1994 at the high school level (Horiuchi, 2003/2005).

been higher than the percentage of women proceeding to higher education by more than ten percent since the MEXT started to collect these data in 1954. In 2012, 56.8 percent of men and 55.6 percent of women entered into any institution of higher education in Japan. While on the surface, there does not seem to be much difference of the preceding rate between men and women 55.6 percent of men go to university while only 45.8 percent of women do. This means that the increase in female participation in higher education is due to female participation in junior colleges. This point is also indicated in literature on women and higher education (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). While the male attendance rate at junior colleges in 2012 is 1.2 percent, the female proceeding rate is 9.8 percent (MEXT, 2012a).

Junior colleges were established in 1950 as a temporary measure to rescue former *senmon gakkō* that did not meet the necessary conditions to be classified as universities and therefore could not be promoted to university status. These institutions remained as permanent higher educational institutions based on the assumption that junior colleges contribute to promoting education for women even though the occupation army insisted that junior colleges should be provisional (Kameda, 1986; Amano, 1986). In ten years, it became impossible to abolish junior colleges (Amano, 2003) and they became permanent higher education institutions in 1964 (The Tsukuba Association for International Education Studies 1998). Amano (1986), who studies women in higher education, indicates that junior colleges had developed because they were considered to meet social expectations and women's needs for higher education. As of 2012, 89 percent of students in junior colleges were women (MEXT, 2012a).

There are differences in curricula between university and junior colleges. Compared to university curricula, junior college curricula are limited to fields that are considered more feminine, such as home economics, education, especially early childhood education, and the

humanities (Brinton, 1993; Strober and Chan, 1994).⁵⁶ This difference in curricula is similar to the difference in curricula in secondary education before World War II. As mentioned in an earlier section, curricula for boys' school were more academically oriented, while curricula for girls' school involved more so-called feminine subjects. Arimoto (2007) indicates a huge gap in the government allocation of its resources between university and junior colleges. Considering the feminization of junior colleges, women in higher education have been systematically less invested in than men.⁵⁷ Although the rate at which female attend junior colleges has steadily decreased since 1994, while the rate attending university has been increased, as Hirao (2008), a sociologist who studies gender, labor, family, and education, indicates, it was only in 1996 that the percentage of women going to universities became higher than that of those going to junior colleges.

Although the historical background of establishing junior colleges is based on the assumption of different levels of education for men and women in higher education, it is noteworthy that these different choices of higher educational institutions between men and women do not come from discrimination against women in current education policy but come from traditional gender roles as well as gender-related employment practices.

Analyzing National Family Research of Japan 2003, Hirao (2008) finds that the decline in the number of siblings decreased the gap in the educational investment on between a son and a daughter. This demographic change caused by the decline of birthrate has increased the rate of students who go to university and has changed the demography in higher education.⁵⁸ Ojima (2003/2005) indicates that the expansion of higher education for women has depended on family economic situations rather than educational investment for future

⁵⁶ The majority of junior college students do not aim to transfer to university (Edwards and Pasquale, 2003). The government statistics show that only 3.4 percent of junior college students transfer to university in 1990 (Edwards and Pasquale, 2003). The ratio increased to 10.6 percent in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a).

⁵⁷ The ratio of women in junior colleges is 88.7 percent in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a).

⁵⁸ While the number of junior colleges decreased from 593 in 1990 to 372 in 2012, the number of university increased from 507 to 783 in the same period (MEXT, 2012a).

career.

Japanese parents tend to have higher aspiration of university education for a son than a daughter. This tendency is confirmed by multiple surveys, including surveys conducted in sixties, seventies, nineties and even in the first decade of the 21st century (Amano, 1986; Brinton, 1993; Chan, 1994; Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991; Holloway, 2010). While 66 percent of parents want their sons to attend university, 37 percent of them want their daughters to attend university (International Comparative Research on home education, 2005 in Holloway, 2010).

Although the historical background of establishing junior colleges is based on the assumption of different levels of education for men and women in higher education, it is noteworthy that these different choices of higher educational institutions between men and women do not come from discrimination against women in current education policy but come from traditional gender roles as well as gender-related employment practice.

Rohlen (1983) indicates that traditional gender roles tend to discourage women from pursuing higher education at four-year universities and from pursuing careers, and instead tend to encourage them to attend two-year junior colleges. He attributes this phenomenon to different expectations after graduation between male and female students; men are expected to build a career, while women are expected to stay home to take care of the family. Brinton (1993) indicates that education is “life-determining” (Brinton, 1993, p.199) for women as well as men in Japan, but for different reasons. For men education is important for career, while for women education is important for a good marriage and for becoming a good mother. This indicates that gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* still persist, even though gender equal educational opportunities have been institutionalized since the end of World War II. Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura (1991) indicate that junior college is an attractive option for parents because it is more affordable and still provides “as a mark of a middle-class status

and as a sort of marriage credential” (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991, p. 238).⁵⁹ As some scholars (Ojima and Kondo, 2000; Brinton, 1993) indicate, the difference in the parental aspirations for sons and daughters came not only from stereotyped gender role models but also from gender discrimination in labor market as described later.

A gender gap is also seen in the majors pursued by men and women in four-year universities. According to the surveys conducted by MEXT every year,⁶⁰ the ratio of women is higher in the humanities, health, home economics, and education, while the ratio of women is lower in science and engineering. Amano (1986) indicates that although this gap tends to be seen as the result of women’s choice, this should also be seen as the result of channeling in society in which gender norms exist.

Gender stratification is seen in the level of university prestige as well. The ratio of women in prestigious universities is significantly smaller than that of men (Brinton, 1993). The gender gap is especially large at the University of Tokyo, so the research participants of this study are a part of minority at that institution. Details of data regarding the University of Tokyo are provided later.

Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura (1991) indicate that the lower rate of female *rōnin* to that of male *rōnin* is one of the reasons that women’s enrollment is smaller than men’s enrollment in prestigious universities.⁶¹ Most parents were not willing to allow their daughters to be *rōnin* (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991). Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura (1991) indicates that *rōnin* is an especially disadvantageous classification for

⁵⁹ More than 60 percent of junior college alumnae married four year university graduates, based on the Social Stratification and Social Mobility Survey (SSM Survey) conducted in 1985 (Hamana, 1990). However, because nearly half of female high school graduates go to universities in the present day, junior college is not as popular as it used to be. The ratio of students who go on to junior colleges decreased since the late 1990s. Amano indicates the rapid decline of popularity of junior colleges among women (Amano, 2003).

⁶⁰ School Basic Survey (1999-2009) in gender statistics database organized by National Women’s Education Center.

⁶¹ *Rōnins* are applicants to universities who failed to pass entrance examinations when they are high school seniors and wait for one or more years to retake entrance examinations for universities. The term of *rōnin* came from the term for samurai who did not have masters in the Edo period.

women who want to obtain employment after graduation because companies often set the lower age limit for women than men in hiring university graduates. In Japan, the Employment Countermeasures Act prohibits age discrimination, but some exceptions are allowed, which includes hiring young people for long-term career development.

In this section, I reviewed literature of higher education and women from World War II to present; however, reviewed literature is mainly about junior colleges and universities⁶². In the next section, I focus on graduate education and higher education reform in which graduate education has been highly affected.

The overview of graduate education and higher education reform in Japan

I will first review the literature pertaining to the overview of graduate education and then higher education reform. Because graduate education and higher education reform are related, I discuss these two subjects in the same section. Graduate education is the sector that is least investigated within higher education (Hada, 2005). After World War II the German model superseded the American model in Japanese educational system. From 1952 to 1953, a new graduate education system was established for conferring masters' and doctoral degrees (Amano, 2006). However, this shift was not completely implemented. Unlike the American education system, professional education was completed at the undergraduate level in Japan. Even training for medical doctors and legal professions had been provided at the undergraduate level (Amano, 2006). Graduate educational institutions functioned as institutions to produce researchers. Professional schools at the graduate level were not established until recently (Central Council for Education, 2005).

This is not the only difference between the Japanese and the American graduate education system. Unlike the American graduate education system, there are two types of

⁶² Sudo and Shibuya (2009) write about graduate school experiences of female adult students, but their book is a collection of several women's writing about their graduate school experiences and comprehensive analysis of their experiences as a study is not included.

doctoral degrees in Japan: *katei hakase* and *ronbun hakase*.⁶³ On the one hand, *katei hakase* is conferred on one who has completed the coursework and submits a dissertation (Ushioji, 1993). On the other hand, *ronbun hakase* is a doctoral degree conferred to those who submit a dissertation in accordance with university regulations and are acknowledged to have the equal academic achievement with those who finished doctoral programs (Central Council for Education, 2005). All doctors in my study hold *katei hakase*. While the government promotes *katei hakase* (MEXT, 2006a), *ronbun hakase* still exists. In Japan, until recently, doctoral degrees were not required for academics. This is applicable particularly in the humanities and social science where master's degree holders were hired as academics (Amano, 2006). Until the 1990s, only a relatively small proportion of older faculty had doctoral degrees (Hada, 2005). The doctoral degree in humanities and social sciences had been regarded as an honorary award given to those who achieved high academic achievement later in life (Ushioji, 1993). While doctoral degrees in the natural sciences became "a professional certificate", such degrees in the humanities and social sciences were regarded as honors awarded to a few authorities (Ushioji, 1993). In Japan, a doctoral degree was neither a passport to the academic world nor certificate to university faculty (Amano, 2006). However, this situation has been shifting recently.⁶⁴ This means that the meaning of doctorate has changed from an honorary degree to a practical degree with regards to employment in academic job market. In the discussion of the government's advisory committee for graduate education in humanities and social sciences under the Central Council for Education, a committee member remarked that a doctoral degree is now "a passport as an academic",

⁶³ The literary translation of *katei hakase* is doctoral program doctorate. For a definition of *ronbun hakase*, see a report, issued by the Central Council for Education on September 5th (2005). The literary translation of *ronbun hakase* is doctoral dissertation doctorate. For details, please see a glossary.

⁶⁴ Among the awarded doctorates, the ratio of *ronbun hakase* is 64% in 1975, while 22% in 2006 (MEXT, 1977, 2009a). See appendix 4 for the list of graduate degree awarded by field of study from 1960 to 2010.

“entrance certificate for the academic career”.⁶⁵ This means that recently getting a doctorate has required becoming a scholar although having a doctorate does not guarantee employment. A doctorate is required to apply for faculty positions. Research participants in my study endorse the shift of the meaning of the doctorate degree in academia in Japan. Mayumi, a research participant, said that when she earned her doctorate in humanities the 1990s, it was very unusual to earn a doctorate while being enrolled in graduate school. In contrast, Hiromi, who relatively recently earned her doctorate, said that one cannot even begin as a researcher until one has earned a doctorate.

To enhance the development of graduate education system, the Central Council for Education states that it is necessary to consider abolishing *ronbun hakase* in order to make systematic education in graduate schools more substantial and to ensure that doctoral degrees conferred by universities in Japan are internationally valid (The Central Council for Education, 2005).⁶⁶ Related to this issue, the Central Council for Education also indicated the necessity to expedite the conferring of doctoral degrees, especially in humanities and social sciences (The Central Council for Education, 2005).

Professional education and graduate education have also been changing. Professional education has been shifting to the graduate level in the fields of engineering, agriculture, and natural science and is expanded to other fields of studies (Amano, 2006). Professional education in other fields, including law school and business school, also has been shifted to the graduate level (Arimoto, 2004). Under the government’s initiative, many graduate courses for training professionals were established (Kaneko, 2004). In August 2002 the Central Council for Education issued a report and emphasized the necessity to produce professionals who are recognized as competent by global standards. In that same report, the Central

⁶⁵ Committee for graduate education, Working Group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences (*Daigakuin bukai, jinshakei* working group) the fourth meeting held on March 4th, 2010.

⁶⁶ Ehara, a researcher of comparative education and sociology of education, (2010) also states that graduate education in Japan is insufficient as a formal curriculum.

Council for Education recommended the policy to establish a new graduate education system that included professional schools at the graduate level (The Central Council for Education, 2002), which the government did in 2003, establishing professional schools at the graduate level, including law school and business school.

These changes were encouraged by Japan's desire to win global competitions. As Ivy (1995) indicated, and as many foreign and Japanese observers have noted, internationalization can reflect the manifestation of the national pride expressed in a new sense. So, as Japan's strives for internationalization through reinforcing graduate schools, it may seem to lose its uniqueness as a nation, but actually, Japan tries to maintain its unique position as the most developed Asian country in the global arena.⁶⁷

The importance of strengthening graduate education as well as being competitive in research at the global level is seen in a report and official documents in 2000's. In 2005 the Central Council for Education issued a report proposing that by making universities internationally competitive, the nation should be more internationally competitive (The Central Council for Education, 2005). The Central Council for Education emphasized the importance of graduate education being internationally attractive and providing quality education in order to enhance international validity and trust worthiness in its quality (The Central Council for Education, 2005). The proposal of the Central Council for Education was reflected in the government's policy. In 2006 Education Rebuilding Council was established in the Cabinet, and in 2007 university and graduate school reform became part of the strategy of national economic growth in the basic principle of economic and financial reform (*keizai zaisei kaikaku no kihon hōshin 2007*). In 2008, based on the revised Basic Act of Education

⁶⁷ Ivy (1995), an anthropologist, delineates examples of efforts of Japanese to emphasize the uniqueness of Japanese culture in various aspects, through searching for an authentic Japaneseness through travel. The importance of protecting Japaneseness is argued in an advertisement by the national associations of towns and villages in Asahi Newspaper dated November 18, 2009. Referring to the decrease of towns and villages due to the consolidation of smaller municipalities to form larger ones, the National Associations of Towns and Villages insists that losing names of towns and villages cherished in Japanese history means losing Japanese identities forever.

(*kyōiku kihon hō*) of 2006, the government made a Basic Plan for Promoting Education (*kyōiku shinkō kihon keikaku*, 2008). The plan stipulates that centers of excellence in education and research are formed as well that graduate education is strengthened in order to train human capital that can lead an international society. The plan also promoted a system of helping female researchers bring their abilities fully into play by balancing research and family and childrearing. While the government has regarded graduate education to be important for the nation, many participants in my research who aim to become researchers found it difficult to balance research and child rearing. This fact suggests that reality has not caught up with the ideal.

While education in Japan has been highly valued at the primary and secondary levels, this has not been the case at the tertiary level. Some researchers (Altbach, 2004; Ehara, 2010; and Yonezawa, 2008) indicate that higher education in Japan has been at the periphery of the international academic community.⁶⁸ For example, Yonezawa (2008), a researcher in higher education, indicates that education is the core factor of soft power for Japan; however, Japanese education is losing its soft power.⁶⁹ Yonezawa (2008) indicates that the Japanese education system was judged as one of the best models in the world by the U.S. Department of Education in the late 1980s, but even at that time, this distinction was limited to the primary and secondary levels. Japan is not the global center in higher education. Although the government does not discuss whether they see higher education in Japan to be in the center or at the periphery on the global level, policies that aim to strengthen graduate education indicate the government desires to be at the top level in higher education in the world.

University reform in Japan is part of university reforms in the world.⁷⁰ One of the

⁶⁸ Ehara (2010), an educationist, indicates that Japanese higher education is in a periphery position in general, but some fields are at the top level.

⁶⁹ Joseph Nye, a political scientist, developed the concept of soft power in 1999 and (2008, p.x) states that soft power is “one of the three ways to affect others’ behavior-coercion, inducement, and attraction”. While Nye categorizes military and economic power into hard power, he categorizes attractive power into soft power (Nye, 2004).

⁷⁰ Other Asian countries also give a high priority to producing talented students who are

characteristics of university reforms in the world is implemented by neo-conservatism, which encourages each university's efforts and is based on the principle of competition in the market (Ehara, 2010). Recent higher education reform needs to be understood in the context of marketization (Kaneko, 2004). This introduces the principle of competition to national universities.

In 2001, the Minister of Education, Atsuko Tōyama, announced a structural reform policy for the national universities known as the Tōyama Plan. She proposed that national universities transform into independent administrative corporations, *dokuritsu gyōsei hōjin* (Okada, 2005). The Tōyama plan proposed the following three major points: “to reorganize and combine national universities, to introduce management techniques based on private-sector concepts in national universities, to introduce the principles of competition in universities by using third party evaluations” (Okada, 2005, p.46). The Minister's proposal was implemented in 2004. National universities transformed their status into independent administrative corporations through which they became more responsible for budget allocation and personnel affairs (Okada, 2005). The Tōyama Plan was proposed in a larger national political context in which the government launched a series of structural reforms to revitalize the Japanese economy by downsizing the number of public servants and reallocating the budget to improve efficiency (Okada, 2005).⁷¹

It is notable that university and graduate school reform in Japan had been promoted by Japan's desire to be globally competitive. This reform included the government reinforcing research universities (Amano, 2006). For this purpose, the government began to cultivate a competitive academic environment and to promote competitions among

competitive at the global level and are developing higher education reform for this purpose (Uchida, 2007).

⁷¹ This neo-liberal tendency began earlier. In the 1980s, with the establishment of the Nakasone administration, deregulation and structural reform became major issues in economic policy and these ideas were expanded to be major issues in educational policy (Amano, 2006). Current university and graduate school reform in Japan was led by the administration since the 1980s (Ehara, 2010).

universities in Japan. Based on the Tōyama Plan (Amano, 2006), in 2002 the government embarked on the 21st Century Center of Excellence (COE) program so that Japanese universities would be competitive with top-level universities around the world.⁷² In 2007 the 21st Century COE was reprogrammed to Global COE program [(The website of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)].

The introduction of the principle of competition reinforces the stratification in university hierarchy by providing funding to selected outstanding performers, as the ranking of distribution of COE awards from 2002 to 2004 show. The five highest ranked universities, including the top ranked the University of Tokyo, were awarded more than half the COE awards (Eades, 2005). Appendices also indicate that all former imperial universities (Tokyo, Kyoto, Tohoku, Kyushu, Hokkaido, Osaka, and Nagoya) and top private universities (Keio and Waseda) are highly ranked with regards to funding (the grant from MEXT and external funds). As Amano (2007) indicates, stratification (the gap in quality and prestige) and expansion (the higher enrollment in higher education) occur simultaneously in Japanese higher education. The reform of graduate education has been undertaken in this context.

The desire to be competitive globally is not particular to Japan alone. For this purpose, modern governments have made efforts to support higher education and science (Clark, 1995/2002). The government's desire to be internationally competitive in science and technology is thought to promote graduate education reform in Japan (Amano, 2006; Ehana, 2004).⁷³ Japan's eagerness to be in a leading position in science and technology can be seen in the high proportion of graduate students majoring in science and engineering. The number of students majoring in engineering in master's levels has increased since the 1960 (Urata,

⁷² The government proposed the idea of establishing COE in the late 1980s. The expression of Center of Excellence was used for the first time in 2008 in the White Paper on Science and Technology (Kobayashi, 2004).

⁷³ In the meeting for formulating the third Basic Plan for Science and Technology (2005-2010), graduate education reform was raised as one of the important task to train personnel for science and technology in order to realize *kagaku gijyutsu sōzō rikkoku*, which means a nation based on the creation of science and technology (Central Council for Education, 2005).

2004).⁷⁴ Based on the international comparison of educational index, *Kyōiku shihyō no kokusai hikaku*, issued by MEXT in 2004, Amano (2006) indicates that these two majors (mainly engineering) comprise approximately 60 percent of the students who obtained master's degrees in 2000.⁷⁵ Nearly 50 percent of the students who obtained doctoral degrees in that year studied in medicine and the health sciences.

Japanese universities, at the graduate level, are characterized by strength in science and engineering and weakness in the humanities and social science (Ushioji, 1993). Fewer students obtained doctoral degrees in the humanities and social sciences in Japan than in other developed countries (Amano, 2006).⁷⁶

In spring 1991, the University Council issued a report regarding graduate school and indicated an enlarged role for graduate schools and the necessity of equipping and enriching graduate schools in quality and quantity (University Council, 1991a). This report referred to the fact that the proportion of graduate students in Japan was lower than in other developed countries. Since then, this international comparison has been referred to as grounds for increasing the number of graduate students (Amano, 2003). In the fall of 1991, the University Council issued another report regarding the size of graduate schools. The report indicated the need to increase the number of graduate students, at least doubling the population by 2000 (University Council, 1991b). The argument for this need to increase the graduate student numbers was grounded in fact that the proportion of graduate students in Japan was lower

⁷⁴ In response to the report issued by the Central Council for Education advising to (1) expand science and engineering departments and increase the quota of students majoring science and engineering, and (2) expand master's program to train engineers (*kagaku gijyutsu kyōiku no shinkō hōsaku ni tsuite*) in 1957, the government made it a policy to increase the number of students majoring science and engineering (Amano, 2003). About one third of university graduates majoring in engineering entered graduate schools by the end of the 1980s (Kaneko, 2004).

⁷⁵ Among students in master's programs, students majoring in engineering in 2011 account for 42.4 percent (MEXT, 2012b). For graduate degree awarded by field of study, please see appendix 3.

⁷⁶ While the percentage of students who obtained doctoral degrees in humanities and social sciences in Japan in 2000 was 4.0 and 3.8 respectively, those were 23.7 and 14.0 in the U.S., 12.9 and 12.9 in Britain, 23.3 and 18.0 in France in the same year (Amano, 2006).

than in other developed countries.⁷⁷ The report also expected the prospect of an increasing need for researchers to promote pioneering academic research and to make international contributions. Japan has aimed to catch up with developed countries since the Meiji period (Arimoto, 2004). Recent graduate education reform can be understood as the most recent part of these efforts.

In response to the University Council's report, standards for the establishment of graduate schools were made less severe and universities were given financial incentives to increase the number of enrolled graduate students. These factors brought about the rapid increase of the number of graduate students (Inoki, 2009; Yoshimi, 2011). The number of graduate schools has also rapidly expanded.⁷⁸ It is notable that although the expression *daigakuin jūtenka seisaku*, the policy of strengthening graduate school, is well known by the parties concerned and graduate education has actually been strengthened, there is no statutory form of such a policy (Kobayashi, 2004).

Even before the University Council announced the numerical target of increasing graduate students in 1991, as early as in the late 1980s, the University of Tokyo issued a report declaring their policy to enrich graduate school. The University of Tokyo already placed a greater weight on graduate school compared with other universities in Japan (The University of Tokyo, 1988). Research participants in my study went to graduate school in the context of the University of Tokyo having placed a premium on graduate education.

Between the years of 1990 and 2000, the number of graduate students increased from 62,000 to 142,000 at the master's level and from 2,800 to 6,200 at the doctoral level, which means that the numbers of graduate students more than doubled at both levels (Amano,

⁷⁷ "The number of full-time graduate students per population of 1,000 in Japan was 0.7 (1989) and the ratio of undergraduate students to graduate students was 4.4 % (1989), while 3.2 and 11.9% in the U.S. (1987), 2.9 and 20.7% in France (1988), and 1.3 and 21.1% in Britain (1987)" (Kōtō Kyōiku Kenkyūkai, 2002, p.175).

⁷⁸ While the number of graduate schools was 313 in 1990, that increased to 621 in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a).

2006). The percentage of students who proceed to the graduate level has also increased from 6.7 percent in 1990 to 10.7 percent in 2000 (Hada, 2005). By 2012 the percentage of students proceeding to graduate school increased to 11.8 percent (Calculated by the author based on School Basic Survey conducted by MEXT 2012). The number of students majoring in interdisciplinary fields and social sciences increased particularly rapidly (Amano, 2006; Urata, 2004).⁷⁹

It is notable that the rate of increase is higher for women than for men among graduate students. Using the 1990 figure as a baseline of 100, the number of women in 2000 is 370, while that of men in 2000 is 230 (Urata, 2004). Although the percentage of women who proceed to graduate school is smaller than men [6.2 percent for women versus 15.4 percent for men in 2012 (calculated by the author based on the data in School Basic Survey conducted by MEXT in 2012)], the percentage of women who proceed to the doctoral level is higher than that of men [10.43 percent for women, while only 9.28 percent for men (calculated by the author based on School Basic Survey conducted by MEXT in 2012)]. In the humanities and social sciences it should be noted that, while the number of male students in master's programs declined in the 2000s, the number of female students increased in the 2000s.⁸⁰

The increase in the number of female graduate students may seem to indicate an increase of career opportunities for women; however, this is not the case. The employment rates for women at both the master's and doctoral levels are lower than those of men (75.8 percent for men and 55 percent for women at the master's level in 2012, 56.3 percent for men and 42.4 percent for women at the doctoral level in the same year)⁸¹ (MEXT, 2012a). A survey study carried out in 2012 by the Science Council of Japan on the problems of graduate

⁷⁹ When index in 1990 is 100, that of social sciences is 307 and that of interdisciplinary studies is 590 in 2000 (Urata, 2004).

⁸⁰ Please see the appendix 6.

⁸¹ Calculated by the author based on the school basic survey (2012).

education from the view of nurturing female researchers indicates that women encounter greater difficulties than men in obtaining employment. This survey study reveals that when the quality of male and female candidates' academic performance are the same, men tend to be hired (Science Council of Japan, 2005).

As a result of the expansion in the number of graduate students, the decline of graduate students' quality has been seen, a trend that started in the mid-1990s (Arimoto, 1996). Some research participants also indicated they saw a decline in the quality of graduate students. The expansion in the number of graduate students was expected to help universities that were short of applicants obtain more students (Ehara, 2010). University faculty members and a magazine article indicate that some students who would not have been admitted to graduate schools in the past are admitted now (Yoshimi, 2011; *Shūkan diamond*, 2010; Takeuchi, 2009). A weekly magazine even reports that some students change university when they go to graduate schools for the purpose of having better brand names in their education credentials, which is called *gakureki rondaring*, education credential laundering (*Shūkan diamond*, 2010). Ironically, while the government aims to be more globally competitive by strengthening graduate education, the graduate schools in Japan are losing competitiveness due to the decline of the quality of graduate students (Yoshimi, 2011).

Regarding the University of Tokyo, while this university is known to have the highest admission standards in Japan, being admitted at the graduate level is not considered as difficult as being admitted at the undergraduate level (*Shūkan diamond*, 2010). This suggests that the possession of under graduate degree from the University of Tokyo affects the identities of graduate degree holders of the University of Tokyo. Those who have bachelor's degrees from the University of Tokyo are more likely to have the elite identity than those who did not attend this university. Some research participants who earned bachelor's degrees at universities other than the University of Tokyo, including Chie, indicated this point. Chie said that being admitted at the graduate level to the University of

Tokyo is much easier than being admitted at the undergraduate level. Although the decline of the quality of graduate students is indicated and the University of Tokyo does not seem to be an exception, it does not necessarily mean that the quality of every graduate student at the University of Tokyo who studied at universities other than the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level is low. It is notable that many research participants in my study, including Chie, earned a bachelor's degree from other prestigious universities.

The expansion in the number of graduate students created unemployment among graduates of doctoral programs (Kobayashi, 2004; Kusahara, 2008; Mizuki, 2007/2008; Ushioji, 1993, 2009).⁸² I argue that the government should have made a concrete employment policy considering the increasing number of graduate students. A serious unemployment issue of graduate degree holders is a logical result of the oversupply of highly educated doctoral degree holders. In Japan, an academic career system starting from post-doctoral fellow, and then getting a tenure track position toward earning tenure has not been established. In addition, the number of academic positions is decreasing (Cabinet Office, 2003b). The oversupply of doctoral students creates the structural problem of "*kōgakureki*, working poor" (Mizuki, 2007/2008), those who are highly educated, but do not have a job that brings in a decent income (Mizuki, 2007/2008; Takeuchi, 2009; Yamada, 2009). It is unusual that doctoral degree holders struggle to obtain academic positions and many of them engage in part-time jobs with low income (Mizuki, 2007/2008).

Yamada, a sociologist, (2009) indicates that the highly educated working poor do not tend to receive attention compared with the poor who engage in manual labor because parents of students who go to graduate school are in a relatively high income bracket, and they often support their children's graduate level education. Furthermore, Yamada (2009) indicates that highly educated women tend to marry highly educated men who earn a high income. This

⁸² In addition, the brand name of universities also influences the job market. Graduates from non-prestigious universities are disadvantaged (Ushioji, 1993; Mizuki, 2008).

seems to make a part-time professional job ideal for these women who can depend on their husbands; while the income is not high, they do not have to sacrifice their pride for work. Sanae, one of my research participants, had actually considered taking a part-time professional job with a high hourly wage while working mainly as a housewife, Yamada (2009) rightly indicates that it is more difficult to shed light on the highly educated working poor issue than on the poverty issue in general.

Some specific factors cause difficulties for doctoral students in employment. First, the supply of graduate degree holders exceeds the demand of faculty positions in universities. As the number of children has declined, the demand for university education is not expected to increase and hence, neither is the demand for university faculty. In addition, in 2001 national universities were reorganized and combined in accordance with the Tōyama Plan. As a result, the number of academic positions was reduced. Second, the structure of university faculty personnel in Japan can be seen as an inverted pyramid. This means that the higher the position in the university, the greater the number of positions (Ushiogi, 2009; Sato, 2009).⁸³ Third, in Japan, it is extremely difficult for doctorate holders to have a job other than in academia (Ushiogi, 1993). Doctorate holders are not attractive to companies and the government in Japan. Their knowledge and skills tend to be regarded as too specified and they are seen as lacking flexibility (Ushiogi, 2009). Fourth, graduates of doctoral programs particularly, experience difficulties because they are older. In Japan it is common to have an age limit for hiring. Age is a part of required information to be filled in a resume in Japan. Mayumi was in her 40s when she earned her doctorate. When she looked for employment, many public advertisements for academic posts presented an age limitation, which prevented her from applying for these positions. Minako, who works for mass media, said that new

⁸³ Ushiogi (2009) even suggested to stop accepting students in doctoral programs for a while for various reasons. The first reason is that university faculty positions are not likely to increase. Tsukahara (2009) also indicates that the number of graduate students is greater than the number of needed university faculty members.

graduates of master's programs could be acceptable, even though they are two years older than new graduates of bachelor's programs, if they have additional assets, such as a higher level of communication and planning abilities, but companies might be unwilling to hire doctorates because they are five or six years older than new graduates of bachelor's program. The company would wonder if it is appropriate to deal with them on the same basis as new graduates of bachelor's programs in providing training for new employees.

Considering the unmet quota of graduate school and the lack of demand for doctorate holders in society, in June 2009 MEXT requested that national universities reconsider the quota for doctoral programs and reflect the changes in their six-year midterm goals starting in the 2010 academic year (MEXT, 2009c, 2009d; Kato, June 6, 2009). This suggests that the unemployment of doctorate holders has been structurally created by the increased quota in graduate school.⁸⁴

While the demand for recruits in the natural sciences has steadily shifted to master's degree holders, the demand for recruits in humanities and social sciences is still for undergraduate degree holders (Amano, 2008). Except for students majoring in engineering, the tendency for companies in Japan to prefer new graduates from the undergraduate level to those from graduate schools has not been changed (Kaneko, 2004). While the master's programs in natural sciences and engineering function as an institution to provide trained scientists and engineers for industry, master's programs in the humanities and social sciences have been a preliminary step toward a doctoral program (Ushioji, 1993). After earning their master's degree, some of my research participants did not pursue their study at the doctoral level, but went to work in a non-academic workplace, including consulting, education, finance, mass media, non-profit, and sales. So, while some master's programs in the humanities and social sciences have been seen as a preliminary step toward a doctoral program, being enrolled in such a master's program does not necessarily close career

⁸⁴ For the shift of quota of graduate students in national universities, please see appendix 5.

opportunities in the non-academic job market.

Obtaining employment is difficult, especially for students majoring in the humanities and social sciences, as statistics and reviewed literature show (Kobayashi, 2004). The employment rate of male and female graduates in the humanities and social sciences at master's and doctoral level are 35.2% and 18.5% for men and 32.6% and 14.1% for women in humanities and 57.8% and 44.1% for men and 45.5% and 32.0% for women in social sciences in 2012 (Calculated by the author based on School Basic Survey conducted by MEXT in 2012). The employment rate includes only *seikishokuin*, regular staff members. Temporary contractors are not included. It is indicated that even a part-time teaching position at university is often not available and this is a concern for those studying in the humanities (Kameyama, 2008).

Problems are indicated in both graduate schools and Japanese society (The Central Council for Education, 2010).⁸⁵ On the one hand, Japanese society lacks the demand for doctoral degree holders (Yoshimi, 2011, Mizuki, 2008). Japanese society has not developed the system to utilize graduate degree holders (Yoshimi, 2011; Mizuki, 2008), especially those with doctorates (Mizuki, 2008). On the other hand, since doctoral education in Japan is very specific, it does not meet the needs of society, (Kusahara, 2008). Communication among university, society, and corporations is encouraged by the Central Council for Education (2005). Yoshimi (2011), a sociologist, argues that the university should make an effort to improve graduate education; at the same time, society needs to change its view of higher education. Yoshimi is right in arguing that both the university and society need to make efforts to solve the unemployment problem of graduate degree holders.

The University of Tokyo and women in the University of Tokyo

⁸⁵ Committee for graduate education, Working Group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences (*Daigakuin bukai, jinshakei* working group) the fourth meeting held on March 4th, 2010.

In this section, I will review literature on the University of Tokyo and women, specifically, studies conducted by Chan (1994) and Strober and Chan (1999). Chan conducted a survey-based gender study of University of Tokyo graduates for her dissertation and in 1999 with Strober, coauthored a comparative study between of alumni from the University of Tokyo and Stanford University. Although the second study is a comparison between two universities, my review focuses on the University of Tokyo.

The University of Tokyo (Tōdai) was the first university in Japan in 1877 and was transformed into Tokyo Imperial University in accordance with the 1886 Ordinance (Okada, 2005). As Strober and Chan (1999) say, the University of Tokyo is “in a class by itself” (Strober and Chan, 1999, p. 6) and there is no other university that has a status equal to the University of Tokyo in Japan. In terms of academic rigor and prestige, the University of Tokyo is the most prestigious university in Japan. Even though the percentage of students entering university in Japan was as high as 51 percent in 2012 (MEXT, 2012a), the prestigious position of the University of Tokyo remains unshakable since it was established (Strober and Chan, 1999). Graduating from the University of Tokyo provides a special sign of being elite in Japanese society. The University of Tokyo graduates have high representation in ministries and the government bureaucracy in Japan (Strober and Chan, 1999). The University of Tokyo is ranked first among universities in Japan in multiple world university rankings in the world, including World University Rankings 2011-2012 and QS World University Ranking 2011 (Nakamura et al, 2013).

Since the first women were admitted in 1946, women’s enrollment in the University of Tokyo has always been lower than men. It was less than 2 percent in the late 1940s and increased to nearly 6 percent in the late 1970s (Strober and Chan, 1999). While the women’s enrollment has increased since then, the women’s enrollment rate is still far smaller than the men’s enrollment rate at present. The enrollment of women at the undergraduate level was 18.3 percent in 2012 (The University of Tokyo, n.d.). Considering that 55.6 percent of men

and 45.8 percent of women in Japan proceeded to university in 2012, the gender ratio of the University of Tokyo does not reflect the general gender ratio of undergraduate students. The University of Tokyo takes the low enrollment rate of women seriously and promotes the increase of women (University of Tokyo, 2010b). In 2013, women's enrollment in the University of Tokyo at the graduate level is higher than that at the undergraduate level (which was 18%): 23% at the master's level, 29% for professional degrees, and 30% at the doctoral level (The University of Tokyo, n.d.).

Compared with the average rate of students proceeding to graduate schools, a much higher rate of undergraduate students at the University of Tokyo proceed to graduate schools. The gender gap in the rate of students who proceed to graduate school from the University of Tokyo is smaller than the national average. While 10.4% of male graduates and 7.0% of female graduates went to graduate schools in Japan in 2005 (Cabinet Office, 2012a), 59% of male graduates and 43% of female graduates of the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level went to graduate schools in that year (calculated by the author based on the number of students in the website of University of Tokyo, 2013). This suggests that for University of Tokyo graduates, going to graduate school is much more common than for graduates in general.

While graduation from the University of Tokyo is commonly believed to guarantee a successful life in Japanese society, according to her gender comparative study of graduates of the University of Tokyo from the class of 1981, Chan (1994) argues that a first-class education has different effects for men and women in family life and career. Chan's study reveals that although graduates of the University of Tokyo are expected to be able to earn high incomes and to obtain good positions in large companies, when their incomes and status are analyzed along gender lines, what is applicable to male graduates is not applicable to female graduates. According to Chan, gender outweighs educational credentials as a significant determinant for income and the sharing of household responsibilities, including

child rearing. Chan's study shows that even the most prestigious academic credential is not powerful enough to overcome gender obstacles. For example, it is commonly known that older women and married women with children have difficulty finding permanent employment in Japan. Women who graduated from the University of Tokyo are not exempt from this trend. According to Chan (1994), the majority of the University of Tokyo alumni in her research are from middle to upper class families and they have well-educated parents. Men and women in her research tend to have similar habitus at home and university, but their paths after graduation seem to be significantly formed by the structure and gender roles of society.

Chan's research (1994) outcome shows that female graduates are disadvantaged with respect to earnings when compared to male graduates. According to Chan's study, academic credentials are not an important determinant of income; the two important determinants of income are the size of the organization of employment and gender. Being a woman and working for a smaller organization negatively affected income. More female graduates worked for smaller organizations in Chan's study.

Chan's study (1994) reveals that even the most prestigious academic credential does not give equal privileges to men and women. Her study is helpful in exploring the different effects that a first-class education have for men and women in family life and career and also helpful in understanding the limited impact of a first-class education on traditional gender roles. However, her study has the following limitations.

First, the limitation of her study is that it is based solely on survey. Chan (1994) does not include any follow-up interviews even in her later book coauthored with Strober in 1999. Even if her research participants had opinions and desired to share their experiences that were not covered by the survey, these opinions and experiences are excluded from her research. If Chan's interpretation of the survey results is not correct, there is no room for correcting her interpretation through interviews. I argue that survey could be one of several methods, but

should not be the only method to explore meanings of a first class education.

Second, Strober and Chan (1999) also do not explore the interpretations of their research participants very deeply. Approximately 18 percent of women in Strober's and Chan's study are full-time homemakers (Strober & Chan, 1999). They say, "For some, being a full-time homemaker was clearly their first choice. But for others, reducing hours of employment or leaving the labor market entirely was not their preferred strategy (Strober & Chan, 1999, p.209)". However, Strober and Chan do not investigate how these women interpret their education at the University of Tokyo in their lives as homemakers. They introduce a full-time homemaker's comments on their surveys saying that she will use education at the University of Tokyo for her children (Strober and Chan, 1999). However, they do not explore how.

Third, although her samples are the University of Tokyo graduates, Chan (1994) tends to draw general suggestions from her research outcome, which is not applicable to the Japanese population in general. Considering the fact that the University of Tokyo is not an ordinary university, Chan should have understood that the alumnae she studied are in the minority in the Japanese population and she should have treated them accordingly.

Based on the literature review presented here and in order to complement Chan (1994)'s and Strober and Chan (1999)'s research, I will therefore explore interpretations of research participants and consider the social and cultural contexts of their lives without generalizing findings to complement.

Gender-related employment policy and practice

In this section, I review literature on gender-related employment policy and practice in Japan. This review provides the background knowledge of the social, economic, and cultural contexts in which Japanese women, particularly highly educated women, are situated.

In literature on gender and employment, women who hold university degrees are referred to

as highly educated women. Considering the fact that the percentage of women who went to universities did not reach 30 percent until 1999 (MEXT, 2012a), in Japanese social context university degree holders could be called highly educated through this time. Women with graduate degrees are neglected in literature on gender and employment in Japan. Therefore, reviewed literature discusses little about women holding graduate degrees. However, literature on employment and occupational practice and choices of women holding undergraduate degrees is still helpful in understanding contexts in which women holding graduate degrees are situated.

Most literature is helpful in understanding gender-related employment practice at the macro level, but not in the micro level. Some, including Ogasawara (1998), Lo (1990), and Kondo (1991), conduct ethnographic research to understand gender-related employment practice. Although these studies are helpful in exploring the significance of gender at workplace, they do not study women with graduate degrees. The significance of graduate education for women in relation to occupations from these women's perspectives needs to be explored.

Before reviewing literature on women and employment, I will briefly give some background information on the government policy to stop the decline of the birth, which is highly correlated with gender-related employment policy and practice. In 1999, in response to the need to promote gender equality in an aging society in which the birthrate was declining, the Japanese government enacted the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, *Danjyo kyōdō sankaku shakai kihonhō* (Cabinet Office, 2009b). The decline in the birth rate has been a serious issue that the government has tried to solve since 1990, when they announced that the average total number of children one woman gives birth to during her lifetime was 1.57 (called the 1.57 shock) (Horie, 2005). *Bankonka*, the increased tendency of people to marry later in life, and *mikonka*, the increased tendency of some people to never marry, are indicated as causes of the decline of birth rate (Shirahase, 2005). Japan is counted as one of

the least fertile and fastest aging countries in the world (Holloway, 2010). Since the 1990s the government has made plans to increase the birth rate by providing an environment to ease the burden of work and child rearing. The government formulated a plan called *enzel puran*, Angel Plan in 1994. Based on Angel Plan, the government formulated *shin enzel puran*, New Angel Plan in 1999. These plans aimed at increasing nursery schools in general as well as nursery schools to take care of children under 3 years old and nursery schools providing extended-hours childcare. In 2003, the government enacted *Shōshika shakai taisaku kihonhō*, Basic Act for Measures to Cope with Society with Declining Birthrate. In 2004 the government issued the policy outline based on the Act and formulated *kodomo kosodate ōen puran*, Plan Supporting Child Rearing, to implement the policy (Cabinet Office, 2009c). The following review of a macro picture of gender-related employment policy and practice demonstrates how difficult it is for women to pursue the well-balanced life of work and child rearing despite the government efforts to create a supportive environment of child rearing.

The employment rate of women has been in the upper 40 percent since 1969 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2013). The pattern of women's participation in the workforce by ages forms an M shape. The M-shape pattern has been seen in Western developed countries until recently, but it usually changes to a continual curve (Brinton, 2001). The White Paper on International Economy and Trade says that the M-shape pattern is unique to some countries, including Japan (Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, 2006).

The peak of women's participation in the workforce is in their late twenties. Women's participation in the workforce decreases in their early thirties. The second peak is in their late forties and women's participation in the workforce declines as they get older (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2013b). While the bottom of the

M-shaped pattern has risen, the M-shape pattern still exists.⁸⁶

The bottom of the M-shape overlaps the typical childrearing period. In Japan approximately 70 percent of women quit their jobs before or after giving birth to their first child (Cabinet Office, 2009b). This implies difficulty with balancing work and child rearing for women in Japanese society. At the same time, it implies a gender norm of wise mother, *kenbo*. A strong bond between mothers and children and the roles of mothers for their children's education are emphasized in the literature on Japanese education (White, 1988; Tsuneyoshi, 1992/2005; Hirao, 2001). The level of education does not influence the employment rate among women aged from 30 to 34, the prime period of childrearing for many women (Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991).

However, this does not mean that the M-shaped curve is equally applicable to women with all levels of education. While the M shape describes the tendency for women's working pattern in general, women who graduated from university tend to remain at work or never return to work once they resign (Raymo and Lim, 2007; Chan, 1994; Mifune, 1996; Sasagawa, 2001).

Some researchers, including Tanaka (1997), Hirao (1999, 2001b), and Matsuda (2004), have studied female university graduates and employment. Tanaka (1997) and Hirao (1999, 2001b) argue that rather than the educational status as university graduates, occupations have stronger influence on a woman's decision to remain in the workforce. For Tanaka, women who work as teachers, and for Hirao, women who work as teachers and civil servants, tend to remain at work. This suggests structural difficulties for women with university degrees to continue working in occupations other than teachers and civil servants. This also suggests that university degrees themselves do not help women remain at work.

⁸⁶ The shift of the M-shaped curve is shown in chart 1 and 2 in appendix 10. The graphs are made by an author based on a labor force survey by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. The bottom of the M-shaped curve shifted from the early thirties to late thirties. This seems to be affected by *bankonka* as well as *bansanka*.

A study by Matsuda (2004) reveals the gap between desire and reality in female university graduates' employment. He finds that a higher ratio of female university graduates resign against their desires than women with less educational credentials except for graduates of vocational schools.⁸⁷ According to his data, many of these women resign due to the incompatibility of work and family in terms of time and physical strength. He suggests that this incompatibility is created by the demanding work environment that does not allow balanced life of family and work, particularly since it is women who are in charge of the household tasks and child rearing (Matsuda, 2004).

However, contrary to Tanaka's and Hirao's studies, Mifune's survey study of graduate degree holders from Ochanomizu University, one of the most prestigious women's universities in Japan, reveals that graduate degree holders tend to remain at work compared with undergraduate degree holders. However, Mifune's study also found that as many as 40 percent of graduates from the graduate school at Ochanomizu University resigned their positions in their first workplace within five years for family reasons (Mifune, 2002). Mifune's study also reveals that more graduate degree holders, especially doctorate holders, resume work than do undergraduate degree holders.

Studies by Tanaka (1997), Hirao (1999, 2001b), and Matsuda (2004) are helpful in revealing that university education does not necessarily bring continual employment for women. However, their studies need to be supplemented by this study for the following reasons: (1) Tanaka (1997) and Hirao (1999, 2001b) do not specify if their samples include graduate degree holders. Matsuda (2004) excluded graduate degree holders from his samples because the number of graduate degree holders was too small. If they had studied female graduate degree holders separately, their research would have illustrated how having a

⁸⁷ According to *Heisei 2 nendo josei koyō kanri kihon chōsa*, the women's labor force survey, conducted by the government in 1991, among women who had planned to work until retirement when they were hired, the higher educational credentials of women, the higher the rate at which they changed their mind (Wakisaka, 1998). This implies that university graduates have difficulty continuing to work or are in situations in which they do not think it is worth continuing.

graduate degrees has influenced the occupations of the degree holders. Some research participants in my study decided to go to graduate school in order to become researchers, which they considered to be a lifetime career. Some of them were able to become faculty members; some of them still search for employment. It should be noted that no one among my research participants who wanted a lifetime career considered becoming a teacher or civil servant. By focusing on graduate degree holders, my study can illuminate what a graduate education means in women's careers. (2) Tanaka's (1997), Hirao's (1999, 2001b), Matsuda's (2004), and Mifune's (2002) studies are quantitative. Mifune's study focuses on female graduate degree holders, but her study does not provide an explanation of how these women made career choices contextually. Data analysis of prior research is helpful in analyzing tendency that can be seen through quantitative data, but their studies do not answer how women place higher education and career in their lives. I aim to answer this question through qualitative approach. In other words, in my study, I value the contexts in which research participants live

Some reasons explain the highly educated women's tendency to leave the workplace and to become housewives. First, highly educated women tend to be married with highly educated men who have high income (Mifune, 1996). Kunihiro (2001) indicates that generally the higher husband's income, the lower wife's employment rate. Highly educated husbands who have high incomes tend to be occupied with work and do not have time for housework (Shiharase, 2010). These husbands tend to transfer often, which requires moving. These situations make it difficult for their wives to continue working (Mifune, 1996).⁸⁸ The high income of the husband allows the wife to be a housewife (Mifune, 1996; Ueno, 1994).

Second, it is not unusual that women resign after marriage or childbirth, after which

⁸⁸ Mainichi Shimbun (2013, October, 16) reported that the government decided to establish a new leave system, which allows national public servants to take up to three years of leave, if they accompany spouses when spouses are transferred overseas. This newspaper article reported on a company that had already established this type of leave system. However, the fact that the case of this company was introduced in itself suggests that such companies are rare.

it is difficult for them to be recruited as full-time employees at a large company or to gain the positions of equal status to their previous position (Ogasawara, 1998). It is common that companies have age limits for employment, which become obstacles for women's reentry as full-time workers (Broadbent, 2003). In general, large companies bring more benefits and prestige for employees than smaller companies in Japan (Chan, 1994; Ogasawara, 1998). These benefits might include extra payment in the form of bonuses, supplements, and other fringe benefits that small companies cannot afford. Women who resign from large companies tend to be employed on the part-time basis or employed by smaller companies when they re-enter the workforce (Ogasawara, 1998). Women with higher education tend to be unwilling to take less prestigious positions or work for less prestigious organizations (Chan, 1994). Less prestigious positions could include part-time jobs. Many part-time workers in Japan tend to work many hours (Broadbent, 2003; Holloway, 2010). Half of part-time workers work more than 35 hours per week (Broadbent, 2003). Regardless of working hours, the content of work, qualifications, or skills, part-time work indicates employment status, and offers lower wages and other financial benefits than does full-time employment (Broadbent, 2003; Osawa, 1993 in Sasagawa, 2001).⁸⁹

Third, children's education tends to inhibit highly educated mothers from working (Hirao, 2007). In Japan, a mother's role is very highly valued. Highly educated women tend to provide high-level education for their children. They tend to feel an incompatibility between pursuing their own career and providing quality education to their children (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2006). Some women participating in my study also felt a difficulty in pursuing their own career and providing quality education for their children at the same time.

⁸⁹ It is notable that the increase of women's participation in the labor force was brought on by the increase of part-time workers, as Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura (1991), Broadbent (2003), and Shikata (2004) indicate. Shikata (2004) indicates that women's participation in the labor force has not changed gender roles that expect women to be in charge of household tasks.

Compared with other developed countries, the rate at which female undergraduate and/or graduate degree holders' are employed is lower in Japan (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2006). The government views utilizing highly educated women with undergraduate and/or graduate degrees as a significant task for Japan. Considering the decline of the birthrate, the government does not want women to give up child rearing for pursuing careers. Instead, the government proposes to fully utilize women with undergraduate and graduate degrees as mothers and workers by providing quality day care to meet the needs of highly educated women and their families. Highly educated women tend to give up their career due to the lack of an environment in which they can continue working and provide quality education for their children (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2006). Education for women is not associated with nationalism as it was before World War II; however, the White Paper on International Economy and Trade (2006) demonstrates that the government still associates highly educated women with national benefits.

It is notable that the government supports women's participation in the labor force as a means of promoting the national interests rather than as a means of pursuing gender equality in employment for the sake of human rights. The government aims to increase women's participation in labor force as one of the growth strategies in the New Growth Strategy formulated in June 2010. The decrease of working population in Japan could weaken the national growth. In a Japanese society in which population is shrinking, if GDP per capita does not increase, the total amount of GPD will decrease in the long term. In Japan GDP per capita and women's labor participation is not high. In order to keep Japanese society growing, the government aims to increase women's participation in the labor force (Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2010a). However, the Child Welfare Act of 1947 stipulated that a nursery school is a welfare facility intended to provide daycare for children "lacking daycare". This suggests that the government expected families to take care of preschool children at home. However, in order to increase tax revenues, improve the national finances and secure

sources for social security, the government now expects that basically both husbands and wives have full-time jobs (*tomobataraki*). The government expects to increase employment by outsourcing unpaid work, including housework and child rearing. The government expects that the increased employment rate will bring economic growth (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2010a). Current policy is not to idealize mothers who are mainly responsible for child rearing in families. However, in reality, working environments are not ready for both fathers and mothers to work on a full-time basis. This can be seen in the fact that the number of nursery schools is not sufficient and approximately 70% of women resigned when they had their first child. Through her research on Japanese women and families in Japan, Holloway (2010) indicates that most mothers in her research felt that, after seeing the work demands required of their husbands, it would be impossible for them to balance family and work. They made their own decision to quit work, but for most women it was a sad decision.

The Japanese government promotes women's employment; however, at the same time, Japanese tax and pension systems benefit housewives rather than women who work on a full-time basis. Highly educated women's strong tendency to stay at home once they resign work is not only shaped by personal preference but also structurally shaped by employment practices and the tax and pension system in Japan. Tax and pension systems discourage women from working on a full-time basis (Abe, 2001; Abe and Otake, 1995; Horie, 2005; Nagase, 2001; Shioda, 2001). In Japan the threshold for being considered a dependent of which status is applicable for tax deduction of 1.03 million yen per year, is less than full-time workers would make annually. Housewives whose husbands are employed can receive a pension without making any payment when their annual income is less than 1.30 million yen (Horie, 2005).⁹⁰ These tax and pension systems rationalize limiting wives' work hours

⁹⁰ According to Horie (2005), although the government introduced these tax and pension systems benefiting housewives, these tax and pension systems were not introduced to benefit housewives but as concessions when the government proposed the reduction of the amount of pension first time and the introduction of sales tax.

(Kunihiro, 2001). It is common for women to adjust their working hours and income strategically by considering the benefits of tax and pension. Highly educated women especially tend to focus on the income bracket of one million yen (Abe and Otake, 1995). The higher a husband's income, the higher the cost of tax and the partner allowance. That is, highly educated women who tend to marry husbands whose income is high tend to see larger benefits from adjusting working hours (Nagase, 2001). Kunihiro (2001) criticizes highly educated women for making these choices as they support gender roles and bad working conditions for part-timers. The tax and pension system actually influenced Keiko, one of the participants in this research, when she decided how she would spend her time after earning her doctorate. While she did not choose to receive a partner allowance so that she could keep academic career opportunities open, it should be noted that she considered that option.

Women were generally excluded from the traditional seniority-based lifetime employment system developed in post World War II in Japan (Brinton, 1993; Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991), though this seniority-based lifetime employment system has been replaced by outcome-based evaluations. Given these circumstances, it is common that university graduates work as office clerks.

Ogasawara (1998), a sociologist, conducted an ethnographic gender study of women who work in clerical positions called Office Ladies (OLs). Her study demonstrates how employment practices in Japan assume the different roles for men and women and how differently university level education influences men and women in employment.

In Japan, women's growing access to educational opportunities does not necessarily lead to the growing access to professional career opportunities (Holloway, 2010). In Japanese companies, it is common that women, including university graduates, are hired in clerical positions with little opportunity for promotion (Ogasawara, 1998). In this sense, graduating

from a university for women is not as rewarding as for men.⁹¹ Thus the employment practices in Japan legitimate giving higher priority to men over women in university education. Unless employment practices change, the tendency of prioritizing a son's university education over a daughter's university education will not change. While educational policy does not discriminate against women in entrance examinations, employment practice does discriminate against them upon graduation. As mentioned earlier, Brinton (1993) indicates that university education has different purposes for men and women in Japan, for men education is important for career, while for women education is important for a good marriage and becoming a good mother. However, Kimura argues that it is the structure of the labor market that affects married women's employment status rather than their intentions (Kimura, 2000).⁹²

According to Ogasawara (1998), few women consider clerical work as their lifetime occupation. Instead, many see their work as temporary until they marry or have a child. Lo (1990), who studies women who work in clerical positions and women who work in factories in Japan, also indicate this point. While Ogasawara (1998) and Lo (1990) indicate that few women consider clerical work as their lifetime career, a survey study of prestigious private universities alumnae conducted in 1993 found that half of the graduates who work as office clerks, desire to work for a long time. This suggests difficulty of balancing career and family for women in managerial positions.

As Ogasawara (1998) and Lo (1990) explain, it is common that large Japanese companies have a two-track employment system: *sōgōshoku* (career track) and *ippanshoku* (clerical track). As the critics argue, a two-track employment system could limit *ippanshoku* women's work and career opportunities due to the clear category of *ippanshoku*. Those who

⁹¹ Brinton and Lee, sociologists, (2001) also indicate discrimination in the labor market in Japan against women with university degrees.

⁹² Regarding the study of gender views in relation with multiple factors, Suzuki (1997) studies the relationships among gender views and social and economic demographic variables.

are *sōgōshoku* are trained to become managers, and those who are *ippanshoku* assume an assisting and clerical position, which includes serving tea. While the majority of men are *sōgōshoku*, the majority of women are *ippanshoku* (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2007).⁹³ The educational qualification of *ippanshoku* women is not necessarily lower than that of *sōgōshoku* men.

The two-track system was introduced by the implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law between men and women (EEOL) in 1986 so that women could have the same career opportunities as men, if they wish. EEOL enforced in 1986, requests efforts by employers to hire men and women equally.⁹⁴ However even after EEOL was enforced, many Japanese women were still hired in clerical positions with little opportunity of promotion because EEOL did not prohibit unequal treatment of men and women in hiring. EEOL was revised in 1999 to prohibit gender discrimination in hiring.⁹⁵ “Choices” of the career track or the clerical track are provided for women. However, it does not necessarily mean that every woman can freely choose her track. Due to the demanding volume of work, some women hesitate to choose the career track, including women who are not confident in their physical strength as well as women who are worried about balancing their career and child rearing. It would be hard for both members of a married couple who raise a child to follow the career track due to great demands of work. Prior studies demonstrate that individual “choice” is constrained by a larger employment practices. Several

⁹³ Soon after the two-track system was introduced, it was criticized by that men were inclined to be hired as *sōgōshoku* automatically, while women were inclined to be hired as *sōgōshoku* as exceptions (Sugeno, 1987 in Cannings and Lazonick, 1994). Two-track system in practice is still gendered at present. The basic survey of employment of women, *Josei koyō kanri kihon chōsa* for 2006 fiscal year, reveals that while the percentage of companies that employ men only for *sōgōshoku* is 44.1 percent, the percentage of companies that employ women only for *ippanshoku* is 64 percent in 2006.

⁹⁴ Wakisaka (1998) argues that rather than EEOL, the serious lack of labor due to the good economy and the mid to long-term lack of labor caused by the decline of birthrate contributes more to hiring women who hold university degrees.

⁹⁵ According to a survey study targeted at famous female private university graduates, some companies hire women for *sōgōshoku* just to improve their image of practicing gender equality without treating men and women in *sōgōshoku* equally (Tokyo *toritsu rōdō kenkyūsho*, Tokyo 1994).

women participating in this research decided to go to graduate school in order to become researchers. They did not consider working as clerks at all. They prefer playing substantial roles instead of assisting positions. However, they also could not consider career track for multiple reasons, such as they are not physically strong enough and difficulty in balancing career and family. Thus, employment practice and traditional gender roles constrain men and women in the family and the workplace.⁹⁶

The literature review I have presented here provides background knowledge of this research. The reviewed literature covers the field of education, particularly higher education, and gender in Japan from various perspectives, including historical, social, cultural, and economic perspectives. A comprehensive literature review helps one to understand experiences and ideas through which I made my data analysis, grounded in complex contemporary Japanese society. Literature provides information about the overall contexts in which Japanese women are situated, as well as showing the reader what was already researched on highly educated women in Japan, which is very helpful for this study.

The inclusion of literature written from the above-stated various perspectives reflects on my research framework that I present in chapter 2. Built on several theories, I develop my own framework to investigate meanings of graduate education for women in Japan. I shall call this framework a “theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process”. My research framework highlights how highly educated women who have critical consciousness make meanings of graduate education in their lives in Japanese society in which education credentialing is gendered and regressive, which also shows how macro phenomena of higher education policy is practiced and appropriated at the local level. I provided comprehensive literature review in this chapter to

⁹⁶ Long work hours prevent not only women but also men from pursuing balanced life of career and family. Due to traditional gender roles that expect women to look after a child, it is not common for men to take child-care leave in Japan. In 2011 whereas 87.8% of women took child-care leave, 2.63% of men took it (Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2012).

describe current phenomena in higher education and women at the macro level and provide its historical background. In order to understand the significance of being graduated from the University of Tokyo in particular local contexts in Japan, I provide a section for the University of Tokyo and women in the University of Tokyo. Without knowing the overview informing historical, social, cultural, and economic backgrounds in which women in Japan are situated, it is difficult to investigate meanings of graduate education for them in their particular contexts and the discursiveness of policy linking macro-level phenomena and micro-level practices. For example, the history of higher education shows how education credentialing has been gendered since the origin of higher education in Japan, which helps to understand genderedness of education credentialing in higher education at present. The overview of graduate education and higher education reform also helps to understand regressiveness of education credentialing in higher education in Japan. Reviewing gender-related employment policy and practices shows work environment in Japan. Knowing the work environment is necessary to understand the criticalness of highly educated women who participated in my research because it influences their career choices.

The reviewed literature provides abundant useful information for exploring meanings of graduate education for women in Japan, but the literature by itself cannot inform specific contexts and meanings made by participants in my research and cannot answer my research questions: the meanings of graduate education for women who graduated from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences. In the next chapter, I analyze my research data and answer my research questions by filling in what is missing in the literature.

Chapter 5

Attitudes towards the choice to go to graduate school for women and their families -genderedness and regressiveness of higher education credentialing

Family background of research participants: families in which the women were raised

Social class is reproduced through education as Bourdieu argues. Bourdieu insists that educational institutions are a mechanism to reproduce an existing social order by reproducing social classes through ostensibly “equal” academic competitions (Bourdieu, 1979/1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Bourdieu is right in seeing hierarchically ordered educational institutions as reproductive agencies for social classes. Indeed, as the following data of my research participants’ parents’ educational backgrounds, occupations, economic and cultural capital show, most women in this research are from a high socioeconomic class. The following words from Minako clearly show how strong social class influences a child’s education.

My parents gave me the best education. They fulfilled my wish and paid for my education ...It’s buying a kind of the brand by money and time. ...My parents invested for my education. They paid for my *juku* (before going to university) and paid for six years while I studied in undergraduate and graduate programs.⁹⁷

I met with Minako on a morning in early summer in a meeting room she reserved for us at her workplace.⁹⁸ She is an energetic professional, in her 30s working in mass media. She is fully content with the education she was given and career she developed in the area in which she utilizes her educational background. She has a sister who majored in music. Her family had two grand pianos at home, which indicates that she is from a wealthy family. Like most of the research participants, Minako came from families with socioeconomic and cultural wealth. Her remarks indicate that students from affluent families are in advantageous positions for admittance to the University of Tokyo as Rohlen (1983) indicates. In Japan

⁹⁷ Please see glossary for the explanation of *juku*.

⁹⁸ Pseudonyms are used for all research participants to protect their anonymity.

education and social class are highly correlated as Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984) argues. The proportion of students at the University of Tokyo from high-income families is greater than the national average proportion of high-income household of which the head of the household is between 45 and 54 (estimated to be ages of parents of university students) (The University of Tokyo, 2010, December). This fact demonstrates how the family economic situation influences academic performance. Families that are categorized in the high-income bracket are more likely than low-income families to spend more for their children's education as well as provide a better environment for their children's preparation for university entrance examinations. Success on the entrance examination for the University of Tokyo often requires expenses for after school education, *juku* (Yu, 2009).

Social reproduction through education as seen in my research data endorses Rohlen's research finding (1983) that family backgrounds still significantly affect the educational outcomes and socioeconomic backgrounds of students' families and the academic backgrounds of their parents are correlated with the school rank. As Mifune (Mifune, 1996) indicates, the tendency of highly educated women (Mifune defines highly educated women as women who have bachelor's degrees.) is to have parents who are also highly educated and have high economic power (Mifune, 1996).

Among the twenty women who participated in my study, six fathers even have graduate degrees, including MBA, medical doctor, and Ph.D. Sixteen women have fathers who have bachelor's degrees. One of them graduated from the University of Tokyo. One woman has a mother who has a master's degree. Eight women have mothers who have bachelor's degrees. One of these mothers was a *rōnin* for one year and went to a prestigious national university, which was rare for women at that time as indicated in literature review.⁹⁹ Four mothers have associate degrees. Many of the mothers who did not go to university had a

⁹⁹ Please see glossary for the explanation of *rōnins*.

desire to study at university but gave up partly for financial reasons and partly because of the common view that higher education was not considered important for women. Three mothers who did not go to university supported their daughters' university education because they themselves had not been able to fulfill their own wish to go to university. Minako's mother is one of these women. Her mother was a junior college graduate. She says,

Well, my mother wanted to study more. At that time, it was commonly accepted that education was not needed for women. My mother's parents are part of them. I think it was a great regret for her not to realize her wish, so she unsparingly invested money and time for educating my sister and me. She sent us a message that we can live as we wish. Thanks to her mental support, my sister and I took it for granted that we would go to university.

Considering the university enrollment rate of men and women in these women's parents' generation, the educational backgrounds of their parents are significantly higher than average. While the ages of these women's parents are not asked in this research, judging from these women's ages, the years when many of the parents would have entered university were expected to be in the 1950s, 1960s and the 1970s. At that time, the rate of men and women who went on to university were 13.1 percent and 2.4 percent in 1955, 20.7 percent and 4.6 percent in 1965, 41.0 percent and 12.7 percent in 1975 respectively (MEXT, 2012a).

The occupations of fathers in this research include medical doctor (with his own practice), white-collar corporate employee, public servant, and self-employed. One woman whose father is a MBA holder describes her father as elite. The majority of fathers, fourteen, are white-collar employees. The occupations of mothers of women in this research include housewife, teacher, nurse, part-time worker, self-employed with their husbands, running a coffee shop, and running a bar. The majority of mothers, thirteen, are housewives. It should be noted that no mother is a full-time employee in a corporation, while the majority of fathers are full-time employees in corporations. This reflects the combination of typical

asymmetrical married couples consisting of full-time while-collar employees and housewives, a situation that increased after World War II and into the 1960s. At the same time, this indicates that the affluence of the women's families does not require the wives' income. The women's parents' occupations indicate most women are from high economic class.

The cultural capital of most women in this research is also high. Four women studied abroad when they were in high school and five women did so while studying for their undergraduate degrees. One of them lived in Europe for five years when she was a child due to her father's business. Exposure to other cultures at a young age suggests the home environment supporting the daughters' learning from abroad. Another woman's grandfather was a university faculty member. Her mother taught at junior high and high school before marriage. Many of her family and relatives are educators. Another woman clearly states that families of graduate students at the University of Tokyo tend to have high cultural capitals and that many parents of female graduate students are university faculty members. Another woman went to prestigious private junior high school and high school. Other woman took an entrance examination for private junior high school. While she did not pass, choosing to take an entrance examination for private junior high school reflects the high level of cultural capital at home. Another woman says that while her family income is quite a bit lower than average, her parents like to read books, including classic literature and academic books, and various books were available at her home. Another woman says that her family is not rich at all, but her mother likes English very much and her mother provided her with an environment in which she naturally learned English. Her family even sent her and her brother to the U.S. for a month one summer for their studies when they were junior high school students. While her parents are high school graduates, her father taught mathematics and her mother taught English at home when she was in junior high school. These two families do not have high economic status, but have rich cultural capital.

On the other hand, another two families whose parents are high school graduates did

not actively provide their daughters with a culturally rich environment. A woman from one of these families says that her parents do not value educational backgrounds; especially her father does not feel the need to go to university. Her father thinks that there are more things to learn in society rather than in university. Family environment of their cases are exceptional in this study.

The economic status of most women in this research is relatively high. This agrees with recent survey that indicates that many parents of graduate students at the University of Tokyo are in high-income bracket, though it is more obvious in the case of parents' income of undergraduate students (The University of Tokyo, 2010). Before entering university, at least four women went to *juku*, institutions that provide extra education beyond what the schools provide for which the family pays extra tuition. These women's families' high economic statuses are suggested in non-academic aspects as well. One woman had overseas trips in every big vacation when she was in college, which was paid for by her parents.

Fifteen women received financial support from their parents. One of them applied for a student loan, but was not accepted because her father's income was too high to qualify. Another woman did not even apply for a student loan because she did not expect to qualify due to her father's high income. Universities in Japan do not have graduate assistantships that come with exempting tuition payment and most scholarships are not grants, but loans. As a result, graduate students in Japan tend to depend on their parents and part-time jobs, which are not necessarily related to their studies (Ushioji, 1993).¹⁰⁰ Judging from the fact that three fourths of the women in this research received financial support from their parents, these women are from affluent families that can afford to support their daughters.

As I have shown the educational backgrounds, occupations, economic and cultural

¹⁰⁰ If students use scholarship of which type is loan from the undergraduate level to the doctoral level, even that scholarship does not require interest, the amount that needs to be returned is expected to be over ten million yen, which is equivalent to one hundred thousand U.S. dollars (when \$1=¥100 is used) (MEXT, 2009b).

capital of the parents of my research participants are high, showing that education has a function to reproduce social classes as Bourdieu argues. However, my research participants' reasons for going to graduate school and their parents' attitudes to their daughter's decision to go to graduate school reveal how higher education credentialing is gendered and regressive in Japan. In the next section, I present my research participants' reasons for going to graduate school. While every reason is not necessarily based on the genderedness of higher education credentialing, one of the reasons women decide to go to graduate school is strongly related to the fact that education credentialing is gendered and to the limited career opportunities for highly educated women in Japan.

Reasons for going to graduate school

Bourdieu sees the educational system as fundamentally having a function to maintain the social order. Bourdieu is right in revealing that the economic, social, and cultural background of students in hierarchically ordered schools basically coincides with those in hierarchically ordered social classes, as my research data show. However, he did not consider that education credentialing in higher education is gendered and regressive.

As described in the literature review, going to graduate school in humanities and social sciences is not as common as in engineering and natural sciences in Japan. Except for students majoring in engineering, companies in Japan tend to prefer new graduates from college to those from graduate schools (Kaneko, 2004). In other words, going to graduate school in humanities and social sciences often involves the risk of losing a more advantageous position in the job market. Brinton also indicates that "too much education can become a liability for Japanese women in the marriage market" (Brinton, 1993, p.211).¹⁰¹ Therefore, for women, going to graduate school at the University of Tokyo creates double risks of being disadvantaged in the job market and the marriage market. The brand name of

¹⁰¹ Benjamin (1997) indicated the same point as Brinton (1993).

the University of Tokyo has a particular possibility of jeopardizing marriageability for women. Despite these possible risks, women in this research choose to go to graduate school at the University of Tokyo. In my review of the literature, it became apparent that I needed to ask the research participants why they chose to go to graduate school at the University of Tokyo. Asking this question would give insight into how individual decisions are made in a particular social structure in Japan. Learning the reasons for going to graduate school also would help one to understand what that decision means in the participants' lives at present. Extant research does not address these questions.

Women in this research have multiple reasons for going to graduate school. Some reasons are gender-specific and others are not. There are four general types of reasons: academic, gender-related (which indicates genderedness in higher education credentialing), moratorium-related (taking time out for personal reasons, including finding oneself), and family-related.

First, every woman had academic reasons for going to graduate school. They went to graduate school because they wanted to study more and they liked studying. Kanako, a part-time lecturer and a postdoctoral fellow in her 30s, and Wakana, a part-time lecturer in her 30s, both had their advisor recommend that they pursue their studies in graduate school. Mayumi, a professor in her 50s, felt the need to study further in her field of work and left her job to go back to university.

One reason to continue further study in graduate school is related to the recruiting system of university graduates in Japan as well as the educational system of the University of Tokyo. In Japan the job search and the recruitment process for university students starts in the junior year of the undergraduate program or sometimes even earlier. The demanding job search process in the relatively early stage of university life sacrifices much study time (Ishikawa, 2010, September 27). Minako describes this situation at the University of Tokyo when she was an undergraduate student.

Students started job search at the end of sophomore, while interviews and sending applications were not followed until fall and winter. Since the first two years were spent in liberal arts at the University of Tokyo, everyone started to take actions for job search when we finally were starting to study in our own majors.

Megumi, a researcher in her 30s, working for an education-related corporation, says that she wanted to study her major, but two years were too short. (This is not the situation in most Japanese universities where applicants apply for particular majors and students study that major from their freshman.) The educational system at the University of Tokyo is unique in that every student commonly studies liberal arts in the first two years. As a career option after earning an undergraduate degree, she had a vague idea of working as a researcher in academia or working for an international organization. She thought that, it would be better to have a master's degree in either case and decided to go to graduate school for the purpose of continuing her specialized field of study, since she had really only had two years to study in that field during her undergraduate program.

Two students had the desire to study in graduate school based on their experience of studying abroad for an academic year. Aki, a professional woman in her 30s who studied in the U.S. in college and now works for a foreign financial institution, said,

I wanted to pursue study further due to my experience of studying abroad. ... In the U.S. the amount of assignment is quite different from that in Japan. In Japan some students study hard, but extracurricular activities, such as club activities, are considered to be important and taking credits are easy, aren't they? Therefore, those who want to study systematically cannot be satisfied at the undergraduate level.

Fumie, a professional in her 20s and working for a manufacturer, raises a similar reason. She studied in Britain for an academic year in college. She says, "I thought I studied hard in Japan, but in Britain I realized the difference in the amount of study between Britain

and Japan, which made me want to study further.”

In Japan, it is said that being admitted to university is much more difficult than graduating from university. Generally speaking, students in colleges are released from the intensive study they experienced while preparing for entrance examinations. As indicated in the literature review, although entrance examinations in general are not as competitive as they once were, the severe competitions of entrance examinations for top-level universities does still persist (Amano and Poole, 2005).

Second, several women raise reasons for going to graduate school related to gender, though this was not usually the only reason they gave. Gender-related reasons that my research participants indicated show a gendered aspect of higher education credentialing in Japan. Although Bourdieu sees education credentialing as if it is genderless, my research data show that it is not completely genderless in Japan, particularly when used in recruitment of employees.

In this study, education is largely viewed through an instrumental lens. In other words, education is viewed as connected with employment. One could decide to go to graduate school in order to, raise one’s cultural level without thinking about career. However, no research participant went to graduate school for the purpose of raising her cultural level or enriching her life, which does not necessarily deny the value of education in itself. Even if graduate education is not utilized for career, this does not mean that graduate education is not meaningful. The purpose of graduate education could be shifted depending on ages of students entering into graduate school. If research participants go to graduate school when they are older, such as in their 60s after their retirement, reasons of going to graduate school are likely to be different from what I heard from my, much younger, research participants. Although education could enrich mind at the same time could be instrumental, compared with viewing education as mainly enriching the mind, viewing education as mainly instrumental in obtaining or developing a professional career has larger possibilities of bringing changes in

women's lives as well as possibilities of social change by challenging the gender-based division of labor. As I will show from the next section, women who decided to go to graduate school for gender-related reasons definitely viewed graduate education as instrumental in career and aimed to live as women having professional work.

Sanae, Yuka, Saki, and Kae all considered becoming researchers and went to graduate school for gender related reasons. They thought that being a researcher was an occupation that would allow women to balance a professional career with family. Going to graduate school to become a researcher is not unique in Japan, but choosing to become a researcher for the purpose of balancing professional career and family could be unique in Japan. Considering that companies in Japan tend to prefer new graduates from colleges to graduate school graduates in the humanities and social sciences, going to graduate school could be a strategic decision to overcome the risks of not being able to find a job.

Saki, a professor in her 40s, who studied at the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level as well, told me that she knows many women at the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level wanted to become housewives because they expected to get married to University of Tokyo alumni and did not need to be ambitious. Men graduating from the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level are most likely to become a member of the elite class. Indeed, graduates of the University of Tokyo tend to be promoted faster than graduates from other universities (Chan, 1994). For women, getting married to a University of Tokyo alumni and becoming a housewife could be an option. Previous studies on the effects of education on men and women reveal that education brings status through occupation for men, while it brings status to women through marriage (Shimizu, 1990). Among the twenty women in this research, nine women graduated from the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level. They could have chosen to aim to become the wives of elites, but instead they pursued their own career. What made them decide to go to graduate school? What was their strategy in life as expressed by going to graduate school?

Sanae, Yuka, and Saki considered being a researcher to be a professional occupation they could handle with limited physical strength. They mentioned that they did not have much physical strength and they were physically weak and would not be able to get a job that required demanding work hours, which is usually for professionals in companies in Japan. Their narratives told how hard it is to work as professionals in business in Japan due to the long work hours, and indicated how hard it is for professionals in Japan to maintain the balance of work and family. Considering that it is common for large Japanese companies to have a two-track employment system for women: *sōgōshoku* (career track) with demanding work hours and *ippanshoku* (clerical track), which is less demanding, it is understandable that these women thought that being a researcher would be a good occupation, and decided to go to graduate school.

When she was a senior in college, Sanae, a professional in her 30s, searched for jobs in business. While she had considered studying in graduate school to acquire specialty and to become a researcher since she was a freshman, she was not completely determined to continue her studies. She says,

I did not know much about occupations that women can have with pride. As I do not have physical strength very much, which has been related in making decisions (in my life), I thought that I could be a researcher while I do not have much physical strength.

Sanae said that while recruiting information was sent from companies to male students in their undergraduate studies, it was not sent to female students. She looked for a *sōgōshoku* (position in career track). In the process of her job search, she was challenged to choose between working as a *sōgōshoku* or having a family. She says,

I don't think that I wanted to take the option of *ippanshoku* (position in clerical track). I was asked if I have children and if I get married as *sōgōshoku*. This question

made me wonder if I cannot have children and should not choose to marry for work (if I work as *sōgōshoku*).

Sanae refers to this experience in another interview as follows:

Sanae: (When I searched for a job) I was 22, I had a boy friend at that time, but I wondered why I was asked if I would marry and would have children in a job interview.

Y.Y.: I understand your point. It happened after the implementation of Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOC), didn't it?

Sanae: Yes. I wondered if they asked the same question to men. I wondered how this was related to work.

The 1986 version of EEOC did not prohibit unequal treatment of men and women in hiring until its revision in 1999, which did prohibit gender discrimination in hiring. A buyer's labor market placed Sanae at a disadvantaged. In addition, Sanae is in an age group called *dankai junior*, the children of the baby boomers in Japan who were born between 1971 and 1974.¹⁰² Also, the year she graduated from university is part of *shūshoku hyōgaki* "the ice age of hiring". Considering this situation, Sanae says,

I think they asked that question for the purpose of screening, but I never thought of life without marriage and children. I was not determined to give birth, but I have not decided not to give birth, so it was very hard to envision the future.

After having this experience, she stopped her job search and prepared to enter graduate school.

Yuka, a university faculty member in her 30s, considered becoming a university faculty as a means to survive as a woman. She says,

I do not have much physical strength, so I cannot get an elite job that is probably what is expected of the University of Tokyo alumnae. That type of work is not a job working from nine to five, is that? I can work from nine to five, but I cannot do a job

¹⁰² *Dankai* literary means a mass.

that requires to work until midnight as a matter of course in a top-ranking company. Before thinking about ability (to perform the job), I would not be able to stand physically. In this sense, I considered becoming a university faculty as a means to survive for a woman. I had mixed reasons for going to graduate school: a desire to pursue study and the practical choice of occupation. Compared with the hardships in a company, it would be better to work hard in graduate school and to become a university faculty member. University faculty members have flexibility in time, don't they?

Yuka's narrative shows her elite identity and that she took it for granted that she would live as an elite. Her narrative also suggests that, in Japan, elites in business are required to be strong enough to work until midnight, which might be hard for men as well. Yuka compares becoming a university faculty member to acquiring a qualification that allows for women to maintain the balance of work and family.

Well, in addition to that I am physically weak, I think that university faculty is an occupation that is easy to maintain the balance of work and family when I get married and give birth in the future. I thought of university faculty as a qualification like passing a bar exam to become a lawyer.

Yuka's consideration of an occupation that would allow her to maintain the balance of work and family is reasonable considering the fact in Japan approximately 70 percent of women quit their job when they give birth to their first child (Cabinet Office, 2009b).

Saki wanted to be a reporter for a newspaper company, but it would have demanded too much physical energy for her. She says, "When I saw how they worked, I thought that it would injure my health and would kill me, if I worked like that. I was weak, so I thought I would not be able to be a reporter." When Saki was junior, she attended a seminar and discovered how interesting research was and considered becoming a researcher. She says, "a researcher has flexibility in time and no transfer. I thought there was no such a suitable

occupation for women like a researcher and I went to graduate school".¹⁰³ She did not think about working as *ippanshoku* (position in clerical track) in a company, but she was also unwilling to work as *sōgōshoku* (position in career track) because *sōgōshoku* women are required to take *ippanshoku* (clerical track) women's feelings into consideration as well as live with the expectation that they work like men. Her comment suggests the difficulty in building and maintaining the good relationship between women in different positions as well as the demanding workload of professionals in companies in Japan. Considering that in 1990 the percentage of female bachelor's degree holders who were newly hired as *sōgōshoku* was only one percent of all female bachelor's degree holders (Ida, 1995, p.123 in Sasagawa, 2001, p.94), Saki's concern about the relationship with *ippanshoku* women if she worked as *sōgōshoku* is reasonable.

When she was in college, Kae, a research fellow in her 40s, also searched for job. She said that at the time it was just after the collapse of the bubble economy, but new graduates from the University of Tokyo were able to get jobs by the brand name of the University of Tokyo.¹⁰⁴ She says,

I searched for job in private enterprises and at think tanks when I was senior, but I was not able to find a job that provided an environment in which women could continue working after marriage. ...So, I stopped my job search and decided to go to graduate school.

Saki and Kae are in their 40s and they graduated from the University of Tokyo (undergraduate level) in the early 1990s. At that time, the Japanese economy was much better compared with *shūshoku hyōgaki*, the ice age of hiring, and the labor market for new graduates was not bad. However, Saki's and Kae's narratives tell that finding a lifetime

¹⁰³ Transfers accompanied by moving domestically and overseas are usually required for professional positions in big companies.

¹⁰⁴ Bubble economy was collapsed in 1990 (Asahi Shimbun, 2007).

professional career even for women graduating from the University of Tokyo (at the undergraduate level) was still limited. With these problems, the difficulties women have in developing a lifetime career are reasonably understood. As Saki indicated the term of sexual harassment was selected as the top new word in 1989, it should be noted that the concept of sexual harassment was not well known in Japan before 1989.¹⁰⁵ Sufficient attention was not paid to gender equality in employment.

It should be noted that Sanae, Yuka, and Kae did a job search while they were in college before deciding to go to graduate school. If they had found a suitable lifetime career, they would not have decided to pursue their studies in graduate school. Especially when Kae graduated, job opportunities were abundant for new graduates, thanks to a prospering economy. She still was not able to find a lifetime career that women could have after being married. Their professional-oriented tendency is part of the inclination of “super highly educated women” who graduated from prestigious universities (Tachibanaki, 2008).

Saki and Yuka realized their wish to become university faculty members. They thought that university faculty members would not be required to work for long hours as *sōgōshoku* (position in career track). They saw the good aspects of university faculty life, but later they realized that faculty work is not as easy as they imagined. In reality they are occupied with work. The gap between image and reality should not be neglected, as discussed later.

In my study, there is a woman who actually felt gender discrimination and left her workplace to go to graduate school for career formation in a way in which elevating herself. Mayumi worked for a foundation after receiving her bachelor’s degree from one of the prestigious national universities in Japan. Because roles were assigned by gender in her workplace, and “a glass ceiling” existed, her husband did not think that working in such an

¹⁰⁵ Since 1984 new words and vogue words have been annually nominated by survey responses from readers of a dictionary of modern terms and then top words have been selected by a selection committee and have been widely announced by mass media (Jiyukokuminsha, n.d.).

environment was good for his wife and recommended she go to graduate school so that she could form career in a way in which elevating herself. Mayumi thought that going to graduate school would elevate herself and would open possibilities to work in a more gender equal workplace. Among all women in this research, Mayumi is the only woman who graduated from four-year university before Equal Employment Opportunity Law between men and women (EEOC) was enforced in 1986. She told me how gender biased her former workplace was.

All subsection chiefs and section chiefs around my age were men. Women worked there, but all chiefs were men. Those who served tea for everyone were women. My workplace was very gender biased.¹⁰⁶

As Ogasawara (1998) demonstrates, employment practices in Japan assume different roles for men and women even after EEOC was implemented and serving tea (*ochakumi*) is one of the tasks expected of *ippanshoku* (position in clerical track) (Ogasawara, 1998, pp.40-43). Mayumi's narrative indicates that Japanese employment practices tend to assign roles based on gender even though their level of education is the same. In the 1980s, Lebra (1984/1985) indicated that a widening gap between women's educational level and career opportunities had developed and this was likely to increase the discontentment of women. Mayumi worked for a foundation in the 1980s. Mayumi's discontentment is understood in the context of this structural problem.

Mayumi did not decide to become a researcher when she started her master's study, but as she kept studying at the doctoral level, she gradually had a desire to become a researcher. It is notable that the number of "women aspiring to become researchers" became large enough to form one category of graduate students among the three types of *shakaijin*

¹⁰⁶ Lebra (1984/1985) introduces a newspaper article from *Asahi Shimbun*, a national newspaper, about gender segregated roles in the office in Japan dated March 3, 1979. According to the article, despite women's presence in the office, they are not seen in the conference room. This suggests that Mayumi's workplace was one of other many such at that time.

gakusei, adult students (Honda, 2011).¹⁰⁷ The fact that “women aspiring to become researchers” is categorized in a group may imply the difficulties women have finding places in business where they can fully develop and utilize their abilities. Pursuing the path toward becoming a researcher could be a strategic choice for women wanting to have a professional career, as some women in my research do, including Mayumi. As the examples of Sanae, Yuka, Saki, Kae, and Mayumi show, the value of education credentialing in Japan is highly gendered in accordance with the highly gendered division of labor seen in employment practices and in the work environment. Bourdieu is not right in that he overlooks at the gender aspect in his examination of social reproduction through education. Limited career options for female bachelor’s degree holders between *sōgōshoku* (position in career track) that may require giving up having children and *ippanshoku* (position in clerical track) in business do not give men and women the same value for their bachelor’s degrees. Consider that Chan’s study (1994) of a group of graduates from the University of Tokyo reveals that career success in business for men in the group was not seen in the women in the same group, Yuka’s Saki’s, and Kae’s decision to go to graduate school instead of pursuing a career in business is understandable (Sanae and Mayumi did not earn bachelor’s degrees from the University of Tokyo.). Bourdieu’s view seeing the educational certificate as the social determinant without considering genderedness of education credentialing is wrong.

Third, some students chose to go to graduate school to have some time “on hold” before moving on as working adults. Yuka, a university faculty member in her 30s said, “I was afraid of stepping out into society (from student life). I am rather a shy person...I thought I had wanted to postpone it, if it was possible.” Yuka actually did a job search while she was writing her bachelor’s thesis, but it didn’t go well because she was not ready at all. She felt that rather than keep searching for a job, she wanted to pursue her studies. Minako

¹⁰⁷ Other two types of *shakaijin* graduate students are those who aim for self development in business and those who are sent to graduate school by workplace (Honda, 2011).

has a similar reason for attending graduate school. Minako did not know what to do when she was in a college, so she went to graduate school to find out. Some women raise the difficulty in obtaining job as part of their reason for going to graduate school. According to Urata's (2004) regression analysis based on data from 1977 to 1999, there is a tendency that the more difficult it is to find employment at the point of graduation from university, the greater the percentage of students who go to graduate school. Due to the stagnant economy, companies held off hiring new graduates for ten years after 1994, a time that is called *shūshoku hyōgaki*, "the ice age of hiring" (Asahi Shimbun, 2007, p.19). Many women in this research finished their undergraduate level studies during this period. Actually, all women who mentioned moratorium-related reasons for attending graduate school graduated in the ice age of hiring. Kanako says, "It was "the ice age of hiring", so I did not feel that I was ready to work in society". Wakana searched for a job and applied to a company, but was not accepted. At the same time, her advisor had often told her that she should go to graduate school, so she decided to go to graduate school.

My advisor recommended that I pursue study in graduate school, so I was not eager to get a job. I searched for a job, but I was not prepared at all maybe because unconsciously I thought that I could go to graduate school... Graduate school was insurance for me in a self-serving manner.

This reason indicates that studying in graduate school is not necessarily based on only pure academic interests and also indicates how competitive the job market has been in Japan. The fact that Yuka, Minako, Kanako, and Wakana did not feel obligated to find employment in order to become economically independent upon earning bachelor's degrees, their financial conditions did not seem to be too tight to refrain from giving up pursuing further study.

Fourth, two women raise reasons related to family for going to graduate school.

Their cases are rare not only among participants in this research. I did not find this type of reason in literature. Natsuko, a university faculty member in her 30s, was strongly encouraged to go to graduate school by her grandmother. Her late grandmother wanted her to study in graduate school because she herself had not been able to study as she wished when she was young. Natsuko's grandmother wanted to study in normal school. Her family promised that she would be able to, but due to a change of their financial situation, she had to give up her dream. She urged her daughter to go to a prestigious university and she did. Furthermore, she told her daughter to send her grandchildren to graduate school. (Since Natsuko does not have a brother, grandchildren are granddaughters in this case.) Her grandmother passed away when Natsuko was in junior high school. The grandmother left money in her will to send her grandchildren to graduate school. Therefore, for Natsuko, going to graduate school was a natural decision. She did not have a chance to hear a reason why her grandmother strongly wanted her grandchildren to go to graduate school. Women who received higher education were in the minority when Natsuko's grandmother was young. Natsuko's case suggests that, for some women, going to graduate school can be taken for granted.

Junko's father recommended that she go to graduate school. Her father studied in a doctoral program, but he was not able to continue his studies due to financial reasons. He had to quit to support his family. For this reason, he had, since she was a child, recommended that Junko go to graduate school. Her father inculcated benefits of going to graduate school in her. Although Junko has six siblings, her father particularly expected her to go to graduate school because she was the only child who seemed to have the academic ability to go to graduate school.

It should be noted that Natsuko and Junko accepted their families' wishes that they go to graduate school. They could have chosen not to go to graduate school. For some women in this research, going to graduate school was an individual decision, while for some women it is a mixture of an individual and family decision. It is notable that Natsuko and Junko did

not indicate that their family members who wanted them to go to graduate education expected a financial reward from their children's graduate education. The fact that Junko has six siblings, which is far more than the average number of children in Japan,¹⁰⁸ but it was still affordable for her family to support their daughter's graduate study implies financial affluence of Junko's family.

Parents' attitudes toward their daughters' decision to study in graduate school

The fact that there are risks involved in going to graduate school in humanities and social sciences indicates the regressiveness of higher education credentialing in Japan. Despite the risks of going to graduate school in humanities and social sciences with regards to the job market and marriage market, fifteen women received financial support from their parents. The status of a new graduate from the undergraduate level, which provides greater opportunities of employment, would be significant not only for women in this research but also for their parents. What are their attitudes toward their daughter's decision to study in graduate school? Were they aware of the risks of going to graduate school? Were they still willing to support their daughter's decision? If parents opposed their daughter's decision, how did they negotiate? Asking these questions helps us understand the situations in which these women made their decision to study in graduate school and how graduate school is seen in Japanese society.

Some parents were supportive; some were not. Some women were already married when they went to graduate school. They did not get their parents' approvals, but just told them of their decision later. Parents who were against their daughter going to graduate school are highly educated, except for one mother. It may sound strange that highly educated parents were not supportive of their daughters going to graduate school, but they were not pleased

¹⁰⁸ It is reported by specified report of vital statistics that the total fertility rate of women in Japan from the 1970s to the 1980s was around 2 (The rate is rounded off to one decimal place.) (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2010b).

because they knew the hardships and risks of studying in graduate school in humanities and social sciences. The higher the educational credentials of some parents, the more negatively they tended to see their daughter's graduate education in humanities and social sciences. While Honda (2008) emphasizes that while education characterized by the mothers' education levels transmits advantages and disadvantages from the parents' generation to the children's generation, both fathers' and mothers' educational levels influence their attitudes towards their children's education. The parents' responses show the nature of family dynamics regarding attitudes toward gender and the family. Parents' responses suggest that highly educated parents tended to try to place their children in advantageous positions in society in accordance with the children's gender, abilities, and characteristics. They wanted their children to live a life without hardships, to live an ordinary life. At the same time, parents wanted their children to pursue their desires, which would not always give the children an advantageous position in society. Highly educated parents' negative and positive attitudes towards their daughters' graduate education show that parents' attitudes tend to lead to social reproduction and yet parents negotiated with their daughters concerning this possible change in their daughters' lives. In other words, they wanted to protect their daughters, at the same time they wanted to respect their daughters' lives as individuals. Parents' concerns reflect regressiveness and genderedness of highly education credentialing in Japan

Although parents who were not positive about their daughters' graduate education did not encourage them to go to graduate school, they eventually accepted and helped their daughters, even though they were not necessarily willingly to do so. For some women, while their fathers were against their decision to go to graduate school, their mothers were rather supportive. Minako is a woman whose father and mother were supportive of her graduate education. She says that she was supported by "mother's enthusiasm and father's economic power". While it was not expressed in words, the majority of women in this research were supported by their fathers' economic power, considering that the majority of mothers are

housewives.

Saki's, Wakana's, and Hiromi's cases-Parents were negative about graduate education.

The parents of three women, Saki, Wakana, and Hiromi, took a negative view of their daughter's idea of going to graduate school. Among women whose parents were against them going to study in graduate school, Saki is the only woman whose mother did not receive a higher education. Saki's father has a bachelor's degree. Both her father and mother opposed her plan to go to graduate school. For Saki's mother, graduate school is a place for moratorium as the following conversation in an interview shows:

Y.Y.: What do your parents think about your decision to go to graduate school?

Saki: They did not understand it at all. The image of graduate school was bad for my mother. For my mother, graduate school was a place for those who did not work and are in moratorium. No matter how I explained, she wouldn't have understood. She did not understand my explanation until I finished a doctoral program. My mother used to tell me that I should quit and should become a high school teacher. I told her that becoming a high school teacher was more difficult and that I aimed to become a university faculty member. However, for my mother, graduate school was still equal to moratorium as well as the image of NEET who stayed at home.

(NEET is population between 15 and 34 years of age who are single and not in employment, education, or training (Cabinet Office, 2005).¹⁰⁹ NEET is seen as a social problem in Japanese society.) Considering that some women in this research went to graduate school partly because of moratorium and partly because of the difficulty in getting a job, Saki's mother's view is not significantly different from that of others. In other words,

¹⁰⁹ The term of NEET, which is abbreviation of Not in Employment, Education or Training, was originally used by the British government to classify young people of an age group between 16 and 18. However, the definition of NEET is different in Japan. In Japan NEET refers to population in the wider range of ages. There are not absolute definitions of NEET. While Cabinet Office includes *kaji tetsudai*, those who assisting in housework, in NEET, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare does not include *kaji tetsudai* as NEET.

Saki's mother's view represents negative views to graduate students in Japan to some extent. Saki's mother's strong opposition to her daughter's decision to go to graduate school cannot be explained by the fact that she did not receive higher education.

Parents with high educational backgrounds may be thought to be more likely to take a positive view; however, some highly educated parents took a negative view. Due to their educational backgrounds, they knew the risks that accompany to going to graduate school. Graduate students in humanities and social sciences are more likely to face difficulty in finding employment when they graduate, compared with undergraduate students. They also knew the difficulty in becoming a university faculty member.

Wakana is a woman whose parents' educational levels are the highest among all in this research. Her father has a doctorate in natural sciences and her mother has a master's degree in humanities. Considering the ratio of men and women who went to universities in her parents' generation, her parents' educational backgrounds are extremely high. Even so, they did not encourage Wakana to go to graduate school. Wakana says, "My parents were not positive. They wanted me to work. They said that there was nothing they could do, since I already decided. Of course, they did not think it was good." She expressed her mother's thoughts as follows: "I think she gave up when I went on to a doctoral program. I think she wanted me to be *mattō na shakaijin*, a normal decent full-fledged working person". This indicates that doctoral students are not thought to be on a track to becoming normal decent full-fledged adults in Japanese society. Unlike Saki's mother who did not receive higher education, Wakana's mother earned a master's degree, but Wakana's mother still seemed to have the view that going on to a doctoral program strayed too far from an ordinary decent career track. More than two years have passed since Wakana received her doctorate, but she still does not have a tenure track position and works as a part-time lecturer. This fact shows that even though she earned a doctorate degree from the most prestigious university in Japan, it is still difficult to find employment.

Like Wakana, Hiromi has highly educated parents. Hiromi is a part-time lecturer in her 30s. Her father has a doctorate in natural sciences and her mother has a bachelor's degree. Her grandfather was a university faculty member. Hiromi's parents did not want her to go to graduate school because they expected a thorny path in the future. Hiromi says,

No parents would be happy if their child chooses to go to graduate school, so my father and mother were against it, but they said, "If you still wanted to do it, do it. If you do so, it's not meaningful if you do not go to the University of Tokyo, so if you are not accepted, why don't you give up?"

Her parents still have kept saying, "Becoming a scholar is not that easy". They have kept asking her "Can you do it?" She says that they know it is really hard to live as a scholar, so they do not think that she needs to do it. They do not want their child to go to such an *ibara no michi*, being full of trials and tribulations. Hiromi is fully aware of the fact that a journey toward becoming a scholar is full of trials and tribulations and she took it for granted that her parents would oppose her going to graduate school. This suggests how strong her enthusiasm for study was. Her parents' words also suggest the special prestige of the University of Tokyo in academia in Japan.

Except for Saki's case, as I have shown, it is notable that some highly educated parents, including Wakana's and Hiromi's parents, were not positive about their daughters' decision to go to graduate school because they were aware of the reality that graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences are not highly valued in Japanese society and their daughters would be likely to be disadvantaged in job market after graduation due to their status as graduates of graduate schools. Unlike Saki's mother, who does not find the value in graduate education in itself, Wakana's and Hiromi's parents who are highly educated see going to graduate school negatively because they do not appreciate pursuing higher level study in itself. Ironically, it is higher education, not the lack of education, that provided

Wakana's and Hiromi's parents with the perspective to judge the value of graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences in the Japanese job market and with the ability to estimate the future prospects of graduate degree holders in humanities and social sciences. As my research data show, highly educated parents especially acknowledge regressiveness of higher education credentialing over the undergraduate level.

Keiko's and Yuka's cases- Fathers were negative, but mothers were positive about graduate education

For some women, the thoughts of their fathers and mothers were different. Bourdieu insists that "the educational system, an institutionalized classifier which is itself an objectified system of classification reproducing the hierarchies of the social world in a transformed form" (Bourdieu, 1979/1984, p.387). For Bourdieu, the educational system classifies people as if it functions as an objectified system to reproduce social classes, but the educational system does not classify men and women in the same manner. Some parents of my research participants considered their daughters' decision to go to graduate school from gendered perspectives.

While fathers were against their daughters' plan to go to graduate school, mothers were relatively supportive. Keiko and Yuka are two such two women. They are in their 30s. After earning her doctorate, Keiko now works for a local administrative office as a part-time specialist. Keiko's father is a medical doctor. Her mother graduated from junior college. Keiko's father was against her idea of going to graduate school all the time. When she was a sophomore and junior, she told her father of her desire to go on to graduate school, but he did not positively respond. Her parents' responses were as follows:

My mother said that if you would like to go, why not you go? But, my father says that research is hard and competitive. ...My father asked me, "When will you have a child?" He seemed to give me a message, please don't do it. He entirely opposed (my idea of going to graduate school)".

Keiko was not confident enough to convince her father and could not decide to go to graduate

school until the end of her senior year. Keiko thinks that her father wanted one of his children to study in a field related to medicine, but he did not think that a medical doctor was a suitable occupation for women because the period of training would overlap with the child-bearing years, so, by aiming to become a medical doctor, a woman would miss the opportunity to have children. Keiko's father recommended that she go to the pharmaceutical department at the undergraduate level after getting a bachelor and become a pharmacist. She tried to meet her father's expectations. She says, "I once said to my father that I would do my best, but in the end, I couldn't. Well, I think I am a type of person that I cannot work wholeheartedly for what I am doubtful." She describes how her mind and her father's attitude shifted as follows:

I negotiated with my father. I reached the conclusion that I couldn't think of other ways and I couldn't work hard for this. Since my father saw that I tried to work for a graduation thesis and to study to prepare for examinations to be admitted by the pharmaceutical department at the same time for a year, but finally I was able to work only on the thesis, at the end he did not oppose. He allowed me to do what I wanted.

Keiko did not think that her choice of going to graduate school was rational. She says,

It's not a rational decision at all. I knew it. If I went to the pharmaceutical department, I would be able to go back to work with good conditions even after taking a break from work for child rearing, so it was obvious what was beneficial, but I still was neither able to choose that path (studying in the pharmaceutical department) nor able to devote myself (to what I was not interested in).

Keiko and her father shared the view that going to graduate school was not a rational choice compared with other alternatives. Keiko did not go to graduate school to become a researcher as a strategy to balance career and family as Sanae, Yuka, and Kae did. On the contrary, for Keiko, going to graduate school was to abandon a choice to balance career with family. Her enthusiasm for research motivated her to study in graduate school. The difficulty academic women have balancing between career and family is indicated in a previous study by Mifune

(2002). Mifune's study found that as many as 40 percent of graduates from the graduate school at Ochanomizu University, one of the most prestigious women's universities in Japan, resigned their positions in the first workplace within five years for family reasons (Mifune, 2002, p.67). While some research participants, including Sanae, Yuka, and Kae chose to go to graduate school to live a balanced life between career and family, Keiko's story suggests that it is difficult for women to balance career and family even in an academic career.

Yuka's case is similar to Keiko in that her father was not favorably inclined toward her idea to go to graduate school, while her mother was relatively supportive. Unlike Keiko's father, Yuka's father did not strongly oppose Yuka's idea to go to graduate school, while he did not dare to recommend that Yuka go to graduate school. Yuka's father graduated from the University of Tokyo and is an elite, working for a company. Her mother also graduated from university. Like Keiko's case, Yuka's parents' responses to their daughter's desire to go to graduate school were highly related to gender. For Yuka's father, her idea of going to graduate school did not make sense because he knew "the low value of graduate school in humanities and social sciences". For Yuka's father, going to graduate school meant abandoning a special privilege given to new college graduates. Especially as a new graduate of the University of Tokyo, Yuka would have been a part of the most valuable human resources in the Japanese job market. Her father thought, "if she loses this opportunity now (as a new college graduate), it will not be possible for her to work for one of the top-ranking companies". Except for students majoring in engineering, companies in Japan prefer new graduates from undergraduates to those from graduate schools. Graduates from the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level are likely to be in the most advantaged position in the business job market in Japan, but this privilege is not applicable to graduates of the University of Tokyo at the graduate level (except for engineering), even though the University of Tokyo is known as the most prestigious university in Japan. Yuka's father's concern indicates how clear regressiveness of higher education credentialing over the undergraduate level is. In Japan,

going to graduate school makes life harder by narrowing career opportunities, instead of expanding opportunities.

In contrast with her father, Yuka's mother was relatively supportive. Of her mother's position, Yuka says,

My mother was thinking that I was not physically strong. She was also thinking about women's lifestyles. Well, my mother's opinion and my opinion were mixed at that point. My mother knew that I would not be able to work for a company since she knew how hard it would be by seeing my father's work. My father came home later than 11:00 pm every day. My mother became a housewife, but she was bored a bit by becoming a housewife, so she wanted me to do what I want to do more. In that sense, my mother thought university faculty was not a bad option as a career choice. Well, I was not physically well when I was senior in college. My health failed in my high school days. My mother said that it would be ok to have a moratorium period by going to graduate school for several years. Financially, it was not a problem to stay at my parents' home. I think my mother probably thought if it didn't work, I could be a housewife eventually.

Yuka's mother's attitudes included contradicting factors, but these contradicting factors included strategic and practical ideas that would allow her daughter to survive as a woman. As well as Yuka, her mother did not think of the option of Yuka working as *ippanshoku* (position in clerical track) in a company was reasonable, but neither did they think positively of the option of a *sōgōshoku* (position in career track) due to its demanding long hours of work. Her mother did not want Yuka to give up doing what she wanted, but at the same time, she wanted to keep open the option of becoming a housewife as a safety net for Yuka.

It is notable that Yuka's mother associated going to graduate school with a moratorium, just as Saki's mother did. However, unlike Saki's mother, Yuka's mother thought that it was all right to have a moratorium period for a few years after graduating from college. The fact that graduate school is associated with a moratorium indicates the difficulty of finding employment for graduate degree holders in humanities and social sciences in Japan.

Ironically, as Yuka's mother's idea suggests, expanding the number of women in graduate school even at the most prestigious university in Japan seemed to be partly brought about by deeply rooted gender roles in Japan that assigns the role of breadwinner to men.

Yuka even more clearly stated the message that she received from her mother as follows:

My mother thinks that it is ok if I go to graduate school where even girls can do what they want in a "gender free" environment, but she thinks that I can use my status as a woman, if I really have difficulty. I received such a message from my mother.

Yuka internalized her mother's strategic ideas and thought. Yuka had a desire to become a university faculty and get married, but at the same time, though, she saw marriage as the last option for her economic survival. She made her life plan to enjoy both career and family, but she also thought about a back-up plan to survive when her ideal plan is not realized. She could be seen as having internalized the traditional gender roles in her back-up plan. However, instead of simply internalizing traditional gender roles, Yuka strategically incorporates traditional gender roles into her life plan, for her convenience. Academic achievement and internalization of gender roles are thought to be associated. Students with low academic achievement have been thought more likely to internalize traditional gender roles. However, a previous study found that traditional gender view is not only internalized by students whose academic achievement is low but also internalized by students whose academic achievement is high (Nakanishi, 1998). However, Yuka's case shows that high-achieving students could decide their position regarding traditional gender norms in more complex and strategic ways.

While Yuka's father did not favorably view her plan to go to graduate school, eventually he accepted it because Yuka is a woman. Her father accepted Yuka's decision because she was not *atotori musuko*, his son and heir. He thought that graduate students were like *kaji tetsudai*, housework helper, which is a title used for those who are neither married

nor employed while helping someone do housework. *Kaji tetsudai* is in almost all cases applied to women. Yuka's parents allowed her to go to graduate school and provided her with financial support. However, if she had been a son, her parents may not have allowed Yuka to go to graduate school because the risks of going to graduate school for men seems to be greater than that for women since *kaji tetsudai* would be an option for women, but not an option for men in Japan. The option of becoming a housewife is more socially accepted than becoming a househusband in Japan. In other words, this means that women have a special privilege that is not given to men. As confirmed by multiple surveys, Japanese parents tend to have higher aspirations of university education for a son than a daughter (Amano, 1986; Brinton, 1993; Chan, 1994; Fujimura-Franselow and Imamura, 1991; Holloway, 2010). However, Yuka's case suggests that this is not the case for graduate education. Due to the low value of graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences in the job market in Japan, Japanese parents are not likely to have any aspirations for graduate education for a son. Rohlen (1983) indicated that different expectations between men and women after graduating from higher education institutions (building a career for men and staying home to take care of the family for women), women tended to be discouraged to go to four-year universities, instead were encouraged to attend two-year junior colleges. Ironically, Yuka's case suggests that, for the same reason Rohlen indicated, some families could allow their daughters to study in graduate school, while they would not allow their sons to do so.

Seen from this point of view, one can understand the phenomenon that the number of male students enrolled in master's programs in humanities and social sciences has been decreasing from 2000 to 2010 (See appendix 6), while the number of their female counterparts has increased. It should be noted that the decline of male students and the increase of female students in master's programs have been understood in a context in which new graduates from graduate school are disadvantaged compared with new graduates from college in job market in Japan. It is also difficult to find academic employment after earning a

Ph.D. in humanities and social sciences.

Aki's case-Neutral, but as long as up to the master's degree

Unlike Keiko's and Yuka's, Aki's father took a neutral position regarding her plan to go to graduate school for earning a master's degree. (Aki's mother died of illness when she was in a junior high school, so only her father's attitude is covered here.)

Aki's case reveals how education credentialing is gendered in the marriage market, even though Bourdieu does not consider genderedness of education credentialing. Aki said if she had wanted to get a doctorate, it would be possible that her father would have opposed her idea because earning a doctorate would take more than five years in her field, including two years for a master's degree. Considering this, going to the doctoral level would have jeopardized her marriageability. She says, it would have created a situation in which *yome no moraite mo nakute*, a bride that no man would take. *Moraite* literarily means a receiver. The expression of *yome no moraite* suggests that a bride is one who is received by a bridegroom not vice versa. Some researchers on education in Japan (Benjamin, 1997; Rohlen 1983; White, 1987/1988) have stated that women who enter highly rated universities might have difficulty in finding husbands. Women who studied at the doctoral level at the University of Tokyo could encounter even more difficulty because they are highly educated in double senses: the brand name of the University of Tokyo and the level of education (doctorate). Aki's assumption that her father would have opposed her earning a doctorate is endorsed by presumption shared by the general public.

This chapter has introduced the family backgrounds of research participants, including reasons for going to graduate school and the research participants' responses to their idea or decision to go to graduate school. While the family backgrounds of the research participants show that overall social class is reproduced through education as Bourdieu argues, my research data show that education credentialing in higher education in Japan is

gendered and education credentials are not evaluated in accordance with the levels of education. Narratives of these women indicate complex reasons for deciding to go to graduate school, reflecting social and economic backgrounds in Japanese society. At the same time, their narratives show how graduate education in humanities and social sciences is not valued in Japanese society and is seen as one that would jeopardize employment opportunities in the future instead of being seen as a stepping stone to becoming a professional or an academic. Their narratives reveal that earning a doctorate could also jeopardize marriageability. These narratives also suggest that for some parents, gender roles significantly affect parents' attitudes toward their daughters' decision to study in graduate school. In the next chapter, I further explore what graduate education means and the status of graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo in their love, marriage, and child rearing.

Chapter 6

Love, marriage, and child rearing

- negotiating power in shifting gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*, a good wife and a wise mother, between hegemony (doxa) and ideology (opinion)

This chapter examines how women who received graduate education have lived their lives in love, marriage, and child rearing. This investigation reveals that how they have negotiated power to protect and develop themselves as critical highly educated individuals, and as a gendered individuals, women, wives, and mothers in order to survive in a highly gendered society. As explained in chapter 2, gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* are not hegemony in Japan anymore. However, they still persist in society. This study found that even highly educated women who received graduate education at the most prestigious university internalized practices developed from the gender-based division of labor; at the same time, they resist and insist on their lives as individuals, rejecting the constraints of gender roles.

Highly educated women in love, marriage market

One spring weekend evening I attended a study meeting for graduate students and young scholars over dinner and drinking alcohol followed by the meeting at an *izakaya*, casual Japanese-style bar in Tokyo. This type of meeting is not designed for students at a particular university and is open to anyone. The meeting seems to function to provide networking opportunities for those in the Tokyo area who are interested in the same or similar areas of study. I attended this type of meeting to meet other graduate students, including students from the University of Tokyo, in Japan and to learn about their graduate student lives and to recruit potential research participants. Graduate students at the University of Tokyo organized most of the meetings and gatherings I attended. Every time I attended a meeting organized by this group, I was the only graduate student affiliated with a foreign graduate school. However, they still gave me a warm welcome and the coordinator kindly included me in their e-mail list upon my request. I felt that they accepted me as a peer graduate student,

but saw me as unique among them because of my status as a doctoral candidate at a U.S. university. I think my unique position allowed me to ask about issues that are common knowledge for graduate students in Japan. Most members already seemed to know one another. As a new comer, I gradually got to know participants. These gatherings over dinner and drinking alcohol almost always followed study meetings. These gatherings seem to function to share information and to build relationships.

It was a study meeting where I met Yuka first time. She is a young scholar in her 30s and was a guest presenter in the meeting. In a gathering after having some conversation in a relaxed atmosphere, I asked her if she could participate in my study. She told me that she could tell me about her experiences, such as her parents being rejected when they tried to register her at a marriage agency. While I expected that some female graduate degree holders might have experienced difficulties in marriage due to their highly educated status as previous studies reveal, it was a little surprising to hear this story when I first requested her to participate in my research. After earning her doctorate, she became a faculty member. She received a good education even before studying at the University of Tokyo. She graduated from one of the most prestigious private girls' schools (junior high and high school) in Tokyo. She is from an elite family. What is an obstacle to marriage? Previous studies and my research data show that structural obstacles exist.

Previous studies indicate that education for women tends to be valued in relation to the degree of benefits for marriage. According to White (1987/1988), who studies Japanese education and society, many parents want their daughters to go to university to increase her prospects for marriage, rather than for a career. According to the research on the effects of educating women and social position by Yano (1996), better marriage is one of the reasons of having a better educational background. The more years of education a woman has, the higher the rate of marriage to husbands who have high educational backgrounds and occupations that are categorized as high in the social hierarchy (Hamana, 1990).

However, Brinton says, “too much education can become a liability for Japanese women in the marriage market” (Brinton, 1993, p.211). A more recent survey study of graduate students also shows that women with graduate degrees are likely to face difficulties in marriage due to their highly educated status, while it is not an obstacle for men with graduate degrees (Science Council of Japan, 2005). White (1987/1988) and Rohlen (1983) indicate that parents tend to think a first-class education is more important for sons than for daughters because the socially expected gender roles of men and women in adulthood are different. White and Rohlen think that women who enter highly rated universities might have difficulty in finding husbands. Fujimura (1985) indicates that many parents are not as willing as to send daughters to the extremely prestigious universities, such as the University of Tokyo, as they are to send their daughters to women’s university. While arranged marriages, *miai kekkon*, have decreased and love marriages, *renai kekkon*, have increased, the educational levels of married couples still tend to be equal (Shida, Seiyama, and Watanabe, 2000, Ueno, 1994)¹¹⁰. Ueno (1994) attributes this to the fact that the criteria for choosing partners are internalized.¹¹¹ Considering that the ratio of women is extremely low at the University of Tokyo (18.3% at the undergraduate level and 27.2% at the graduate level in 2012, calculated by the author based on the number of students in the website of the University of Tokyo) (University of Tokyo, n.d.) and those who go to graduate school are a minority in Japan, women who graduated from graduate school are not likely to be in an advantageous position in the marriage market. It is not surprising that alumnae of graduate school of the University of Tokyo encounter difficulties in finding husbands due to their highly educated status which has a double meaning: the name value of the University of Tokyo and the level of education (graduate level).

¹¹⁰ According to Japanese National fertility Surveys arranged marriages were more common than love marriages until the 1960s. Love marriages account for 87.2 percent, while arranged marriages account for 6.2 percent among men and women who got married sometime between 2000 and 2005 (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2005).

¹¹¹ Bourdieu would call internal criteria of choosing partners as habitus.

Becker (1981), an economist, argues that the division of labor between a wife and a husband is determined not only by biological differences between man and woman but also by differences in experiences and invested human capital. Whereas women invest human capital that contributes to bearing and raising children, men invest human capital that contributes to bringing income from the market to the family. In accordance with Becker's argument, if investments in human capital were the same between men and women, highly educated men's and women's status in the marriage market would become higher due to the increased investment. However, higher education does not always equally increase the status of men and women in marriage market in Japan.

Some participants in this study (Saki, Keiko, Tomomi, Hiromi, and Yuka) indicated that students and alumnae of the University of Tokyo are in a disadvantaged position in the marriage market due to their highly educated status as students and alumnae of the University of Tokyo. Among these five women, Saki and Keiko are married. They studied at the University of Tokyo from the undergraduate level through the doctoral level. It is understandable that these women are married to alumni of the University of Tokyo. Saki says that regardless of differences in levels of education (undergraduate and graduate), upon the entrance into the University of Tokyo, women are excluded as targets of love. Similarly, Keiko heard stories of other alumnae of the University of Tokyo often having trouble getting married. When she was a freshman at the University of Tokyo, a male classmate told her that she should have chosen another top private university because alumnae of the University of Tokyo would not be able to be happy as women. Her landlady told her that she should not break up with her boyfriend if she had one, because she would never have another one. Similarly, through her friends' strategies and her own experiences, Tomomi realized that when a woman's educational credentials and income, including prospect of income in future, are higher than a man's, it is likely to be difficult for them to be married. Tomomi had heard about the difficulty that alumnae from the University of Tokyo have finding a husband. She

often heard that it is difficult for men to marry women whose educational levels or incomes are greater than theirs. Many alumnae from the University of Tokyo whom she knew married alumni from the University of Tokyo within a couple of years of graduation. She said that they strategically found boyfriends at the University of Tokyo when they were students and got married early to avoid being disadvantaged in the marriage market.¹¹² While for Tomomi, being educated at the University of Tokyo is a factor that makes the prospect of marriage difficult, for her mother, what makes the prospect of marriage difficult for women is the inability to wash rice in a proper manner. Tomomi's grandparents used to be farmers who had rice fields in the northeastern area of Japan that is known as its rice, the staple food for Japanese people. When Tomomi was a child, her mother thoroughly taught her how to wash rice appropriately. When rice is not washed in a proper way, it does not cook well. For Tomomi's mother, not being able to cook rice well is a fatal fault, inhibiting women from getting married, and she told this to Tomomi. For Tomomi's mother, washing rice is automatically assigned to women. Her mother did not teach her son how to wash rice. Tomomi found that *musenmai*, a type of rice that did not need to be washed, was sold in Tokyo. The skill that her mother sees as an important condition of marriage for women is no longer required in urban life in Japan.

Coming to Tokyo for higher education and being educated at a graduate school of the University of Tokyo brought Tomomi to the world in which things are put in a different light. Tomomi broke up with her boy friend who was an artist. He was a man who voluntarily quit university and aimed to become a painter. Tomomi thought that the differences in their educational credentials would not be a problem because he voluntarily chose to achieve success in art, a very different field from academics. However, as she made progress in

¹¹² International marriage tends to increase these days, however laws and regulations have not been completely ready to protect foreign wives and husbands in Japan (Qu, 2010). Partly because the unreadiness of Japanese society and partly because opportunities of meeting foreigners would not be usually given in daily lives for many Japanese, marrying a non-Japanese man are not likely to be part of marriage strategies of alumnae of the University of Tokyo.

graduate school by earning a master's degree and then moved on the doctoral level, their relationship began to become difficult. It was not caused by her skill in cooking, including washing rice. She is not certain, but she suspects that he was too proud to be in a situation in which he was stagnant in his career as an artist, while she progressed satisfactorily in her academic life. Learning that her friends also have this issue, Tomomi found that her personal issue was not purely personal and started to think about taking the relationship between love/marriage and education credentials seriously.

As described above, Saki, Keiko, and Tomomi talked about how female graduates of the University of Tokyo are disadvantaged in love and the marriage market. In contrast, Hiromi and Yuka refer to the arranged marriage market which includes *miais*. *Miai* is an arranged meeting in which a man and a woman are formally introduced with a view to marriage. While the percentage of *miais* has been declining, as love marriages have been getting more common, *miais* do still exist. Unlike love marriages, the balance of marriage conditions between men and women, including education level, is considered to be important in the arranged marriage market. Therefore, highly educated women are even more disadvantaged in the arranged marriage market. Hiromi shared an episode of *miais* that her family experienced. Hiromi is a doctorate holder. All *miais* brought to her family went to her younger sister because Hiromi was too educated. Hiromi said that she is “irrevocably highly educated”. It is notable that she uses the word of “irrevocable” to refer to her highly educated status. Being highly educated itself does not include negative connotation, but in the context of marriage, the overly highly educated status has a negative connotation for her.

Yuka had a similar experience. She told me of her experiences a search for a partner when she was an ABD. Before she turned to 30, she and her parents started a partner search. In Japan purposefully actions for a spouse search is referred to *konkatsu*, which is abbreviation of *kekonn* (marriage) *katsudō* (activities) and was coined in 2007 by Masahiro Yamada, a sociologist. *Konkatsu* includes having *miais*, going to purposefully arranged

parties for finding boyfriends or girlfriends, and registering with matching service companies.¹¹³ Yuka's parents worried about her marriage and went to a *kekkon sōdanjo*, marriage agency, to register her, but her parents' attempts to register were declined because the agency was not likely to introduce any men to a woman whose educational background was at the doctoral level. It is not uncommon that parents are interested in marriage partner search of their children. On the contrary, a media analysis of *konkatsu* even says that it is parents who first show an interest in *konkatsu* (Hirakiuchi, 2010). Considering that a husbands' educational level tends to be equal or higher than his wife's (Shimizu, 1990; Yano, 1996), it is not surprising that Yuka's parents were declined in their attempt to register her at a marriage agency.¹¹⁴ She went to different kinds of parties, including one purposely arranged for *miais* and one arranged for elite universities. She says, half of the men were looking for equal partners, but another half of men were looking for partners whose education level was lower. It was extremely difficult for her to explain what people do at the doctoral level in humanities and social sciences and she had many uncertain factors, including employment. Doctorates in humanities and social sciences are unlikely to be employed by companies in Japan. Therefore she needed to explain what her future career would be. She felt that she was in extremely disadvantaged in *konkatsu* and felt that it was absurd to continue *konkatsu*. She decided to focus on writing her dissertation first and then finding employment before engaging in a spouse search. She earned a doctorate in her 30s and became a university faculty member. As a result, the uncertain factors in her life (degree and employment) are removed. However, she is still having difficulty finding her future spouse. She says that graduates of the University of Tokyo, especially women, as well as the university faculty members are "mystery persons" for the general public. Instead of enjoying being elite, Yuka

¹¹³ For details of *konkatsu*, please see Yamada & Shirakawa (2008) and Yamada (2010).

¹¹⁴ While the majority of junior college and university alumnae married with university graduates, couple in which wife's educational background is higher than that of her husband was only 8.4 percent in total in a survey of women's status by the Tokyo Metropolitan government (Yano, 1996).

feels disadvantages for “not being ordinary” in the marriage market even after she obtained economic, professional, and geographic stability as a university faculty member. If Yuka were a man, having a doctorate from the University of Tokyo and working as a tenure track university faculty would have advantages in the marriage market because of the general tendency to think that the husbands’ educational credentials are equal or higher to the wife’s. Yuka’s case shows that even when one does not think a standardized pattern is good, not following the standardized pattern is likely to make life difficult to live. Although Yuka strategically tried to take advantage of being a woman in her life, her decisions do not go well in the marriage market.¹¹⁵ These women’s stories endorse difficulties in marriage that are stated in the literature.

While the tendency to marry later or not at all is seen in general in Japan, this trend is most conspicuous among highly educated women (Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005).¹¹⁶ Raymo and Iwasawa (2005) explain that the large decline in marriage among highly educated women is caused by “both increasing economic independence and continued economic dependence on men” (Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005 p.801). As highly educated women become economically independent, the sufficient supply of economically attractive men is not provided. At the same time, highly educated women economically depend on men. Because Japan is characterized by highly divided gender roles at work and in the family, women tend to face difficulties balancing career and family. Raymo and Iwasawa (2005) refer to other sociologists’ research and say that in societies like Japan where marriage is characterized by gender roles, it is difficult for women to balance career and family (Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005). Highly educated women’s economic dependence on men increases due to the high

¹¹⁵ In Japan the group-oriented mindset is formed through preprimary to secondary education employing group activities in hidden curriculum (Lewis, 1995; Tsuneyoshi, 1992/2005; White 1987/1988). Taking a lifestyle that is different from many others is more likely to create difficulties in life.

¹¹⁶ Ratio of unmarried men and women in Japan in 2010 is as follows: men 25-29 years old-71.8%, 30-34 years old-47.3%, 35-39 years old-35.6%; women 25-29 years old-60.3%, 30-34 years old-34.5%, 35-39 years old-23.1% (Cabinet Office, 2012b).

opportunity cost of career interruption for these women (Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005). Raymo and Iwasawa (2005) indicate that while women's economic resources are not negatively associated with marriage in some other industrialized countries, in Japan this is not the case.¹¹⁷ While Raymo and Iwasawa (2005) attribute the large decline of marriages among highly educated women to factors on the women's side, my research data suggest that the negative association of women's economic resources with marriage could be partly due to the general tendency for men to want to have a greater income than women, since social norms in Japan expect men to be breadwinners. Aki, a participant in this research, works for a foreign financial institution as a professional after earning a master's degree. She is in her 30s, but she told me that her income was probably greater than average in Japan. Her residence in Tokyo where Aki and I met for interviews suggests she was telling the truth. We met in a high-ceilinged spacious lobby of the building where she lives. Sophisticated couches are placed and a receptionist works in the lobby, which reminded me of a luxurious hotel lobby. She says that people have been able to guess her income through her occupation and the name of the financial institution for which she works. She feels that men lose their interests in her when they hear her occupation although she is a cheerful and friendly woman and is not arrogant at all, in my eyes.

For Raymo and Iwasawa (2005) income could be in proportion to education level. However, Raymo's and Iwasawa's study (2005) is not necessarily applicable to graduate degree holders pursuing academic career. They assume that highly educated women earn a high income, but regarding female graduate degree holders, being highly educated does not necessarily mean that they earn high income. Several women pursuing an academic career participating in this research have part-time jobs and are searching for full-time employment. In addition, those who received student loans have tremendous debts. As referred to an earlier

¹¹⁷ Another prior study also reveals that for men high income is positively associated with marriage, while for women high income is negatively associated with marriage (Shirahase, 2005).

chapter, in Japan universities do not have graduate assistantships that come with an exemption of tuition payment. Until finding employment, graduate degree holders struggle with financial instability. It is notable that no woman mentioned difficulties in getting married due to their financial instability or low income, while prior study reveals that men and women whose economic situations are unstable are negatively associated with marriage (Sato & Nakamura, 2007).

Concerns about not fixed future for women who have not had a child and are searching for academic employment-possibilities of childbirth and child rearing and the future career aspiration

Balancing research and career with child rearing is not only an issue for women who already are mothers but also an issue for women who may become mothers in the future. Some women in this study (Kanao, Wakana, and Keiko) postponed or reserved the decision to have a child because they have not had tenure yet. In Japan, it is common that tenure is given at the time of recruitment, such as lecturer and associate professor, while postdoctoral fellowships with a limited period of time are also common.

Kanao and Keiko are in their early 30s and Wakana is in her late 30s. They are still at the age of being able to become pregnant, but biologically do not have many years left for the prime time of childbirth. They are in a position to decide whether they will give birth or not in the near future because it will be difficult to become pregnant, as they get older. They are not certain about their life plan in the future, including employment, childbirth, and family life. Making a clear life plan would be difficult for anyone, but it is particularly difficult for women who earned doctorate because the timing of employment tends to overlap the prime time for childbirth and it would be difficult to find employment without searching in geographically wide areas. Regardless of being ready or not in advance, these women feel that they are forced to choose either career or childbirth until they find employment. In this sense, studying at the doctoral level is a life-determining decision for women in Japan,

though women may not be aware of this at the time of decision. Existing research reveals that mothers tend to give a higher priority to taking a responsibility as mothers over realizing their own goals and career, but highly educated mothers who achieved a certain status in their career tend to search for balancing life as a mother with life as an individual (Honda, 2008). In other words, it would be difficult for highly educated mothers who have not achieved a certain status in career to balance life as a mother with life as an individual. In terms of academic career, tenure can be considered to be a certain status in career.

Despite her strong desire to have a child, Kanako cannot decide to have a child at this stage because she thinks that it would be impossible for a mother to find employment if she does not have any academic-related status or position, such as a student and a research fellow. She now receives a postdoctoral fellowship, but the period of the fellowship will be over in two years. Considering her age, she thinks that she will shift to give higher priority to having a child over pursuing academic career if she cannot find employment before the expiration of the fellowship. She has provisionally set a period for which she will give a higher priority to employment over childbirth. If she is placed in a situation in which she must look for employment without any academic affiliation, she fears that she will “stand at the crossroads of her life”. If she has a child before finding employment, she has a fear that she will fade out from academia like some other female graduate students and alumnae of the University of Tokyo she knew. She knows female graduate students taking leave of an absence from graduate school for child rearing as well as female doctorate holders taking a break from research for child rearing. They have not come back to academia yet. They may or may not come back to academia in the future, but it is not certain at this stage. Kanako assumes that they will not come back to academia. The point is that, from Kanako’s view, they faded out from academia. An acquaintance in her 70s told Kanako that having a break from career for some years for child rearing in life would not be a problem at all, if one were capable and had motivation. Kanako has a close relationship with her and attends a cooking

class for sophisticated cuisine and table settings organized by her. Kanako's acquaintance has had a career in a field other than academia and raised two children. While Kanako's acquaintance's argument was based on her own experiences, Kanako still is not convinced that it is possible to develop a career if she has a child before finding employment that provides maternity and childcare leave. It would be ideal for her to find employment nearby, and then to have a child and take a maternity leave and childcare leave, but she thinks it would be quite difficult. While she would like to have tenure, she is not determined to apply for a position at universities that are too far from the area where she and her husband live. She thinks that it could be acceptable to live separately from her husband as long as she could come home to meet him on weekends, but she has become uncertain about how to prioritize her pending issues, including childbirth, employment, and married life.

Wakana's and Keiko's situations are similar to Kanako's in that their future plans are pending, including employment, childbirth, and family life. Unlike Kanako, Wakana and Keiko do not have a strong desire to have a child. While Wakana did not have a strong desire to have a child, seeing her friends starting to give birth recently made her wonder if she would have a child or not. Considering her age, she feels that she does not have much time to wait. She does not regret at all that she went to graduate school, but at the same time, she acknowledges that she narrowed the possibility of giving birth earlier by going to graduate school. Unlike Kanako whose husband is an employee of a company, Wakana's husband is a researcher searching for employment (tenure). Financial instability also makes her hesitate to decide to have a child. She thinks that she cannot help living separately from her husband, if she or her husband obtains an academic position in different places. However, she cannot live separately from her husband if she has a child. She has not thought about how to deal with the situation in which she has a child when her husband does not live with her. She would like to avoid the two things (living separately and having a child) happening at the same time. She says that she cannot decide whether to have a child or even make a family life plan at this

time. She thinks that she lets things take their course.

Like Wakana, Keiko does not have a desire to have a child. She said that either having a child or not having a child is acceptable. It depends on the situation. She would like to have a child because she has not experienced childbirth yet, but she does not have an absolute desire to have a child. She says that she may want to have a child if she can be employed before she turns 35. A female faculty advised her to not have children until she obtained tenure; otherwise an academic career would not be secure because child rearing requires too much energy and time and would interfere with research. Considering that so many men have long work hours in Japan (Cabinet Office, 2009b), it would not be easy to share housework and child rearing equally between wife and husband in some families. The faculty member's advice is understandable. Keiko's husband is extremely busy with work. He leaves home before 7:00 am and comes home before 1:00 am. Keiko's advisor told her that she could not expect to have "women's ordinary happiness" as she entered into graduate school and at that time she got ready to give up this happiness. Keiko says that "women's ordinary happiness" means becoming a full-time housewife, but eventually it means childbirth. Now she realizes the weight of not choosing "women's ordinary happiness" even more than when she was first told of this. For Keiko, pursuing a doctorate is incompatible with pursuing "women's ordinary happiness". Considering the time limit for childbirth, she thinks that it is difficult for women to work actively in the forefront of academia. As Kanako did, Keiko has set a period for which she aims for the possibility of working at the forefront of academia for two years. This will be a crucial time in her life. She says that she cannot make her life plan beyond two years from now. She said, "My mind is blank. I feel as if I am in the mist". Her intense concentration on research shows her strong determination to pursue an academic career. She has a full-time job three days a week in a local administrative office as a professional. After work she comes to her office at a certain university to study and stays there until 10:30 pm or 11:00 pm. She also comes to her office in the afternoon on other

weekdays and studies there until 11:00 pm or midnight. She is entitled to use an office at the university as an unpaid research fellow. Keiko informed me that it is common for graduate degree holders if they do not find employment upon graduation to become unpaid research fellows in order to avoid a blank period on their resume.

Kanako, Wakana, and Keiko worried about their unpredictable future. In contrast, Natsuko, did not worry when she was in a similar situation because she got used to an unpredictable future. She looked as if she had a strong barrier to protect her from uneasiness. She said that showing uneasiness as an adult is childish. When she got married, she did not live with her husband because they worked in different places. Upon earning her doctorate, she obtained an academic position. While one who was in that position was not expected to work for extended period of time, her position did not have a specific period of contract. She and her husband talked about the possibility that they may have not been able to live together until their retirement, though they would make an effort to. She did not worry about childbirth and child rearing while she and her husband were separated. She actually gave birth when they were separated. Thanks to her husband's transfer, she was able to live with her husband later. However, even before she knew if she could live with her husband, she did not consider giving up childbirth or her career at all. She thought that childbirth and career development should be done simultaneously because the body clock could not wait and life was always busy. Natsuko gave birth twice in her 30s; at the same time she developed her academic career. Among the research participants who did not give birth when they were students, Natsuko is an exceptional case in that she obtained an academic position (which is a kind of tenure because the position is not based on a contract for a specific period) without postponing childbirth. This suggests that in order to obtain both childbirth and an academic career, a woman may be required to be ready to live apart from her husband until retirement as well as be to be willing to raise a child without her husband present.

Housewife (status and mindset) for highly educated women

The gender norm of *ryōsai kenbo* support becoming a housewife, but socioeconomic conditions in a particular historical context also promoted the gender role model of the husband being the breadwinner and the wife staying home. The rapid growth of the economy in Japan after World War II required men devoting long hours to work and this required that women to stay home to support their husbands (Ueno, 1990/1991).¹¹⁸

Ueno (1994) indicates that the negative image of the housewife changed to positive in the 1970s and being housewife has become the symbol of affluence. The number of housewife-oriented women has increased in the younger generation. A public-opinion survey regarding gender equality, *danjo kyōdō sankaku ni kansuru yoron chōsa*, conducted by Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, indicates that women in a younger age group have stronger preference to be a housewife. In a public-opinion survey in 2007 (Cabinet Office, 2007a), 40.2 percent of women in their 20s expressed this preference and in the following survey in 2009, 36.1 percent of women in their 30s agree that the husband should be the breadwinner and the wife should stay at home (Cabinet Office, 2009a). These are the highest proportion among women under 60 in respective years. These high proportions suggest the difficulty in balancing career with family for women in Japan. Although younger people's preference to be a housewife tends to increase, almost everyone participating in this research, including women in their 20s and 30s, does not see becoming a housewife positively. Ueno (1994) indicates that EEOL provided opportunities for women to take the same responsibilities as men do, but indicates that this did not drastically increase the number of women who continued working. She attributes this to the fact that conditions for balancing raising children with work were not improved and that continuing in the workplace was not

¹¹⁸ The gender role that husband should be the breadwinner and the wife should stay home completed in the period of rapid economic growth in Japan in the 1960s (Ueno, 1990/1991). The period of rapid economic growth made husbands' income high enough to support family. As a result, many unemployed wives were produced (Kunihiro, 2001).

an attractive option for young women who saw the sacrifice required for women to balance work with family. This suggests that for some women, the difficulties in balancing work with family moved them to become housewives.

Existing studies of female bachelor's degree holders reveal that some of these women voluntarily choose to be housewives (Sasagawa, 2004/2006; Wakisaka and Noma, 1998). Sasagawa (2004/2006) shows examples of women in the younger generation, educated in university who voluntarily choose to be full-time housewives. These women choose to be housewives not because they feel obligated to do household tasks as wife, but because they would like to enjoy mothering and avoid the trouble of managing the burden of work and raising children. Research conducted by Wakisaka and Noma (1998) on female bachelor's degree holders also reveals that some voluntarily choose to be housewives for several reasons, including for their own hobby and study, for not having the financial need to work, and for raising children. Although some housewives choose to stay home due to the lack of quality day care, some women voluntarily choose to stay home regardless of the availability of quality day cares. Wakisaka and Noma (1998) reveal that most of these women internalize gender roles and even see having a job for contributing to the enrichment of the family.¹¹⁹

Existing studies reveal that some highly educated women also prefer to become housewives. However, almost no one among the participants in this research was willing to become a housewife except for Yumi. Yumi sees being a housewife positively, even though she does not consider becoming a housewife at this time. She is a single woman in her 20s. After earning a master's degree in social sciences, she has worked as a professional for a research company. As Sasagawa (2004/2006) claims that women do not choose to become housewives on the basis of the housework, Yumi does not consider becoming a housewife due to the responsibility of doing housework. What she would like to do most is advocacy,

¹¹⁹ Having a job for family is also seen in women in blue color, while their purpose of working is for financial contribution to family (Kondo, 1990).

that is proposing values of life what she believes are good. She would like to do activities that are connected to communities. She wants not only to practice her ideas by herself, but also to share her ideas with society. She would like to send a message to society to suggest reconsideration of current relationships with environment and inter-personal relationships. She thinks that current city life is based on individualism and mass consumption, which has aggravated an environmental problem and has made human relationships tenuous. She thinks being a housewife may put her in the best position to change these undesirable situations, because it would be difficult to do it as an occupation. This type of housewife is referred to in the literature as *katsudō senryō shufu*, which means full-time activity housewife (Ueno, 1994). While Yumi sees a housewife positively, her positive image of a housewife does not come from tasks expected of a housewife (housework and child rearing). Instead, her positive image of a housewife comes from the fact that a housewife is expected to have abundant free time to use for activities in which she is interested. Thus, as the other women in this study, Yumi is not attracted to being a housewife merely to be a housewife.

The fact that Yumi is the only woman in this study who sees being a housewife positively does not necessarily mean that all other women have seen a housewife negatively throughout their lives. Their gender views change with time. Previous studies suggest that highly educated women with good academic performances do not necessarily deny traditional gender views (Nakanishi, 1998; Proweller 1998). Low achievers in schools and universities were seen to have the tendency to internalize housewife-oriented “traditional” gender views (Nakanishi, 1998). Through her research on women in women’s high schools and women’s universities, Nakanishi (1998) finds that some students whose academic achievement is high also internalize traditional gender views. She also finds that university is more influential than family for women’s choice of direction in life, including career and family. In her research of girls in a prestigious private girls’ school, Proweller (1998) also finds that students construct identities and negotiate their views as women in school. She argues that

existing discourse does not dictate girls' positions, but they form themselves through interacting with practices in school and society.

While the university is not always more influential than family in directing women's life, Nakanishi's and Proweller's argument is applicable to some of the highly educated women in this research (Kanakano and Sanae). Because of the environment in which she was raised, Kanako had a vague idea of becoming a housewife before she entered university. Her mother was a full-time housewife and she did not have any other women in her family who could be role models. Because she was raised in the country, it was common that her friends from her hometown got married in their early 20s. However, she changed her mind after she entered the University of Tokyo because no one there considered becoming a housewife. She earned a doctorate and is now searching for academic positions. Sanae also took it for granted that she would become a housewife before going to graduate school. As Kanako, Sanae did not have a role model other than full-time housewives among her family and relatives. While Sanae was impressed by therapists when she encountered a problem in her junior high school days and aimed to become a clinical psychologist, she still thought that she would become a housewife while working as a clinical psychologist on a part-time basis. She says that going to graduate school opened the new world for her. After earning a master's degree, she obtained a license of a clinical psychologist. After working as a school counselor and a part-time lecturer, she became a professional in a foundation as a regular employee. She says, "going to graduate school did not suddenly change the world, but the world connected with graduate school is what I had not known". Going to graduate school changed her view of being a housewife. In an interview, she told me, "a housewife is separated from employment in society. It (becoming a housewife) is like a retirement in one's 20s. In other words, it is permanent unemployment". Getting married and becoming a housewife is considered to be employed at home, as a new workplace, and is referred to "permanent employment" in Japan (Kunihiro, 2001, p.69). Sanae's expression of "permanent unemployment" suggests a drastic

change of her view of being a housewife.

Graduate education resulting in paths toward conflicting directions-transcending and strengthening gender roles of women simultaneously

Graduate education provides a means of transcending roles of women as wives and mothers (*ryōsai kenbo*) and at the same time strengthens traditional gender roles of women as housewives by narrowing career choices. In other words, it is not right to think that the higher women's educational levels are, the less traditional the gender roles become. While Bourdieu (1979/1984) sees school as a mechanism to reproduce an existing social order, my research data reveal that graduate school has a more complicated function. Graduate education motivates women to pursue lifetime careers that do not agree with an existing social order. However, in terms of strengthening the gender roles of women as housewives by narrowing career choices, graduate education could be said to contribute to maintaining an existing social order. Before discussing the specific cases of the research participants in my study, I will refer to a prior study on identities of housewives who received higher education. Kunihiro (2001) conducted research on the complicated identities of middle-aged housewives in 1996. She found that some of highly educated wives in urban areas have complicated housewife identities laden with a dilemma.¹²⁰ In her research, some unemployed wives neither identify themselves as housewives nor non-housewives. All of these women and their husbands received higher education. Their reasons for answering like this included: "I don't think I am a housewife while I am seen as housewife by others." (Kunihiro, 2001, p.67) and "I have the aspect of a housewife, but I have other aspects" (Kunihiro, 2001, p.67). Kunihiro (2001) interprets this as indicating that having the identity of a housewife is different from being identified as housewife by others.

This is applicable to participants in my research. Some women do not have the

¹²⁰ Kunihiro (2001) considers junior college graduates to be highly educated in her research.

identity of housewife or are not comfortable being referred as housewives while they are likely to be seen as housewives. Kanako and Wakana are two such women. They work as part-time lecturers. (Kanako is a postdoctoral fellow as well.) Their husbands are working and it is Kanako and Wakana who are in charge of housework. They are likely to be seen as housewives, but they do not consider them housewives. Kanako says that she is like a kind of freeter. Cabinet Office (the government) defines freeters are young people between 15 and 34 who do not work as a regular employee though they would like to work as regular employees.¹²¹ Considering that housewives are not part of the freeters category and are socially accepted compared with househusbands, she could identify herself as a housewife who has a part-time job. She is not socially seen as a freeter, but the fact that she identifies herself as a freeter indicates that she has a strong reluctance to being categorized as a housewife.

Wakana thinks that she might be a full-time housewife because she does not have a full-time job, though she thinks that her life might not be like a typical housewife's life. She is also very uncomfortable with being categorized as a housewife. She raised the example of filling out her occupation in a document. She says, "I am really reluctant to circle housewife for occupation because housewife is associated with one who does nothing and has *sanshoku hirunetsuki*. In my mind, being a housewife is not a desirable situation. Of course, I do not blame other housewives and full-time housewives, but as my ideal, I do not want to be just a housewife." *Sansyoku hirunetsuki* means three meals and a nap. *Sansyoku hirunetsuki* is a mode of expression to describe a relaxed life of full-time housewives.

Kanako and Wakana see being a housewife as an undesirable situation. They earned their doctorates as a result of their hard work and aim to become researchers. For them, being

¹²¹ It is notable that housewives are not counted as freeters, while all men who are not employed as regular employees or self-employed are categorized into freeters regardless of their marital status, which implies that househusbands are part of freeters, while housewives are not (Cabinet Office, 2003b).

a housewife is a provisional stage of their lives until they find permanent academic positions instead of choosing to be housewives positively as some highly educated women do according to existing studies (Sasagawa, 2004/2006; Wakisaka and Noma, 1998). In other words, being a housewife is a result of the fact that they were not be able to find employment. Therefore, they cannot have a positive identity as a housewife and being referred as a housewife makes them feel uncomfortable.

Some women (Kanako and Yuka) see becoming a housewife as the worst-case scenario. Kanako is a postdoctoral fellow and a part-time lecturer. While having difficulty finding a tenure-track position, Kanako thinks that if she cannot find employment while she still has her postdoctoral fellowship, she cannot help becoming a housewife because it is unlikely that she will find employment without having any academic affiliation. She wonders if she can make up her mind as to whether she can accept becoming a full-time housewife. She does not want to work anywhere else other than in academia. She indicates the difference between men and women in meanings of career. For men, career is the means of living, whereas for women career is pursuing self-realization. She says, “married women who are unemployed are not referred to *himo*, are they? (*Himo* is a derogatory word meaning a man who is financially dependent on a woman.) I feel that it is possible that women can pursue career enhancement for self-realization in their studies, instead of finding employment out of the necessity to work hard to bear the burden of supporting a family budget. However, men are placed under the pressure of doing more than self-realization through career once they are past a certain age”. Kanako’s husband is a regular employee of a company and she is not required to find employment to support family budget. She does not dare to consider pursuing a career other than academic one. Similarly, when she was a graduate student, Yuka thought that she could accept becoming a housewife and doing her research, if she got married and could not find employment. She actually became a university faculty member as a single woman. Her worst-case scenario was not realized. It is notable that Kanako and Yuka do not

assume that they need to work for living in their married life. Considering that economic necessity requires many wives to work, full-time housewives are in a privileged class that needs not work but can do what they want to do (Ueno, 1994). In this sense, thinking that the worst-case scenario is to become a full-time housewife is an idea of the privileged class. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, highly educated women tend to be married to highly educated men who have high incomes (Mifune, 1996). There is a tendency that the higher the husband's income is, the lower wife's employment rate (Kunihiro, 2001). As some women did in my study, Kanako and Yuka, two women in my study, went to a doctoral program to become researchers as a lifetime career, which is beyond a role of *ryōsai kenbo*, but at the same time, they did not deny the possibility of becoming a full-time housewife.

Like Yuka, Kae went to a doctoral program with the aim of becoming a researcher as an appropriate lifetime career for a woman. Unlike Kanako, Kae was married and had two children before earning her doctorate. Kae, gave a higher priority to having a child over research/career no matter how difficult it might be for mothers to find employment. She thinks it is ridiculous to change her way of life because of others' interference. She is in her 40s, but has never yet been employed in a regular position. Instead, she has consistently applied for fellowships and has been selected as a fellow until now. Compared with her male colleagues who became faculty members, she feels that her life is precarious as a professional in academia although she is not certain that she has not found employment because she is a woman. While she wants to find a tenure-track or tenured academic position, she has continued to be a fellow and her financial stability is presumed to depend on her husband who is a medical doctor. Despite her dedication to research for many years and her wish to be employed, graduate education narrowed her career choices. As a result, graduate education strengthened a gender segregated roles in her marriage relationship assigning her husband as breadwinner and assigning her to be the major parent rearing and educating children.

However, her graduate education also provides her with the possibility of becoming a faculty

member at sometime, a role transcended by women's role as wives and mothers.

Graduate education provides women with academic training to pursue academic careers, but at the same time, graduate education at the doctoral level narrows career choices to academia. As a result, those who cannot obtain academic positions could choose to be unemployed and to become housewives. The significance of graduate education could change depending on whether women could obtain full-time academic positions or not.

It is notable that no research participant in my study told me that they view themselves as the recipient of an investment through the national tax subsidizing their education. My research participants do not express their will or determination that they need to contribute to society as the ones who received a large investment through a national university. Instead, they seem to view their graduate education more personally. Considering the fact that they invested their own money to their graduate education and most women have student loans, this is understandable. If one has a loan from the undergraduate level to the doctoral level, the amount of loan is over 10 million Yen (100,000 U.S. dollars at the exchange rate of 100 Yen to the U.S. dollar) (MEXT, 2009b). As mentioned in an earlier chapter, compared with other OECD countries, Japan highly depends on household expenditure for higher education (OECD, 2012).¹²² Japan is categorized as a country "with high levels of tuition fees but less-developed student support system" by OECD (OECD, 2012, p.279). No one discusses whether educated housewives are a poor tax investment or not, but Mariko did. Mariko participated in my study as a former staff member of Office for Gender Equality, the University of Tokyo, not as a graduate degree holder in the social sciences and humanities. She told me that she does not want graduates of the University of Tokyo to become housewives regardless of the levels of education (undergraduate and graduate) because of the large amount of national tax has been invested to their education at the University of Tokyo. She raised examples to show what a wonderful study environment

¹²² Household expenditure for higher education in Japan is 50.7 percent in 2009 (OECD, 2012).

the University of Tokyo provides, such as libraries and the ratio of students and faculty.¹²³ She told me that considering that there are many women who can neither study at the University of Tokyo nor study in such a wonderful environment despite their wish, she wants alumnae to think about what they can do as graduates of the University of Tokyo. She has a strong desire that graduates of the University of Tokyo do not become housewives and take an easy life. For Mariko, becoming a housewife means to take an easy life. Mariko's remarks suggest how low the status of housewife is placed at the University of Tokyo. Kanako's and Wakana's strong unwillingness to be referred to housewife could be related to the low status of housewife at the University of Tokyo as suggested by Mariko's remarks.

Mariko wants graduates of the University of Tokyo to contribute to society by doing what only graduates of the University of Tokyo can do. It is not certain that if there is work that only graduates of the University of Tokyo can do, but it should be noted that to keep hoping to find employment requiring knowledge and skills obtained through graduate education could lead to producing housewives. Becoming a housewife could be a means of finding employment requiring graduate level knowledge and skills. For example, Kanako and Wakana are part-time lecturers. They could be categorized as housewives, while they aim to become full-time university faculty members. Kanako says that she thinks that her parents-in-law see her as a full-time housewife teaching at a university as a part-time job. Wakana also says that as she does not have a full-time job, she may be actually a full-time housewife. The line between a housewife and a prospective university faculty member is not clear. Kanako and Wakana may or may not find full-time academic positions in the future. Mariko's remarks sound like that alumnae of the University of Tokyo can do special thing

¹²³ The University of Tokyo was ranked 15th for the ratio of students and faculty in 2011 (The lowest ratio is the first.) (Nakamura et al, 2012). Considering that most universities ranked below 15th were specialized universities in medical sciences, being ranked 15th is significantly high as a general university. The University of Tokyo was also ranked 5th for university libraries (Nakamura et al, 2012) in 2010 among universities in Japan. Libraries were ranked by several items, including the number of books and budget for libraries.

that only graduates of the University of Tokyo can do if they wish, however, this is not necessarily true. Some alumnae may have voluntarily chosen to become housewives, but as Kanako's and Wakana's examples show, some alumnae chose a quasi-housewife life for the purpose of obtaining full-time academic positions. They might be able to find full-time employment that does not require knowledge and skills they gained through graduate education, but they dare not do so. Keiko clearly said that what makes it possible for her to continue pursuing an academic career is an economic base founded on marriage as a safety net. Keiko indicated that many others give up pursuing an academic career for financial reasons. Keiko does not have a full-time job, but she has multiple part-time jobs in order to prepare herself to obtain a full-time academic position. Judging from the context in our conversation, it is not likely that Mariko meant housewives like Kanako and Wakana, but it is important to understand the diversity involved in being a housewife as well as the fact that it is financial resources that allow graduate degree holders to keep pursuing an academic career. If they cannot afford to be without a full-time job, they need to work on a full-time basis regardless if the work is related to their specialty obtained through graduate education.

It is also important to be aware of the fact that factors that make it difficult for highly educated women to continue working are not purely personal, but social as shown earlier in the literature. In other words, highly educated women's decisions whether to pursue their career or not should be thought about as part of a structural societal issue. For example, due to the extremely long work hours required to work as managerial positions (*sōgōshoku*), it is not surprising that women quit their job for child rearing. Re-entering as full-time regular employees in labor market after an interval is difficult. In Japan it is common that managerial positions require transfers that mean moving, so, pursuing a career in business may require families live apart. Pursuing an academic career also could require families live apart, as Kanako and Wakana seriously consider that possibility. While Mariko wants alumnae of the University of Tokyo to do what only graduates of the University of Tokyo can do, considering

a larger social structure that makes it difficult for women to pursue the well-balanced life between career and family, alumnae of the University of Tokyo should not be blamed when they do not always give career the first priority. Otherwise, having received an education at the University of Tokyo would negate their individual agency, restrict individual freedom, and create the burden of being tough women who never give up their career no matter what, instead of expanding possibilities of choices in their lives. As the hegemony of gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* restricted women's lifestyles, expecting highly educated women who graduated from the University of Tokyo to give the first priority to work would restrict their lifestyles. Although almost every research participant did not make a positive comment about becoming a housewife, this does not necessarily mean that they are hostile to housewives. For example, Natsuko, a university faculty member who is a working mother of two small children, was surprised to see alumnae of some private women's secondary school's strong hostility to full-time housewives when she was in college. Natsuko was neither determined to dedicate her life to work nor had strong desire to become a housewife. It was natural for her to continue working after marriage and childbirth. In the next section, I discuss how three mothers (Junko, Mayumi, and Minako) utilize their graduate education in their child rearing, though they are not housewives.

Graduate education contributing to education in the home setting in out-of-preschool and out-of-school time

Previous studies reveal how the mothers' education levels influence education at home (e.g., Honda, 2008; Hirao, 2007). Education at home here means here parental involvement during out-of-preschool and out-of-school time, which is different from home schooling.¹²⁴ Honda (2008) found that education characterized by the mothers' education

¹²⁴ Home school is not legally allowed in Japan. School Education Act enacted in 1947 (Article 17 and 18) stipulates that guardians should let children receive compulsory education in schools. School Education Act does not allow home schooling.

levels transmits advantages and disadvantages from the parents' generation to the children's generation; children of highly educated mothers tend to be in more advantageous positions in future academic performances and career. However, existing research does not discuss how graduate education particularly contributes to education at home. Some women in this research utilize their graduate education to a considerable extent during out-of-school time for their children. Among twenty research participants, nine women are mothers. Among these nine mothers, three women in particular (Junko, Mayumi, and Minako) told me how they utilized their graduate education for education in the home setting and the principles of their child rearing. Junko and Mayumi particularly utilize their graduate education to help educate their children while Minako utilized her graduate education in her principle of child rearing; the satisfaction that she gained from her graduate studies formed her attitudes toward educating her daughter. These women (Junko, Mayumi, and Minako) utilized their graduate education in different ways. Their attitudes and parental involvement in educating their children suggest that the knowledge and experiences gained in graduate school are significant in their child rearing.

When I visited Junko's home for an interview, I saw how she educated her preschool children at home during out-of-preschool time. Junko and I sat down at a dining table at her house in a residential area in Tokyo on a spring day. Junko is a postgraduate research student preparing to study in the doctoral program. Junko is in her 30s and the mother of three young children, two preschoolers and a baby. Her three children, including the baby, played together in the living room. Her two small children, a girl and boy, politely greeted me when I greeted them. The girl even brought slippers for me when I came close to the table. While Junko and I talked, the three children watched a video quietly while they ate snacks. The little boy brought ice cream and pieces of chocolates. He kindly offered to share their snacks with me. Their polite manners and consideration to a guest suggested that they were well-educated children. Books and educational and entertaining toys, such as blocks and a *sugoroku*, a

Japanese board game, are abundant in a living room. When I sat down, Junko set aside sheets of *Kumon* mathematics learning materials that were on the table and served a couple of tea with a pretty wood stick decorated with brown sugar on its tip to stir sugar into coffee. *Kumon* learning materials on the table suggest that their two children go to *Kumon* to study. *Kumon* is a famous educational service provider that provides tutoring for preschoolers as well as school-aged children. At *Kumon* classes, preschoolers as well as school-age children work on mathematics, Japanese, and English.¹²⁵ For preschoolers, *Kumon* is part of early education to develop children's talents and abilities at the early stage of their lives. Junko sent her two preschoolers to *Kumon* so that they would not have trouble reading and writing Japanese when they study in an elementary school. Junko's children, except for her baby, go to a nursery school instead of a kindergarten. Junko tried to supplement what her children gained from a nursery school so that they would be able to read and write *hiragana*, the Japanese cursive syllabary, as she thinks that children attending kindergartens are able to do. As mentioned earlier, a nursery school is a welfare facility intended to provide daycare for children, while a kindergarten is an educational institution intended to nurture children as well as to promote their physical and mental development.

Among the nine mothers, Junko is the one who associated the role of mother with graduate education in the most direct way. Junko consciously utilized her graduate education. She attributed her research skills and problem awareness to her graduate education. Junko took initiative in various activities for her children, including organizing crime prevention seminars for mothers and children, having children had farming and cooking experiences. For example, she rents a field and cultivates vegetables to teach her children that there are things that we cannot control. She wants her children to learn not only from books but also from firsthand experiences. She is eager to provide a well-rounded education for her children.

She decided to go to graduate school to meet her desire of pursuing her studies,

¹²⁵ For further information of *Kumon*, please see Hirao (2001a).

rather than to excel in her child rearing, but she thinks that graduate education contributes to planning and implementing helpful child rearing activities.

Junko: Well, I think it is because I was educated in graduate school that I can plan and implement these events.

Y.Y.: Uh-huh. So, you practically utilize graduate education, don't you?

Junko: Yeah, I do. These abilities, like searching, become a part of my habits. Other graduate degree holders also have become accustomed to searching, haven't they?

Y.Y.: Uh-huh.

Junko: Graduate degree holders have the habit of becoming aware of problems and searching.

An extant study (Honda, 2008) found that mothers in high socioeconomic class tend to make an effort not only develop their children's academic achievement and enrich their cultural level by giving them opportunities to take lessons, but also to give them opportunities to have variable experiences. Highly educated mothers (with bachelor's degree or more) tend to be more involved and have more carefully thought-out consideration in their children's education than do less educated mothers (Honda, 2008). Holloway's research (2010) on Japanese mothers also shows that more highly educated mothers appear to be eager to provide education in the home setting than do less educated mothers. Highly educated women's heavy involvement in their children's education is explained by the fact that Japanese have high expectations for mothers. The norm of *ryōsai kenbo* still persists, although it no longer is the only absolute norm for women. In Japan, a mother's role is extremely highly valued and mothers are expected to be well trained to produce the next generation well (Brinton, 1993). Citing an article in the Japan Labor Bulletin (1990), Brinton (1993) indicates the important role of mothers as the one who takes the responsibility to influence their children's future. Women who received higher education utilize their education by investing in their children's education, which brings better education and better income for their children. In that sense, a mother is an important agent for social reproduction

and the social success for their children. As previous studies have shown, Junko is one of many highly educated women who enthusiastically educate their children. However, what is not covered by previous studies is that Junko is different in that she attributes her abilities to provide high quality home education to the academic training she received in graduate school. Judging from Junko's heavy involvement in her children's education and the inclination that highly educated mothers tend to be more involved in their children's education than less educated mothers, does graduate education strengthen traditional gender roles in a sense? This question was lingering while I conducted this research. There are no clear-cut answers. The answer is yes and no, depending on contexts and cases. In the case of Junko, her heavy involvement in educating her children, based on her graduate education, occupied her life to the level that she set aside her own studies. Graduate study strengthened her role of a mother as educator. However, in another sense, graduate study helped Junko pursue an academic career, which goes beyond the traditional gender roles of women. As a postgraduate research student, Junko aims to have a career using her studies. What should be also noted is that the roles Junko plays could be shifted as time passes. This research showed me only a glimpse of a limited period of her life. If I see her life in longer terms, the significance of her graduate education in her life could be shifted from being mainly utilized for enriching child rearing to being mainly utilized for developing her career.

Mayumi also acknowledged the benefits of graduate education for child rearing, but in different ways from Junko. Mayumi is a university faculty member in her 50s. Unlike other participants in this study, when she entered graduate school, she was in her 30s and already had two children. For Mayumi, the period when she was a graduate student overlapped the period that she was building her family as a mother who raised children. She was very attentive to balance her study with child rearing so that she did not neglect child rearing due to her graduate studies. Unlike Junko who applies overall academic training in graduate school to child rearing, such as searching and planning, Mayumi applied her

academic training to education in out-of-school time in more particular direct and concrete ways. Her area of study is related to the development and growth of children. She applied what she had learned from books to understand what actually happened in her family and adjusted relationships with her children in accordance with their developmental stages.

Based on her learning from her graduate education, Mayumi practiced gender equal child rearing. For example, she learned that in Japan self-restraint is encouraged while self-assertion is not developed well. In addition, in Japan girls are expected to be even more self-restraining. In this sense, for girls restraint has a double meaning. Based on this knowledge, she intentionally taught her children, especially her daughter to be assertive in appropriate manners according to their ages. She taught her children that they did not have to decide their choices and behaviors depending on their sex so that they could freely live irrespective of sex in Japanese society. For example, she had their son and daughter chose colors of their clothes irrespective of their sex. She did not say of pink as a girls' color and blue as a boys' color. She told me of one episode. When her children played doctors and patients in a nursery school or elementary school, teachers said that boys were doctors and girls were nurses. Mayumi taught them a different view. She taught that roles were not decided depending on sex and that boys and girls could become doctors. Mayumi's continuous efforts to provide gender-equal education based on her graduate study seem to be fruitful. She says that probably partly because of this education, and partly because of her daughter's natural tendency, her daughter grew up to be a woman who can assert her own ideas. Her son grew up to be a man with a gentle nature. Mayumi did not encourage him to be assertive as much as she encouraged her daughter because girls are doubly restrained. Now her son and daughter also equally share housework as family members. Mayumi and her husband do not expect their daughter to do more housework than their son does because their daughter is a woman. Mayumi says, "My family does not have any rule based on gender".

Previous studies of highly educated mothers (Hirao, 2001a, 2007; Holloway, 2010;

Honda, 2008) show that they tend to be more involved in educating their children during out-of-school time than less educated mothers. However, none of these studies explicitly show how graduate education in particular is applied in an actual setting of child rearing in the following two points. First, no one has studied the phenomenon of explicit gender education as Mayumi taught her children. Hirao (2001a; 2007) does not discuss gender education. Holloway (2010) and Honda (2008) refer to mothers' expectations of their children. Holloway's study reveals that most mothers tend to reproduce gender-related differences in roles, which assigns men as breadwinners and women as homemakers. Honda's study found that even a mother who has bachelor's degree expects their sons to take positions as leaders in their career, because they are men. Therefore, these mothers do not have ideas to provide gender education for their children as Mayumi did. Second, definitions of highly educated mothers are various in Hirao's, Holloway's, and Honda's studies and none of these studies particularly focus on graduate degree holders. In her chapter issued in 2001, Hirao (2001a)'s work suggests that highly educated women are four-year university graduates. In her work in 2007, women who have higher education are categorized in one group. This group may include women who attended junior colleges. Mothers who received graduate education may or may not be included in Hirao's works. Holloway's study (2010) does not include any mothers who received graduate education as research participants. In Honda's study (2008), undergraduate and graduate degree holders are included in the same category in her analysis. Direct applicability of graduate education to child rearing could depend on area of the woman's study, but Mayumi's case shows that it is certain that the understanding of specialized areas of study in graduate school contributes to child rearing that may not be implemented by those who did not receive higher education.

Mayumi's child rearing based on her graduate education shows that graduate education could weaken traditional gender roles in the next generation through education in out-of-school time. Her graduate education is surely attributed to weakening traditional

gender roles in her children. However, the implementation of gender-based education to this extent would have been difficult without having a husband with whom she could share her ideas as well as a home environment in which she could embody a gender equal relationship with her husband. If Mayumi's husband's work did not allow him to share household tasks with his wife, it would have been difficult to inculcate the idea that roles were not decided by gender even though her husband had the same desire to raise children in a gender equal home environment. Mayumi's husband is a university faculty member, a position that is considered to have relatively flexible work hours compared with company employees in Japan. As mentioned earlier, working in a career track is required to work for long hours. For example, Keiko's husband who works as a company employee usually comes home after midnight. If Mayumi's husband worked like Keiko's husband, it would have been extremely difficult to share household tasks and to practice gender education through the example showing how they shared their household tasks. Furthermore, Mayumi actually became a university faculty member after earning a doctorate. As she taught her children that one could become a medical doctor irrespective of one's sex, through her own life, she proved that women could become a professor. Gender education would not have been convincing if actual examples had not been presented at home. Mayumi was in an advantageous environment to apply her graduate education for teaching her children at home. Foucault (1975/1995) insists that educational institutions produce "docile body", but Mayumi's case illustrates that graduate school did not make her docile. Instead, graduate school trained her to be a critical thinker to resist the major gender discourse in Japanese society.

Existing literature reveals that mothers tend to be evaluated by the quality and achievement of their children (Hirao, 2001a). Some mothers feel vicarious satisfaction through the academic success of their children (Hirao, 2001a). As one of the mothers in Hirao's study succinctly remarked "A good child is necessary for becoming a good mother" (Hirao, 2001a). Sanae, who earned a master's degree from the University of Tokyo after

earning a bachelor's degree from another university, told me of the reaction of a friend of her mother's when she had heard that Sanae had been admitted to the University of Tokyo. The friend of her mother said to her mother, "You will be called a mother of a student at the University of Tokyo". Being a mother of a student at the University of Tokyo is considered to give one a sense of pride as a mother. However, extant literature on mothers who graduated from the University of Tokyo maintains that they tend to have achieved self-realization, which makes them avoid directing their children into a proxy competitions as well as expecting too much of them (Kataoka, in Kobayashi and Kai, 2009). Although it is too simplistic to think that all mothers who graduated from the University of Tokyo achieved self-realization, Minako is one of those mothers who did and did not have any desire to realize her wishes through her children. After earning a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Tokyo, she became a professional in mass media. When I asked her if she had anything in her life that she would like to utilize her graduate study for, including career and child rearing, she replied that she did not have any desire for her child to achieve what she had not been able to do. She says,

I have nothing to regret. I don't have an unmet desire that I wish I could have studied more at the doctoral level or in different areas of study. (Since I studied in graduate school), I already know what is like academic world. I did everything that I wanted to do and gained what I wanted to study. I am fully satisfied with all of these and have a sense of achievement.

Studying for six years at the University of Tokyo gave Minako full satisfaction and the sense of achievement. By referring to discontented full-time housewives who left the workplace because they had children and then tried to realize what they were not able to achieve through their children and their education, she explains how different she is from such discontented mothers. She says that discontented mothers would have their children take violin lessons and send them to famous private elementary schools to meet their (the

mother's) unmet desire for a successful career of their own. It is notable that Junko was eager to send her daughter to a private elementary school and even gave up her study for a while for this purpose, while she is not a part of mothers who aim to achieve self-realization through their children. Minako does not feel that she needs to be evaluated by her daughter's achievements because she has her own achievements in her career. It is notable that unlike Minako, Minako's mother wanted her children to obtain what she had not been able to obtain, including high education and cultural status. Minako's mother wanted to go to a 4-year university, but she went to a junior college since the situation did not allow her to go to university partly because college education was not considered to be necessary for women at that time and partly because she was responsible for taking care of her younger sisters as the oldest daughter. Minako's mother even opposed Minako's marriage because she seemed to think marriage would disadvantage Minako's career although Minako's husband is also a graduate of the University of Tokyo and he did not have any objection to Minako's intention to pursue her career. As Mayumi's case illustrates, graduate school does not necessarily make women "docile" (Foucault, 1975/1995), Minako's case also illustrates that graduate school can make a woman critical of an inseparably strong relationship between mother and child to the extent that it inhibits a woman from identifying herself as her own person, separate from her child. It should be noted that Minako's mother's moral support contributed to providing Minako with "the best education" (quoted from Minako's words) at the University of Tokyo, though Minako does not see mothers in general who try to achieve self-realization through children as a positive thing.

Minako and Junko both had graduate education in master's programs at the University of Tokyo. In the case of Junko, graduate education motivated her to be heavily involved in her children's early education and she made efforts to send her daughter to send a private elementary school. In contrast, graduate education directed Minako to avoid heavy personal involvement in educating her daughter and she is not interested in sending her

daughter to elite schools.

Transposing graduate education into a higher quality of children's preschool education or pursuing research/career?-struggles as highly educated mothers

My research data reveal that graduate education is transposed into a higher quality of children's preschool education. I indicated earlier that graduate education provides a means of transcending the roles of women as wives and mothers by opening professional career opportunities, but at the same time strengthens the traditional gender roles of women as housewives by narrowing career choices. By transposing graduate education into a higher quality of children's preschool education, graduate education also strengthens gender roles of women as mothers who are expected to be educators of their children. My research data also suggest that highly educated mothers struggle to pursue career/study and provide quality education and decide their own points of the best balance, which are changeable as time shifts. Among the nine mothers, Junko is the one who consciously chose to give up her study for a while for the purpose of providing quality education for her child.

Junko transposed graduate education into a higher quality of children's preschool education by preparing her child to receive a higher quality education in a private elementary school and by providing various opportunities for her children, including farmwork and cooking. Junko is a postgraduate research student who earned a master's degree from the University of Tokyo. She aims to become a full-time researcher. While raising three small children, she studies to be admitted to study at the doctoral level at the University of Tokyo. She says that she would recommend women go to graduate school if they are active and have considerable financial resources because it contributes to the family fortune if the mother has wider perspectives. She associates women with mothers and insists that highly educated mothers enhance the cultural capital at home. She says that she may not recommend men to go to graduate school because it may cause a problem where men cannot support their family.

She considers the husband to be a breadwinner and considers the wife to be an educator of children. Her remarks indicate that she internalized the division of labor based on gender roles at home and give an impression that she is satisfied to focus on playing her role as mother. However, she disagrees with the idea that mothers should give up their dreams for their children. Junko internalized traditional gender views and opposing views at the same time. She was in a dilemma between her desire to fulfill her responsibility as a highly educated mother to provide quality education for her children and her wish to pursue her own study and career as an individual.¹²⁶

Junko struggled with realizing her aspiration as an individual and as a mother at the same time. As an individual, she wanted to become a full-time researcher. As a mother, she wanted to provide quality education for her three children. Though Junko had a passion to pursue her study, she gave up her study for a while to educate her children. She said that she is an outgoing person and likes to work outside home. She never thought about becoming a full-time housewife. Becoming a full-time housewife was not an option in her life. However, she feels the dilemma of her life as a mother and her life as an individual. Existing studies show that her personal struggles are not unique among highly educated women in Japan. Educating children is one of the reasons given for highly educated women's low labor force participation rate (Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, 2006). Honda's research on education at home during out-of-school time (2008) reveals that highly educated mothers struggle with striking the balance between providing quality education for their children and realizing their own wishes. Honda (2008) found that the higher a mother's education level becomes, the more eager she is to give priority to her children's education overall. Hirao's research on Japanese motherhood and early childhood education (2001a) describes the struggles of highly educated mothers who discontinue their careers for child rearing. Junko

¹²⁶ As presented in chapter 5, Yuka also has traditional and non-traditional gender views in her life plan. However, she has these views strategically so that she can use either depending on her convenience.

said “If mothers give up their wishes for children and children are told so, it would be too much of a burden for the children.” She referred to a brochure that says that as children grow, they will begin to see how their mothers live as a person, so living a life in which mothers sacrifice everything for their children will cause the children a great deal of trouble. Junko says that this is absolutely right. At the same time, Junko says, “Having said that, in order to provide good education for children, mothers are required to be involved in educating children to a great extent in Japanese society. I cannot help taking a lifestyle that I have denied. (She denies that mothers should sacrifice their personal desires for their children.) By providing children with good education, I cannot help following the trend of prioritizing children over self-realization of mothers”.

Existing research by Kataoka, an educational sociologist, reveals that the higher a mother’s education level becomes, the more their children, as students, take entrance examinations for private schools (Kobayashi & Kai, 2009 in Asahi Shimbun Weekly AERA November 2, 2009). Junko is one of these mothers. She took a break from her study for a while to prepare her daughter for her entrance examination for private elementary schools. After visiting several schools, including public and private elementary schools, Junko decided to send her daughter to a private school because she thought that private elementary schools provide better education than public schools. For example, English was added as part of school curriculum for fifth and sixth graders starting from 2011. Junko is not comfortable sending her daughter to a public school where teachers do not have proficiency in teaching English. As she has had experiences studying abroad, she feels that she has a higher level of English abilities than public school teachers have. She had her daughter take classes at a kind of *juku* for preschool children to prepare for the entrance examinations. She says that elementary school entrance examinations examine not only the children but also the mothers. Through examining children, they examine how mothers are involved in educating their children. According to Junko, mothers who have full-time jobs are blamed by private

elementary schools for forcing children to live at the adult's pace whereas the mothers should live at the children's pace. Although mothers are not openly blamed in so many words, she felt that message through the experience of her daughter's entrance examinations. Junko did not mean that children of working mothers cannot be admitted to private elementary schools, but the heavy involvement, including picking up children from schools and visiting schools, required by private schools does not allow mothers to work. In the first place, preparation itself for taking entrance examinations is hard for working mothers. Preparation includes having children taken classes at a preparatory school for entrance examinations. While Junko, among my research participants, is especially devoted to educating her children, she is not an exception among highly educated women in Japan.

In addition sending children to a private school cannot be considered unless you have financial resources. Hirao (2007)'s research shows the financial aspect of education during out-of-school time by mothers with different educational levels. She indicates that the private educational services are "an integral part of educational system in Japan" (Hirao, 2007, p.171). According to her, highly educated mothers are more likely to use private educational services such as *juku*. Heavy involvement in educating children not only requires time and effort but also financial resources. Mothers with a high educational background are more likely to be able to choose not to be employed to meet the financial needs of purchasing educational services for their children. The Hirao's research finding indicates that the mother's educational background tends to be associated with family financial resources, which creates differences in mothers' involvement in educating their children. Junko has made a tremendous effort to provide high quality education for her children. Even before her children reach school age, using *jukus*, including Kumon and preparatory classes for entrance examinations of private elementary schools, Junko eagerly educates them. Considering that 99% of elementary schools in Japan are public (MEXT, 2012a; MEXT, n.d.), choosing a private elementary school for her daughter indicates Junko's considerable eagerness in

educating her children as well as abundant financial resources, since Junko's family can afford education.

In contrast, Saki, a university faculty member, gave up the early education of her daughter for her career. She used a nursery school for her three-year-old daughter. She said "I actually had a desire to give many things to my child before I had a child. I want to have my child taken piano and swimming lessons, but at the same time I think it may be impossible. I send my child to a nursery school. This means I give up *sōki kyōiku*, early education. A nursery school just aims to nurse children to be healthy and to live a happy life and something like that. A kindergarten is absolutely different from a nursery school indeed". Saki's remarks indicate how difficult it is for working mothers to provide early education in the Japanese education system. *Sōki kyōiku*, early education, flourishes in Japan (Hirao, 2001a). Hirao (2001a) explains early education in the Japanese contexts as follows: "its objectives are to enhance positive aspects of children rather than to combat learning problems that can hinder children from low-income backgrounds" (Hirao, 2001, p.185). According to Hirao (2001a), early education flourishes in Japan for the following reasons: (1) Japanese parents tend to believe that children have equal potential abilities at birth. The success of developing children's potential depends on efforts by children and parents. (2) Due to the declining the number of school-aged children, preschoolers have become the new market of educational industries. The boom of early education encourages the heavy involvement of mothers. Saki's remarks regarding a difference between nursery schools and kindergartens came from a difference in which department has authority of these organizations. Whereas nursery schools fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (MHLW), kindergartens fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). This difference expresses the difference in the purpose between nursery schools and kindergartens. A nursery school is a welfare facility intended to provide daycare for children "lacking daycare", which is stipulated by the Child

Welfare Act. A nursery school takes care of 0-6 year-old children. In contrast, a kindergarten is an educational institution intended to nurture children as well as to promote their physical and mental development, which is stipulated by School Education Act. A kindergarten educates (3-6 year-old) children.¹²⁷ As Show and Wright (1997) view policy as a device that classifies people with various meanings, policy functions as device to classify institutions through which to present norms. By distinguishing kindergartens from nursery schools according to authorities and functions, the Japanese government implicitly presents the norm of the standard family as a family that does not lack of daycare. While influences caused by a difference in environments between kindergartens and nursery schools on the development of children are not certain, the way in which these organizations are categorized influence the definition of desirable early education in Japan. Saki's remarks that sending her daughter to a nursery school is a synonym of giving up on early education suggests that she thinks that a kindergarten provides better environment for her daughter than a nursery school.¹²⁸ While the literature tends to indicate that highly educated women often give up working for the purpose of providing their children with quality education, Saki's remarks suggest that highly educated women who choose their career could also suffer from unmet desire to provide as much high quality preschool education for their children as they want.

While Saki cannot provide as much early education for her daughter as she wants in her day-to-day life, she plans to provide quality early education in a way that not many

¹²⁷ As the government considered the seriousness of the declining birth rate, and in 2006 established an a new system called *nintei kodomoen*, which literary means acknowledged children's garden, to unify a nursery school and a kindergarten, while keeping existing systems of nursery schools and kindergartens. *Nintei kodomoen*, established by MHLW and MEXT provides both daycare and education for children regardless if they lack daycare or not (MEXT & MHLW, n.d.). However, *nintei kodomoen* has not been spread as widely as nursery schools and kindergartens yet.

¹²⁸ A national survey of academic abilities and learning environment 2010 revealed that elementary school students (6th graders) and junior high school students (9th graders) who went to kindergartens took better scores than students who went to nursery schools in Japanese and mathematics tests. However, the national survey did not collect any data on socioeconomic statuses and home environment although socioeconomic statuses and home environment could be factors to influence scores (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2010).

women can do. As she goes abroad for her research once a year, she plans to take her daughter, so that she can expose her daughter to diversity that her daughter cannot experience in Japan. She has actually taken her daughter abroad. Not many mothers can give this type of firsthand experience to their children. She even plans to take a sabbatical at the same time as her husband who works as a university faculty member and to take her daughter to a foreign country for a year. Saki is also determined to send her daughter to a private junior high school. As Junko, Saki believes that private schools provide better education than public schools. While Saki had to give up sending her daughter to a kindergarten, she plans to provide quality education for her daughter in alternative ways from early childhood through secondary education in ways that she does not have to sacrifice her research career.

As stated above, Junko and Saki made different decisions in how they channel their graduate education into their children's education. Junko transposed graduate education into a higher quality children's preschool education and elementary school education in future by sacrificing her study. In contrast, Saki gave up providing higher quality of preschool education for her daughter for her own career. However, she plans to provide a very diversified environment for her daughter while she is pursuing her career. It is notable that they are both in a high socioeconomic class. While Bourdieu (2002) emphasizes the commonalities among people in same classes, the cases of Junko and Saki show that the individual agency of people in the same class is not uniformly exercised. Depending on their priorities, circumstances, and financial and time resources, Junko and Saki exercised their agencies and made their own decisions.

Mothers who do not see trade-off career between quality child rearing

While Junko and Saki felt that for a certain period of their lives they needed to give up either research/career or quality child rearing to some extent, some mothers in this study did not feel this dilemma as deeply as Junko and Saki do. Sanae and Natsuko have full-time

jobs and they do not feel that there is a trade-off between research or career and quality child rearing. This difference came from different views of early education and different definitions of quality education between these two types of mothers. From Junko's and Saki's views, kindergartens provide more advanced education than nursery schools and private schools provide better education than public schools. In contrast, most participants in my study, including Sanae and Natsuko, do not think that sending their children to nursery schools as well as public schools is a problem in child rearing. While existing studies (e.g. Honda, 2008) tend to draw attention to the tendency highly educated mothers to give higher priority to their children's education over their career, my research data suggest that diversity can be seen on this issue among highly educated mothers.

Sanae is a woman working as a professional for a foundation. She both pursues her career as well as providing quality education for her children by giving them diverse learning experiences. Despite her busy schedule with a full-time job, including occasional overtime, she gives her utmost efforts to provide quality education and various experiences for her two children who are elementary school students. Giving up her career for children's education would not be an option for her as she is a divorced mother. Sanae provides various learning activities for her children as follows: Her daughter takes violin lessons and has even had the opportunity to participate in a joint concert with a professional orchestra. Sanae participated in a field day organized by *gakudōhoiku* (*Gakudōhoiku* is an institution that takes care of schoolchildren outside of school time) for her children. For approximately these two years, normally in Sunday mornings she has taken her children to soccer lessons. She even participates in an annual over-night soccer training at a dormitory with her children, which she enjoys. When I observed the lesson, some adults also played together, including Sanae. While she was the only woman among eight adults, she actively participated in the game by running and calling out on a ground covered by beautiful artificial turf. Another mother, observing the game with me, commented that the quality of coaches in this team was quite

good for a children's team. What makes Sanae so energetic to work hard as a professional and to provide diverse learning opportunities in pleasant ways as a mother? She told me that a sense of responsibility as a parent made her feel children's happiness as her happiness, which energized her to give her utmost efforts for child rearing. Sanae is aware of the fact that she cannot do beyond her economic and physical strength, but she still does her best in child rearing. Sanae's case is an example of how a highly educated woman strives to pursue career and provide quality education for her children. Though Sanae usually gets home from work around 7:00 pm and cannot spend much time with children, it is remarkable that her daughter describes her as "super mom" in an essay because Sanae graduated from the University of Tokyo and has a full-time job. This episode suggests that being highly educated and having a full-time job does not necessarily prevent mothers from providing diverse learning opportunities. On the contrary, it could be a reason for being respected by children.

Natsuko, a university faculty member, in contrast to other women, did not feel any difficulty in balancing research and career with child rearing. When she sees her female graduate student wondering if she needs to give up marriage, having children, or career, Natsuko thinks that current female graduate students could be greedier. They do not have to give up any of these just because they are women. She herself does not worry if and how she could balance research and career with child rearing, partly because she does not feel the pressure of being a mother as a caretaker. Among the nine mothers in my study, Natsuko is the one who shares childcare with her family members the most. For example, when her first child was two years old, she studied abroad for six months by herself. Her parents took care of Natsuko's child during her absence. Without her family's cooperation in child rearing, Natsuko could not have been able to devote herself to her studies to that extent. However, other women would not necessarily be willing to study abroad for educational and personal reasons, even if they did have family who could take care of a child during their absence. For those who believe in the effect of early education, the period during which they live

separately would be a lost opportunity of early education. For those who would like to cherish time with a small child, living separately from the child would be a lost opportunity of their joy of nurturing the child.

It should be noted that it is not only child rearing environment but also mindset that causes struggle to mothers. As explained in the next section, in Japan mother and child are expected to be strongly bounded as a unit. Regardless of whether or not one consciously adopts this attitude to a greater or less extent, one is inevitably affected by such an environment. The fact that Natsuko does not struggle as much as Junko and Saki do could be attributed to both environment and mindset. As my research data suggest, highly educated women educated in graduate school's views of career, research and child rearing are diverse. They make their best decisions in their own ways from options they can take to balance career and research and with child rearing.

Norms of motherhood and child rearing in Japanese society and graduate schools in Japan

A survey study of graduate students reveals that graduate schools do not tend to provide support for their students to balance study with family. On the contrary, female graduate students tend to be discouraged from marrying and giving birth (Science Council of Japan, 2005). This survey study suggests difficulty in balancing study with family in graduate schools in Japan.

Chika feels this difficulty of balancing study and family as well as continuing her study in graduate school due to social expectations to mothers in Japanese society. Chika is a doctoral student who has two young children. She says that *sansaiji shinwa* is still believed even in the academic world. *Sansaiji shinwa* is a well known expression in Japan, which means that mothers should stay home and take care of children at least until they turn four;

otherwise children cannot grow well.¹²⁹ Previous studies (Hirao, 2001a; White, 1987/1988; Tsuneyoshi, 1992/2005) reveal that the tie between mother and child is strongly acknowledged as a unit in Japan. According to White (1987/1988), the Japanese mother builds a strong bond with her child, who depends on the mother's care, and thus the mother's identity is based on this relationship with her child. The strong bond between mother and child expected in Japanese society is seen in the struggles of some participants in this study, including Chika. When Chika informed her professor of her pregnancy, the professor expected that she would take a three-year break from her studies to concentrate on child rearing while she intended to take a break of no more than a year. While gender equality has been promoted by the government as stated in Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society promulgated in 1999, the expectation that mother plays a major role in child rearing has not changed and the expectation of mothers of young children in graduate school culture is not significantly different from the rest of Japanese society. As Chika's example shows, a dominant gender expectation in Japanese society is reproduced in graduate school. Foucault (1972; 1976/1990) argues that discourse is unconsciously internalized by people, and it is clear that the discourse on roles of mother is unconsciously internalized in Japan.

According to survey findings by Holloway (2010), many women believe exclusive maternal care is beneficial for children under four years old. Japanese National Fertility Survey conducted in 2005 suggests how strong this belief is rooted in Japan. More than 70 percent of respondents agree that it is desirable that mothers stay home and not work while they have small children.¹³⁰ Nursery schools are commonly accepted in Japan. However, a nursery school is not legally defined as an educational institution. As mentioned, a nursery

¹²⁹ Hirao (2001b) introduces similar phrase, *sansei made ha haha no te de*, which means "mothers should stay at home at least until the child reaches three years of age" (Hirao, 2001, p.195). It should be noted that the percentage of children under 3 years old in nursery schools is lower than that of children over 3 years old. While the former is 25.3%, the latter is 34.2% in 2012 (MHLW, 2012, September 28).

¹³⁰ In 2000, 3.5% of men and 3.8% of women agree that it is desirable that mothers work on a full-time basis. More than 50% of men and women agree that it is desirable that mothers are full-time housewife while they have small children (Shirahase, 2005).

school is a welfare facility intended to provide daycare for children “lacking daycare”, which is stipulated by the Child Welfare Act in 1947. Originally, nursery schools were started for low income groups (Sodei, 1996). The phrase of “lacking daycare” suggests that this Act was promulgated on the assumption that basically families take responsibility to care for children at home until they are four years old.

Academic network/peer group and alienation of female graduate students who raise a child

Previous studies demonstrate that women tend to be excluded from academic networks (Kano, 1988). Referring particularly to Crane’s research on personal research networks, Kano’s research indicates how these networks benefit researchers, by providing advice and information, and forming ideas through the exchange of information. Kano (1988) indicates that being alienated from academic networks disadvantages women in their career development because advice on career and information on career opportunities are shared in these academic networks. Being excluded from academic networks particularly disadvantages one in employment in Japan because it is not unusual that academic part-time or temporary positions are hired through personal connections. My research suggests that female graduate students who raise a child particularly feel the disadvantages of being alienated from academic communities. Chika, Junko, and Risa are included in this group.

Chika also had experiences of being estranged from academic communities and from her colleagues because she is a mother. For example, the information on a social gathering among other graduate students and alumni was not provided for her because other students thought she was busy with parenting, while she would have participated in the gathering if she had known of it. It should be noted that her professor and other students alienated Chika from academic communities because of well-intentioned considerations. Chika feels that gender norms of mothers of young children hindered her from freely developing her

academic progress and networks. Chika says, “I did not feel any inconvenience in pursuing my study because of being a woman until I had a child. I didn’t think I was inferior to my male colleagues. I thought I could bring my ability into full play as much as my male colleagues could do or even more, but since I got married and had a child, rather than marriage, having a child. Since having a child, I became confronted by a difficulty and I cannot do my research well.” The following conversation with Chika shows how she has been alienated from academic networks that would benefit her academic career. Being left out of academic networks is likely to lead to the loss of an important part of her academic career development.

Chika: I don’t mean I am ostracized, but I feel alienated very much. Well, a circle of friends and acquaintances is important in this world (academic community), isn’t it?

Y.Y.: Uh-huh. Networks are important in everything.

Chika: You said it. Research opportunities and information are conveyed through people. Even though it seems to be out of well-intended consideration, getting to be rapidly left out of such (academic) networks results in a tremendous loss in my research career.

Y.Y.: Uh-huh. Various information may be shared there.

Chika: Yes, indeed. For example, the information on establishing a big COE project is shared there. I may be able to be hired as a researcher, if I applied, but I cannot do anything without having information.¹³¹

Y.Y.: Uh-huh.

Chika: Part-time lecturers are also hired through personal connections, while universities gradually are getting to accept applications.

Chika’s experiences suggest that gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* are still deeply rooted in Japanese society. It is not only in Japan that networks are important in academic career, but as mentioned being in networks is particularly important in Japan because it is not unusual that academic positions are hired through personal connections. In Japan it is not uncommon that part-time or temporary academic positions are introduced by academic advisors. Many participants in this research actually earned positions as part-time lecturers

¹³¹ COE is an abbreviation of Center of Excellence. For details of COE, please see chapter 4.

through personal connections. Taking this into consideration, as she says, Chika is placed in a very disadvantaged position because she is a mother of young children.

Junko and Risa also had similar experiences of being left out of academic communities because they have small children. Unlike Chika who was left out of academic communities because of well-intended considerations, the reason that Junko, a postgraduate research student, and Risa, an ABD, were left out of academic communities is that they cannot participate in networking events due to their child rearing. Networking events are usually held during the evening to night or weekend, when nursery schools are closed. Junko said, “What is discussed in nommunication includes many important issues”. Nommunication is a coined slang combining *nomu* (drinking) and communication. *Nomu* literally means drink, but in this context, *nomu* means drinking alcohol. Nommunication means facilitating and/or deepening human relationships by drinking alcohol together. It is a general word that could be applied to business and academia. Gatherings over alcohol are usually held in the evening or night because it involves alcohol. Gatherings are held either on weekdays or weekends. Usually these gatherings are held in *izakaya* (Japanese-style bars) and restaurants, although venues are not limited to these places. Exchanging information and ideas is expected in a relaxed atmosphere of these gatherings. Participants at gatherings that include drinking might be able to receive information that would not be officially shared. Drinking gatherings could also offer good opportunities for participants to get to know each other. The following conversation with Junko reveals that how difficult it is for mothers of young children to stay in academic communities.

Junko: Social gatherings are scheduled after classes. Mentally it is a big burden for me to think of what I would lose, such as networking.

Y.Y.: Uh-huh. Well, they may talk about academic positions.

Junko: For example, a nommunication started 8:30 or 9:00 pm and people came home by the last train.

Y.Y.: It would be difficult to join, wouldn't it?

Junko: I can't join.

Risa is aware of the importance of attending social gatherings in universities in Japan. However, she cannot attend gatherings because research meetings and social gatherings following the meetings are scheduled during the evening to night or weekend. She has been gradually alienated. As she cannot attend, she has not been invited to meetings and gatherings. Chika, Junko, and Risa are systematically alienated from academic communities, which is not only be a personal loss for them, but also be a social loss that hinders potential scholars from developing their academic interests and career opportunities.

It should be noted that female students struggle not because the University of Tokyo does not take any action for promoting gender-equal environment. On the contrary, the University of Tokyo sees gender equality to be essential for the University of Tokyo as a leading university in Japan. Since 2002, when the university established Promotion Committee for Gender-Equality, the university has promoted gender equality through various activities. In 2006, the university established Office for Gender Equality under the direct control of the president and started to grapple with promoting gender equality in earnest. For example, the university established multiple university nursery schools for researchers and students to help them pursue their academic career. The university established an advising room for female researchers and their family to help their career development and balance research with life events, such as pregnancy, and child rearing (The University of Tokyo, 2010b). While the university has made efforts to promote gender-equality and to help female students and researchers continue their research, my research data reveal that day-to-day activities, such as research meetings and gatherings, in graduate school are not arranged at a time convenient for those who raise children. In this situation, despite university-wide efforts to support female students and researchers, research participants in this study, including Chika, Junko, and Risa, still found it difficult to develop their research networks.

Are these women powerless recipient of a major discourse on mother's roles? While Foucault (1972; 1976/1990) argues that power penetrates and controls individuals and does not appreciate individual agency, they are not merely helpless recipients of a major discourse on gender norms and society based on the assumption that mothers play major roles of child rearing. Although they cannot change the dominant gender norms expected to mothers in academic communities, they are not a powerless recipients of a major discourse on parenting. While struggling to find for the best balance, they are making their own decisions as how to prioritize child rearing and their research. This fact indicates limitations of Foucault's argument on power. Foucault argues that discourse is unconsciously diffused among people through various ways, including their social practices. He also insists that institutions, including educational institutions, reinforce penetrating discourse by producing "docile body" (Foucault, 1975/1995). Although Chika, Junko, and Risa are restrained by power penetrated in social practices as Foucault (1972) argues, they are fully aware of power inhibiting them from living in their desirable academic environment in which mothers are not excluded from academic communities. Utilizing critical thinking trained in graduate school, they view situations in which they are placed critically and decide their actions in their own ways. This is their conscious resistance to power. For example, against her professor's expectation, Chika did not take a three year break from study after her childbirth. As Junko, Chika was not comfortable with being forced to play her role as mother in a standardized way contrary to her own idea of what it means to be a mother. While raising two small children, Chika aims to create a supportive environment for parents who balance study with child rearing. She even became an active member of a club for students and faculty members who aim to balance study with child rearing. She turned her wish to network with other people who pursue studies and raise children into reality. In the year the club was established, 30 people joined the club. Now approximately 40 people participate in the club. While both men and women are welcome to the club, all members are women. This suggests that women more

likely feel the need of such a network to share their experiences and information as well as to encourage one another. The main activity is a bimonthly lunch.

On a winter week day in 2010, lunch was held at a nice, but not a luxurious, restaurant decorated with simple, but stylish interior with high ceiling. Despite it being a cold rainy day, ten women, including me, joined the lunch. They were at different stages in their graduate studies. They sat down around a long rectangular plain wood table. Two women joined with their children. One woman had her baby in her arms. The other woman, Junko, and her three children, including a baby, joined the lunch little after the lunch started. Members had lunch in a relaxed atmosphere over lively casual conversation. Members held the babies in their arms in turn in a friendly atmosphere. If I did not know that this was a club lunch, I would have thought it was an informal friends' gathering. I was the only guest at that time. While I was different from members in that I was single and did not have any child, I was able to join their conversation without difficulty as a guest, which suggested that new members would not feel out of place in the club. If I were a man, I would have felt out of place because no man was present at that lunch. After we finished a meal, Chika took over the meeting. After she had covered the agenda, Chika kindly gave me a time to introduce myself. After introducing myself as a doctoral student studying education at the University of Wisconsin in the U.S., I briefly explained my research and distributed invitation letters to my research that I sent to *Satsukikai*, an alumnae association of the University of Tokyo. I asked the members if any of them could become my interviewees. Junko and Chika agreed to be interviewed. After the lunch, most members moved to another restaurant to continue conversation over coffee. Conversation over lunch and coffee covered various issues, which was not necessarily academic, including exchanging information on how their children were doing and health such as pelvis correction. One of the members shared her experience to be a minority in department in which a large majority of students are men. She was not casually invited to lunch with her male colleagues. She thought that it was because she was a woman.

It was not discrimination, but she felt that she was disadvantaged. They also complained a bit about their partners who were not fully supportive when they worked hard on their research and work. One of the members said that her parents and parents-in-law opposed her plan to send her child to a nursery school. She said that the quality of a nursery school run by the University of Tokyo was not bad at all. However, the fact that nursery schools are not categorized as educational institutions like kindergartens seemed to create the negative image of nursery schools compared with kindergartens for some in the older generation. While members shared their difficult situations and problems, they did not look glum. When they were chatting, they smiled and laughed. They exchanged information and gave advice one another, but nothing was coerced. The club seemed to provide a safe space for members to share their concerns and problems.

For Chika and Junko, the club for students rearing a child is definitely helpful to think about how they balance research with child rearing. In that sense, sharing and networking brought about through the club is meaningful for students rearing a child. Rather than practical support in balancing research with child rearing, the club gave moral support to them.

About two weeks after the lunch, I met Chika. She says that the club made a big difference for her life. She was very encouraged by meeting and sharing her struggles with other participants energetically conducting research while raising two or three children. A woman that she met in that club outsources a great portion of housework and child rearing in order to be at the top in her area of study. Seeing such a woman's life made Chika think about the weight of research and family for her. From Chika's viewpoint, current female professors at the University of Tokyo were able to become professors as result of devoting themselves only to research even if they had families. Chika wondered if she is determined to that extent. She pondered over the best balance between research and family for her through the club. She is still searching for it.

About a month after the club meeting, Junko and I met at a coffee shop and she told me what she thought about the club lunch. She said,

“I tried to solve my *moyamoya*.¹³² I have a strong desire of removing unclear feelings from me, but I think probably I will keep this *moyamoya* in my whole life. Working in Japanese society as a working mother, well, it may be the same in the U.S., means that neither can she devote herself 100% to career and research nor she devote 100% to child rearing. She may have to be absent from the office when her child has fever suddenly. Atmosphere in the office may make her feel uncomfortable. Through the club lunch, I realized that striking the balance between career/research and child rearing would not be an issue to have a right answer. Perhaps I should say, I realized that I take the reality as it is. ...I saw everyone (at the lunch) had *moyamoya*, so I accepted. Well, in that case rather than trying to solve it, I would get along with it”.

Junko’s struggle with balancing child rearing with research/career indicates that working mothers are expected to make commitments as “two whole people” (White, 2002, p.153) at graduate school/workplace and at home, while men’s roles as fathers are not thought to be conflicting with their commitment at workplace (Gunter and Stambach, 2003). Like Chika, Junko had thought about how to strike the balance between research/career and child rearing in her life and learned from other members’ lives. For Chika and Junko, the club provided opportunities for learning and helping one another. For Chika and Junko, both research/career and child rearing are equally important part of their lives. Chika’s first priority is not to produce the best research outcome. Striking the balance between research and child rearing is more important for her. From Chika’s viewpoint, it is important for the university that female students/researchers maintain or even enhance the quality of their research outcome and are academically productive. While the University of Tokyo regards work-life balance as important as well (The University of Tokyo, 2010b), Chika felt that there was a gap between her idea and the university’s expectation for women. She was not told this

¹³² *Moyamoya* means pent-up feelings that prevent one from feeling fine.

by her professors, but through her graduate student life she felt that the university wanted women to be productive. For example, she received that message through a symposium presented by “super female researchers of the world” (The University of Tokyo, 2010a, p.51). For the University of Tokyo, diversity is indispensable to be a top-level university in the world. The university considers gender equality a contributing factor to diversity (The University of Tokyo, 2009 May, 2010b).

Along with Chika and Junko, Risa was not willing to outsource child rearing to a great extent. She could depend on outsourcing when she needs extended-hours childcare at a nursery school and a sick child day care, but she dares not to use these outsourcing services. Regarding situations in which her time for research is often used for taking care of her child, Risa says that she cannot complain because she voluntarily choose to take care of her child. She does not use any consultation services for female students provided by the university because she thinks that her issue is a kind of complaint that someone’s advice cannot solve. She would be happy if people around her would just be more understanding how hard it is for a mother of a young child to be productive. She thinks that each component of child rearing may not sound hard, such as getting up many times at night for nursing a baby. Through my research data, female graduate students who do not give their first priority to scholarly achievements may not be in the minority at the University of Tokyo, which is endorsed by an interview with Mariko, a former staff member of Office for Gender Equality at the University of Tokyo. Mariko said, “All women who come to the University of Tokyo are excellent, but all of them do not necessarily aim to pursue their career energetically.¹³³ Some women may do, but most of them desire to get married and to have a child (or children) as well as to work to some extent. I wonder what percentage of them wants to be competitive with men”. Mariko felt sorry that many female students at the University of Tokyo are not ambitious. She

¹³³ Mariko’s remarks and opinions do not represent Office for Gender Equality, the University of Tokyo.

wishes they were more ambitious. A report on the outcome of the project of “support for 10 years to establish a career” organized by the Office for Gender Equality (2010a) gave me the impression that the university encourages female students and researchers to be productive.¹³⁴

As I stated above, female graduate students who are mothers in this study are in a predicament by being left out of academic networks because they are mothers. They are unsatisfied with being forced to focus on their role as mothers. At the same time, they think the balance between research and child rearing is important. They are not willing to pursue academic achievements wholeheartedly if it means sacrificing child rearing. They are not comfortable with being pushed to be productive. They would like to have ownership of the decision as to the best balance for them. Chika’s critical view and Risa’s sense of feeling no need for the university’s help seem to be caused by their strong desire to have ownership in their life choices.

As I have presented, Chika, Junko and Risa all have an issue trying to balance study/career with child rearing as graduate students (as a postgraduate research student for Junko). In contrast, Mayumi and Kae dealt with that issue earlier in their lives. Mayumi is now in her 50s and it was in the 1990s when she was a graduate student while raising two small children. At that time, academic and social environment was different at that time. Childcare support services for graduate students were not available. In order to help women continue working, providing childcare support services at workplace in general, including universities, is taken for granted now, but it was not the case at that time. In addition, Mayumi says that students who were raising children, were even more in the minority at that time, so rather than searching for special support for students raising children, Mayumi was always careful to stay in good standing as a graduate student. She thought if she was not able to meet the academic requirements, it could be thought that this was because she had children. She made her utmost efforts to avoid that situation.

¹³⁴ The presentation event was held on March 29, 2010 at the University of Tokyo.

Kae is in her 40s and was a graduate student while raising her children from the 1990s to the 2000s. Like Mayumi, Kae did not seek any support from the university. Kae had troubles finding a public nursery school for her first child, though this is not a difficulty limited to graduate students. At that time, the University of Tokyo did not yet provide nursery schools.¹³⁵ There are many families who need nursery schools for their small children. The lack of nursery schools for small children from 0 to 6 year-old has been a social problem in Japan.¹³⁶ When it took time for her to find a nursery school, she thought that her academic life was over. Considering the difficulty of finding public nursery schools, the University of Tokyo's activities to promote gender equality, including by establishing multiple nursery schools, would be helpful for students like Kae.

Unlike Chika, Junko, and Risa, neither Mayumi nor Kae mentioned a sense of alienation from academic communities because they had children nor desired to be networked with other students rearing a child. Judging from conversations in interviews, it could be partly because they were in the minority in the first place. Mayumi says that when she was a student, the majority of students in her department came to graduate school fresh out of college. They were single and in their 20s. Mayumi was already in her 30s, approximately ten years older than other students. In contrast, Kae came to graduate school fresh out of college. She was not in the minority in that point, but she was in the minority in her department, as the majority of graduate students were men. The lack of a strong desire to be part of academic networks or even networks for students raising a child could be affected by the social environment where childcare support was not provided as much as it is now. It should be noted that the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society, *Danjyo kyōdō sankaku shakai kihonhō*, was enacted in 1999 and it was not until the 2000s when the University of Tokyo officially

¹³⁵ The University of Tokyo Hospital started to provide a nursery school in 2007 and the University of Tokyo provided more nursery schools in 2008 (The University of Tokyo, 2010b).

¹³⁶ 24,825 small children were on wait lists in 2012. (These children are called “*taiki jidō*”, which is literally means waiting children) (MHLW, 2012, September 28).

promoted gender equality. Child rearing was not supported by university until the 2000s. Mayumi said that when she was a student, the academic environment made her feel uncomfortable to seek any support for students raising a child. Therefore, she tried to deal with child rearing as her personal issue and tried not to show how hard it was to manage research and child rearing with a limited amount of time. Looking back on her own experiences, she is happy to see that the social and academic environment has changed to be more supportive. It is reasonable to think that the social environment at that time did not nurture a desire in Mayumi's and Kae's mind network with other students rearing a child. Rather than a sense of alienation from academic networks, the difficulty for Mayumi and Kae was the limit of their available time due to their child rearing. Mayumi's efforts to make academic progress in a limited amount of time were seen in her phrases, "I felt that I could not waste even one minute" and "I really did not have time to talk to other graduate students at all". Kae's situation was similar to Risa. Kae was often interrupted by child rearing, which prevented her from concentrating on her research and being productive. Kae even woke up at 1:00 or 2:00 am to complete her dissertation in time.

Influence of husbands' attitudes toward graduate study of their wives

My research data show that husbands' participation in housework and child rearing as well as husbands' financial resources to support their wives' study create practical differences in the progress of the women's graduate study. Among five women in my study whose graduate student days overlapped the period of raising a small child (preschooler), Mayumi and Chika present a sharp contrast. Mayumi's husband was extremely supportive both practically and morally. With her husband's strong support, Mayumi was able to concentrate on study without worrying about financial issues and she was able to earn her doctorate without being interrupted for financial reasons. He paid everything to support her graduate study, including tuition. While Mayumi did not have substantial income during the

approximately ten years of her graduate education, she did not have any financial concern. Considering the lost wages during her studies, Mayumi's graduate study was an extra expense for the family budget. She was in a position to be able to focus on her study without worrying about financial needs. It was her husband who recommended her to leave her previous workplace where there was less prospect to enhance herself and to go to graduate school to develop her career. He is a university faculty member and for him, it is education that is the most important thing in life. Not often, but he even took their children out on weekends so that Mayumi could concentrate on writing her thesis. He took care of children at night when she attended meetings. While Mayumi was in charge of housework at that time it was not because she did not have income but because her husband commuted a long distance and the situation did not allow him to do housework. He also strongly recommended that she earn a doctorate, although it was extremely difficult to earn doctorate (*katei hakase*) in humanities and social sciences during the period in which students were enrolled in doctoral programs in the 1990s when Mayumi was in graduate school. As explained in an earlier chapter, until the 1990s, a relatively small proportion of older faculty had doctoral degrees (Hada, 2005).¹³⁷ The doctoral degree in humanities and social sciences was regarded as an honorary award given to those who achieved high academic achievement later in life (Ushiogi, 1993). At that time, it was common to leave graduate school without earning doctorate, if the student found a job. Even in that situation, Mayumi's husband insisted that she should earn a doctorate before finding a job; otherwise she would regret later in her life and it would be difficult to write a dissertation once she started working. Her husband's advice motivated her to give a higher priority to earning a doctorate over finding a job. Considering that a doctorate is becoming a requirement for finding academic positions, her husband's foresight helped her develop her academic career. Although Mayumi was not affiliated with any network for students rearing a child, with husband's strong support, she successfully earned a doctorate in

¹³⁷ For types of doctorate in Japan, please see chapter 4 and a dissertation glossary.

six years while raising two children.

Chika's case makes a sharp contrast with Mayumi's. Like Mayumi, Chika was already married when she decided to go to graduate school. Since Chika's husband knew her desire to go to graduate school when he married with her, he encouraged her to do what she wanted to do and gave his wholehearted support to her. However, he encouraged her not because he valued research or graduate study but because it was what would make her happy. He did not value studies and he himself quit the university soon after he entered. Chika's financial resources consisted of student loans. After she reached the limit of student loans, tuition was paid from her husband's income. While she worried about the financial aspect, she did attend to graduate school. For Chika's husband, her study was a kind of "costly hobby", akin to taking adult education classes. For him, being a student is an easygoing life. In contrast, for Chika, graduate study is more than a hobby. As she aims to become a researcher, graduate study is a necessary process to go through. Chika said that the idea of her graduate study being a hobby is always a reason for a quarrel. It is more than a hobby for Chika, but, on the other hand, she admits that being a student is not as tough as working and finds it difficult to oppose her husband's argument. Because her husband works full-time as a breadwinner to support his family, Chika struggles with being a graduate student. A previous study (Hatano, 2009) indicates that within a marriage, research tends to be treated as leisure when it does not bring income. Hatano (2009) reveals that when wives' research becomes a financial burden to the family budget, the degree of financial dependency on husbands who work as breadwinners increases. Wives are expected to contribute to families through housework and child rearing. In this situation, research is relegated to leisure that does not contribute to family and that creates difficulty in being productive. While Chika's husband let her pursue her graduate study, he did not participate in housework and child rearing until she worked on a full-time basis three times a week, because he regarded her as "a full-time housewife doing what she likes". When Chika started teaching at a vocational

school on a full-time basis three times a week, her husband became very cooperative in sharing housework with her. Chika understands that this change was caused by the change of her position for him. Having a job that brought in substantial income changed her position from a full-time housewife to a working woman who contributes to the family budget. Having a job prevents her from concentrating on her graduate study, but at the same time, it is her job that brings her husband's active participation in doing housework. Chika says, "if I do not work and try to balance research and child rearing, he never helps (housework and child rearing)". Unlike Mayumi, Chika has not been able to concentrate on her study and has not also been able to be productive since she had small children. It is partly because she has taken all the responsibilities for housework and child rearing. It is also partly because she has felt guilty about devoting herself to study and forgetting her children. If her husband had actively participated in child rearing and had appreciated the value of research, she may not have felt guilty about devoting herself to research.

The difference in progress of doctoral studies between Mayumi and Chika does not come from the difference in academic abilities between them. They are both excellent. This is endorsed by the fact that Chika earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Tokyo. Being admitted by the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level is known as the most difficult in Japan. Chika was admitted without going to a private high school or *juku* to prepare for entrance examinations, which is not very common to applicants.¹³⁸ When I interviewed Chika, she was going to change her work contract from three days to five days a week. She made this decision because she had not been able to be productive in her research while raising small children. She is going to giving up her research for a while to prioritize earning a living. It should be noted that she does not give up her study completely. On the contrary, she made this decision as a strategy to continue her research in the long term.

¹³⁸ As mentioned in an earlier chapter, Rohlen (1983) indicates that the majority of students who were admitted to the University of Tokyo were graduates from private high schools.

Although Foucault (1975/1995) underestimates the power of agency by emphasizing “docile body”, individual agency surely works and makes one choose one’s own choice. Chika is not a powerless individual who has no option other than doing what everyone expects of her in academia as a researcher. The majority view in this context means to consider those who take leave of absence from graduate school for a while to be dropouts. Even if she is categorized as a dropout due to her decision to take a leave of absence and work full-time, as long as she has a will to continue her graduate study and to earn a doctorate, she is not a dropout in academia. Furthermore, she is not a dropout in her life. On the contrary, taking a leave of absence for a while is a positive strategic choice for her to continue her research in the long term. Chika’s decision seems to be seen by some people like Wakana and Kananko as being faded out from academia. Chika may be seen as being faded out in a short term, but I argue that it is too early to judge Chika as faded out from academia because she dares to decide to take a break for a while from research as a strategy to continue her research in the long term. I can see only a part of the life stages of research participants in this limited research period. Even if Chika does not work, she would not expect to make significant progress on her degree, due to her responsibilities of housework and child rearing, as well as her struggle with guilty conscience. It is reasonable that Chika decided to take a full-time job and try to open a way to resume her research in the future after her children get older.

Chika’s decision to take a full-time job is opposite to Mayumi’s decision to prioritize earning a doctorate over employment. Both decisions were affected by their husbands’ attitude toward graduate education. Going to graduate school and aiming to become a researcher is beyond the life of *ryōsai kenbo*. However, it is notable that as my research data (Mayumi and Chika) suggest, for a married woman, what made earning a doctorate smooth is the husbands’ financial resources and his willingness to be supportive, creating an environment in which wives do not have to work and thereby sacrifice their research.

Compared with men who are financially supported by their wives, women who are supported by their husbands are more socially acceptable in Japan because the latter is within the existing gender norms. Among the eight married female graduate students in this research, five students are financially supported by their husbands. Ironically, pursuing a life beyond *ryōsai kenbo* is significantly helped by living a life that is in line with an existing gender norm that expects husbands to support their wives financially. Some women decided to pursue an academic career because they thought researchers as professionals, could balance career with family. However, pursuing an independent economic life though an academic career tends to require some economic dependence on husbands.

As I have shown, women educated in graduate school of the University of Tokyo live their lives while they negotiate their power as a highly educated genderless individuals and professionals, yet as women, wives, and mothers, in highly gendered society. Women who received graduate education do not unconsciously accept gender norms, but consciously search for how they can live as individuals who have multiple selves. Graduate education helps women transcend gender roles of wives and mothers by helping them to pursue professional careers; at the same time, graduate education strengthens the gender roles of wives and mothers by enhancing economic dependency on husbands and transposing graduate education into higher quality of children's education.

As I have argued, the materials in this chapter contribute to the theory of higher education as genderedness, regressiveness, and critical engagement. In love and marriage, the higher the level of education credentials of women beyond the undergraduate level, the more difficult they have finding partners and spouses in love and the marriage market in general. Rather than increasing the attractiveness of women, the status of graduate degree holders of the University of Tokyo is often seen as negative in love and the marriage market because it seems that men are overwhelmed by women who have higher education credentials than they do. In child rearing, graduate education could create stress for highly educated women in one

sense. Some of them were torn between the role of mother and the role of researcher/professional. The higher the educational level of the mothers the higher the quality of education the mothers tend to want to provide their children. It is not easy for some highly educated mothers to pursue study/career without sacrificing the provision of what they think is higher quality education for their children. In love, marriage, and child rearing, highly educated women tend to struggle with managing to play multiple roles at home and graduate school or the workplace. Pursuing personal happiness as well as professional success is also a struggle for these women. Although some highly educated women partly internalize the gender discourse that assigns men as breadwinners, they still critically view existing practices in academia and society and do not docilely follow conventional gender norms and practices. For example, Chika and Junko took actions to network with other students and researchers raising a child. Thus, higher education credentialing is gendered and regressive in love, marriage, and child rearing in Japan and graduate education certainly trains students to think and act critically in their lives as individuals who have multiple selves and positions despite cultural, social, and economic constraints.

In the next chapter, I will discuss how women who earned graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo have carved out their lives in graduate school and career after graduation. Some of them had difficulties in graduate school as well as with the transition from graduate school life to career for multiple reasons. Some women experienced difficulties due to the lack of a systematic step-by-step program guiding students toward graduation in graduate school. Other women encountered gender-related difficulties. In either case, women critically sought solutions, while they struggled with the overcoming difficulties they faced. I will also discuss how they find the significance of graduate education in their lives, which shows that they were trained to be critical thinkers in graduate school. The significance of graduate education for highly educated women does not necessarily match the significance of graduate education expected in policy. Highly educated women appropriate the meaning of policy in

their particular contexts. Although graduate education was promoted for the purpose of strengthening national competitiveness (Cabinet Office, 2007, 2008; Central Council for Education, 2005; University Council, 1991a, 1991b), research participants appropriate meanings of graduate education that are not matched with strengthening national competitiveness. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will argue that “a theory of higher education as critical engagement and as a practice in a discursive policy process”, a theory that I explained in chapter 2, works in analyzing how highly educated women carve out their lives in graduate school and career and how they find the significance of graduate education.

Chapter 7

From graduate student life to career: struggles, criticalness, and progress in life
- policy as critical engagement and a practice in discursive process

How do women who receive graduate education find the significance of that education in their lives as students and during their subsequent career? This research reveals that they created multiple meanings at the individual level. Abu-Lughod (1990) shows how global phenomena are manifested in different localities. Shore and Wright (1997) insist that policy helps individuals define themselves by giving them categories, such as professional, to work within. I explore how graduate students and graduate degree holders appropriate meanings of graduate education through the experiences and views of the graduate degree holders themselves. The University Council (1991a, 1991b) and the Central Council for Education (2005) proposed MEXT to promote graduate education and to expand graduate school as a means to enhance global competitiveness for Japan. In response to the University Council's report, standards for the establishment of graduate schools were made less severe and universities were given financial incentives to increase the number of enrolled graduate students. These factors brought about the rapid increase of the number of graduate students (Inoki, 2009; Yoshimi, 2011). In 2008 the government drew up The Basic Plan for Promoting Education (*kyōiku shinkō kihon keikaku*) that stipulates "strengthening graduate education as well as forming the highest level COEs in the world" (Cabinet Office, 2008, p.30).¹³⁹ However, at meetings that I observed in 2010, the Central Council for Education raised the issue of unclear career path for graduate degree holders in humanities and social sciences.¹⁴⁰

Although not all graduate students are depressed, not a few research participants were seriously distressed in graduate school for following reasons; difficulty in having

¹³⁹ The Basic Plan for Promoting Education aims to promote education policy comprehensively for five years from 2008 to 2012 (MEXT, 2008).

¹⁴⁰ Meetings that I observed were *daigakuin bukai*, graduate education division, and *daigakuin bukai jinshakei wāking gurūpu*, a working group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences, a specialized group working for humanities and social sciences under *daigakuin bukai*.

positive self-images as graduate students as well as difficulty in envisioning a future career life, in other words, difficulty in finding employment for doctoral students, severely competitive academic environment, the lack of a systematic graduate education program, and their minority status as women in academia. As these examples show, policy is a discursive practice in which meanings of graduate education are appropriated by graduate degree holders. “Appropriation is a kind of taking of policy and making it one’s own” (Levinson and Sutton, 2001, p.3). The recipients of policy at the local level do not necessarily share the aims of the policy with policy makers. Viewing policy as a practice in discursive process is related to the situation in which graduate education in humanities and social sciences are not highly valued in job market in Japan. Graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences have not been highly valued in Japanese industrial circles and thus the need for building a close connection between graduate school and the industrial circles was emphasized in the meetings of the Central Council for Education that I observed in 2010. Bourdieu is right about social class reproduction through education but wrong in that he does not consider that degree holders are not necessarily allocated jobs based on their levels of higher education. For Bourdieu, academic credentials are used to classify people as if academic credentials are a fundamentally correct standard. However, my research data reveal that the value of doctorate degrees is not higher than that of master’s degree in the job market in Japan. Despite the fact that Japanese society does not provide sufficient employment opportunities for those with graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences and fails to utilize their knowledge and skills, my research data clearly show graduate education contributes to the development of critical thinking against Foucault’s view that education trains students to be docile rather than critical.

Research participants’ distress is powerful enough to significantly direct and decide their career. In my study, four women (Chie, Megumi, Keiko, and Yuka) experienced serious distress in graduate school. In the following sections, I present career-related issues through

the different types of struggles experienced by these women, which shows problems of graduate education as well as how graduate education and graduate school are placed in Japanese society. By presenting the issues that caused distress to some research participants, I show how they dealt with these issues. Research participants' distress reveals how their reality is widely different from the University Council's and government's ideal of enhancement of international competitiveness through increasing highly educated human resources.

In later sections, I will discuss the social and personal significance of graduate education for women, including those who earned doctorates and went on to academic careers and women who left graduate school after earning a master's degree and now have a non-academic career. My research participants appropriate meanings of graduate education in various ways. Some see it as necessary training for their professions (researchers), but others do not see it as having directly served their career. However, they commonly find the significance of graduate education in their own contexts. If higher education has a function to produce a "docile body" trained to fit well in the existing society through its official curriculum and hidden curriculum, as Foucault argues (1975/1995), then graduates should be commonly trained to be docile, but my research data show that they are not docile. On the contrary, graduate study provided a means of expressing their ideas and enhanced their critical thinking. Although they do not necessarily express themselves through organized activities and sometimes speak in ways not previously done, at the individual level, graduate education did train these graduates to see things from multiple perspectives and think critically, as I will show later.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ There are e-mail lists for sharing announcement on study groups and lectures as well as announcing job opening for graduate students and scholars. However, these e-mail lists are usually for both men and women. I do not know any e-mail list only for women. Regarding NGOs' active role of bringing political change in gender, see Chan-Tiberghien (2004). Her study examines how grassroots feminist and human rights education contributed to bringing political change to institutionalize global human rights into domestic laws and policies, such as the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (1999).

Policy as a practice in discursive process-

Studying at graduate school created unexpected struggles – Chie’s case

“Graduate school days were terrible, terrible four years.” Chie summarized her experiences in graduate school when I met her at a coffee shop for an interview in one winter morning. This summarizing sentence suggests that she went through extreme hardships in graduate school. No positive comments on her experiences in her graduate school days were heard from her. Through her philosophical way of talking, Chie gave me the impression that she is a gentle and levelheaded woman, but as a young woman in her 20s, the tone of her voice was cheerless. Being a minority as a woman in a competitive academic environment without having any students’ networks, Chie became depressed in graduate school and still has not completely recovered her health.

Upon receiving her bachelor’s degree from another university, Chie started her master’s study at the University of Tokyo. While the university where she studied at the undergraduate level was not a women’s university, women were not at all in the minority. However, women were a distinct minority in her department in the University of Tokyo. She was not able to find any women in her age group with whom she could have casual conversations, which was a great worry for her. She says that her graduate student life could have been better, if there had been more women who could have casual conversations and support one another. Students were quite competitive and there was no network to help one another among students. The distance between faculty and students were also great. Therefore, she had to study in isolation. This very competitive atmosphere coupled with not being able to find any helpful female colleagues created a great stress for Chie. She felt uncomfortable throughout her graduate student life. Being placed in such an extremely stressful environment in graduate school made her seriously depressed. She even thought about leaving graduate school because her health condition was so bad. She did take two years’ leave of absence from graduate school, taking four years to get her master’s degree.

She eventually graduated using sheer willpower. Chie's story suggests that it is not only life events, such as marriage, childbirth and child rearing that affect women's graduate student life and career.

Graduate study is expected to be a stepping stone to career development for students, and such was the case for many participants in my study. However, it was not the case for Chie. On the contrary, going to graduate school ironically became a stumbling block for Chie. Chie was healthy before she entered into graduate school. Isolation in a severe environment made her seriously depressed. Her poor health conditions did not allow her to find employment after graduation.

A year after Chie earned her master's degree, she still had not completely recovered her health. Because Chie cannot work on a full-time basis, due to her health conditions, she has a part-time job as a *juku* teacher. She teaches students from elementary to high school levels. Since students go to *juku* after school, her job does not start until evening. During daytime, using a long distance education program, she studies to obtain a certificate to be qualified as an administrative worker in the field of medicine. Instead of aiming to obtain a certificate related to her quantitative data analysis knowledge and skills that she learned in graduate school, Chie aims to obtain a certificate in administrative work in the field of medicine because that certificate is not difficult to obtain and is in demand in Japanese job market. While becoming an office worker in medicine is not her first choice, she considers obtaining this certificate as a kind of buying insurance as a means of earning a living even if she again becomes clinically depressed.

Chie says that she has strayed off from the normal life course by going to graduate school. Going to graduate school in itself would not be the cause of her straying away from normal life course, instead, it was the serious depression she experienced in graduate school that pulled her away from a normal life course. Her health condition was so bad she was unable to search for employment while she was a graduate student and her health condition is

still not completely recovered to the level that she can search for full-time employment. Regardless of gender, “normal life course” in Japan means earning a degree and being employed upon graduation. In Japan, the recruitment of new graduates (*shinsotsu*) while they are enrolled in schools, including universities, with the expectation that they start working upon graduation, is the most common way to enter the working world. Doctorate holders who pursue careers in academia are exceptions because it is more difficult to be employed as tenured professors in academia upon earning graduate degrees than in other fields. However, generally speaking, being in *shinsotsu* is a more advantageous position than those who are not *shinsotsu* in job market. For those who have already graduated without finding employment while they are enrolled in school, the possibility of being recruited as regular employees (neither temporary nor hourly paid) rapidly decreases.¹⁴² In other words, new graduates have special privileges with greater employment and training opportunities for career development as regular employees. Chie graduated from a prestigious university at the undergraduate level. Considering that new graduates from colleges are in a greater demand than new graduates from graduate schools in Japan, Chie’s graduate education cost her significantly as she can not even enter the job market at this time on the strength of her bachelors’ degree.

Chie is searching for a job, ideally for a position at a research company that might utilize her quantitative research knowledge and skills, but due to her health problem, she does not think that she can work as a regular employee. Having had depression made it difficult for her to utilize her educational background for career. She has a desire to utilize her graduate education, but she still cannot see its direction yet and is searching for future vision. Going to graduate school significantly altered her life plan (to be on a normal life course). She is trying to restore her life.

¹⁴² Science Council of Japan suggested MEXT to consider university graduates who graduated within three years to be new graduates (Yamagami in Asahi Shimbun, a national newspaper, August 23, 2010).

The importance of informal student networks for surviving graduate students' life – Cases of Chie, Aki, and Megumi

The number of graduate students has increased as the University Council proposed. In 1991 the University Council recommended doubling the number of graduate students at least by 2000. The number of graduate students actually more than doubled, but this will not lead to empowering the nation unless graduate students are empowered in graduate school. In order to develop human resources who can play active parts in the world, enriching graduate programs and supporting systems are necessary.

It is a great pity that a healthy and promising young woman lost her health and the opportunities to fully develop her abilities because she went to graduate school. After two year's leave of absence, Chie was able to earn a master's degree, but the price she paid for the degree was too high. Chie told me that the environment of her department was especially severe in terms of competitiveness compared with other departments. Therefore, the academic environment of every department of the University of Tokyo should not be judged as severe as that of Chie's department. However, supporting networks among students would be helpful for students regardless of the distinction of gender or areas of study. An overly competitive environment could distress not only women but also men. If there had been such a peer support network, Chie may not have been depressed and could have enjoyed her graduate student life and could have utilized her educational background in a way that would not have strayed from a normal life course. Actually, in a survey study of graduate students' life at the University of Tokyo, the majority of graduate students expressed a desire for the reinforcement of students' networks (The University of Tokyo, 2010, December).

Aki was in the same position as Chie in that women were a minority in her department. As with Chie, Aki entered into graduate school at the University of Tokyo upon earning her bachelor's degree from other university. There were a couple of women in her

department, but Aki was the only woman who was in a circle of graduate students who studied together in her department. In contrast to Chie, Aki says that she went along with other male students in her cohort. She studied together with them for assignments and had meals and drank with them. She did not tell me of any difficult or uncomfortable experiences due to her being a woman. Similarly to Chie, Aki also did not continue her graduate studies at the doctoral level. Upon receiving her master's, Aki joined a foreign financial institution in Tokyo as a professional. Even several years after graduation, she still keeps in touch with her male colleagues. She says, "I joined 'a male club' as the only woman. I usually ate with them on a campus cafeteria, but the life style of women living normally in my department probably would not be much different from mine". While Aki and Chie were each members of a minority in their departments, the tones of Aki's and Chie's narratives were significantly different. It could partly because Aki's sanguine nature. She says that she is not a type of a person who feels much stress by nature. It could also partly because her background. She had a previous experience being a minority when she studied in the U.S. for a year when she was in college. She may have become accustomed to being a minority. She also may have been treated better as a rare commodity, as the only women in a circle of her colleagues in her department. However, the presence of an informal student network through which students helped one another would be a major difference between Aki's and Chie's departments. Chie struggled with a sense of isolation in her department due to the lack of any student networks to help her graduate student life, while Aki did not. Although women were minority in Aki's department, she was not isolated from other students because she was a part of an informal students' network through which students could academically help each other. While Chie struggled with the situation in which she did not have any female colleagues that she could casually talk with in graduate school, Megumi's case suggests that having a circle of female colleagues in itself is not much help in surviving the severities of academia. Women were not a minority in Megumi's department. Megumi was able to share her struggles with other

female students in her department and encourage one another. That type of network is what Chie desired to have. However, Megumi told me that her women's network did not help her academically because they mentally supported one another through sympathizing with their difficulties. Megumi says that her female cohort should have improved themselves through friendly rivalry by constructive criticism and discussion. Megumi's criticism of her peer network in graduate school suggests that Aki's network both provided academic and mental support for its members. Differences in graduate school experiences between Chie and Aki suggest the importance of supporting academic environment to students, including informal students' network. This difference affects not only graduate student days but also career and life after graduation. A supportive environment should be available to students regardless of gender so that they can fully develop their potentials and effectively utilize their academic training. Otherwise, graduate education cannot contribute to society.

Difficulties of establishing secure identities as graduate students as well as of envisioning career and life in the future-Cases of Megumi and Yuka

My study reveals that it is not unusual that graduate students are distressed in graduate school. Previous studies of graduate study and graduate students are not very informative concerning serious stress that female graduate students face, difficulties other than in marriage, balancing study and family, and employment. However, a recent survey study of graduate students' life at the University of Tokyo reveals serious distress that graduate students have, as the following data show (The University of Tokyo, 2010, December): 82.3 % of students worry about their career and ways of their lives. 75.6 % of students worry about employment. Nearly 60 % of students have felt strong anxiety in the past six months. The study also found that a higher percentage of female students have distress than do male students, while differences are not striking. On the whole, in humanities and social sciences, the percentage of students who have anxiety about their ability and

aptitude for doing research is 45.6% (The University of Tokyo, 2010, December). The fact that 80% of students worry about employment suggests that the need for researchers in Japanese society has not increased, counter to what the University Council (1991b) assumed would happen. My research data support these findings. About a half of the research participants in my study told me about serious stress they or their colleagues experienced in graduate school. I often heard from research participants that graduate students around them take antidepressant or struggle with insomnia. This fact suggests how serious their distress is.

As Chie did, Megumi also suffered greatly in graduate school. Unlike Chie, women were not minority in Megumi's department, but Megumi struggled to find significance in her graduate study and was not able to have bright prospects in any systematic steps how her graduate study might lead toward a future career. Megumi is an ABD. She took a leave of absence from graduate school and works as a researcher in a research center, which is part of an education-related company. While the majority of college graduates do not go to graduate school,¹⁴³ it was natural for her to go to graduate school. Megumi entered into the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level in order to study under a particular professor. However, the educational system at the University of Tokyo is unique in that every student commonly studies liberal arts in the first two years. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, in most universities in Japan applicants apply for particular majors and students study that major from freshman. Megumi felt that two years was too short a time to study under the guidance of the professor with whom she was studying, so she went to graduate school without any hesitation, to keep learning from that professor. When she finished her master's thesis, there was no option for her other than studying at the doctoral level because she was too occupied with writing a master's thesis to take time for a job search before she earned a master's degree. In Japan, it is common for students to find employment before graduation; otherwise it would be significantly difficult to find a regular position that is not based on contracts for a limited

¹⁴³ Please see appendix 7.

period of time. Megumi was accepted to study by a doctoral program without difficulty, so it was automatic for her to study at the doctoral level. Therefore, it was not until she began her doctoral work, that Megumi began to think about the significance of her research and develop a clear vision of her career. In Megumi's words, she was at "*nayami no soko*, the bottom of distress" when she studied in the doctoral program. She was entirely at a loss as to what she wanted to do. She realized that she was not able to explain the significance of her research in her own words. She was only able to explain it using her advisor's words. She also became uninterested in what she was doing in graduate school. She was not certain whether she had an aptitude to be a researcher. Considering that nearly a half of the students in humanities and social sciences have anxiety about their abilities and aptitude of research (The University of Tokyo, 2010, December), Megumi is not an exception. Considering that she passed the entrance examination of the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level, considered to be the most difficult entrance examination in Japan, the excellence of her academic ability would not be debated. Megumi's anxiety of her ability and aptitude for research is partly related to graduate education system in Japan. It can be said that Megumi's anxiety was a natural consequences of the lack of systematic graduate education. In systematic graduate education program, a concrete research proposal would indicate the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct doctoral research. This knowledge and these skills should be acquired through coursework and preparation for preliminary examinations. Megumi was not able to find a system to move her doctoral study forward to the completion, which contributed to increasing her anxiety.

Systematic graduate education system has not been completely established yet in Japan. As introduced in an earlier chapter, in Japan graduate school is formulated as a system to produce doctorate holders, while another system, called *ronbun hakase*, to award doctorates still exists. However, in reality, systematic graduate education programs are still in the process of being established, as indicated in meetings of the Central Council for

Education in 2010. Doctorates are now required for those who aim to become professional researchers, which is different from honors awarded for authorities in their later years. However, graduate schools have not yet thoroughly prepared systematic step-by-step doctoral programs to equip students to complete their dissertations. In other words, overall in Japan earning doctorates tends to heavily depend on each student's ability. In this situation, in 2005 the Central Council for Education issued a report on graduate education of which title was *shin jidai no daigakuin kyōiku*, graduate education in the new era, for the betterment of graduate education, such as making graduate education programs more substantial.¹⁴⁴ A step-by-step program consisting of well-balanced coursework, preliminary examinations, and proposal defense, is not taken for granted in doctoral programs in Japan. One of the important issues listed in the report is to enrich and strengthen coursework to equip students with basic knowledge and abilities in students' fields of study. The report indicates the importance of the process management of doctoral programs through systematically linking each step, including coursework, guidance in writing a dissertation, and a final defense. The report also indicates that graduate education in humanities and social sciences has tended to depend too much on advisors' guidance. Considering the above stated situation of graduate education in Japan, it could be said that due to the system in place, graduate students in Japan are prone to face difficulty in earning doctorates.¹⁴⁵

Looking back on her struggles in graduate school, Megumi told me that she felt as if she was thrown in the ocean without having sight to see steps toward earning her PhD. For a student, pursuing a doctorate not having a clear step-by-step course of graduate study is like taking a voyage without having a mariner's compass. When I talked about the graduate education system in the U.S. with Megumi, she was greatly impressed and asked me questions. After hearing about the systematic graduate education in the U.S., including

¹⁴⁴ Based on this report, MEXT draw up a five-year plan (2005-2010), *daigakuin kyōiku shinkō shisaku yōkō*, the program of promoting graduate education (MEXT, 2006a).

¹⁴⁵ Ehara argues the necessity of systematic curriculum in graduate school (Ehara, 2010).

preliminary examinations and a proposal defense, Megumi told me that in Japan graduate students were expected to do more by themselves in their study (compared with students in the U.S.). By sharing my graduate school experience in a U.S. university with Megumi, I was able to learn how she viewed graduate education system in Japan compared with graduate education system in the U.S. It is an example how I became a tool of this research that influenced research participants, as stated in a chapter on methods and methodology.

Unlike Megumi, Yuka was not dissatisfied that her graduate education was not systematically programmed, but she also told me about the lack of systematic graduate education in Japan when she was a graduate student. She says that there was no package of classes she was required to take. She said that the students at the University of Tokyo were expected to acquire a basic knowledge of their field of study through self-study. What was required at the University of Tokyo, especially in her major, was to find research questions and to study the answers to these research questions by themselves. As the most prestigious university in Japan, not a few faculty members at the University of Tokyo may assume that graduate students have a basic knowledge in their majors when they entered into graduate school. Yuka's explanation of the graduate education system at the University of Tokyo suggests that, students, especially those at the University of Tokyo, are expected to do much by their own efforts without a structured program as students studying at the university ranked highest in university hierarchy in Japan. Megumi's case shows that the traditional graduate education system, which is not systematically structured, has not necessarily been able to meet every graduate student's needs.

In connection with Megumi's not being able to find the significance in her research, she also struggled with thoughts of not being able to contribute to society. Megumi's struggle is understandable because making social contribution could give one the sense of belonging to society. The sense of alienation from society is likely to create struggles for people. Considering that the prestigious position of the University of Tokyo is unshakable and

graduating from the University of Tokyo provides special signs as being elite in Japanese society, the sense of alienation from society is likely to cause a great struggle. In the Fundamental Law of Education promulgated in 1947, the aim of education is to nurture builders of society (Article 1). Despite being a student at the highest level (doctoral level) in the most prestigious university in Japan, Megumi was not able to feel part of the builders of society, which is likely to be hard for her. In a gendered dimension, as declining birth rate has been a serious social problem in Japan, giving birth is considered as contributing to society. If Megumi were a mother when she was a graduate student, she would likely not have felt that she was not able to contribute to society. When she was distressed the most, she even thought that she was entirely useless in society and it would be better for her to work. She raised an example. When she bought a book at a bookstore, she felt that she could contribute to society more if she became a cashier in the bookstore rather than she could by reading the book. If Megumi had been confident in the significance of her research and had felt that her research would contribute to society, she would not have felt that she was not useful in society.¹⁴⁶

While Yuka did not suffer from feeling she was useless in society, as Megumi did, Yuka did struggle with a situation when she was a graduate student in which she was not able to place herself socially as an adequate member of society as an adult. Yuka said that up to the master's level, being a graduate student is understandable to people around her because studying at the master's level is common for students majoring natural sciences and engineering. Earning a degree in the medical department takes six years although earning a bachelor's degree in other departments are expected to take four years. Being a student for six years at a university was socially acceptable from Yuka's perspective. However, she felt that being a doctoral student in any country is beyond understanding for most people in Japan. She said that the image of student from the perspective of the general public is of someone in

¹⁴⁶ It should be noted that the scope of my research was particular. Even if she was not confident in the significance of her research, Megumi may have felt that she was useful in society, if she was involved in other activities through which she felt that she contributed to society.

their early 20s and not working, but lazing around. Students in Japan do not necessarily laze around, but compared with intensive study required to pass competitive entrance examinations at prestigious universities, student life during college days is considered to be easier and more relaxed, especially in humanities and social sciences. The general public in Japan also does not commonly accept a person being a student after a certain age.¹⁴⁷ The negative image of especially doctoral students in humanities and social sciences is likely to be related to unclear career paths for them. Fighting with anxiety, Yuka devoted herself to her studies despite not knowing if she could find employment as a faculty member in a tenure track. Being seen as a student and being regarded as someone who was idle was hard for her.

Yuka and Megumi were not able to find niches as doctoral students in Japanese society partly because doctoral students are not socially acknowledged as occupations contributing to society and partly because finding employment after earning degrees is extremely difficult, as literature has shown in an earlier chapter. Megumi indicated that the value of research is not appreciated in Japan and this leads to the low status of doctoral students in Japanese society. She compares Japan with Europe where she also studied. She indicated that in Europe doctoral students are socially acknowledged to have an occupation and doctoral students identify themselves as those who are engaged in research as an occupation.

Unlike Megumi, Yuka received fellowships that did not require repayment, but she still was not able to have a comfortable identity as a doctoral student. To her friends who worked from morning to night, conducting research was not considered to be work. Her friends were jealous of the fact that she received funding while she did not work. To her friends, Yuka was still living an easy student life although her student life was not easy. Generally, graduates of the University of Tokyo are considered to be elites in Japan, a

¹⁴⁷ When I filled out a medical questionnaire in a clinic in Japan, I wrote a student for a blank for occupations. A medical doctor asked explanation regarding my occupation because I was over 30.

brilliant career is expected, but this is not always the reality for graduate degree holders. This fact in itself suggests the low value of research and being a doctoral student in Japan.

Megumi's and Yuka's experiences show that conducting research at the doctoral level in humanities and social sciences is not appreciated by the general public although the report on graduate education issued by the Central Council for Education in 2005 indicates a fewer number of graduate schools in humanities and social sciences compared with the number of graduate schools in natural sciences and indicates the importance of well-balanced development of graduate education in natural sciences, humanities and social sciences (Central Council for Education, 2005). The Central Council for Education regards doctoral students as contributors to the knowledge based society, but doctorate students in my research, including Megumi and Yuka, do not confidently identify themselves as contributors to knowledge or to society. Just reading the report cannot answer why many doctorate students suffer from anxiety and depression. This situation cannot be answered without analyzing the local contexts in which the students live. Considering the view of policy as a practice in a discursive process (Levinson and Sutton, 2001), analyzing policy through the sociocultural perspective to learn about local contexts is necessary.

Making their own decisions critically in exploring career -cases of Yuka and Megumi

Yuka and Megumi have seriously struggled with distresses since they started their doctoral study. Foucault (1975/1995) argues that social institutions, including educational institutions, train bodies to be docile. If his theory is applied, Yuka and Megumi could have been the most docile to the nation of Japan, as they were educated from the undergraduate level to the doctoral level in the most prestigious national university in Japan. However, their lives show that graduate school, as an educational institution, did not instill major discourse through its curriculum and hidden curriculum to produce docile adults. My research data show how they critically searched for and carved out their own career and lives.

Megumi did not suffer as a woman when she was enrolled in a doctorate program, perhaps because her distress that she was not able to contribute to society and her concern as to the significance of her doctoral work was too great to leave room for worrying about gender-related issues. Unlike Megumi, Yuka found her life as a woman to be very stressful. She did not necessarily struggle with gender discrimination, but when she started to think about marriage and childbirth in her late 20s, she was worried that the family life and professional life she had envisioned when she entered graduate school seemed to be more difficult to achieve than she had expected. She realized that she had had two conflicting model images: one image was getting married and having a child in her late 20s as a university faculty member. The other image was to continue studying as a graduate student until she became around 30 years old. She said that realistically, the beginning age for a university faculty would be in early 30s, and even this might be difficult. If she would start her academic career in a rural area at a university that was not categorized as a research university, it would be difficult to conduct research and to meet her future spouse. She felt that she was completely at a loss when she thought about that situation. Yuka's worry is reasonable. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, in Japan the academic career system starting from post-doctoral fellow, and then getting on the tenure track towards earning tenure has not been established. In addition, the number of academic positions is decreasing (Cabinet Office, 2003b). Difficulty in finding employment in the academic job market for doctorate holders was systematically created by the unbalanced demand and supply. Ushioji, a scholar of education who wrote on university faculty as a profession, argues that twice as many doctorates are awarded each year than there are academic positions available. (Ushioji, 2009). As the birth rate declines, the demand for university faculty members is not likely to increase. Although Yuka was seriously distressed about her situation in which her life as a woman was not fulfilled, she decided to focus on finishing her dissertation by the end of her research fellowship. She earned a doctorate and then started to work as a university faculty member.

After struggling with anxiety about an unpredictable future, Yuka realized her dream to become a faculty member, just as she had envisioned.

I attended classes that Yuka taught, including seminars and a lecture in a large class. Classes and the materials she distributed for students were well organized. In a large class, Yuka explained basic terms that were taught at the primary or at least the secondary education, while such basic terms would not have been explained in classes she had attended as a student at the University of Tokyo. By inserting the personal example of her family taking a one-day trip, she helped students imagine the historical background she explained, which shows her efforts to make the content of study intelligible. Using material she distributed in the class, she tried to stimulate students' critical thinking in data analysis. She lectured the large class with great fluency. In seminars, as well as in a large class, Yuka urged students not to accept information without thinking critically. She emphasized the importance of analyzing statistics and data critically. She raised an example; only reported cases are counted and reflected in statistics. Unreported cases do not mean that these cases do not exist. She indicated that there might have been minor cases that were not reported and taught students the importance of critically analyzing data. Regardless class size, she emphasized critical thinking. In Japan acquiring knowledge is important for high school students who prepare for entrance examinations of universities. Considering this, providing academic training in critical thinking at higher educational institutions is significant for students. Yuka's classes prove that graduate schools did not train body to be docile. On the contrary, Yuka even transmits critical thinking to her undergraduate students. In her classes, she looks confident and her excellent preparation for her classes shows her high abilities and efforts as an academic. From observation of her classes, her serious distress when she was a doctoral student and a postdoctoral fellow before being employed as a faculty member was hard to imagine. Considering her ability, it is not surprising that she obtained a faculty position, but Yuka thought that her worst-case scenario was to become a housewife. I have no intention to

criticize housewives, but the fact that Yuka told me that she had not discarded the option of becoming a housewife suggests how competitive and difficult it is to be employed as a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in Japan.

Unlike Yuka who decided to focus on finishing a dissertation for an academic career, Megumi made a different choice, to carve out her own future after experiencing “*nayami no soko*, the bottom of distress” when she studied in her doctoral program. Great suffering in graduate school made her search for a way of solving her distress. Megumi found a way in which she could utilize her academic background in the field other than academia. In the first year of her doctoral program, she was kept busy by various activities other than doctoral research and enjoyed her doctoral student life. Activities she was involved in included teaching at a high school and working for an education-related company on a part-time basis. In the second year of doctoral program, Megumi tried to start her doctoral research seriously, but it did not go well. Although she became a doctoral student, she was not able to envision her future career life as a researcher, which was likely to be caused by the fact that not only did her research not go well but she was not able to see the significance in her research. At that time, she started to work as a volunteer at a foundation related to an international organization, partly because of her interest in international organizations as a workplace in the future. While she worked as a volunteer, she started to consider working in a field other than academia and started a job search. As mentioned earlier, in Japan, the recruitment of new graduates (*shinsotsu*) while they are enrolled in schools, including universities, and the expectation that them to start work upon graduation is the most common way to enter the working world. Doctorate holders who pursue career in academia are exceptions because it is more difficult to be employed in academia as a tenured professor upon earning a graduate degree. However, generally speaking, *shinsotsu* is in a more advantageous position than those who are not *shinsotsu* in job market. In order to go into the job market as *shinsotsu*, Megumi decided to choose *manki taigaku*, leaving graduate school without a doctorate after meeting

all requirements except for a dissertation. In Japan, *katei hakase* is required to be enrolled in minimum five years in graduate school. In order to be qualified as *manki taigaku*, she needed to be enrolled in graduate school until the end of the third year as a doctoral student. Megumi applied for companies related to her major. She says that her application was not accepted by companies to which she applied because they probably did not need doctoral students in humanities and social sciences. However, she received a job offer as a *shinsotsu* from an education-related company as a researcher. Upon the end of the third year, she started to work as a regular employee for the company, taking a leave of absence from her graduate education.

Megumi's decision to work as a regular employee on a full-time basis before earning a doctorate and taking a leave of absence might be seen as dropping out of the severe and competitive doctoral student life. Interviews with research participants in my study reveal that doctoral students who take a leave of absence without having the prospect of earning doctorates tend to be seen negatively as dropouts. However, I argue that she made a constructive decision to change the direction of her career in order to utilize her knowledge and the skills she obtained through training in graduate school. She critically investigated to solve the problems she faced in a doctoral program and made her own decision to contribute to society as a highly educated person in her own way. Regarding the decision she made, she says, "rather than to stop conducting research by taking a leave of absence from graduate school, I try to be involved in research from this side (not in academia) for a while". Although she does not discard the possibility of returning to a doctoral program, now she does not feel the inevitability of returning to academia to conduct academic research. Her interest of research has shifted from academic-oriented to more practical-oriented setting that is more directly connected to solving problems. What she values in her work is that she is involved in a research community from a different viewpoint than what she was accustomed to as a graduate student. When she was in graduate school, she participated in research

communities through conducting research, but she now coordinates joint research projects in accordance with the needs of her company. Thus, she says she can effectively utilize her knowledge and personal connections gained through graduate education for her work. She feels that working for an education-related company broadened her horizons. Through her current work participating in joint research and coordinating research in order to collect wisdom to produce information in a timely manner, she has become able to see her study within the larger context of society. She was not able to do this while she was enrolled in graduate school.

Looking back on her decision to take leave of absence from graduate school and take her current position, Megumi is glad she made the decision to find employment rather than continuing her research in graduate school. Because she did not choose to continue her research in graduate school without taking leave of absence, it is impossible for her to compare and judge which option is better by experiencing both. However, what is important here is to learn what Megumi thinks of her decision. Participants' views are memories of themselves, part of a constructed self-representation, intended to narrate an image, a history. Durkheim (1895/1938) aims to understand how social systems and functions shape individuals' behaviors, instead of paying much attention to how individuals view their experiences and behaviors in their own contexts. Unlike Durkheim, I value the subjectivity of research participants to inform how research participants think, understand, and want to place their experiences and decisions in their lives. As Koyama (2008) says of subjectivity in autobiography, subjectivity clearly transmits how one wants to tell their lives to others. As I explained in a chapter on methods and methodology, I see personal memory as social and value subjectivity in this research because the nature of ethnographic research values subjectivity. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw say, "The task of the ethnographer is not to determine 'the truth' but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others' lives (Emerson et al, 1995, p.3)". Megumi's personal narrative can be seen to be embedded in a master narrative

(dominant story) emphasizing the extreme difficulty doctoral students and doctoral holders have finding employment. (I use three types of narratives categorized by Sakurai (2002, 2009) explained in my chapter on methods and methodology.) Megumi thinks that she clung to graduate school s and earning a doctorate. Her remarks indicate that not having a doctorate would not be a disadvantage for her at her workplace. In other words, a doctorate would not be advantageous for her at her workplace that is not part of academia.

It should be noted that Megumi does not think that most companies did not accept her job application because she would leave graduate school without a doctorate. Instead, she thinks that she was not hired because of her status as a doctoral student in humanities and social sciences, which is likely to be true. Not having a doctorate is not likely to be an obstacle of employment. As explained in an earlier chapter, it is extremely difficult for doctorate holders to have a job other than in academic (Ushioji, 1993). Doctorate holders are not attractive for companies in Japan. Their knowledge and skills tend to be regarded as too specified and doctorate students tend to be seen to lack flexibility (Ushioji, 2009). Although the University of Tokyo is known as the most prestigious university in Japan, Megumi's case suggests that the name value of the University of Tokyo does not have much appeal to companies whether applicants are ABDs or doctorate holders. As I argue in chapter two, the value of higher education in the job market is regressively evaluated, which means that higher education is only valued in job market up to the level of the undergraduate level, while the value of education is depreciated in job market (except for academic job market) as one studies further to the master's level and then the doctoral level.

Gender-related experiences of women in graduate school in which males are dominant— Cases of Keiko, Minako, and Hiromi

As I have shown in chapter six, the husbands' educational level tends to be equal to or higher than wives' in Japan (Shimizu, 1990; Yano, 1996), so female graduate degree

holders are disadvantaged in love and the marriage market in Japan. Alumnae of the University of Tokyo are especially in disadvantaged in love and the marriage market because no university has higher prestige than the University of Tokyo in Japan. Genderedness of education is also seen in graduate school. In this section, referring to some research participants' experiences in their graduate school days, I will show how education is gendered in graduate school, particularly through the assumption of gender stereotype in the characteristics and roles of men and women. The experiences of my research participants show how men are placed in the central position as majority in graduate school as well as in academia.

There are two types of gender discrimination in academia: institutional discrimination and informal discrimination. My research data reveal that institutional gender discrimination is not a major issue in academia. However, some research participants experienced informal gender discrimination when they were graduate students. As prior research indicates (Sasahara, 1995), it is important to place gender-related problems that graduate students face at the core of the issue. Experiences in graduate school significantly influence graduate students' mental state and career after graduation. While institutional discrimination includes employment and salary discrimination, informal discrimination includes advisors' lower expectations of female graduate students compared to male graduate students (Asakura and Hara, 1999/2009). Informal discrimination also includes male colleagues' discriminatory attitude towards women in male-dominated academia. Academic advisors in graduate school have significant influence over graduate students. Therefore if female graduate students keep receiving negative evaluations from academic advisors, they cannot be confident in their academic performance and would act as the poor performers they are labeled as by their advisors (Kano, 1988). Academic advisors' low expectations of female graduate students could lead to placing women at a disadvantage in academic performance and employment opportunities (Asakura & Hara, 1999/2009; Kano, 1988). In informal

gender discrimination, research participants particularly raised the following two interrelated issues: (1) gender stereotype in characteristics, and (2) gender stereotype in roles. The first issue here specifically means the assumption that men are superior in logical thinking over women. It should be noted that it is generally argued that, when compared with women, men have higher aptitude as researchers. This general argument is wrong because it ignores individual differences in aptitude and abilities. Individuals' aptitudes and abilities are formed by a complex combination of innate characteristics, environment, including unconscious and conscious educational, work, and life environment, and efforts. To think that gender, only a biological difference, dictates aptitude in itself is illogical because such an argument rejects considering other social and cultural factors affecting the formation of aptitudes. Viewing women negatively as researchers should be rectified not only because it is against gender equality but also because it prevents women from developing their potentials and abilities and is a waste of potential social benefits. In the following paragraphs, I will show how research participants experienced such discrimination and how they reacted. It should be noted that gender stereotype in characteristics is not necessarily taken as discrimination by all research participants. As I will show later, Minako does not think gender stereotype in characteristics as discrimination, but she thinks that generally speaking, men are better than women at logical thinking as well as taking a broad view of a situation.

Keiko was not always confident that she had an aptitude for research. Through communication with her academic advisor, she had the impression that her academic advisor believed that women could not write logically without making greater efforts than men, which discouraged her. She consulted with other graduate students who entered graduate school earlier than she had. Among various opinions, she accepted particular advice to change that belief that women could not write logically by actually writing good logical papers, though she thought that was very difficult as what one person could do was limited. Keiko told me that she was always depressed when she was a graduate student. She did not

see herself as becoming a researcher and her pride was hurt in an environment in which she was never complimented. Like in Chie's department, the academic atmosphere was also severe in Keiko's department. Keiko told me that if students could not control their anxiety, they would become mentally ill. For Keiko, studying in a doctoral program was akin to persuading herself that she did not care, no matter how critical her advisor and her colleagues were of her writing.

The gender view that men have higher aptitude than women as researchers is not necessarily seen among my research participants. However, Minako thinks that men do tend to be better than women at thinking logically and taking a broad view of the situation. Thus, she thinks men are more suited to academia than women. Willis studied working class lads in the UK and concluded that they reproduce themselves unconsciously as a class (Willis, 1977/1978).¹⁴⁸ Minako internalizes the acknowledgment of men's superiority over women in logical thinking and discourse on gender-based aptitudes. However, Minako is different from working class lads in that she took a position that did require her to exercise logical thinking. Her position as a producer of cultural TV programs in mass media, often requires her to use logical thinking. The students Minako saw in graduate school who showed outstanding qualities in academic discussions were men. Although none of her professors directly indicated that male students did better in academic discussions than female students, seeing that professors were pleased to see the exchange of heated discussion by male students gave Minako a vague impression that men had higher aptitude to academic discussions. Unlike Keiko, Minako seems to associate male-dominated academia with different innate aptitude of men and women instead of associating it with an environment in which women are structurally disadvantaged in academia. She thinks men tend to effortlessly see the whole picture while women cannot do this without making a conscious effort. It is notable that

¹⁴⁸ Willis argues that the combination of "subjective sense of manual labour power" (Willis, 1977/1978, p.2) and "an objective decision to apply it to manual work" (Willis, 1977/1978, p.2) direct working class lads to engage in work in working class (Willis, 1977/1978).

Minako's view that men are better than women at logical thinking is confirmed through her career in mass media. This suggests that the gender images formed in graduate school influence further forming of gender image in career after graduation, even in a non-academic field. Women's underrepresentation in academic leadership is also seen in other professional occupations (Cabinet Office, 2009b). According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (November 9, 2007), female professors say that universities contribute reinforcing gender stereotypes, and gender stereotypes could be reproduced even in graduate education.

Minako indicated that the differences in discussion methods between men and women might be caused by the tendency of women to sympathize with others in discussions more than men. She indicated that the impression that men are superior to women in logical thinking over women is produced by women's tendency to respect harmony with others, instead of sticking to self-assertiveness without agreeing with others in conversations. In Japan maintaining harmony and cooperation is taught as essential from preschool through secondary education.¹⁴⁹ Women could be more influenced by education emphasizing harmony and cooperation than men due to the expected gender role of women as supportive rather than assertive. Unlike Keiko, Minako was not offended by acknowledging the superiority of men to women in logical thinking, which may seem to give the impression that Minako lacked criticalness, but she suggested that this may be caused by differences in styles of discussion which was socially learned. What strengthens Minako's view that men have higher abilities in logical thinking as well as in taking a broad view of the situation is not only her graduate school experience seeing heated academic discussion by male students, but also the fact that, in her higher education experience, she has never met female faculty members whom she admired for their academic excellence.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Regarding the importance of harmony and cooperation in education in Japan, please see Lewis (1995) for preschool and primary education, Tsuneyoshi (1992/2005) for primary education and White (1987) for primary and secondary education.

¹⁵⁰ Yumi met a female graduate student whose academic abilities were extremely high. She denies the value to distinguish men and women in aptitude.

Minako's career life in mass media has not changed her gender view. The lack of experience in meeting an excellent woman in mass media may suggest the low percentage of women in mass media due to the extremely busy schedule, demanding long work hours. She says that a person in her position is required to be available for 24 hours a day for work,. Thus, the lack of female faculty members in academia and *sōgōshoku* women who are in managerial positions in a larger society in Japan significantly influences highly educated women's view of gender. It is ironic that studying at the most prestigious university produced the image of men and women that could lead to justifying the gender-based division of labor that assigns women to assisting positions. It is notable that Minako does not work as an assistant, but she works as a *sōgōshoku*, professional. By receiving "the best education" at the University of Tokyo, from the undergraduate through the master's level, Minako was able to develop her academic and cultural level to be attractive enough to be employed as a professional in mass media. In Japan, mass media is a difficult field in which to find employment. Working as a professional in mass media is beyond the role of women based on the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo*. At the same time, studying at the University of Tokyo in a male-dominated academic environment strengthened Minako's consciousness of the stereotypical image of gender-based strengths.

While Minako's gender view came partly from her experience of not having met any excellent female professors and partly from the general tendency of women to respect harmony in conversations, Keiko indicates that the tendency in academia to consider men's ways of thinking to be logical originates from the fact that men outnumber women in academia. Although I neither showed any demographic data on gender components in academia nor mentioned low percentage of female researchers in Japan, Keiko raised the issue that men outnumbered women as the reason why men were thought to be better logical writers than women in academia. Seeing men as rational while women as emotional is a deep-rooted assumption in European philosophy, which leads to dividing fields by gender

(Connell, 1995). For example, Connell (1995) sees science and technology are masculine fields. As rationality is valued in academia, it is not surprising that research is seen as a masculine field in accordance with the above-stated dichotomy of gender assumptions.

In Japan, women are still in a minority in academia, especially at the University of Tokyo. The ratio of female researchers in Japan is 13.8% as of 2011, which is lower than that of many other countries. The proportion of female faculty tends to be low in prestigious universities, which is not a phenomenon unique to Japan (Kano, 1988; University of Tokyo, 2010b). The low percentage of female researchers in Japan is not the result of differences in academic abilities between men and women. It should be noted that in a white paper on gender equality published in 2012 (*danjyo kyōdō sankaku hakusho*) the difficulty to balancing work with family is raised as the first reason given by both men and women to explain the low rate of female researchers in Japan.

The fact that the higher the position in the university faculty, the smaller the proportion of women becomes indicates the difficulty women have in obtaining academic positions in university. Although the proportion of female faculty has gradually increased, the percentage of women in president, professor, associate professor, lecturer, assistant professor, and assistant in 2011 is as follows: 8.5, 13.0, 20.8, 29.1, 25.4, and 54.2 (Cabinet Office, 2012a).¹⁵¹ The proportion of women is higher in part-time faculty than full-time faculty (Hada, 2005). The proportion of female faculty is higher in junior college faculty than in university faculty (Cabinet Office, 2012a).¹⁵² In 2009, the percentage of women in professor, associate professor, lecturer, assistant professor, and assistant at the University of Tokyo was as follows: 4.2, 9.0, 14.8, 14.6, and 37.3 (The University of Tokyo, Office for Gender

¹⁵¹ There is only one national university having a female president among 87 national universities in Japan as of 2007. The only national university having a female president is a women's university (McNeill, November 9, 2007). In Japan, the position of lecturer is higher than assistant professor.

¹⁵² Kano (1988) indicates that due to that fact that journals issued by junior colleges are often not listed in a journal index published by the National Diet Library, which brings articles written by junior college faculty members into a disadvantaged position (Kano, 1988).

Equality, 2010b, p.2).

The underrepresentation of women in prestigious universities and the tendency for fewer women to occupy higher positions in the university faculty is not unique to Japan (Kano, 1988, p.36). However, the percentage of female faculty members at the University of Tokyo is lower than at prestigious universities in the U.S. and UK (University of Tokyo, 2010b, p.34). The underrepresentation of women in academia, especially in higher academic positions is likely to be related to the tendency for women to have greater domestic responsibilities compared with men. The study of young researchers in Waseda University, a prestigious private university in Japan, reveals that every woman with children found it difficult to balance child-rearing with research, while not even one man with children discussed such difficulties (Waseda University, 2007). This result is surprisingly similar to a study of women and men in the science faculty that studied how they experience the promotion process in the U.S. While men described the promotion process as a game, women saw it as a balancing act between work and family (Gunter and Stambach, 2003). This similarity suggests that the gender regime expecting women to take a major role in domestic work regardless of their participation in paid work is not unique in Japan. As the above-stated demographics of the gender proportion of academic positions show, trying to climb the academic ladder is not easy for women. In order to rectify numerical gender inequality, the government decided on a national policy to increase to 30%, the percentage of women holding the positions of leadership in every field, including academia, by 2020.¹⁵³ Considering the extreme numerical gender inequality in academia in Japan, positive action to increase the ratio of women in leadership positions is meaningful, but numerical equality does not necessarily guarantee social equality because “gender is a way in which social practice is ordered” (Connell, 1995, p.71). Connell (1995) indicates that institutions, such as

¹⁵³ Positive action is stipulated in the article 2, in the Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society (1999). The concrete goal to increase the percentage of women to 30% by 2020 in every field was a cabinet decision in 2005 (Cabinet Office, 2009b).

the workplace and the school, are substantively gendered. She defines hegemonic masculinity as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 1995, p.77). As long as hegemonic masculinity is reproduced and maintained, social gender equality cannot be realized. Although having a full-time job is taken for granted for men and women in current Japanese society, it is women who are expected to play a major role in household tasks and child rearing. Social gender equality will not be realized until this situation changes.

Demographic data showing the low percentage of academic women suggest that it would be difficult to find role models of female researchers. Even Aki, who established a good relationship with her male colleagues when she was in her master’s program, found it very difficult, as a woman, to become a researcher. She told me that she would wonder what to do if she had a daughter in the future and if her daughter had a desire to study in a doctoral program and to become a researcher. Because Aki does not know any female professors in her area of study, she wonders if it would be really possible for women to become professors.¹⁵⁴

Considering positive action, being a woman would not necessarily be a disadvantage in the academic job market. Yuka indicates that if everything were equal, universities would employ women because gender balance in personnel organization is important in the certified evaluation and accreditation of universities. Judged from this point of view, women seem to have an advantage in the academic job market. However, taking all factors into consideration, including gender discrimination some women experience in the processes of becoming professional researchers, it cannot be said that being a woman is an advantage in the

¹⁵⁴ In Japan the percentage of women among managers in corporations of which sizes are over 100 is 6.6% (Cabinet Office, 2009b). This shows that the situation in academia is not worse than that in business. It should be noted that Aki works for a foreign financial institution, instead of a Japanese company.

academic job market.

Hiromi, a part-time lecturer as a doctorate holder, shared the experience of her graduate school days with me. Hiromi's case shows that when women are in the minority, some male graduate students may not expect women to be their colleagues standing at an equal position to work hard together to improve themselves and one another. When she worked hard for an international symposium, like her male colleagues did, her male colleagues referred to her as "the one who was certified to be a man". She thinks that she was considered to be part of the men's group because she contested with them on even terms. This suggests that male graduate students think that the only graduate students who keep a good standing as prospective researchers are men. If this experience of Hiromi's is placed in a larger society in Japan, this suggests that there is a stereotypical image that only men are major contributors to academia. For Hiromi's male colleagues, Hiromi was considered to be a woman who behaved like a man because of her dedication to research and productiveness as a graduate student. Hiromi interpreted being certified to be a man as a compliment, though she was uncomfortable being categorized as a man. And though she was classified as a man, she was not told by her male colleagues that she came to the University of Tokyo in order to look for a husband who would be a graduate of the University of Tokyo. But a female friend of hers was told that by a young male researcher. Hiromi indicated that some men considered female graduate students as frills in graduate school. Seeing female graduate students as frills is rooted in hegemonic masculinity, instead of just numerical gender imbalance. She thought that such a discriminative attitude by men was a reflection of the lack of confidence in men's academic abilities. Because hegemonic masculinity is not fixed, but changing in gender relationships (Connell, 1995), Hiromi's male colleagues' discriminative attitude to their female colleagues can be construed as resistance to a potential threat that could change the existing hegemonic masculinity in academia.

While gender equality as a principle is stipulated in the Basic Law for Gender-Equal

Society (1999), gender equality is still not hegemonic in actual practice in academia. Connell (1995) insists that “gender is a way of structuring social practice in general, not a special type of practice” (p.75), and so the Basic Law for Gender-Equal Society (1999) stipulates basic principles concerning the lives of men and women, instead of specific realms. However, gender discourse in general in Japan was not necessarily significantly changed by the enactment of Basic Law for Gender-Equality Society. The gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* are challenged, but my research data show that these norms still persist. As Foucault maintains, sex is the target of social control and administration (Foucault, 1976/1990), and as an example the Japanese government enacted a law for gender equality. As Foucault argues that discourse in general is unconsciously diffused among people through “their history, their economics, their social practices, the language (langue) that they speak, the mythology of their ancestors, even the stories that they were told in their childhood” (Foucault, 1972, pp.210-211), discourse is deeply embedded in individuals. Therefore, the enactment of a law promoting gender equality does not automatically change gender discourse in society.

The general argument about women’s aptitude as researcher interplayed gender norms, seeing men as breadwinners and women as the ones engaged in reproductive work at home. A study on a gender equality plan for nurturing researchers found such gender norms to be one of the factors contributing to the disadvantage women face in attaining academic positions (Waseda University, 2007). Regardless of marital status, women, as opposed to men, tend to be seen as ones who do not need to earn a living. As some of my research participants indicated, generally speaking, in Japan women tend to be regarded as not having financial needs and tend to be allowed to stay home without earning a living, while society requires men to earn a living. According to Taga (2005), who studies post-adolescence and gender, in a society in which roles are segregated by gender, becoming an adult has different meanings for men and women. For men, becoming an adult means obtaining economic independence through employment, whereas for women becoming an adult means getting married and

becoming a mother. Economic independence is not required for women to become adults in this setting. It is assumed that single women have the option of getting married, if they cannot make a living as a researcher. Married women tend to be seen as ones who already have husbands who support them, so they tend to be seen as those who do not earn a living as researchers. In Japan it is not uncommon for academic advisors to introduce to their students part-time or temporary academic positions. It is sometimes observed that some academic advisors are more helpful to male students than female students so that male students can be full-fledged researchers (as breadwinners) (Waseda University, 2007). In contrast, some advisors seem to think that it would be more desirable for female students to settle down in marriage (Hara, 1996). Prior research also indicates that women who experienced childbirth and child rearing tend to experience difficulties in being productive academically due to their gender roles at home. As a result, they tend not to be seen as active researchers in the forefront of the field (Waseda University, 2007).

Keiko told me how academic advisors would generally decide the order of priority of graduate students to whom they introduce academic positions. (She did not talk about cases at the University of Tokyo, but cases in general.) The first priority would be given to married men. The second priority would be given to single men. The third priority would be given to single women. The fourth priority would be given to married women. In this order of priority, regardless of marital status, higher priority is given to men over women because men are considered to be breadwinners who need to support their family, while women are not. Keiko added that, unlike women, in this priority order, for a man to have a child could be an advantage rather than a disadvantage. This priority order suggests how deeply rooted are the concepts of the gender roles that regard men as breadwinners and women as ones who are in charge of household chores and childrearing in Japan. This priority order shows that gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* might have shifted from hegemony to ideology, but they are still deeply rooted in Japan. A survey study conducted in 2005 on graduate students reveals some

structural difficulties female graduate students have in obtaining employment. The survey study refers to an example of married couples where both of them are researchers. When the husbands are hired as full time researchers, hiring wives as part-time researchers tends to be seen as sufficient (Science Council of Japan, 2005). Keiko is categorized in the group of married women, which is the lowest priority category. Keiko says that objectively she is seen to be in a safe position being protected by her husband who has steady income as a company employee while she tries to obtain tenure. While indicating the disadvantage of being a married woman in the academic job market, Keiko is aware of the fact that marriage greatly helps her financially because the financial resources brought from marriage allowed her to keep pursuing an academic career. It is not unusual that people give up pursuing academic career due to financial difficulties.

Keiko made a strategic plan to survive in academia as a woman. Keeping in mind the disadvantaged position of married women in the academic job market, Keiko constantly needs to insist, through her attitudes that she aims to become a professional researcher. In order to show that she is not the type of woman who is satisfied to work as a part-time researcher to balance housework with child rearing. She accepts any work even when it is not certain if the work is helpful for her academic career; otherwise, it could be thought that she chose the job for the purpose of balancing career with family. Keiko's strategy to overcome her disadvantaged position as a married woman in the academic market made her extremely busy. While searching for a full-time academic employment, Keiko works as a specialist for a local administrative office three times a week. In addition, she has another part-time job at *juku*, while she vigorously conducts research. She sometimes worries that her extremely busy life could ruin her work and family life. The fact that her parents divorced may make her worry more serious. She feels loneliness and pressure as a married woman in the academic job market. Even if she cannot find employment, Keiko does not think that she can become a housewife because that would be too risky. She thinks that if she writes articles as a

housewife, it is unlikely that an academic job would be introduced to her. Considering how she is seen in academia, she is careful about her attitudes as a married woman.

Keiko was not the only woman who felt that men and women were not necessarily equally treated in academia through their graduate school life. Hiromi also did not think that men and women were treated in the same way in graduate school. One of her professors suggested that she consider a life plan other than pursuing an academic career. Since Hiromi did not consider a career other than becoming a researcher, she was offended by the professor's words. It is notable that Hiromi took the professor's words as sexual harassment in her 20s, but now in her 30s she thinks that it was out of his well-intentioned concern. In her words, it was out of *oyagokoro*, parental love for one's child, in this case, parental love to save one's child from hardships. The professor's words implied that pursuing an academic career would be too difficult for a woman. Considering that women are a minority in academia and that the prime time for childbirth are likely to overlap with graduate education or job search, it is understandable that pursuing an academic career is not an easy path for women. Hiromi does not think that it would be better for women to pursue a non-academic career, but the change of her attitude toward her professor's words show that Hiromi is now more confident in herself as a scholar and her strong determination to become a scholar no matter what other people say.

It is notable that none of the women who felt that men and women were not equally treated in academia through their graduate student life (Keiko and Hiromi) gave up their desired career in academia and shifted to a career considered to be more feminine, in which the work environment could be more friendly to women. Minako, who acknowledged men's superiority to women in logical thinking and taking a broad view of the situation, also did not think that she was not suited to her career in mass media and did not consider career change. Instead, she sees her career as an appropriate career to utilize her knowledge and experiences gained through graduate education. She does not mean to discourage women from pursuing

either an academic or business career. She says that she would recommend both men and women to pursue doctoral study if they are outstandingly excellent and determined to do so. She works as a *sōgōshoku*, in which women are minority, and takes it for granted that she will keep pursuing her career as well as her responsibilities as the mother of a young child. She wishes Japanese society would change so that women continuing to work after childbirth would be taken for granted. Instead of accepting imposed gender roles seeing men as breadwinners while women engage in housework and child rearing, Keiko, Hiromi, and Minako critically think about how men and women are placed in academia and a larger Japanese society and they aim to carry out their career goals as professionals no matter how difficult it is.

Social and personal significance of graduate education for women pursuing or in academic career-Cases of Tomomi and Wakana

Graduate education is certainly helpful in pursuing an academic career, but my research found that for my research participants, graduate education is more than a means to obtain career. Foucault (1975/1995) argues that “the school became a machine for learning” (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.165). For him, school is an institution to discipline students. In this context, the fruit of school education is to produce docile students who react to injunction. In Foucault’s words, “it is a question not of understanding the injunction but of perceiving the signal and reacting to it immediately” (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.166). According to Foucault’s argument, it could be suggested that the longer students are trained in educational institutions, the more docile students become. However, my research participants, especially those who are pursuing doctorates and or have earned doctorates, acknowledge that graduate education enabled them to think critically. One of the aspects of critical thinking is to be able to understand and articulate phenomena and ideas. Two women (Tomomi and Wakana) especially acknowledge that they learned how to articulate their ideas in words through

higher level education, as the following examples show.

Tomomi is a doctoral student. Education enabled her to put her vague ideas into words. When she was an undergraduate, she was not trained to critically view and to discuss issues. Partly because undergraduate students are not familiar with academic literature, her classmates just accepted professors' explanation and did not make critical comments about professors' views at all. She took this for granted until she started to study in graduate school. At the undergraduate level, she was not in an environment in which she was required to articulate her own views. In graduate school, she is required to articulate what she thinks and argue for it. She can now view things from multiple perspectives and read articles critically, and she can also articulate her previously vague and intangible feelings. She cannot specify this solely as the outcome of graduate education. She says that it may be the result of her many years of study, or it may be the result of the differences in quality of education between the undergraduate and graduate levels, but it seems to be certain that academic training in graduate school definitely contributed to enhancing abilities of critical thinking and articulating her own views and ideas.

Wakana also told me that graduate education enabled her to express herself in words. Until she was trained in graduate school, as she did not have means of expressing her ideas in words. She realized that she depended on her senses to deal with things. Even though there were things she felt, she was not able to articulate these things before she was trained in graduate school. Graduate education and her character are inseparable because training she received in graduate education significantly influences her views and attitudes in general. In other words, graduate education influences decisions she makes in her life because views and attitudes acquired in graduate school are penetrated in her whole being.

Social and personal significance of graduate education for women having non-academic career after master's degrees -Cases of Minako, Aki, Sanae, Yumi, and Fumie

Some research participants, including Yumi, Fumie, Aki, Minako, and Sanae work as professionals in non-academic fields. (I do not include Chie in this category because she is in the process of preparing for her career and now is doing a temporary part-time job.) Yumi, Fumie, and Aki work for business, Yumi for a research company, Fumie for a manufacturer, and Aki for a foreign financial institution. Minako works for a mass media company. Sanae works for a foundation

All of them are satisfied with their decisions to go to graduate school and highly rate their graduate studies in their lives. However, reasons they positively evaluate their graduate school experience are not necessarily the significance of graduate education in their career. Show and Wright (1997) view policy as devices that classify people, but people are unaware of the process. In this view, reports issued by the Central Council for Education (Central Council for Education, 2005), classify master's degree holders as highly professionals who contribute to society in various fields. However, my research data reveal that master's degree holders do not necessarily utilize their graduate education in their career and they are little conscious of the process of being classified as high-level professionals. In other words, there are significant gaps between the intended outcome of the Central Council for Education and reality in master's degree holders' roles in the professional world. As Levinson and Sutton (2001) do not see policy as a linear process but a discursive process and argue that people appropriate meanings in multiple sites, graduate degree holders appropriate meanings for graduate education that are different from a policy proposal, as the following case shows.

The reports issued by the University Council on graduate students in 1991 indicated the need to increase the number of graduate students not only to train researchers but also to train professionals in non-academic fields (The University Council, 1991a, 1991b). In its policy proposal, the Central Council for Education (2005) specifically clarifies the purpose of master's programs as follows: "master's programs aim to develop a wide range of learning as well as abilities to conduct research. Master's programs also aim to develop excellent abilities

for engaging in highly professional occupations” (The Central Council for Education, 2005, p.14). This purpose clearly shows that master’s degree holders are expected to play a role as professionals by utilizing their graduate education. However, in reality, my research data reveal that women who work as professionals after earning a master’s degree are not required to have a master’s degree in order to be employed as professionals. According to them, the content of work for bachelor’s and master’s degree holders is the same in their workplaces. I do not mean that every occupation for master’s degree holders in non-academic career does not require graduate level education, but in Japan it is not unusual that the contents of work for bachelor’s degree holders and master’s degree holders are the same. This indicates that, as written in an earlier chapter, Japanese society has not provided a system to utilize graduate degree holders (Yoshimi, 2011; Mizuki, 2008). There is a wide gap between the role of master’s degree holders expected by the Central Council for Education and the actual need of human resources in job market.

Prior research on the outcome and evaluation of graduate education for adult graduate students (Kato, 2002) reveals that graduate education was more helpful in non-career aspects than in strictly career aspects of the lives of the degree holders. This prior study reveals that the experience of studying in graduate schools influenced graduates’ perspectives in general and the formation of character; however, skills and knowledge acquired through graduate education do not significantly contribute to their careers. Although most research participants in my study are new graduates of undergraduate programs, my research data show similarity to Kato’s research outcome in that for those who work in non-academic fields, graduate education is not highly evaluated in its contribution to their careers. Among the aforementioned five women who hold master’s degree in my research, Minako is the only woman who associates graduate education with career, while some of them indirectly associate graduate school experience with their career. Moreover, other research participants also see their graduate school experience as an experience that

influences their ways of life. It is worth noting that graduates evaluate aspects that are not directly related to career as an outcome of graduate education.¹⁵⁵

Minako's case

For Minako, going to graduate school were beneficial in her career as well as in her private life. However, it is notable that Minako thinks that it was the additional two years she was able to use freely for research and other things as a student that made her “an interesting person”, and therefore an attractive candidate to be employed as *sōgōshoku*, a professional, in mass media. For Minako, it is not knowledge and skills provided by academic training in graduate school that helped her gain employment in mass media. Although a master's degree was not required to apply for her position, she thinks that if she had not gone to graduate school, she might not have chosen her current occupation and might not have been able to be employed as a professional in the very competitive field of mass media. She says that only “interesting persons” can be employed in mass media. From her viewpoint, considering that the job search usually begins in a student's junior year in college, two years are not enough to become an interesting person. She thinks that having enriched experiences during her longer student life helped her personal development and led to employment in mass media. She went to graduate school partly because she did not know what she wanted to do as work. It should be noted that Minako does not think that academic training in graduate school in itself contributed to her value in job market in the field of mass media. It is certain that she is engaged in highly professional work and going to graduate education helped her to obtain an opportunity to be employed as a professional in mass media, but the way in which graduate education contributed to this is different from the policy proposal by the Central Council for

¹⁵⁵ Although Kato (2002) hypothesizes that adult graduate students evaluate graduate education for character development rather than for career development because adult graduate students are still in the stage of elite in Trow's transition of higher education system, judging from my research data, this hypothesis is not likely to be correct because going to graduate school is not necessarily associated with a privilege as elite in a context in Japanese society considering the severe job market for graduate degree holders.

Education (2005).

While graduate education in itself did not contribute to Minako's current employment, this does not mean that graduate education was not helpful at all to her in her job. On the contrary, her graduate school experience enriched Minako's career and private life. Her career and private life are inseparable because the cultural issues she deals with in her job are related to the area of her graduate study. Widening the area of interest and adding cultural experiences in opera, music, and art, and studying what she was interested in enriched her life. Learning provided the ultimate joy for her. She thinks that her rich experience in graduate school days somehow contributed to her work in producing cultural programs in mass media. She does not indicate particular points, but she thinks that her knowledge and skills to conduct research are utilized for her work.

Aki's case

Unlike Minako, Aki's does not think that her work is an extension of her graduate study. However, Aki is similar to Minako in the following two points: first, they view their graduate school experience as a precious experience in their lives. Second, going to graduate school indirectly provided them with an opportunity to find employment. Whereas having additional rich life experiences during her graduate school days helped Minako search for what she wanted to do in a job and ultimately helped her find a job in mass media, Aki's experience studying at the University of Tokyo only indirectly led to employment at a foreign financial institution. Aki joined a foreign financial institution as a professional upon graduation. She thinks going to graduate school was a good step in her life. She never had such an intensive period of study in her life, and she holds it as very precious. However, as with Minako's position, Aki's position did not require knowledge at the graduate level. Unlike Minako, Aki does not think that she utilizes the knowledge and skills that she obtained through graduate education in her job.

Aki earned a bachelor's degree from a university other than the University of Tokyo. Foreign financial institutions are not well known as a workplace among students at the university where Aki studied at the undergraduate level, while foreign financial institutions are well known as a workplace among students at some other universities, including the University of Tokyo. While a master's degree is not required for her position, Aki thinks that it would have been difficult to work for a foreign financial institution if she had not studied at the University of Tokyo. Because of the lack of graduates working for foreign financial institutions, there was little information about the employment at foreign financial institutions brought by graduates at a university she studied at the undergraduate level. She would have not known of a career in foreign financial institutions and would not have applied if she had not studied in graduate school at the University of Tokyo. She says that the brand name of the University of Tokyo does not help in her ultracompetitive workplace, but the volume of information from the many workers in foreign financial institutions who are alumni of the University of Tokyo was definitely helpful in learning about foreign financial institutions and a career there. For Aki, studying in a graduate school at the University of Tokyo provided an opportunity to learn about previously unknown career possibilities. While in an earlier chapter I refer to the fact that some students change university when they go to graduate schools for the purpose of having better brand names in their education credentials (*Shūkan diamond*, 2010), Aki is not one of these students. The university where Aki studied at the undergraduate level is a prestigious university and the reason why she chose to study at the University of Tokyo is that the University of Tokyo has a professor with whom she wanted to study.

Sanae's case

Unlike Minako and Aki, Sanae did not find a full-time regular employee position when she was in graduate school. But going to graduate school did open Sanae's eyes to the

possibility of a woman doing something other than being a housewife. She now works as a professional in a foundation, but if she had not gone to graduate school, she cannot imagine what she would have done as an occupation. Partly because she did not have a role model other than housewives around her and maybe partly because she experienced gender discrimination in her job search as a senior in college, Sanae was not able to envision her career life when she was an undergraduate student. As referred to in an earlier chapter, women are often required to choose between *sōgōshoku* (career track) and *ippanshoku* (clerical track) in large companies at the time of employment. *Sōgōshoku* (career track) is known for its long work hours, which can make child rearing difficult.

For Sanae, graduate education provided her with a means of being economically independent as a single mother. She became a single mother of two children due to divorce and started to work in her current workplace in her 30s. Sanae said that it was very unlikely for women in their 30s to find employment as *seishain*, a regular employee. She attributed her employment as a regular employee to her educational credential from the University of Tokyo. She may have been able to be employed as a regular employee even if she had not had a master's degree. However, what is important here is how she interprets the meaning of her graduate education rather than whether or not a graduate degree actually helped her obtain her position of a regular employee. As I argued in my chapter on methods and methodology, I value subjectivity in this research. Koyama (2008) says that autobiography is subjective in that it is a result of memory and stories selected by the speaker, but this does not damage its value as historical material because it is subjectivity that clearly transmits how one wants to tell his or her life to others. I applied this argument to my research. Considering that it is difficult for middle-aged women to find full-time employment regardless of their educational credentials (Sasagawa, 2001), for women in their 30s to acquire a regular employee position is not easy. Kunihiro, a sociologist who writes about housewives and gender, introduces a typical remark of housewives who want to reenter the labor force as

follows: “once a woman resigned, she would not be able to have career opportunities. The only available opportunities would be as a cashier at a supermarket or as a cleaning woman” (Kunihiro, 2001, p.51). Sanae says that if she had not gone to graduate school, she thinks that her career options would have been limited to simple labor that anyone can do, such as working as a cashier at a supermarket.

She thinks that she was able to find employment as a regular employee because she graduated from graduate school at the University of Tokyo. As Aki did, Sanae changed university in her transition from the undergraduate level to the graduate level. From her viewpoint, the brand name of the University of Tokyo was an advantage for her in finding employment. Although Sanae earned a bachelor’s degree from a prestigious university and did not change a university because she intended to add the prestige in her educational credentials rather because she was recommended by her professors, she felt the power of the brand name of the University of Tokyo in finding employment. The University Council suggested the need to train professionals who had highly specialized knowledge and abilities in its report issued in 1991, but the University Council did not intend to promote women’s participation in labor force. However, Sanae found the significance of graduate education in expanding the possibilities for herself as a woman and promoting her economic independence by work.

Soon after earning a master’s degree as a licensed clinical psychologist, Sanae got married. She worked as a school counselor and a part-time university lecturer, but not as a regular employee. The concluding way of life she reached to meet her professional desire as a woman starting a family until she divorced was to become a housewife while having a highly paid professional part-time job. Prior research shows that Sanae’s case is not an exception. As mentioned, Yamada (2009) indicates that highly educated women tend to marry highly educated men with high income. This makes a part-time professional job ideal for these women who can depend on their husbands; while the income is not high, they do not have to

sacrifice their pride for work.

For Sanae, from a short-term perspective, graduate education did not lead to a full-time career as a professional regular employee upon graduation. However, from a long-term perspective, graduate education surely opened the path for a career that she would not have even known before. As Riessman says, “Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal” (Riessman, 1993, p.15), the significance of graduate education for Sanae has gradually shifted. In Sanae’s case, graduate education did not at first provide the ambition to be economically independent through a professional full-time job, while expanding ways of her life as a woman. By with the change of family environment caused by divorce, the significance of a graduate education at the University of Tokyo shifted to become a means to economic independence. Sanae now takes it for granted that women work on a full-time basis. For her, living as a housewife changed from hegemony to ideology. Going to graduate school indirectly brought about this change in her thinking. She thought that she could have planned her career better if she had been determined from the beginning to work on a full-time basis and had planned accordingly. She thinks that in the future she will be able to teach her daughter a better and wiser way to pursue a career. It would be ideal for Sanae to be able to see the fruits of receiving a higher-level education in her own life, but she thinks that the outcome of receiving higher-level education for women will not likely to be fully gained until the next generation. For Sanae, graduate education empowers women not only by expanding the opportunities in their lives, but also by providing assistance in making career plan for women in the next generation with full-time job in mind. As Sanae’s example shows, policy recipients appropriate multiple meanings in their contexts and the policy process is discursively made in the negotiation of diverse actors by macro-level policy and micro-level appropriation as Levinson and Sutton (2001) argue.

As I have shown earlier, the policy process is discursive. My research data show how research participants find multiple personal significances of graduate education in their

contexts. This shows that they are not just recipients the policy to strengthening graduate education in Japan. On the contrary, they find the significance of graduate education in their contexts. In this sense, they are important actors of the policy process.

At the same time, my research data show how graduate education enables critical thinking. Foucault argues that educational institutions function to produce “docile body” instead of training students to be critical (Foucault, 1975/1995). For Foucault, social institutions, such as schools function as “machine for supervising and hierarchizing” (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.147). For Foucault, a docile body is hierarchically placed in society. However, research participants in my study show that it is certain that graduate education can also make students critical thinkers and neither necessarily places graduates in a hierarchical order nor directs graduates to support an elite-oriented way of life that is uncritical of the existing hierarchical order in society.

Yumi’s case

Going to graduate school changed Yumi’s values. As Foucault (1975/1995) argues that components employed in school, including examinations, surveillance, and timetable, are means to discipline students, it is not only the content of learning in graduate school that forms graduate school experiences, but also components of graduate school life that give meanings of graduate education. What influenced Yumi’s values most in graduate school days was not her graduate research, but communicating with her colleagues in graduate school. As the University of Tokyo is the most prestigious university in Japan, it was not surprising to be stimulated by other students there. Yumi went to graduate school to study what she wanted to do the most, international cooperation. However, once she started to study in graduate school, she realized that she had had only a vague image of international cooperation without understanding the reality. She realized that she had seen international cooperation as attractive due to its image of working at the forefront of the issues in the world. She had

envisioned that she would work hard in an office at the United Nations. Once she realized that her desire had no solid basis on reality, she decided to be more realistic instead of just being longing for the image. She realized that she had had longed to become a woman succeeding in career life and working abroad was part of that career success. Before studying at graduate school, Yumi was elite-oriented and had an ambition to rise in the world. However, going to graduate school changed her values. Going to graduate school made her introspective. Instead of pursuing what she had longed for, she decided to take seriously what she is really interested in and to search for what would make her really alive. She thinks that even if the process of searching for what would make her alive does not bring success in the world, such as being promoted in a company, it is not be a problem for her because searching for what she is really interested in is more important than rising in the world. Although the University of Tokyo is inclined to be associated with the image of the elite, by going to graduate school of the University of Tokyo, Yumi was trained to be a critical thinker and decided not to pursue an elite life style. Graduate education directed her to focus on what she thought of as the essence of life.

It is notable that the report on graduate education issued by the University Council in 1991 (University Council, 1991a) states that graduate school is expected to play a central role in nurturing human resources to play a leadership role in various areas abroad, such as in international organizations. The more recent proposal by the Central Council for Education (2005) also emphasizes the role of graduate school in nurturing high-level professionals. Originally, Yumi wanted to be a part of this international workforce for international development. When Yumi was an undergraduate student, her professor advised her that in order to work for international development, it would be advisable to have at least a master's degree. So, in order to pursue her career in international development, she went to graduate school. However, while there she changed her career direction and now works as a professional in marketing at a research company. Yumi's example shows how the intentions

of MEXT's advisory committee's are appropriated at the local level. For the University Council, nurturing human resources to play a leadership role in international organizations is a desirable role of graduate school, but for Yumi, aiming to work for an international organization means to rise in the world, while she specifically thinks about her particular case, instead of associating career at international organizations with rising in the world. She has chosen to appropriate her education to give her life the most meaning for herself.

In order to expand future career opportunities, Yumi chose to work for a business company. She thought that she would be able to work in the non-profit field later, while it would not be possible to change career from non-profit to business. As explained earlier, in Japan, recruiting of new graduates (*shinsotsu*) while they are enrolled in schools, including universities, and expecting them to start working upon graduation is the most common way to enter the working world. It would be difficult to become a regular employee in a well-known company if one was not employed by that company upon graduation. She thinks that career change from a company to a non-profit organization would be possible, but not vice versa. Yumi sees her current work as one of the steps in her career. She considers engaging in community building or revitalization in the future. Because the area of her study in graduate school is different from her current work in marketing, she cannot utilize her knowledge of international cooperation directly in her work. However, she is able to utilize the basic knowledge and skills of research for her current work. Yumi thinks that the background of conducting research in graduate school would be helpful when she is involved in community building or revitalization in the future. Yumi's case shows an example of how the significance of graduate education is critically discovered over a long period of time in life.

Fumie's case

Fumie's case also shows that graduate school enables critical thinking. Foucault (1975/1995) argues that school has a function of normalization accompanied with penalty.

For example, deviation from normalized time, activity, behavior, speech, body, and sexuality are punished in school (Foucault, 1975/1995). For Foucault, education is a means of bringing uniformity and eradicating deviation. However, in Fumie's case, graduate school had an opposite function; for Fumie, graduate education not only permitted taking a life course that is different from the majority, but also gave positive meanings to her own chosen life course. For Foucault, "sex is located at the point of intersection of the discipline of the body and the control of the population" (Foucault, 1972/1980, p.125). Foucault views sexuality and gender norms as constructions. For Foucault, sexuality is controlled as a form of social control (1976/1990). Foucault (1976/1990) delineates how sexual norms have been administered by authority and how the discourse on sexuality has been produced. Taking his theories on sexuality as well as theories on school and discipline into account, for Foucault, school has a function to train students to be docile as men and women. However, Fumie's case suggests that she learned that she did not have to be constrained by gender norms of women in her life.

For Fumie, as with Yumi, graduate school made her a critical thinker. Fumie works in sales at a manufacturing company. In Japan there is no diversity in students' ages in the same cohort in colleges, while this is not the case in graduate school. When Fumie was a student at the undergraduate level, graduating from university at the age of 22 and being employed upon graduation was the only way of life she knew. However, once she found students with various backgrounds and ages in graduate school, she realized that she did not have to follow the fixed life course. When she was a student at the undergraduate level, she was afraid of being different from others. Seeing diverse experiences of other students in graduate school, this persistent idea that she needed to be the same as others weakened. Considering that Japanese society has been seen by some as group-oriented (Cave, 2007), as represented by the school's hidden curriculum in which group-based activities are incorporated, it is not surprising that Fumie had been under an obsession not to be different from others. In her book about Japanese education, White (1987) refers to an editorial in

Asahi Shimbun, a national newspaper, which reported the importance of uniformity taught to Japanese students. Being different from other students could mean one becomes a target of bullying. As mentioned earlier, in Japan, maintaining harmony and cooperation are taught as essential from preschool through the secondary levels (Lewis, 1995; Tsuneyoshi, 1992/2005; White, 1987). For seniors in college, going to graduate school is not as common as searching for employment. Fumie made a different decision from most of other students. Her decision was motivated by her study abroad experience in UK during her junior year in college. When she returned to Japan for her senior year, half of students around her already have been given informal assurances of employment on graduation. The diversity she had seen in students' background in the UK helped her not to feel pressured to start seeking employment just because she was senior. The diversity she saw in graduate school could be said to have strengthened her confirmation that it would not be a problem to be different from others. For instance, when she decided to go to graduate school, she no longer had a goal to get married by a certain age. Her graduate school experience strengthened Fumie's attitude to value her way of life as an individual that was not bound either by a persisted idea not to be different from others or by the gender norms of women often connected with their roles at home. She met a student raising a baby and a single, career-oriented woman in her late 30s in graduate school, which made her decide that she would not be bound by a conventional idea limiting lives by age. Her colleagues who did not go to graduate school seem to be in hurry to marry and start a family. Graduate education gave her a critical view to see her life in the long term.

As Yumi did, Fumie chose to work for a company after earning a master's degree in order to expand the options of her future career. Considering the limited employment opportunities for doctorate holders in non-academic fields, Fumie thought if she became a doctoral student, it would not be possible to be employed as a regular employee in a company after earning a doctorate degree. She thought that she could go back to graduate school to study in a doctoral program in the future if she wants to. As Yumi does not intend to stay in

her current workplace until her retirement, Fumie does not think that she will work for the same company until her retirement. As Yumi did, in her current job, Fumie utilized basic knowledge of research methods, such as analyzing customers' companies. While working as a professional in business, Fumie keeps her interest in academic research and keeps in touch with doctoral students who started graduate study earlier than she did and consciously participates in gatherings with them through which she is academically stimulated. Her ways of life working as a professional in business and having an attitude of being eager to learn from students at the forefront of their fields at the University of Tokyo reflects her critical thinking.

Concluding thoughts

As I have shown, higher education policy in Japan is a practice in a discursive process in which female graduate students and graduate degree holders appropriate meanings of graduate education in their own contexts. How graduate students and graduate degree holders are labeled is negotiated in a larger social structure in which graduate degree holders are situated in the job market and academia. As I have illuminated, women educated in graduate school are not powerless recipients of power to define them in a severe academic environment in graduate school and the job market in which graduate degree holders are often unfavorably treated. They critically find social and personal significance of graduate education for them in their contexts.

Significant suffering of graduate students and graduate degree holders in humanities and social sciences is an inevitable consequence of the structural problem in both society and graduate school. In that sense, the sufferings of graduate degree holders are systematically created. The structural problem in society is that graduate education is highly valued neither in the non-academic job market nor in wider society in general. Doctorate holders also face difficulty in finding employment in academic job market because the supply of doctorate

holders surpasses demand of academic positions for doctorate holders (Kobayashi, 2004; Kusahara, 2008; Mizuki, 2007/2008; Ushioji, 1993, 2009). Also, structurally, graduate schools have not yet thoroughly developed systematic step-by-step doctoral programs to equip students for the completion of their dissertations.

The structural problem in society shows that higher education credentialing is regressive in Japan. The value of higher education in the job market is regressively evaluated, which means that though higher education is valued in the job market up to the level of the undergraduate education, the value of education is depreciated in job market (except for the academic job market) as one studies further to the master's level and then the doctoral level. Graduate degree holders are not attractive human resources compared with bachelor's degree holders except for the field of engineering in Japan. The regressiveness of higher education credentialing is not commonly seen in the world. For Bourdieu, school has a function of maintaining the existing social order by reproducing social classes through ostensibly "equal" academic competitions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984). He does not assume that higher education credentialing is regressive.

In addition to structural problems in society and graduate school, some research participants had uncomfortable experiences in graduate school because they are women. The notion that it is men who play the central role in academia still dominates in Japan, as seen in Hiromi's case. Hiromi's male colleagues referred to her as "the one who was certified to be a man" by seeing her actively involved in academic activities. Connell (1995) says "hegemonic masculinity establishes its hegemony partly by its claim to embody the power of reason" (Connell, 1995, p.164). The reason why academia is male-dominated is related to a deep-rooted assumption in European philosophy. According to Conell (1995), patriarchal ideology in European philosophy is that men are characterized by rational, while women are characterized by emotional. Considering the assumptions of gender and the gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* in Japan, it is not surprising that academia is male-dominated in this country,

especially at the University of Tokyo. Creating an academic environment in which men and women can freely learn and equally develop their abilities is important. Rectifying the conceptual gender inequality that defines aptitude and abilities based on gender in academia is important because defining men and women by gender stereotypes is not only against human rights but also the waste of human resources.

Despite being placed in difficult social and academic environments for graduate degree holders and women, my research participants learned to think critically in graduate school and even when graduate education is not directly reflected in their career after graduation, they find the significance of graduate education in their contexts. For example, graduate education changed Yumi's sense of values in her life. Graduate education changed her elite-oriented aspiration to cherishing what she thought of as the essence of life. Structural problems in society as well as in graduate school significantly influence graduate students and graduate degree holders. However it does not necessarily mean that structural problems completely dictate graduate holders' lives monolithically. Levinson and Sutton (2001) do not see policy as a linear process but a discursive process constructed by the negotiation of diverse actors in diverse contexts, and, Levinson and Sutton view policy as practice embedded in daily life. So, policy is not necessarily accepted by its recipients as policy makers intend. Recipients appropriate the meaning of policy in their particular contexts. Although graduate education was promoted for the purpose of strengthening national competitiveness (Cabinet Office, 2007, 2008; Central Council for Education, 2005; University Council, 1991a, 1991b), my research participants appropriate meanings of graduate education that do not match this idea of strengthening national competitiveness. Although structural problems should not be ignored, highly educated women's agency to decide their attitude to carve out their lives despite difficulties should not be underestimated. Their conscious efforts to develop their knowledge and experiences in their contexts demonstrate the power of education to build one's own life. While Foucault regards

educational institutions as the disciplinary institutions producing docile bodies (Foucault, 1975/1995), my research data indicate that graduate education does not produce docile bodies. Instead graduate education produces critical thinkers.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Power of graduate education and structural constraints
-challenge and resistance of highly educated women in Japanese society

Does graduate education at the most prestigious university in Japan expand opportunities in the career and family life for women in Japan? Does graduate education strengthen the gender norms of women known as *ryōsai kenbo* or transcend gender roles of wives and mothers? Does graduate education train students to be critical thinkers? Understanding what happened in the demographic shift of graduate students and the structure of Japanese society is important to answer these questions. The number of graduate students, including those in the humanities and social sciences, rapidly increased in the 1990s (Please see appendices for details.) due to the increase of the quota of graduate schools in Japan. The University Council proposed to MEXT to increase the number of graduate students because the proportion of graduate students in Japan was lower than in other developed countries (University Council, 1991b). In response to the University Council's proposal, standards for the establishment of graduate schools were made less severe and universities were given financial incentives to increase the number of enrolled graduate students. These factors brought about the rapid increase of the number of graduate students (Inoki, 2009; Yoshimi, 2011). The growth of graduate students in the humanities and social sciences is remarkable because unlike students majoring in engineering, graduates with bachelor's degrees in the humanities and social sciences are in more demand in the non-academic job market in Japan than new graduates of graduate school. It is also difficult for master's and doctorate degree holders to find employment in the academic job market. Thus, going to graduate school is a risky decision that could threaten future employment opportunities.

By focusing on graduate degree holders in humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious university in Japan, I investigate the significance of graduate education for them and present a new research framework for studying the

significance of graduate education in humanities and social sciences for women in Japan. Alumnae of the University of Tokyo are a minority in Japanese society. The experiences of the women I discuss are not representative of graduate degree holders in general in Japan, but indicative of women reflecting particular qualities to be considered as the most highly educated women in Japan. I study graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo because graduate degree holders from the University of Tokyo are socially considered to be highly educated in Japan. Considering the fact that the number of graduate degree holders has increased, simply possessing graduate degrees is not considered to be highly educated. By choosing female graduate degree holders from the most prestigious university in Japan, women's experiences as highly educated women were expected to be shown more clearly than by choosing female graduate degree holders from other universities. By limiting research participants to women who graduated from the University of Tokyo, the possibility that their struggle is attributed to the low rank of graduate school is eliminated. I study the alumnae of the University of Tokyo, the most extreme case of highly educated population in Japan, because this contributes to illuminating the significance of graduate education for women in a context of Japanese society in which the rank of the university is important. Even though the women I study received the highest level education in Japan in terms of the degrees pursued and overall ranking, my research show some of them still face difficulties due to their extra highly educated status as women. Studying alumnae of the University of Tokyo emerges from that fact that men and women with the same education credentials have been treated differently in the hiring process and workplace in Japan. Studying the women who graduated from the University of Tokyo clearly shows that the gender roles of men and women are still deeply rooted in academia as well as in society, no matter how high the educational credentials of the women.

By drawing on multiple theoretical frameworks, and on Japanese women's insights into graduate education, I have developed a "theory of higher education as critical

engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process”. As a “theory of higher education as critical engagement”, my theory is a counter argument against Foucault. As a “theory of higher education as genderedness and regressiveness”, my theory is a counter argument against Bourdieu. As a “theory of higher education in a discursive policy process”, my theory is per Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001). Regarding Foucault and Bourdieu, I draw from their work only that which pertains to my work. I discuss these scholars’ works as they are related to individuals, instead of addressing their comprehensive discussion on larger social phenomena.

As I have shown, higher education credentialing is regressive and gendered in Japan. For Bourdieu, academic credentials are used to classify people as if academic credentials are fundamentally correct standards. He assumes that the higher the level of education, the higher the position in the educational hierarchy. For Bourdieu educational institutions have a mechanism to reproduce an existing social order by reproducing social classes through ostensibly “equal” academic competitions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979/1984). Bourdieu sees hierarchically ordered educational institutions to be reproductive agencies of social classes. He argues that “the School is better able than ever, at all events in the only way conceivable in a society wedded to democratic ideologies, to contribute to the reproduction of the established order, since it succeeds better than ever in concealing the function it performs.” Bourdieu also maintains that the "misrecognition of the social determinants of the educational career – and therefore of the social trajectory it helps to determine – gives the educational certificate the value of a natural right and makes the educational system one of the fundamental agencies of the maintenance of the social order" (Bourdieu, 1979/1984, p.387). Bourdieu indicates that the value of educational credentials is treated as if it is fundamentally correct and justifies existing hierarchically social order. Although Bourdieu’s works covers more issues, exploring the relationship between education and society from broader perspectives, rather than drawing from his discussion of the larger

social structure in which education is situated, I draw only from his work that pertains to my study.

Bourdieu is right about his argument of social reproduction through education in general, judging from the fact that overall, educational backgrounds, occupations, economic and cultural capital of parents of my research participants are high. However, Bourdieu misses the regressiveness and genderedness of higher education credentialing. In contrast to Bourdieu's argument on social reproduction through education, I argue that (1) regressiveness and (2) genderedness should be considered in higher education credentialing in Japan.

Bourdieu does not discuss how academic credential works (1) at different levels in higher education (undergraduate and graduate), and (2) for men and women. These two points are delineated as follows: First, Bourdieu misses the point that the educational system does not always function as a fundamental agency to maintain social order by reproducing social hierarchy. Generally, in the humanities and social sciences, bachelor's degrees are more valued than graduate degrees in the job market in Japan except for the academic job market. Doctorate degree holders are even less attractive than master's degree holders in the non-academic job market, partly because their knowledge and skills tend to be regarded as too specified and they lack flexibility (Ushioji, 2009), and partly because they are older. Due to the oversupply of doctorate degree holders in the academic job market, finding employment in this job market for master's and doctorate degree holders is also difficult. As I have shown, this study also reveals that the value of higher education credentialing in Japan does not increase in accordance with the level of education when the degree is over the undergraduate level. Thus, this study clearly shows that going to graduate school in the humanities and social sciences in Japan is considered to be a risky decision because of the lack of employment prospects. In terms of the difficulty that doctoral students and doctorate degree holders have in finding employment, women tend to have gender specific difficulty with regard to the timing of childbirth while they search for employment. The struggles of

female doctoral degree holders, such as Kanako, Wakana, and Keiko, are understood in this context. Their difficulties go beyond personal issues, but are part of a larger structural social issue. This suggests that the sufferings of highly educated women can only be removed by creating employment opportunities for highly educated human resources and creating and promoting a graduate school environment accommodating students who are considering starting or have already started a family.

Second, Bourdieu does not consider the unsymmetrically “balanced” marriage relationship in terms of educational credentials between men and women. Some researchers indicate that the first-class education will be a disadvantage for women in the marriage market in Japan (Benjamin, 1997; Fujimura, 1985; Raymo and Iwasawa, 2005; Rohlen, 1983; White, 1987). A husband's educational level tends to be equal or higher than the wives' in Japan (Shimizu, 1990; Yano, 1996). Only 17.4% of men entered into graduate school as of 2010 (MEXT, 2012a). In this situation, women who graduate from graduate school are likely to face difficulty in finding men who have equal or higher educational credentials. Therefore, very highly educated women are at a disadvantage in the marriage market due to their educational status.

This research reveals that irrespective of the level of education, undergraduate or graduate, the prestige of the University of Tokyo could threaten women's marriage opportunities. Alumnae of graduate school of the University of Tokyo are likely to encounter difficulties in finding husbands on two counts: the name value of the University of Tokyo and the level of education (graduate level). Yuka's example clearly shows the disadvantaged status of very highly educated women in the marriage market in Japan. Yuka studied at the University of Tokyo from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. Unfruitful results of her attempts in the marriage market discouraged her from participating actively in that market.

It is remarkable that a graduate education/degree provides a means of transcending the roles of women as wives and mothers (*ryōsai kenbo*) and at the same time strengthens

traditional gender roles of women as housewives by narrowing career choices and transposing graduate education into a higher quality of children's preschool education. As I have showed in chapter 6, Kanako and Wakana work as part-time lecturers while they search full-time academic employment. They pursue their lifetime academic career, but difficulty finding tenure of a tenure track academic employment causes them to choose a quasi-housewife life for an unknown period of time, while they wait for a full-time academic position. Keiko, who became a part-time professional for a local administrative office after earning a doctorate, says that economically she is helped by her marriage because even if she cannot find employment for a while, that will not trigger tight financial conditions for Keiko. Mayumi was fully supported by her husband financially when she was a graduate student, though she later obtained a position as a professor. As these examples show, a graduate education/degree provides women with qualification to pursue professional career. At the same time, it could strengthen traditional gender roles of women as housewives and/or could enhance the economic dependency on their husbands. This phenomenon shows that not being able to find a marriage partner is not the only area reflecting genderedness in higher education credentialing in Japan.

As Junko's case shows in chapter 6, my research data reveal that graduate education is transposed into a higher quality of children's preschool education. Junko became a postgraduate research student, after earning a master's degree. She gave up her studies for a while to prepare her daughter's entrance examination to a private elementary school. Utilizing her research skills and problem solving training from graduate school, she organized activities for children and mothers such as crime prevention seminars. Junko is not the only woman who struggles with balancing research and childrearing. Chika, Kae, Mayumi, and Risa, also experienced difficulties in balancing research and child rearing. The ideal gender norm of *ryōsai kenbo*, good wives and wise mothers, is not hegemony any more. The Japanese government enforced the Basic Law for Gender-Equal Society in 1999 and has

been promoting gender equality policy since then. However, the division of labor that sees women taking the major responsibilities for child rearing is still deeply rooted in Japanese society. Gender norms of *ryōsai kenbo* and *sansaiji shinwa* (a well known expression in Japan which means that mothers should stay home and take care of children at least until they turn to four; otherwise children cannot grow well) still persist as an ideology in Japanese society.

Bourdieu sees education credentialing as if it is genderless, but my research data show that it is not completely genderless in employment practice in Japan. It is common that large Japanese companies have a two-track employment system for women: *sōgōshoku* (career track) and *ippanshoku* (clerical track). Due to its demanding work hours, *sōgōshoku* tends to be considered to be difficult for women who want to find a balanced life between career and family. These limited career options in business for women who graduated from four-year universities motivated women to go to graduate school. For some women, including Kae, Sanae, and Yuka, graduate school could provide an alternative career option for having a lifetime professional career without giving up happy family life.

However, going to graduate school and pursuing an academic career is not an easy path for women either. Some research participants, including Hiromi, and Keiko, had uncomfortable experiences in graduate school because they are women. This shows how higher education is gendered and that hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995) is strong in academia. As Connell (1995) argues, no masculinity exists without a system of gender relations. Foucault also views sexuality and gender norms as constructions. For Foucault, “sex was not something one simply judged; it was a thing one administered” (Foucault, 1976/1990, p.25). Definitions of masculinity and the masculine field are constructed in gender power relationships. An example of this can be seen in Hiromi’s experience. She was an active graduate student in a department where women were a minority. She was referred to as a “the one who was certified to be a man” by other male graduate students. This fact shows

that there is an assumption that it was men who were expected to have a central role in academia.

Foucault argues that educational institutions function to produce “docile bodies” instead of training students to be critical (Foucault, 1975/1995). There could be more than one way in which the term of docile bodies is used. Some may relate docile bodies to a system in society, instead of individuals. However, I will give my definition of Foucault’s term of “docile bodies” because others, who have different perspectives, could understand and interpret this term differently. In this study, I define “docile bodies” as docile individuals who are neither critical of the power and dominant gender discourse imposed on them nor do they critically exercise their individual agencies, but are docile individuals who ignorantly follow dominant gender discourse and are powerless recipients of the power imposed on them. For Foucault, social institutions, such as schools, function as a “machine for supervising and hierarchizing” (Foucault, 1975/1995, p.147). For Foucault, a docile body is hierarchically placed in society. Foucault does not value individual agency, and neither does he think of higher education as critical engagement to enhance consciousness as individuals with a means of expressing their ideas and acting on one’s own judgment rather than following the major discourse and the existing norms.

In contrast to Foucault’s argument that educational institutions are meant to produce “docile bodies”, I argue that graduate education trains students to think critically. Individuals have agency and graduate education does not weaken their conscious sense of themselves as individuals, though it is inevitable that individual agency is highly influenced and limited by social systems and institutions. I argue that graduate education as critical engagement enhances the students’ consciousness of themselves as individuals who can think and act on their own judgment.

Research participants in my study show that it is certain that graduate education teaches students critical thinking and neither necessarily places graduates in an hierarchical

order nor directs graduates to support an elite-oriented way of life that is uncritical to the existing hierarchical order in society. As I have shown, not a few women indicated this point and critical thinking is seen in their lives. This point is significant because critical thinking influences views, goals, and life styles. For example, some women, including Tomomi and Wakana, were enabled to view things from multiple perspectives and had acquired the means to articulate ideas and phenomena. Another example of critical thinking changing ideas that had been previously taken for granted is seen in Yumi. Before going to graduate school, Yumi was elite-oriented and had an ambition to rise in the world. However, graduate school changed her values. Going to graduate school made her introspective. Instead of pursuing what she had longed for, she would now like to take seriously what she is really interested in and would like to search for what would make her life more exciting. Thus, graduate school can make students critical thinkers. Women who received graduate education are not necessarily just powerless recipients of discourse.

Lastly, this study shows that the policy of higher education in Japan is a practice in a discursive process. As Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001) argue for the discursive nature of policy process, higher education policy process is not linear but a practice in a discursive process in which the meaning of graduate education is created not only by policy makers at the macro level but also by those who received graduate education at the micro level. Recipients appropriate the meaning of policy to their particular context. Although a policy document stipulating increasing the number of graduate students was not issued in response to the University Council's proposal to MEXT to increase the number of graduate students and to make the nation competitive in the world, the number of graduates has grown rapidly. However, the policy of promoting graduate education has not been accepted by stakeholders at the multiple levels, including students, business, and academia, as intended. While increasing the number of graduate students led to an increase in high-level professionals and researchers, the increase of graduate degree holders also led to the

oversupply in the job market. On the one hand, the competitive academic environment in graduate school created great stress to some students to the extent that it made them depressed. Though the intention of training high-level professionals may have been to contribute to society on a global level, graduate education could make a student's life harder than it might have been in the normal course of life. For example, Chie became seriously depressed due to a severe academic environment in which she could not find any peer students' network. On the other hand, for those who transferred to the University of Tokyo for their graduate education, going to graduate school gave them special privilege as graduates of such a prestigious university. For example, the brand name of the University of Tokyo was an advantage for Sanae in finding employment and going to graduate school opened Sanae's eyes to pursuing full-time employment rather than only being a housewife. As these examples show, the meaning of graduate education could be found in unexpected ways other than what the higher education policy intended. It could even be received in the opposite way of the intended results as seen in Chie's case. While promoting graduate education was meant to train human resources, it could hinder students from starting a professional career upon graduation. Graduate school also could give students the prestige, due to the name of the university.

Thus, I have investigated the significance of graduate education in the lives of Japanese women who hold graduate degrees from the University of Tokyo in humanities and social sciences and how they found meanings in their lives. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw say, "The task of the ethnographer is not to determine 'the truth' but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others' lives" (Emerson et al, 1995, p.3), so this ethnographic study investigates multiple truths from the research participants. Learning from the different perspectives and contexts of the research participants contributes to the expanding knowledge of graduate education, the least investigated area in higher education in Japan.

I resent the experiences of my research participants because not a few of them went

through hardships brought about by unreasonable social structural problems beyond their control. Being disadvantaged in the marriage market and the job market as graduate degree holders in general is a social structural problem. “Hegemonic masculinity” (Connell, 1995), seen in the assumption that men are more logical than women, is rooted in academia in Japan. Earning a doctorate anywhere is not easy, requiring great effort, time, and cost. However receiving rewards that reflect such efforts and investment is extremely difficult in Japan. The lack of informal students’ academic network and of a systematic graduate education system guiding students step by step contributes to depressing not a few graduate students. While I resented the experiences of my research participants, I was encouraged as I listened to their narratives, by their great efforts to carry out their studies and careers despite these difficulties. Women who studied in graduate school at the University of Tokyo are a group of women who are in a privileged position in terms of their having received a graduate education at the most prestigious university, one at the forefront of research in Japan. Many of my research participants gained much from their graduate school experiences and were trained to become critical thinkers through graduate education. However, not many of them have opportunities to utilize these skills and knowledge in their occupation. Although I do not intend to promote social class reproduction through education as Bourdieu explains it, I argue that graduate education should be better rewarded not only on an intellectual level but also on a career level, through which the benefits of receiving a graduate education could be more social rather than just personal and the profits of an extra-long period of study could be returned to society. The problems my research participants face, including difficulties in finding employment, marriage, and living a balanced life between research/career and child rearing, are beyond their personal issues. Rather, these are larger structural societal issues. Unlike Foucault, who does not highly value individual agency, I learned that my research participants did indeed exercise their agency and carved out their own ways. Creating the mechanism and environment in which going to graduate school is not a high-risk action is necessary. Without

having such an environment and as the risk of going to graduate school increases, the label of highly educated human resources could have a negative connotation and the value of studies could be depreciated, against the intentions of the expansion of graduate education (enhancement of competitiveness by intellectual human resources, including researchers and high-level professionals). As Shore and Wright (1997) and Levinson and Sutton (2001) insist, that policy process is a practice in a discursive process in which the meanings of policy are appropriated at the local level. By using a theory of higher education as critical engagement, genderedness, and regressiveness in a discursive policy process, this study investigates the significance of graduate education for women who received graduate degrees in humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo. I hope that my research will contribute to expanding knowledge of the possibilities and problems of graduate education as well as gender-related and academic credential-related employment issues. By investigating possibilities and problems of graduate education in Japan, this dissertation contributes to building society in which the fruits of education can be fully utilized irrespective of sex.

Appendix 1-1 : Interview protocol

For women with graduate level degrees in humanities and social sciences from the University of Tokyo

- What is your major in graduate school?
- Which year did you graduate from graduate school of the University of Tokyo (master's and doctoral program)?
- Which year did you graduate from college?
- Did you also major in the same field at the undergraduate level?
For doctoral degree holders, did you also major in the same field at the undergraduate and master's level?)
- Did you study at the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate level?
For doctoral degree holders, did you study at the University of Tokyo at the undergraduate and master's level?
- For those who studied at different universities at the undergraduate and master's level, which university did you study at the undergraduate and master's level?
- How old are you?
- Why did you choose to go to graduate school?
- Why did you choose the University of Tokyo?
- What did your parents think when you decided to go to graduate school?
- How did your parents (or spouse, if you are married) influence your education and career?
- Did your parents also go to university and graduate school?
- What did your parents do for a living when you were a child and a student?
- For those who are married, what is your spouse's occupation?
- If there is anything that made you hesitate pursuing graduate school, what made you hesitate?
- If there was anything that made you hesitate pursuing graduate school, why did you still decide to go to graduate school in spite of these difficulties?
- Would you recommend pursuing graduate school to others?
- If you experienced any difficulties, discrimination, and/or inconveniences in your study at graduate school due to being a woman, in what way have you experienced difficulties, discrimination, and/or inconveniences? If there is any, please give an example. If you ever experienced any difficulties and/or inconveniences because you are a woman with graduate degree, in what way have you ever experienced difficulties and inconveniences? For example, when you look for a job or even after

being employed and when you married or when you think about marriage, have you had any difficulty?

- What did graduate education bring to your life?
- What are benefits that you gained from your graduate education, including practical and non-practical benefits, such as mental satisfaction? Please give an example.
- How do or will you utilize your graduate education? For those who have a children, for example, is it helpful for educating your children? How many children do you have? How old are they?
- If there are any disadvantages due to your graduate education in your life, what are these disadvantages and in what way have you ever experienced them? If you have any, please give examples. What is your current occupation?
- Have you been in your current occupation since you graduated from graduate school?
- For those who are married, what is your spouse's occupation?
- Please tell me about your typical day. Regarding the fact that you graduated from graduate school, if you have anything you would like to share with me what I did not ask, please tell me.

Additional questions for highly educated married women

- Are there any thing you share your household tasks, including cooking, cleaning, and child rearing? If so, what does your spouse do?
- How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the sharing of household tasks with your spouse, and why so?

For a former and a current staff working for the office for gender equality of the University of Tokyo

- What situations that led to the establishment of the office for gender equality?
- What differences have been made in the university since the establishment of the office for gender equality in 2003?
- The office for gender equality at the University of Tokyo supports female researchers. Do you support women with graduate degrees who pursue careers other than research?
- According to prior studies, female graduate students majoring in humanities and social sciences face more difficulties in obtaining employment than students majoring in natural science. Do you have any programs to support graduate students in humanities and social sciences?
- According to the website of an organized group of parents at the University of Tokyo that support one another as they study and rear children, the office for gender equality

provides them with support. How do you support them? Are there any other groups you support for gender equality?

- Regarding gender equality, is there any unique issue or problem at the University of Tokyo as the top university in Japan?
- The University of Tokyo has its own nursery schools and affiliated nursery schools. Compared with other universities, support for gender equality at the University of Tokyo seems to be advanced, such as having own nursery schools. Do you think that the University of Tokyo receives special support from the government for achieving gender equality due to its status as the most prestigious university in Japan?
- Some departments at the University of Tokyo have quantitative goals to increase the percentage of female faculty. In a previous survey study of graduate students conducted by the Science Council of Japan in 2005 (“Problems of graduate education from the viewpoint of training female researchers”), the majority of graduate students are against setting quantitative goals. Rather than setting quantitative goals, they think that creating gender equal environment is more important. What do you think setting quantitative goals for gender equality?

For government officials working for related fields for this study¹⁵⁶

- The greater number of women has been to graduate schools recently. What do you think about this situation? What do you think about this situation for men and women?
- A larger number of men and women study in graduate schools these days. Do you think the significance of graduate education for men and women is different? If so, how is it different?
- What do you think about the increase of highly educated women with graduate education in a society in which the birth rate has declined?
- As a larger number of men and women attend graduate schools, the significance of graduate education in Japanese society seems to have shifted. Do you think the significance of graduate education for men and women is different? If so, how is it different?
- According to the White Paper on Gender Equality (2009), in terms of some indices measuring gender equality, the positions of Japan is behind many other countries as demonstrated by Gender Empowerment Index (58 among 108 countries) and Gender Gap Index (98 among 130 countries). What are the obstacles to promoting gender equality in Japan? How do you think gender norms and roles related to these

¹⁵⁶ Affiliations of the government officials are not specified in order to protect anonymity, which was requested by an interviewed government official.

obstacles?

- According to the report issued by the Science Council of Japan in 2005 (*Nihon gakujyutsu kaigi taisei jōchi iinkai*), graduate students in humanities and social sciences face difficulties finding employment. The same report indicates that women face greater difficulties than men in employment in humanities and social sciences as well as natural sciences. What do you think about this situation?

Appendix 1-2: List of research participants

	Name	Marital status	Children	Age	Degree	Major	Undergraduate degree	Occupation
Those who left graduate school after receiving a master's degree	Yumi	single *1	0	20's	master	social sciences	other university	Professional working for a research company
	Fumie	single	0	20's	master	social sciences	other university	Professional working for a manufacturer
	Chie	single	0	20's	master	social sciences	other university	Juku teacher
	Aki	single	0	30's	master	social sciences	other university	Professional working for a foreign financial institution
	Minako	married	1	30's	master	humanities	The University of Tokyo	Professional working for mass media
	Sanae	divorced	2	30's	master	humanities	other university	Professional working for a foundation*2
	Tomomi	single	0	20's	master	social sciences	other university	Doctoral student
	Keiko	married	0	30's	doctor	social sciences	The University of Tokyo	Part-time specialist for a local administrative office
	Megumi	married	0	30's	ABD *3	humanities	The University of Tokyo	Researcher in an educational corporation
	Kanako	married	0	30's	doctor	humanities	The University of Tokyo	Part-time lecturer, Postdoctoral fellow
Those who earned Ph.D. and those who pursued or pursue Ph.D.	Yuka	single	0	30's	doctor	social sciences	The University of Tokyo	University faculty
	Junko	married	3	30's	master *4	humanities	other university	Research student
	Chika	married	2	30's	master	humanities	The University of Tokyo	Doctoral student and part-time lecturer in a vocational school
	Risa	married	1	30's	ABD	humanities	other university	Postdoctoral fellow *5
	Wakana	married	0	30's	doctor	humanities	other university	Part-time lecturer
	Hiromi	single	0	30's	doctor	humanities	other university	Part-time lecturer
	Natsuko	married	2	30's	doctor	social sciences	The University of Tokyo	University faculty
	Kae	married	2	40's	doctor	social sciences	The University of Tokyo	Research fellow
	Saki	married	1	40's	doctor	social sciences	The University of Tokyo	University faculty
	Mayumi	married	2	50's	doctor	humanities	other university	University faculty

*1 Yumi lives with her boyfriend.

*2 Sanae is a clinical psychologist, while she does not work as a clinical psychologist for a foundation.

*3 Megumi takes a leave of absence from a doctoral program.

*4 Junko has a master's degree and prepares for applying to a doctoral program.

*5 In Japan ABD can become a postdoctoral fellow.

Appendix 2

Number of students
(undergraduate and graduate students)

Number of full-time faculty (professor,
associate professor, and lecturer)

1	Nihon University (private)	68,139	1	University of Tokyo (public)	2,472
2	Waseda University (private)	43,667	2	Nihon University (private)	2,080
3	Ritsumeikan University (private)	32,982	3	Kyoto University (public)	1,985
4	Kinki University (private)	30,071	4	Osaka University (public)	1,975
5	Meiji University (private)	30,032	5	Tohoku University (public)	1,718
6	Keio University (private)	28,931	6	Kyushu University (public)	1,567
7	Tokai University (private)	28,328	7	Keio University (private)	1,534
8	Kansai University (private)	27,851	8	Tsukuba University (public)	1,511
9	Hosei University (private)	27,656	9	Hokkaido University (public)	1,474
10	Toyo University (private)	25,646	10	Tokai University (private)	1,459
11	Chuo University (private)	25,607	11	Waseda University (private)	1,420
12	Doshisha University (private)	25,315	12	Kinki University (private)	1,299
13	Teikyo University (private)	24,344	13	Nagoya University (public)	1,278
14	Kansei Gakuin University (private)	22,046	14	Hiroshima University (public)	1,203
15	Rikkyo University (private)	19,411	15	Ritsumeikan University (private)	1,084
16	Fukuoka University (private)	19,054	16	Kobe University (public)	1,070
17	Kanagawa University (private)	18,197	17	Meiji University (private)	929
18	Senshu University (private)	18,152	18	Okayama University (public)	911
19	Aoyama Gakuin University (private)	17,853	19	Chiba University (public)	887
20	Ryukoku University (private)	17,649	20	Niigata University (public)	826
21	Osaka University (public)	15,540	21	Teikyo University (private)	758
22	Komazawa University (private)	15,223	22	Fukuoka University (private)	749
23	Meijo University (private)	15,136	23	Kanazawa University (public)	748
24	Tokyo University of Science (private)	14,230	24	Kagoshima University (public)	742
25	The University of Tokyo (public)	14,128	25	Shinshu University (public)	729
26	Kokushikan University (private)	13,861		Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	729
27	Kyoto University (public)	13,387	27	Hosei University (private)	725
28	Chukyo University (private)	13,208	28	Kumamoto University (public)	693
29	Kyoto Sangyo University (private)	12,961		Yamaguchi University (public)	693
30	Daito Bunka University (private)	12,865	30	Osaka City University (public)	686
31	Tokyo University of Agriculture (private)	12,144	31	Doshisha University (private)	676
32	Meiji Gakuin University (private)	12,122	32	Kansei Gakuin University (private)	666
33	Aichi Gakuin University (private)	12,116	33	Kansai University (private)	655
34	Kobe University (public)	11,924	34	Kitazato University (private)	655
35	Tohoku Gakuin University (private)	11,796	35	Toyama University (public)	654

Academic year 2011 (April 2011–March 2012)

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Eds.)2012) pp.107,109

Appendix 2

	Campus size	m ²
1	Hokkaido University (public)	660,191,674
2	University of Tokyo (public)	326,698,557
3	Kyushu University (public)	75,854,360
4	Kyoto University (public)	49,940,801
5	Kagoshima University (public)	36,572,731
6	Nihon University (private)	30,725,759
7	Tohoku University (public)	22,190,609
8	Iwate University (public)	14,705,512
9	Tsukuba University (public)	13,111,347
10	Tottori University (public)	9,771,808
11	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	9,752,378
12	Utsunomiya University (public)	8,906,460
13	Yamagata University (public)	8,349,969
14	Miyazaki University (public)	7,858,130
15	Shinshu University (public)	6,538,008
16	Shimane University (public)	6,476,307
17	Gifu University (public)	6,365,479
18	Niigata University (public)	6,096,073
19	Mie University (public)	5,603,757
20	Tokai University (private)	4,780,783
21	Ehime University (public)	4,660,250
22	Shizuoka University (public)	4,146,177
23	Kinki University (private)	3,753,146
24	Kyoto Prefectural University (public)	3,490,155
25	Nagoya University (public)	3,247,681
26	Hiroshima University (public)	3,142,085
27	Tokyo University of Agriculture (private)	3,107,425
28	Akita Prefectural University (public)	2,818,755
29	Tamagawa University (private)	2,697,044
30	Kanazawa University (public)	2,667,258
31	Doshisha University (private)	2,319,355
32	Waseda University (private)	2,152,860
33	Meisei University (private)	2,108,846
34	Okayama University (public)	2,064,711
35	Kochi University (public)	2,052,320

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Eds.) 2012) p.109

Appendix 2

Number of students in doctoral program

1	University of Tokyo (public)	6,795
2	Kyoto University (public)	4,119
3	Osaka University (public)	3,414
4	Kyushu University (public)	3,080
5	Waseda University (private)	2,998
6	Tohoku University (public)	2,995
7	Tsukuba University (public)	2,625
8	Hokkaido University (public)	2,581
9	Nagoya University (public)	2,553
10	Hirosima University (public)	1,906
11	Kobe University (public)	1,783
12	Keio University (private)	1,779
13	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	1,630
14	Okayama University (public)	1,420
15	Chiba University (public)	1,361
16	Tokyo Medical and Dental University (public)	1,110
17	Chuo University (private)	1,036
18	Kanazawa University (public)	1,031
19	Nihon University (private)	935
20	Hitotsubashi University (public)	908
21	Ritsumeikan University (private)	852
22	Niigata University (public)	810
23	Meiji University (private)	803
24	Kumamoto University (public)	769
25	Osaka City University (public)	746
26	Tokyo Metropolitan University (public)	717
27	Kagoshima University (public)	703
28	Doshisha University (private)	693
29	Nagasaki University (public)	662
30	Tokushima University (public)	654
31	Yokohama National University (public)	648
32	Kansai University (private)	573
33	Rikkyo University (private)	563
34	Gifu University (public)	526
35	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	507

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Eds.) 2012) p.149

Appendix 2

	Percentage of doctoral students in all students (undergraduate and graduate students)	%
1	University of Tokyo (public)	24.2
2	Kyoto University (public)	18.2
3	Tohoku University (public)	16.4
4	Kyushu University (public)	16.2
5	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	16.1
6	Nagoya University (public)	16.0
7	Ochanomizu University (public)	15.8
8	Tsukuba University (public)	15.6
9	Osaka University (public)	14.5
	Hokkaido University (public)	14.5
11	Hitotsubashi University (public)	14.1
12	Juntendo University (private)	13.2
13	Hiroshima University (public)	12.8
14	Showa University (private)	10.9
15	Okayama University (public)	10.7
	Kobe University (public)	10.7
17	Kanazawa University (public)	9.8
18	Chiba University (public)	9.4
19	Osaka City University (public)	8.9
20	Tokushima University (public)	8.7
21	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	8.5
22	Yokohama City University (public)	8.0
23	Tokyo University of Arts (public)	7.8
24	Tokyo Metropolitan University (public)	7.6
25	Kumamoto University (public)	7.5
	Gunma University (public)	7.5
	Nagasaki University (public)	7.5
28	Nara Women's University (public)	7.2
	Nagoya City University (public)	7.2
30	Gifu University (public)	7.1
31	Kagoshima University (public)	6.6
	Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (public)	6.6
33	Niigata University (public)	6.5
	Yokohama National University (public)	6.5
35	Toin University of Yokohama (private)	6.2

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Eds.) 2012) p.149

Universities at which the number of students is less than 2000 are not included.

Appendix 2

Number of awarding doctoral degrees (katei hakase)

1	University of Tokyo (public)	1,343
2	Kyoto University (public)	890
3	Osaka University (public)	668
4	Kyushu University (public)	581
5	Hokkaido University (public)	568
6	Tohoku University (public)	553
7	Nagoya University (public)	503
8	Waseda University (private)	501
9	Tsukuba University (public)	394
10	Hiroshima University (public)	354
11	Chuo University (private)	316
12	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	307
13	Kobe University (public)	284
14	Chiba University (public)	279
15	Meiji University (private)	217
16	Doshisha University (private)	206
17	Okayama University (public)	200
18	Niigata University (public)	192
	Ritsumeikan University (private)	192
20	Keio University (private)	190
21	Tokyo Medical and Dental University (public)	176
22	Kumamoto University (public)	162
23	Osaka City University (public)	160
24	Nihon University (private)	159
25	Hitotsubashi University (public)	150
26	Kanazawa University (public)	147
	Yokohama National University (public)	147
28	Kansei Gakuin University (private)	144
29	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	133
30	Tokyo Metropolitan University (public)	130
31	Tokushima University (public)	129
32	Nagasaki University (public)	117
33	Kansai University (private)	116
34	Hosei University (private)	108
35	Kagoshima University (public)	104

Academic year 2010 (April 2010–March 2011)

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Ed.s) 2012) p.147

There are two types of doctoral degrees in Japan: katei hakase and ronbun hakase. Katei hakase is a doctoral degree awarded to students who were enrolled in graduate school and received necessary number of credits and guidance. For details, please see a dissertation glossary.

Appendix 2

Number of awarding doctoral degrees
(ronbun hakase)

1	University of Tokyo (public)	154
2	Kyoto University (public)	88
3	Keio University (private)	77
4	Nihon University (private)	65
5	Kyushu University (public)	63
6	Tokyo Medical and Dental University (public)	62
7	Tokyo Women's Medical University (private)	54
8	Tohoku University (public)	53
9	Waseda University (private)	52
10	Osaka University (public)	51
11	Nagoya University (public)	50
12	Hokkaido University (public)	49
13	Kobe University (public)	45
14	Showa University (private)	42
15	Tsukuba University (public)	41
	Osaka City University (public)	41
17	Dokkyo Medical University (private)	40
18	Juntendo University (private)	39
19	Chiba University (public)	35
20	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	29
	Hiroshima University (public)	29
22	Shinshu University (public)	26
	Yokohama National University (public)	26

Academic year 2010 (April 2010–March 2011)

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al (Eds.) 2012) p.147

Ronbun hakase is doctoral degree awarded to those who were not enrolled in graduate school. This means that ronbun hakase does not require taking coursework and passing examinations to Ph.D. candidates. For details, please see a dissertation glossary.

Appendix 2

	Grants-in-aid for scientific research by the government	Yen
1	University of Tokyo (public)	23,426,634,000
2	Kyoto University (public)	13,891,247,000
3	Osaka University (public)	11,780,910,000
4	Tohoku University (public)	11,233,293,000
5	Kyushu University (public)	6,872,312,000
6	Nagoya University (public)	6,637,206,000
7	Hokkaido University (public)	6,514,210,000
8	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	4,772,739,000
9	Tsukuba University (public)	3,757,665,000
10	Keio University (private)	3,407,446,000
11	Kobe University (public)	2,824,092,000
12	Hiroshima University (public)	2,802,051,000
13	Waseda University (private)	2,409,147,000
14	Okayama University (public)	2,293,630,000
15	Kumamoto University (public)	2,043,196,000
16	Chiba University (public)	1,996,590,000
17	Tokyo Medical and Dental University (public)	1,988,190,000
18	Kanazawa University (public)	1,720,957,000
19	Niigata University (public)	1,411,397,000
20	Tokushima University (public)	1,334,221,000
21	Ehime University (public)	1,260,038,000
22	Nagasaki University (public)	1,192,295,000
23	Tokyo Metropolitan University (public)	1,139,974,000
24	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	1,135,441,000
25	Shinshu University (public)	1,072,601,000
26	Osaka Prefectural University (public)	1,033,680,000
27	Osaka City University (public)	1,022,355,000
28	Ritsumeikan University (private)	972,473,000
29	Nihon University (private)	969,020,000
30	Shizuoka University (public)	949,688,000
31	Yamaguchi University (public)	941,798,000
32	Kagoshima University (public)	933,977,000
33	Gunma University (public)	907,848,000
34	Yokohama City University (public)	849,637,000
35	Yokohama National University (public)	787,672,000

Grants-in-aid for scientific research (*kakenhi*) is awarded by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for every field, including humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. JSPS is a quasi-governmental organization under MEXT.

Academic year 2011 (April 2011–March 2012)

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al. (Eds.) 2012) p.271

Appendix 2

	External funds (Total amount)	Yen
1	University of Tokyo (public)	44,925,000,000
2	Kyoto University (public)	22,909,726,000
3	Osaka University (public)	21,910,233,000
4	Tohoku University (public)	17,053,703,000
5	Kyushu University (public)	12,221,602,000
6	Keio University (private)	9,890,599,199
7	Nagoya University (public)	9,649,358,000
8	Hokkaido University (public)	8,928,577,149
9	Tokyo Institute of Technology (public)	8,405,129,899
10	Tsukuba University (public)	4,302,429,000
11	Kobe University (public)	4,150,519,000
12	Hiroshima University (public)	4,059,644,000
13	Waseda University (private)	3,968,692,437
14	Kumamoto University (public)	3,556,990,000
15	Shinshu University (public)	3,332,149,000
16	Tokyo Medical and Dental University (public)	3,134,505,377
17	Okayama University (public)	2,833,606,000
18	Chiba University (public)	2,807,464,000
19	Tokushima University (public)	2,658,767,522
20	Kanazawa University (public)	2,456,644,000
21	Kinki University (private)	2,392,029,155
22	Yamanashi University (public)	2,255,492,058
23	Ehime University (public)	2,247,942,988
24	Kagoshima University (public)	2,160,623,000
25	Nagasaki University (public)	2,141,201,000
26	Yamagata University (public)	2,098,983,417
27	Niigata University (public)	1,945,136,000
28	Nihon University (private)	1,927,430,436
29	Gifu University (public)	1,850,062,000
30	Mie University (public)	1,849,497,000
31	Tokai University (private)	1,809,286,000
32	Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (public)	1,794,421,000
33	Yamaguchi University (public)	1,784,480,000
34	University of Electro-Communications (public)	1,747,748,000
35	Toyama University (public)	1,738,547,000

Academic year 2010 (April 2010–March 2011)

Source: University ranking 2013 (Nakamura, M. et al. (Eds.) 2012) p.283

Appendix 3: Graduate degree awarded by field of study

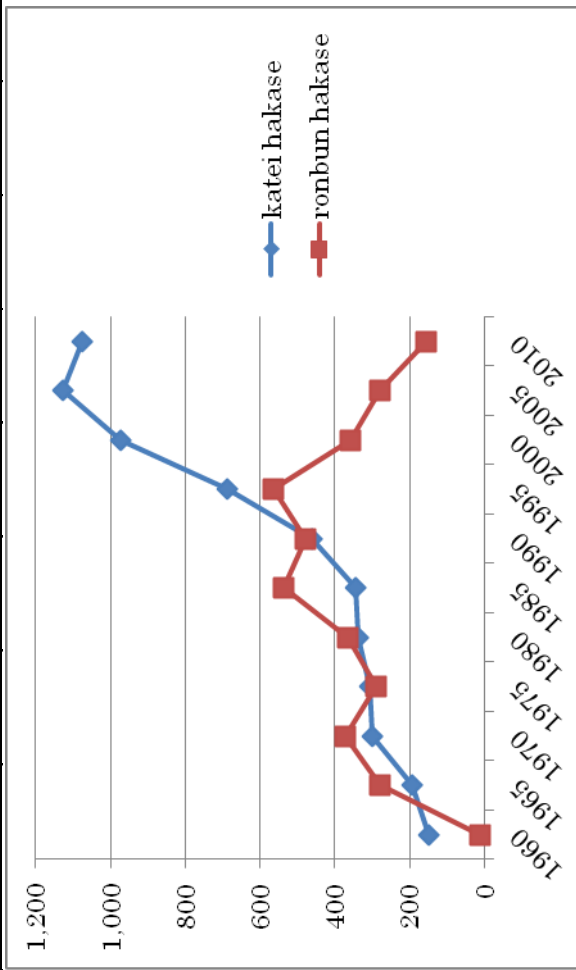
Master's degree	Total	Humanities	Social science	Science	Engineering	Agriculture	Health		Home economics	Education	Mercantile marine *1	Fine arts	Interdisciplinary studies
							Medicine & Dentistry	Others					
1965	5,967	966	874	932	2,272	406		204	44	134		135	
1970	11,301	1,699	1,483	1,484	4,448	1,149		423	82	337		196	
1975	13,422	1,988	1,586	1,482	5,821	1,135		491	94	415	26	384	
1980	15,396	1,976	1,552	1,710	6,975	1,168	39	658	106	569	20	443	180
1985	21,270	2,090	1,612	2,133	9,612	2,336	41	936	124	1,517	23	613	233
1990	27,059	2,262	2,282	2,984	13,117	1,868	53	1,220	154	2,036	44	627	412
1995	46,086	3,417	5,057	4,676	21,681	2,886		1,870	290	3,713		985	1,511
2000	60,836	4,446	8,328	5,724	26,957	3,661		2,841	245	4,593		1,183	2,858
2005	74,210	5,491	9,499	6,518	31,252	4,339		4,851	283	4,931		1,785	5,261
2008	74,796	5,262	8,805	6,542	31,629	4,377		5,750	271	5,073		1,916	5,171
National (2008)	43,175	1,468	2,362	4,309	20,546	3,609		2,932	60	4,338		468	3,083
Local (2008)	4,062	261	505	446	1,362	191		663	17	15		259	343
Private (2008)	27,559	3,533	5,938	1,787	9,721	577		2,155	194	720		1,189	1,745
Doctor's degree													
1965	3,911	50	82	416	419	241		93					
1970	4,688	57	91	611	853	353		276					
1975	4,592	75	84	676	986	385		210					
1980	6,269	77	76	822	1,186	527		249					10
1985	7,978	86	127	860	1,404	697		353					54
1990	10,633	129	183	835	1,967	719		393					324
1995	13,532	344	359	1,243	3,312	1,108			5			18	378
2000	16,076	601	610	1,586	3,964	1,241			17			43	834
2005	17,396	801	973	1,633	4,195	1,321			12			121	1,340
2008	16,735	956	1,060	1,525	3,954	1,222			25			142	1,376
National (2008)	11,689	499	523	1,247	3,177	1,052			6			68	1,144
Local (2008)	992	48	70	98	120	41			1			22	49
Private (2008)	4,054	409	467	180	657	129			18			52	183

Source: Statistical abstract (education, culture, sports, science and technology) MEXTb 2012, pp. 186-187.

*1 "Included in 'engineering' after the partial amendment to the regulation on Academic Degrees." (MEXT, 2012b, pp. 186-187).

Appendix 4: Doctorate awarded by field of study (katei hakase, ronbun hakase, The University of Tokyo)

	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
katei hakase	150	195	299	307	338	345	460	688	973	1,126	1,075
ronbun hakase	10	279	372	291	366	538	477	565	358	278	154



Source: This table is based on *Daigakuin oyobi gakubu kankei shiryō* (The University of Tokyo, 2012a, pp.47-50).

Appendix 4: Doctorate awarded by field of study (katei hakase, ronbun hakase, The University of Tokyo)

academic year doctorate	katei hakase						ronbun hakase							
	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Literature	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	9	7	9
Education	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	6	2	6
Law	4	5	2	8	5	4	4	0	1	0	0	1	2	2
Economics	5	0	1	0	0	4	9	0	2	5	3	1	3	6
Sociology	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	2	3	1
Others							5							4
Science	45	45	86	100	105	126	125	2	44	53	51	50	40	43
Engineering	25	46	101	114	122	101	164	1	67	98	91	115	195	194
Agriculture	23	26	47	42	53	59	86	1	56	48	46	70	118	80
Pharmacy	14	18	24	27	26	25	23	3	22	43	35	27	52	42
Medical	31	52	32	12	20	18	32	3	84	121	59	82	101	87
Health			3	3	6	7	8	0	0	1	0	3	15	3
Total	150	195	299	307	338	345	460	10	279	372	291	366	538	477

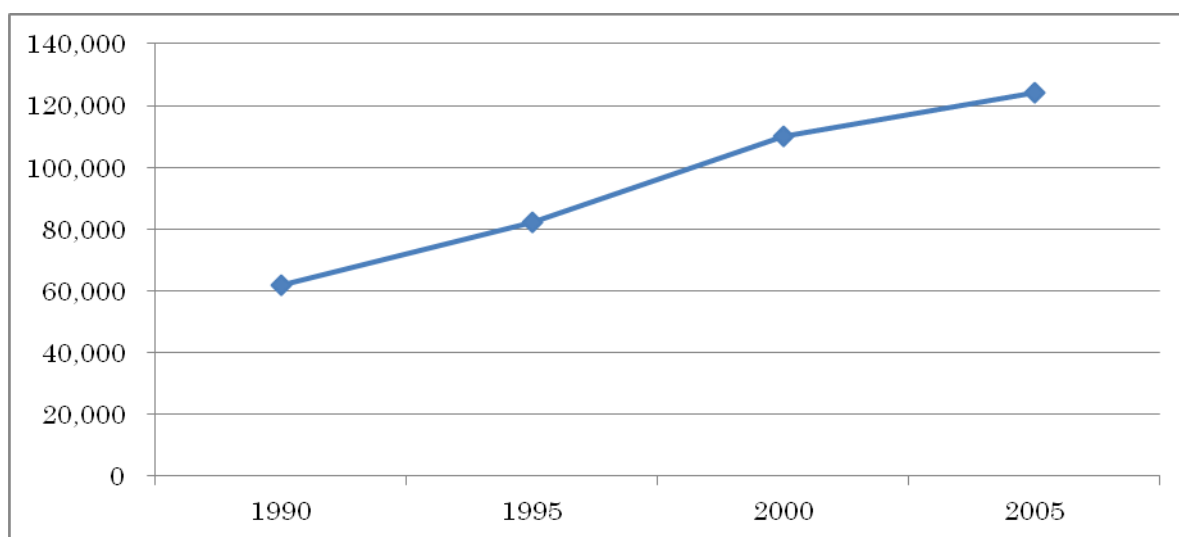
Source: This table is based on *Daigakuin oyobi gakubu kankei shiryō* (The University of Tokyo, 2012a, pp.45-49).

Appendix 4: Doctorate awarded by field of study (katei hakase, ronbun hakase, The University of Tokyo)

department	academic year							
	doctorate		katei hakase		ronbun hakase			
	1995	2000	2005	2010	1995	2000	2005	2010
Literature	21	30	44	56	14	13	17	6
Psychology	2	2	3	4	2	0	0	0
Sociology	3	5	5	0	1	0	0	1
Social psychology	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Social Informatics			1	0			0	0
Education	4	10	11	19	2	4	4	3
Law and Politics	3	4	5	17	0	2	5	1
Sociology								
Social psychology								
Economics	13	6	14	16	6	3	2	2
Arts and Sciences	19	52	85	78	9	12	9	13
Science	7							
International contribution				1				
Science	144	198	163	145	36	22	15	5
Engineering	222	269	237	190	204	133	84	45
Agricultural and Life Sciences	8	12	8	4		1	0	1
Medicine	78	117	119	111	105	62	55	28
Pharmaceutical Sciences	23	22	27	10	13	18	3	8
Mathematical Sciences	62	170	174	176	114	51	27	10
Life Sciences	10	12	27	32	8	6	5	3
Environmental Studies	44	39	51	43	44	28	25	15
International Cooperation	24	24	24	19	7	3	0	1
Information Science and Technology			34	32			4	3
Interdisciplinary Information Studies			24	37			1	1
Total	688	973	1,126	1,075	565	358	278	154

Source: This table is based on *Daigakuin oyobi gakubu kankai shiryō* (The University of Tokyo, 2012a, pp.47-50). Graduate school of sociology was incorporated into graduate school of humanities and sociology in the academic year of 1995.

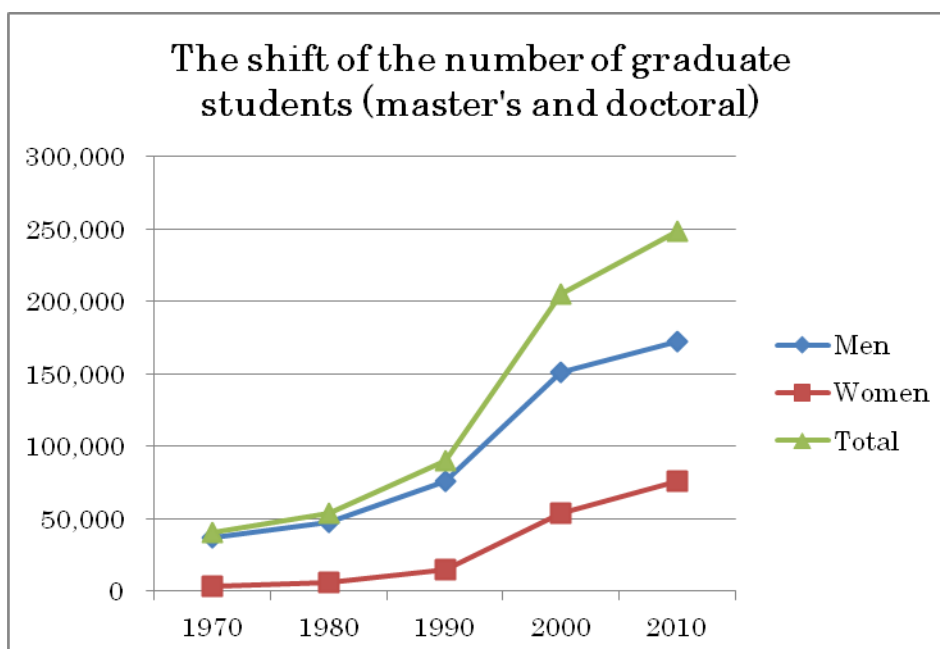
Appendix 5: The shift of quota of graduate students in national universities



Year	1990	1995	2000	2005
Number	62,000	82,000	110,000	124,000

This chart is based on the report issued by the committee on equipping and enriching the facilities of the national universities (MEXT, 2006b).

Appendix 6

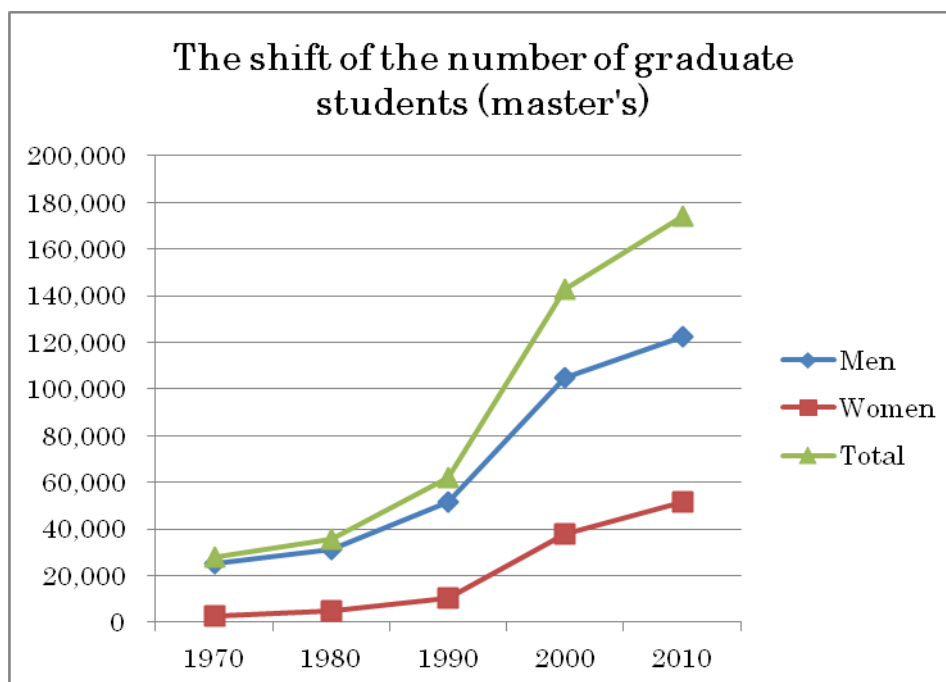


The shift of the number of graduate students (master's and doctoral)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	37,381	47,733	75,672	151,095	172,674
Women	3,576	6,259	14,566	54,216	75,589
Total	40,957	53,992	90,238	205,311	248,263

Chart 1: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6

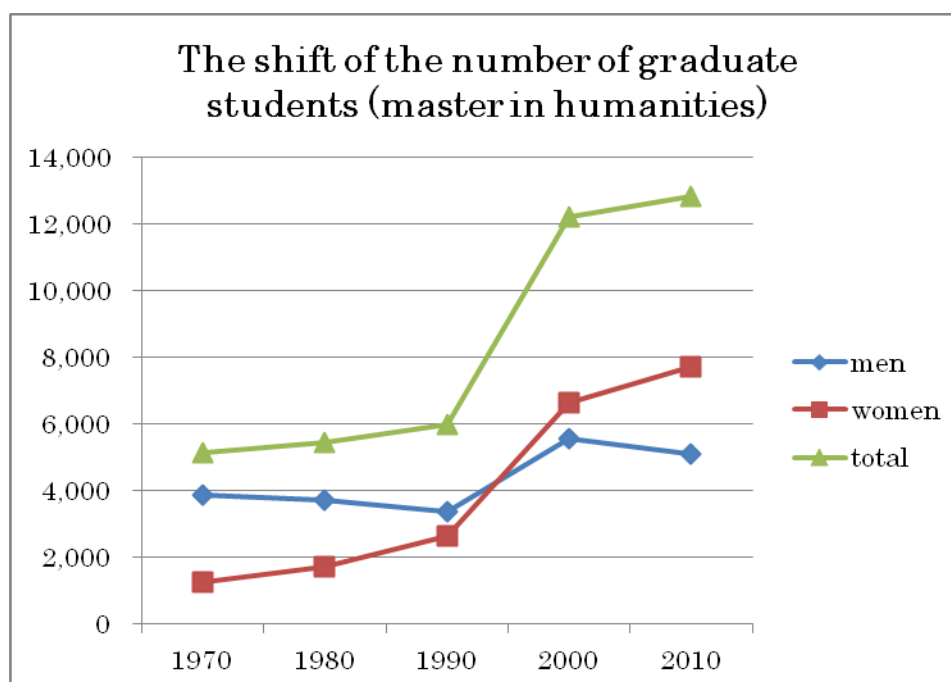


The shift of the number of graduate students (master's)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	25,022	31,164	51,590	104,945	122,432
Women	2,692	4,617	10,294	37,885	51,399
Total	27,714	35,781	61,884	142,830	173,831

Chart 2: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6

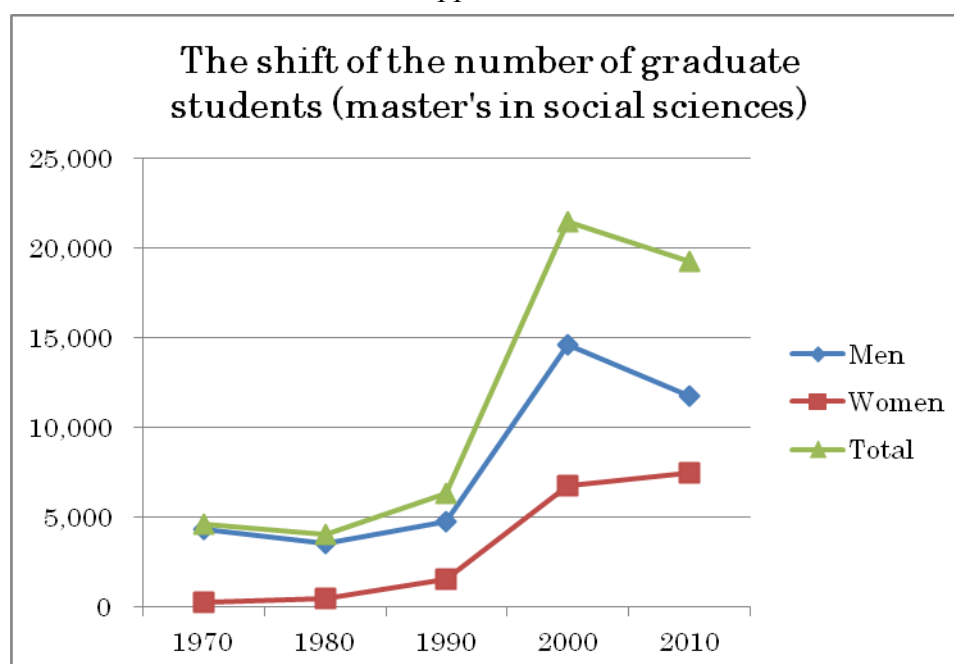


The shift of the number of graduate students (master's in humanities)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	3,894	3,727	3,370	5,585	5,098
Women	1,263	1,742	2,639	6,649	7,728
Total	5,157	5,469	6,009	12,234	12,826

Chart 3: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6

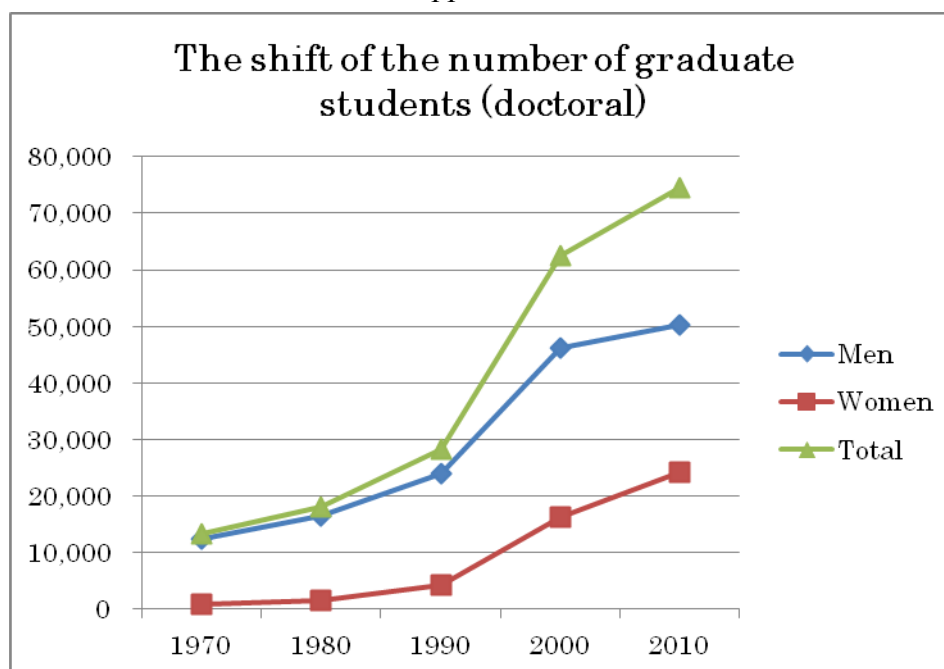


The shift of the number of graduate students (master's in social sciences)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	4,306	3,545	4,791	14,662	11,774
Women	301	505	1,575	6,795	7,504
Total	4,607	4,050	6,366	21,457	19,278

Chart 4: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6

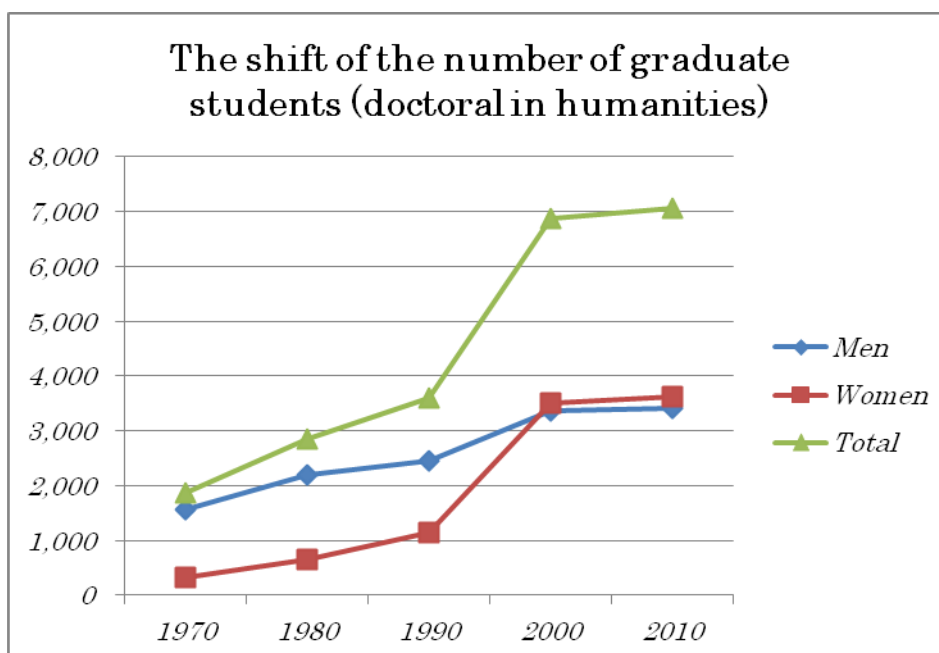


The shift of the number of graduate students (doctoral)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	12,359	16,569	24,082	46,150	50,242
Women	884	1,642	4,272	16,331	24,190
Total	13,243	18,211	28,354	62,481	74,432

Chart 5: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6

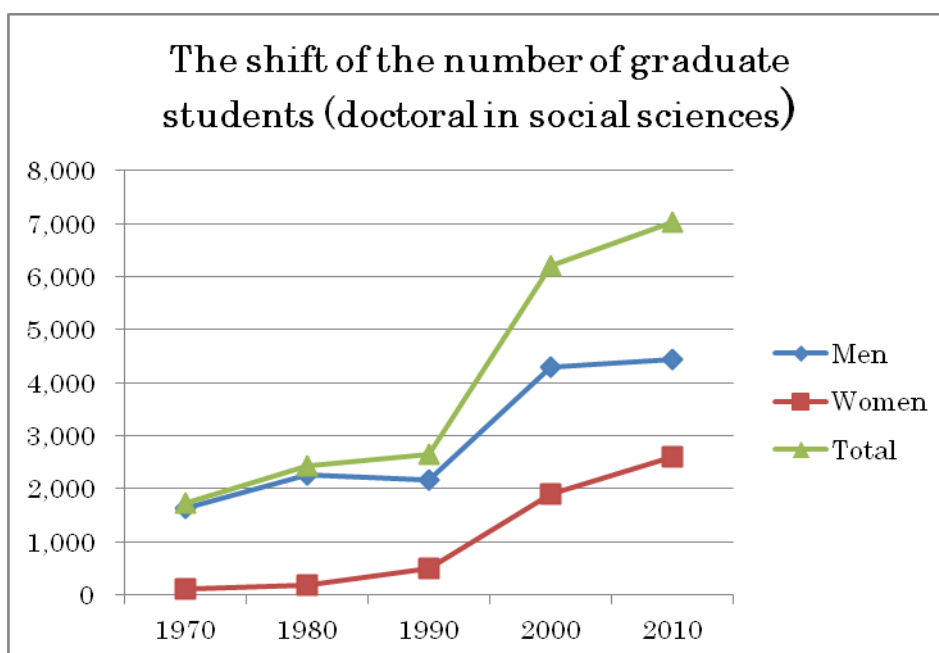


The shift of the number of graduate students (doctor in humanities)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	1,556	2,195	2,453	3,360	3,423
Women	320	665	1,141	3,511	3,634
Total	1,876	2,860	3,594	6,871	7,057

Chart 6: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 6



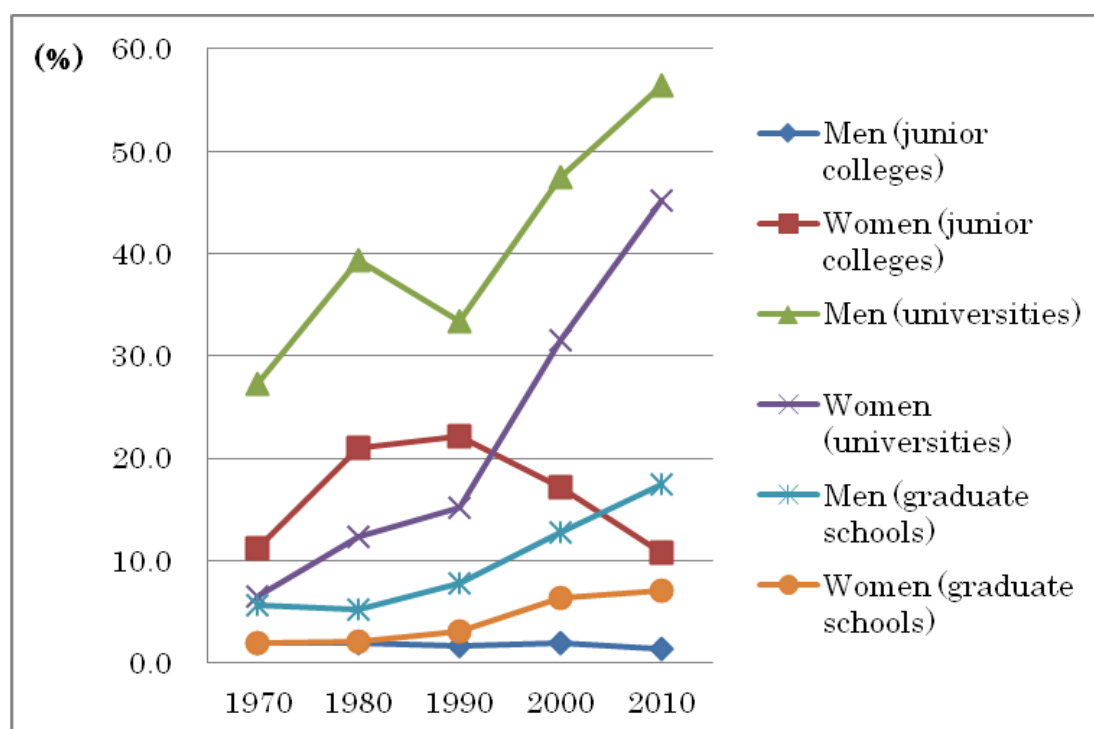
The shift of the number of graduate students (doctoral in social sciences)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men	1,627	2,260	2,154	4,292	4,432
Women	100	170	500	1,903	2,592
Total	1,727	2,430	2,654	6,195	7,024

Chart 7: This chart is based on Gakkō Kihon Chōsa Hōkokusho (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), School Basic Survey Report, by MEXT.

Appendix 7:

The shift of entering rate to junior colleges, universities, and graduate schools in Japan

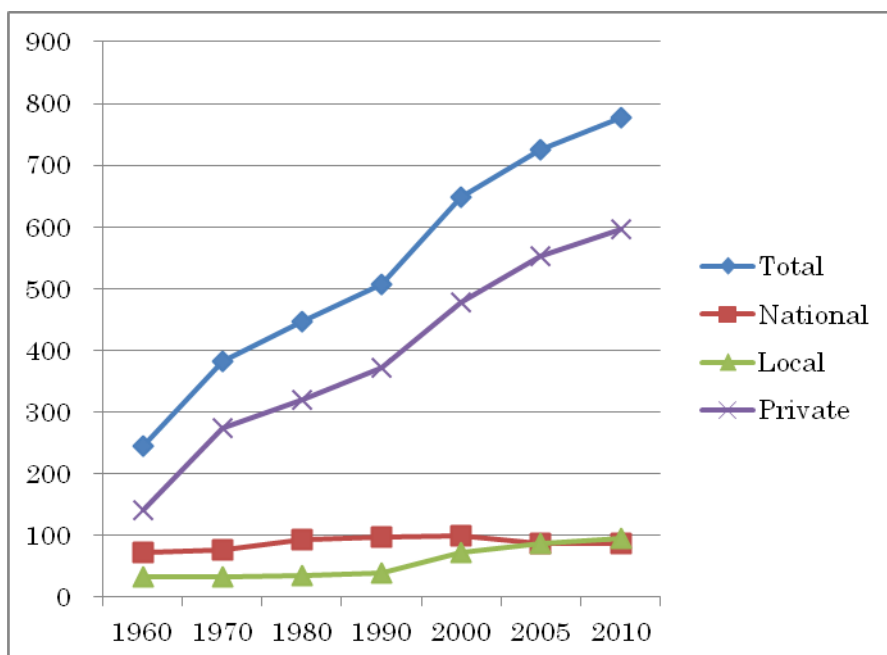


	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Men (junior colleges)	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.9	1.3
Women (junior colleges)	11.2	21.0	22.2	17.2	10.8
Men (universities)	27.3	39.3	33.4	47.5	56.4
Women (universities)	6.5	12.3	15.2	31.5	45.2
Men (graduate schools)	5.7	5.2	7.7	12.8	17.4
Women (graduate schools)	2.0	2.1	3.1	6.3	7.1

Chart 1: This chart is based on *Gakkō kihon chōsa hōkokusho*, School Basic Survey (1971, 1982, 1991, 2000, and 2012a), by MEXT.

* The number of students who particularly entered graduate schools for 1970 and 1980 is not specified in the statistical data. This may include a small number of students who entered educational institutions other than graduate schools, such as other departments at the undergraduate level. "Entering rate" in 1970 and 1980 is calculated by the author on the assumption these students entered graduate schools.

Appendix 8: The shift of number of universities in Japan

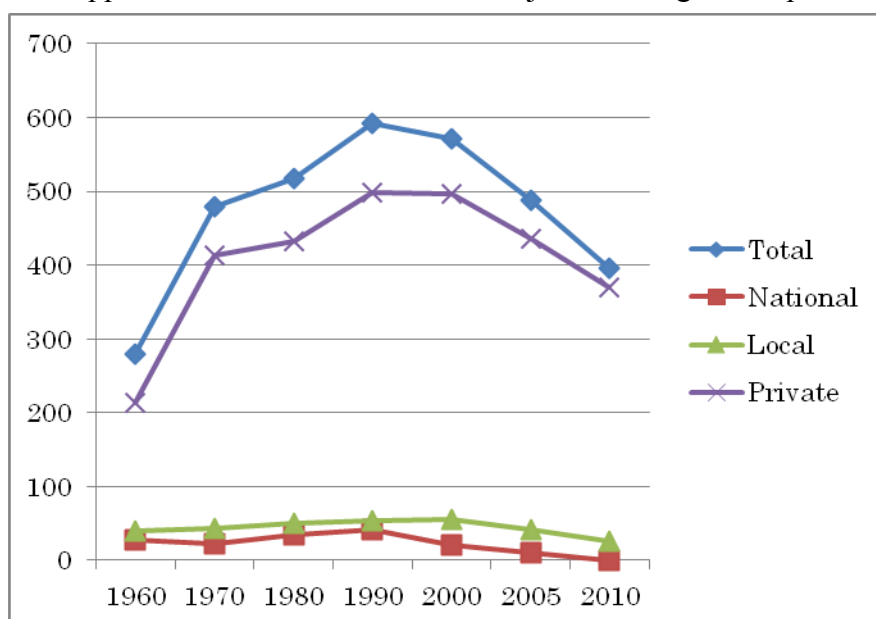


Universities

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
Total	245	382	446	507	649	726	778
National	72	75	93	96	99	87	86
Local	33	33	34	39	72	86	95
Private	140	274	319	372	478	553	597
Percentage of private (%)	57.1	71.7	71.5	73.4	73.7	76.2	76.7

Chart 1: This chart is based on *Monbu kagaku tōkei yōran*, Statistical Abstract of Education, Science, and Culture (2012b), by MEXT.

Appendix 8: The shift of number of junior colleges in Japan

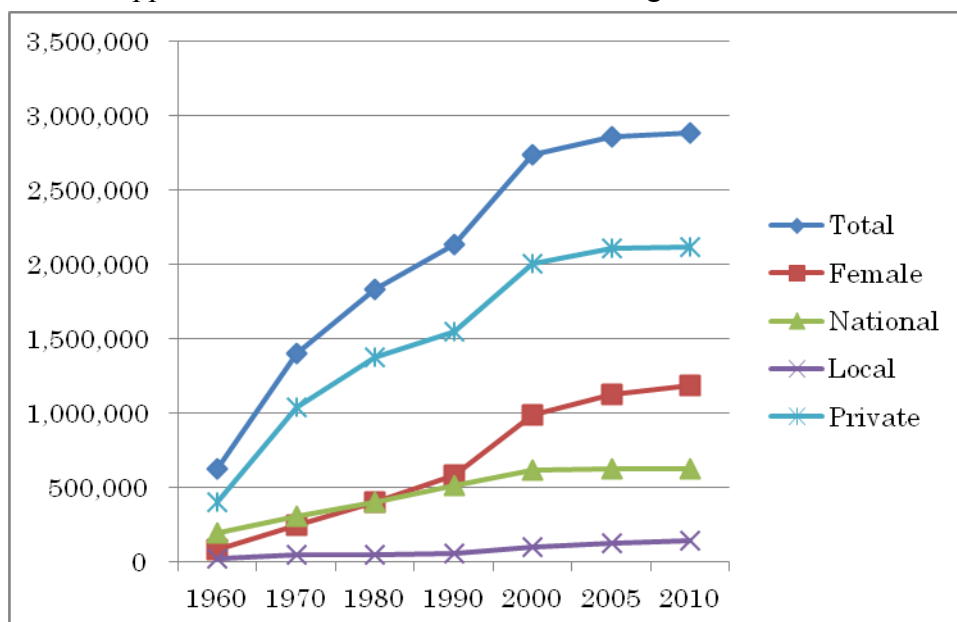


Junior colleges

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
Total	280	479	517	593	572	488	395
National	27	22	35	41	20	10	0
Local	39	43	50	54	55	42	26
Private	214	414	432	498	497	436	369
Percentage of private (%)	76.4	86.4	83.6	84.0	86.9	89.3	93.4

Chart 2: This chart is based on *Monbu kagaku tōkei yōran*, Statistical Abstract of Education, Science, and Culture (2012b), by MEXT.

Appendix 9: The shift of number of undergraduate students

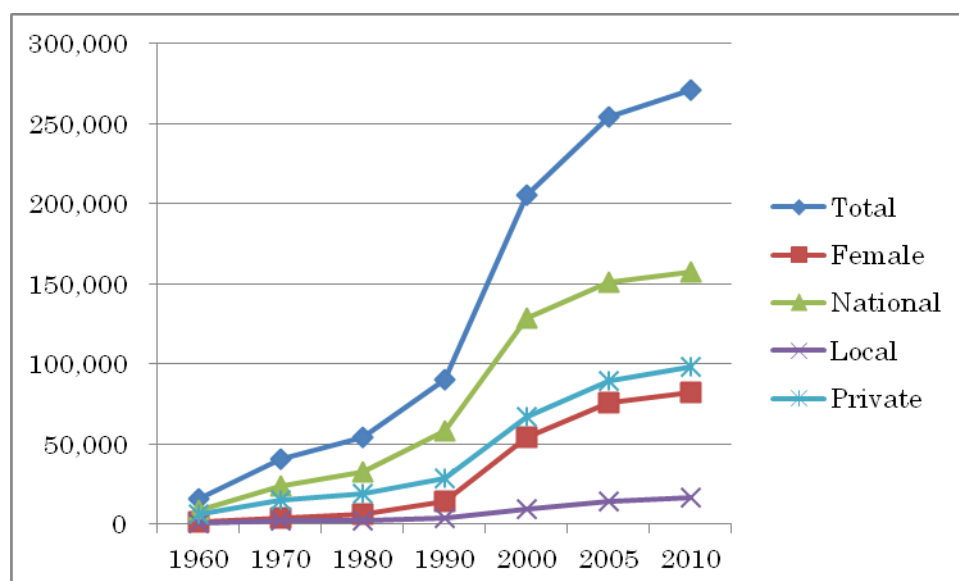


Undergraduate
students

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
Total	626,421	1,406,521	1,835,312	2,133,362	2,740,023	2,865,051	2,887,414
Female	85,966	252,745	405,529	584,155	992,312	1,124,900	1,185,580
National	194,227	309,587	406,644	518,609	624,082	627,850	625,048
Local	28,569	50,111	52,082	64,140	107,198	124,910	142,523
Private	403,625	1,046,823	1,376,586	1,550,613	2,008,743	2,112,291	2,119,843
Percentage of private (%)	64.4	74.4	75.0	72.7	73.3	73.7	73.4
Percentage of women (%)	13.7	18.0	22.1	27.4	36.2	39.3	41.1

Chart 1: This chart is based on *Monbu kagaku tōkei yōran*, Statistical Abstract of Education, Science, and Culture (2012b), by MEXT.

Appendix 9: The shift of number of graduate students



Graduate
students

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
Total	15,734	40,957	53,992	90,238	205,311	254,480	271,454
Female	1,113	3,576	6,259	14,566	54,216	75,734	82,133
National	8,928	23,547	32,728	57,885	128,624	150,780	157,092
Local	851	2,301	2,386	3,890	9,719	13,928	16,403
Private	5,955	15,109	18,878	28,463	66,968	89,772	97,959
Percentage of private (%)	37.8	36.9	35.0	31.5	32.6	35.3	36.1
Percentage of women (%)	7.1	8.7	11.6	16.1	26.4	29.8	30.3

Chart 2: This chart is based on *monbu kagaku tōkei yōran*, Statistical Abstract of Education, Science, and Culture (2012b), by MEXT.

Appendix 10: Employment rate of women by age

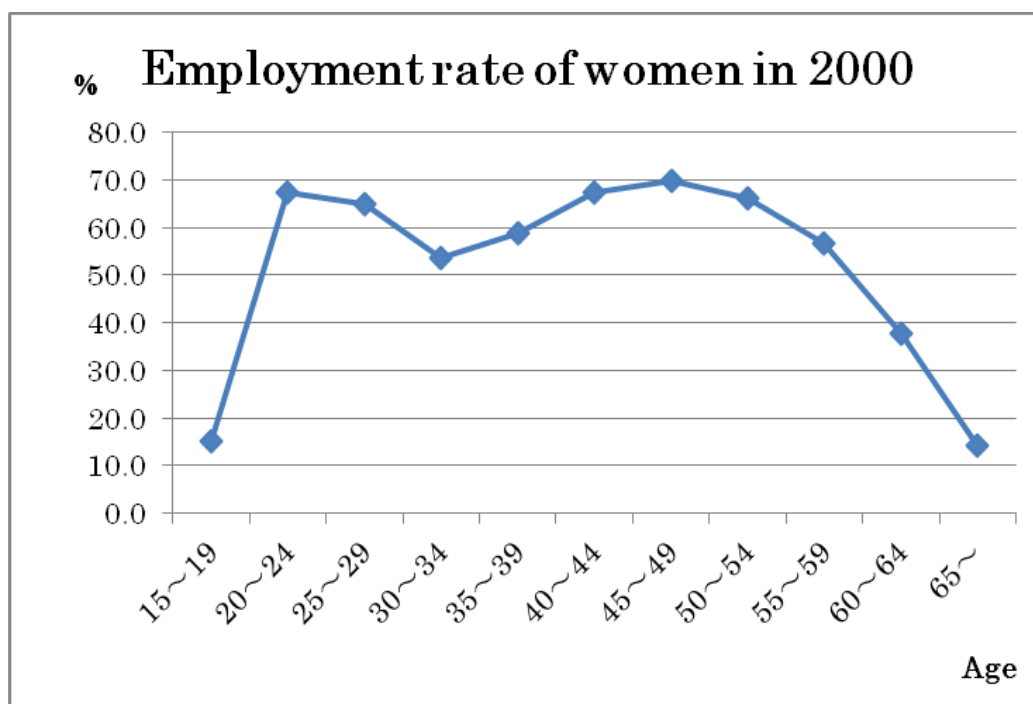


Chart 1: This chart is based on *rōdōryoku chōsa* (2013b), Labor Force Survey by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).

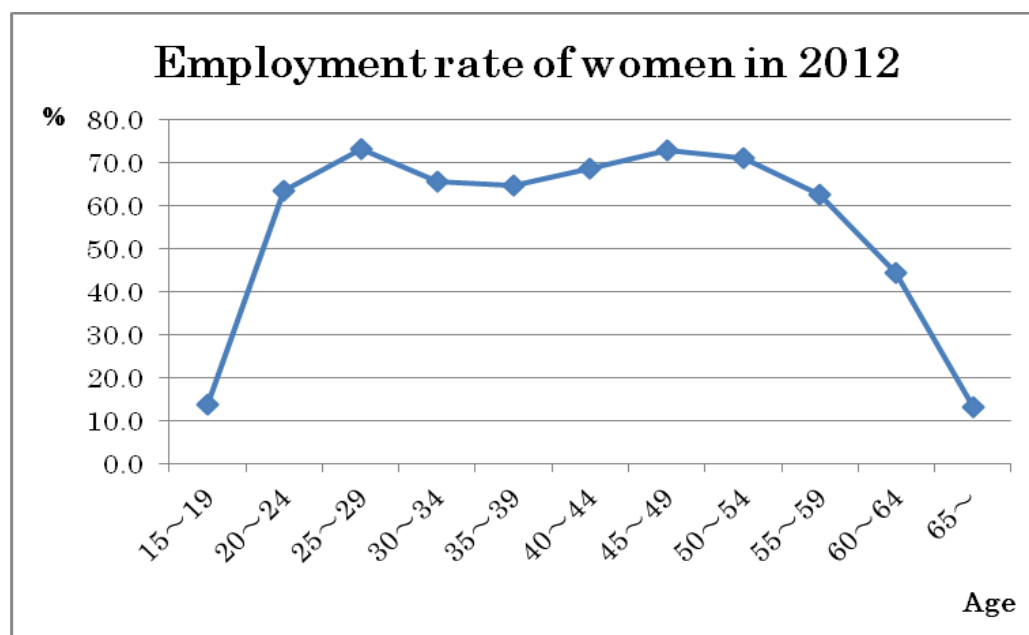


Chart 2: This chart is based on *rōdōryoku chōsa* (2013b), Labor Force Survey by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).

Glossary

Bankonka 晩婚化

The tendency for more people to marry later in life

Chuō Kyōiku Shingikai 中央教育審議会

Central Council for Education. The minister of MEXT's advisory committee regarding education established in 1952.

Daigaku bunkakai 大学分科会

Meetings on university education under the Central Council for Education. *Daigakuin buikai* and *daigakuin buikai jinshakei wāking gurūpu* are part of *daigaku bunkakai*.

Daigakuin buikai 大学院部会

Meetings on graduate education held by the Central Council for Education

Daigakuin buikai jinshakei wāking gurūpu 大学院部会人社系ワーキンググループ

The working group for graduate education in humanities and social sciences under the meeting on university education of the Central Council for Education

Daigaku shingikai 大学審議会

University Council. Japanese government's advisor committee established for discussing higher education in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). University council was established in 1987 and was consolidated in 2000 into *Chuō Kyōiku Shingikai*, *daigaku bunkakai*, a committee discussing higher education that is part of Central Council for Education.

Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) 男女雇用機会均等法

The official name of EEOL in Japanese is *koyō no bunya ni okeru danjyo no kintō na kikai oyobi taigū no kakuhotō ni kansuru hōritsu*. The two-track system consisting of *sōgōshoku* (position in a career track) and *ippanshoku* (position in a clerical track) has been developed due to the implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law between men and women (EEOL) in 1986 so that women can have the same career as men, if they wish. EEOL enforced in 1986 requests efforts of employers to hire men and women equally. However even after EEOL was enforced, Japanese companies often still hired Japanese women for clerical positions with little opportunity of promotion in because EEOL did not prohibit unequal treatment of men and women in hiring. EEOL was revised in 1999 to prohibit gender discrimination in hiring.

Freeter フリーター

Cabinet Office defines freeters are young people (except for students and housewives) between 15 and 34 who do not work as regular employees though they would like to work as regular employees (Cabinet Office, 2003). It is notable that the Cabinet Office excluded housewives from freeters, while the Cabinet Office did not have a category as househusbands for men.

Fukoku kyōhei 富国強兵

Fukoku means enriching a nation. *Kyōhei* means strengthening military. *Fukoku Kyōhei* is a well-known Japanese government policy in modernization. Based on *fukoku Kyōhei*, girls' education is promoted to produce *ryōsai kenbo* who contribute to enriching Japan by supporting husbands and raising the next generation wisely.

Honne 本音

“An undeclared actual feeling or opinion” (Lebra, 1984, p.336). In Japan, feelings and opinions are categorized as *honne* and *tatema*, undeclared and declared. The declared principle does not necessarily express actual intentions, feelings or opinions. People are expected to judge which is *honne* and which is *tatema* through relationships and contexts. For example, when one is invited to someone's house, one should judge if the invitation is *honne* or *tatema*.

Ippanshoku 一般職

Position in a clerical track

Juku 塾

Private institutions that provide extra education beyond what the schools provide. There are two roles of *juku*: to provide private tutoring for supplementing regular schoolwork and to provide training for preparing for entrance examinations. Some *jukus* focus on only one role, while other *jukus* provide both services. Hirao (2001) reports a survey result conducted in 1993 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1994), that the *juku* enrollment rate of 9th grade students, the highest grade of junior high school in Japan, was 67 percent.

Kaji tetsudai 家事手伝い

Those who help with housework. *Kaji tetsudai* often refers to those who are neither married nor employed but help someone with housework. In almost all cases, *kaji tetsudai* is a title used for women. *Kaji tetsudai* is usually refers to a family member rather than a servant. *Kaji tetsudai* is distinguished from housewife because housewife is not placed as a helper for housework but placed as a one who plays a central role of maintaining the smooth running of

the household.

Kagaku kenkyu hi (Kakenhi) 科学研究費 (科研費)

Kakenhi is grants-in-aid for scientific research awarded by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). “Grants-in-aid for scientific research are awarded to promote creative and pioneering research across a wide spectrum of scientific fields, ranging from the humanities and social sciences to the natural sciences. Grants are awarded to projects organized by individual researchers or research groups at Japanese universities or research institutes engaged in basic research, particularly research in critical fields attuned to advanced research trends” (JSPS Website, n.d.).

Katei hakase 課程博士

There are two types of doctoral degrees in Japan: *katei hakase* and *ronbun hakase* (see definition in this glossary). The literary translation of *katei hakase* is doctoral program doctorate. *Katei hakase* is a doctoral degree that is awarded to those who met the following conditions: (1) were enrolled in graduate school for five years or more, (2) earned over 30 credits, (3) received necessary guidance, and (4) passed a dissertation examination and/or defense (Council of Central Education, 2005, p.63). While *ronbun hakase* still exists, *katei hakase* has recently become more prevalent.

Konkatsu 婚活

Purposefully actions taken for a marriage partner search, including having *miais*, going to purposefully arranged parties for finding boyfriends and girlfriends, and registering with matching service companies. Due to the decrease of *miai* and marriage between people who work in the same company, marriage partner search has become more necessary (Yamada and Shirakawa, 2008). Literally, *konkatsu* is short for *kekkon* (marriage) *katsudō* (activity). The new word of *konkatsu* indicates that searching for future spouses requires conscious efforts like *shūkatsu*, which is short for *shūshoku* (finding employment) *katsudō* (activity), job search. The word of *konkatsu* was coined by Yamada (2007) in a journal, AERA, and was disseminated in 2008 by publishing his book under joint authorship with Shirakawa (2008) (Shirakawa, 2010). The word of *konkatsu* was widely disseminated to the extent that it was nominated as one of the new words and vogue words in 2008 and 2009.¹⁵⁷

MEXT 文部科学省

MEXT is short for Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was integrated with Science and Technology

¹⁵⁷ As mentioned earlier, since 1984 new words and vogue words have been annually nominated by survey responses from readers of a dictionary of modern terms and then top words have been selected by a selection committee (Jiyukokuminsha, n.d.).

Agency and was renamed to The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in 2001. In order to avoid confusion, I refer to MEXT for both organizations in this dissertation.

Miai 見合い

An arranged meeting in which a man and a woman are formally introduced with a view to marriage

Mikonka 未婚化

The tendency of many people never to marry

NEET (No Employment, Education, or Training) ニート

The single young population between 15 and 34 years of age who are not in employment, education, or training

Nihon gakujutsu shinkokai (Gakushin) 日本学術振興会 (学振)

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), a quasi-governmental organization under the auspices of MEXT.

Ronbun hakase 論文博士

In Japan, there is a unique system called ronbun hakase, which is a doctoral degree that does not require coursework and examinations to be Ph.D. candidates. The literary translation of *ronbun hakase* is doctoral dissertation doctorate. Ronbun hakase is awarded to those who met the following conditions: (1) passed a dissertation examination, (2) were acknowledged to have equal level of academic abilities with those who completed doctoral programs (Central Council of Education, 2005, p.63).

Rōnin 浪人

Applicants to universities who failed to pass entrance examinations when they are high school seniors and wait for one or more years to retake entrance examinations for universities. The term of *rōnin* came from samurai had no masters in the Edo period.

Ryōsai kenbo 良妻賢母

Ryōsai means a good wife and *kenbo* means a wise mother. *Ryōsai kenbo* is used as a fixed expression. The concept of *ryōsai kenbo* was created as ideals for women in the Meiji period. (For details, see chapter 2).

Sansaiji shinwa 三歳児神話

Sansaiji means three-year-old children. *Shinwa* means legacy. *Sansaiji shinwa* means that mothers should stay home and take care of children at least until they turn to four; otherwise children cannot grow well.

Senmon gakkō 専門学校

Special (vocational) schools. The Meiji government did not provide the legal status of “university” to private higher educational institutions (Kaneko, 2004, p.118, Okada, 2005, pp.34-35.). These institutions were called *senmon gakkō*.

Shakaijin 社会人

Shakaijin literarily means society person, working members of society compared with student. According to the Basic School Survey (MEXT, 2009), *shakaijin* is defined as those who are employed, but those who retired from corporations and housewives are included. In context of graduate education, *shakaijins* are those who did not enter into graduate school upon finishing the undergraduate level.

Shinsotsu 新卒

New graduates. In Japan many companies have an employment practice of recruiting new graduates while they are enrolled in school, including universities, so that they start to work upon graduation. New graduates have more privileges for greater employment and training opportunities for career development than regular employees. It is extremely rare for one who has graduated without finding employment while they are enrolled in school, to be recruited as regular employees (neither temporary nor hourly paid).

Sōgōshoku 総合職

Position in a career track

Shōshika 少子化

The decline of fertility. The decline of the birth rate has been a serious issue that the government has tried to solve since 1990 when they announced that the average total number of children one woman gives birth in life was 1.57 (called the 1.57 shock) (Horie, 2005, p.307).

Tatemaie 建前

Declared feelings and opinions. The opposite word of *honne*. See explanations of *honne*.

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