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—A Sociological Study of Measuring  
Poverty in Japan—

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The economic function is one of the basic functions of the family. It is chiefly concerned with the production and consumption of the family as a living unit.<sup>1)</sup> In relating to this characteristic of the family, the level of living is regarded as a problem concerning the family as a social group. In so far as one lives within a family, his level of living, or whether he is poor or not, is, in Japan, generally estimated by considering the living conditions of the family unit to which he belongs. His level of living is not only measured by his own economic conditions, but also by the mode of life of his family unit. The mode of life of the family denotes a way that the family makes its proper functions following after its own value systems. The level of living, therefore, is concerned with the reciprocal relationship between the function of production and that of consumption of the family. What kind of job the breadwinner has and how much income he gets, to which aspects of living condition such as food, clothing, housing, religion, education, insurance, recreation etc. the family can attach the great importance in spending income, and moreover, as a matter of the social

consciousness, to what extent the spiritual and material needs of the family members are satisfied, these are the realistic factors which exert an influence upon the level of living.

Not to mention, there are various degrees or different stages of the level of living. Sometimes they can be indicated by some indices.<sup>2)</sup> However, even in the cases which, objectively, may be regarded as on the almost same stage, there, subjectively, might be great differences among them, if one has been on that level since his birth, one falls down from the upper level, or one rises up from the lower. In this sense, the level of living is a kind of social consciousness.<sup>3)</sup> It is neither an economic index which can be shown in figures, nor a value standard which is invariable. It is a content of social consciousness which is quite flexible and endlessly extensive, if permitted, according to one's social circumstances. Therefore, when one has fallen down from the higher level, or when one has reduced his living scale to which he had been accustomed himself, he feels the discrepancy between the former and the present level of living as poverty. However, it is very difficult to grasp the content of such social consciousness objectively, because it can be multifarious according to person, time and place.

There have been two kinds of viewpoint of studying poverty ; the one is that of understanding poverty as absolute fact and the other as relative fact.<sup>4)</sup> However, according to our empirical studies,<sup>5)</sup> in Japan, poverty is directly related to the family as a unit of living and is closely associated with the functions of production and consumption of the family. The functioning of the family is dependent on its structure. Therefore, we may tentatively define poverty as follows; the

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state that the normal structure of the family is disorganized and its proper functions, above all, the functions of production and consumption are malfunctioned ; or, the state that both incomes and expenditures of the family are very small and its living scales are extremely compressed. The menace of the physical efficiency or the simplicity of the mode of life is merely a result come from the smallness of the living scale. It is, therefore, of less importance whether the family budget is well balanced or not. Regardless of the balanced budget, the poor is poor. The extremely indigent families usually have neither the red nor the black in their budgets, because, in general, they have neither a supportor who may lend them money, nor property which they can sell. In another case, supposing there would be a family which might have the red in its budget at any period, nevertheless, one might not consider this family as poor, when its living scale is large, or its living way is many-sided and complex. As an example, let us take up a fairly big merchant who has considerable debts. He might probably go bankrupt and promptly fall into poor class, if his business were stopped and his debts were liquidated. Nevertheless, his family will be not regarded as poor and as an object of the public assistance, in so far as he continues to carry on his business by circulating capital and to live many-sided and gaudy.

According to our studies refered above, poverty is fundamentally dependent upon the smallness of the total amount of income, and the smallness of income is caused, in many cases, by that of the earned income as well as related to certain kinds of job as the income source. In so far as concerning these aspects, poverty is obviously an economic phenomenon. However, a smallness of the earned income mcstly

occurs when the function of production in the family as a group is not given full play. It results, in many cases, from the lack or absence of a perfect supporter in the family. Thus we have the malfunctioning of the family unit. Besides, a smallness of expenditure restricts the function of consumption of the family unit and therefore the desires of the family members are not sufficiently satisfied. The value standard of the family unit can not be adequately followed. Thus we have the maladjustment of the family unit to society. In short, from the point of view of the functions of production and consumption of the family, poverty is a phenomenon of social maladjustment and malfunctioning of the family as a social group. It is therefore closely connected with family disorganization.<sup>6)</sup> In the sense just stated, the so-called standard of living should, exactly speaking, be the *standard of family living*<sup>7)</sup> and its base should, consequently, be on the *standard of family*. In other words, the normality of the structure and function of the family can be a scale of measuring the level of living. Again, in short, the family organization is an important factor in determining the level of living. Thus we can say that the problem of the level of living is sociological as well as economic. From the sociological point of view, the patterns of poverty denotes the patterns of the poor family.

In setting up the patterns, the first problem is to decide the criterion of classification, because there can be various kinds of pattern according to the difference of criteria. Concerning the standpoints of classifying poverty, we can divide them into two main schools. The one is that which takes up the cause of poverty as criterion. This is a most common way. About it, however, we must be cautious, since it is

not a classification of poverty itself but that of cause of poverty. The actual poverty is an effect resulted from that cause. The classification of the cause is not necessarily the same as that of the effect. Besides, since it is called the cause, it is, at least, in the way of thinking, concerned with the past situation of the family. In addition, as the cause of poverty is usually interrelated by several factors, it is very difficult not only to decide the primary factor among them, but also to classify it according to a definite principle. Hence, if we examine the classification of this school, we may notice that, despite they call it the cause of poverty, most of them, in fact, classify it according to the effect resulted from that cause, namely the present situation of the poor. For example, sickness, thriftlessness, drunkenness, death or incapacity of chief wage-earner, low-income, irregular work, unemployment, ignorant or careless housekeeping, excessive size of family and so on.<sup>89</sup> Others can be scarcely discriminated whether cause or effect, such as habit, shiftlessness, improvidence, scolor and so on.<sup>90</sup> On the contrary, the other is that which takes up the future situation of the family as a criterion. They try to understand the economic rise and fall of the family in relation to the family life cycle.<sup>100</sup> By paying attention to the biological aspects of the family group, they insist that the welfare of the family unit is, in the long run, influenced by the increase or decrease of the wage-earners within the family and it has terminal cycles or rhythms in the process of change. It is of practical value to estimate the balance of producing and consuming abilities in the family by imagining the future family composition and to predict the undulation of poverty and wealth of the family unit. Due to its nature, however, such a study cannot help including

certain assumptions within its arguments ; because, since the family composition may be changed by the unpredictable death or removal of its members, its future situation will not always composite the figure which is supposed today.

There might be many other points of view, but we have no space here to discuss about them. Now, positively we should state our opinion. While it seems that two schools stated above are trying to understand poverty in relating to, as it were, the past and the future situation of the family respectively, we should like to grasp it just in the present situation. The reason is as follows. The yardstick, whatever it might be, should be universal through time and space and is desirable to be so simple as being easily available for anyone. That which is provided with such conditions is most valuable in practice. To be most sure, plain and direct, it is the best to set up it in the present tense. The proverbs in Japan, such as "many children of the poor," "fifteen years of age of the first child is at the bottom of poverty," "fifteen years of age of the last child is at the climax of prosperity," are the products of the experience of the common people. For them, it is doubtless the easiest way to measure the levels of family living by observing the family composition before their eyes. How, then, can we grasp poverty at present? It is possible if we understand it as the family structure itself in the presence. According to our studies, poverty in Japan can be shown as the patterns of the poor family and classified as those of the disorganized family unit. Before describing the patterns of the disorganized family unit, we must first analyse the organized family unit, for the former is a co-ordinate concept as compared with the latter.

Concerning the concept of the organized family unit

or the normal family,<sup>11)</sup> however, there can be various interpretations, since it is concerned with the substance of the family as a social group. Abstractly we can define it as the family whose composition is perfect and interrelationship is in harmony, by making its proper functions in full, being adjusted well to the larger society and approved as a sound social unit by society. Nevertheless, there can be many explanations, if we try to determine its component factors concretely. The exact decision of the normal family is of great significance. It has wide and deep influences upon the practical problems and social structures in our country. From the aspects of the quality of family relationships, it is connected with the family system in Japan, and from that of the quantity of family members, it is concerned with the optimum size of the family and consequently with the population problems in Japan.<sup>12)</sup>

For developing our argument in this paper, we are urged here to submit some working hypothesis on the normal family. According to our studies, the poor family is that which is destroyed either in its form or in its contents. And so we put together the characteristics of the poor family and then, in contrary wise, idealtypically compose a type of family which has such structural attributes as corresponding to the former. Though to discuss about the conditions of the normal family prior to describing the characteristics of the poor family, is, from the aspect of describing plainly the result of the research, inverted, we have first to set up the concept of the normal family, because, from the order of the argumentation, it is systematic to prescribe first the normal family and then the abnormal family.

The requirements of the normal family have been in-

duced as follows :

- (1) *To consist of father, mother and children.* (It is fundamental for the normal family to be composed of these three elements, and the family which is composed of husband and wife, or of other members such as their parents or collateral relatives follows after it.)<sup>13)</sup>
- (2) *To have not too many children.* (The definition of "too many children" is, of course, relative, and it is very difficult to decide the optimum size of the family. However, according to our studies, we shall tentatively consider it as a family which does not include more than about three or four children.)<sup>14)</sup>
- (3) *To have all members healthy.* (All family members are in such a healthy condition as being adequately able to make their functions as a family member.)<sup>15)</sup>
- (4) *To have a harmonious interrelationship.* (Internally, there is no serious conflict-tension relationship among the family members. They are held together by affection.)<sup>16)</sup>
- (5) *To be in a state of social adjustment to society.* (On its external side, the mode of life of the family as a group adjusts well to society. For instance, the family that its head has some job, gets adequate incomes by fulfilling his social role through his job and its function of consumption is satisfactorily displayed. In other words, the family which is appreciated as an adequate social unit by society.)<sup>17)</sup>

Thus, we have named the family which meets the five above-mentioned requirements the normal family. (1) and (2), above, are associated with the composition of the family, (3) with the physiological conditions of the family member, (4) and (5) with, so to speak, the contents of the family. Corresponding to the latter two, the former three are related to, so

to speak, the form of the family. The normal family should not be lack of even one of them. Therefore, the abnormal family can be defined in a manner corresponding to those requirements of the normal family. We can divide the types of the abnormal family into three groups: disorganized as to form, disorganized as to contents, and disorganized both as to form and as to contents. We have named the first of these, "the broken family,"<sup>18</sup> and have subdivided it into two sub-groups: (a) the compositionally broken family whose composition is not perfect in corresponding to the requirements, (1) and (2), of the normal family; (b) the physiologically broken family whose one or more member is invalid or has some physical or mental deficiency. The second group is "the disharmonized family,"<sup>19</sup> and also is divided into two subgroups: (a) the internally disharmonized family which has some serious and constant conflict-tension relationship among the members; (b) the externally disharmonized family which is in a state of maladjustment to the larger society. And the third is "the disrupted family,"<sup>20</sup> which includes both factors of the former two groups. These are summarized as follows:

#### THE ABNORMAL FAMILY.

- (1) The broken family—disorganized as to form
  - (a) The compositionally broken family
  - (b) The physiologically broken family
- (2) The disharmonized family—disorganized as to contents
  - (a) The internally disharmonized family
  - (b) The externally disharmonized family
- (3) The disrupted family—disorganized both as to form and as to contents

According to our empirical studies in Japan, the actual types of the abnormal family can be classified as follows:

Type A : *The mother-and-children family*. (No father ; it is composed of mother and children under 20 years of age.<sup>21)</sup> The families such as the grandmother-and-grandchildren family, the adult stiter-and-infant brother family and the family that the father is in jail, etc. follow after this type. The family which can not get adequate earned income because of absence or lack of the perfect male power as a breadwinner.)

Type B : *The father-and-children family*. (No mother ; it is composed of father and children under 20 years of age. The families such as the grandfather-and-grandchildren family, the adult brother-and-infant sister family and so on follow after this type. The family in which, because of lack of the mistress who manages the household, consumption is loose or the male breadwinner cannot perfectly do his productive function.)

Type C : *The old persons family*. (It is composed of old persons only, who are over 65 years of age and have a declined function of production.)

Type D : *The children family*. (It is composed of children only, who are under 20 years of age and have an immature function of production.)

Type E : *The too many children family*. (It is composed of both parents but many children. According to the reasons stated above, we shall tentatively consider here the difinition of "too many children" as more than about three or four children in so far as concerning poverty. The family which has usually an unbalanced budget owing to many children whose function of production is large against the smallness of that of production.)

Type F : *The invalid family*. (It includes one or more

invalid members, regardless of the breadwinner or others. The physically or mentally handicapped follows after the invalid.<sup>22)</sup> The family whose function of production cannot be done sufficiently on account of the invalid and, owing to his medical expenses, function of consumption is compressed.)

Type G : *The disrupted family*. (Internally discordant family. It is not *the broken family* as stated above. It is a family which constantly has some serious conflict-tension relationships among the members, for instance, between husband and wife, parents and children, mother and daughter-in-law, and so on. Owing to such discord, the function of production of the family unit is not given full play or its function of consumption is not sound, that is, corruption or extravagance.)<sup>23)</sup>

Type H : *The maladjusted family*. (Externally discordant or socially maladjusted family. It is neither the above-stated *broken* nor *disrupted family*. It is a family which cannot adjust to the larger society ; for example, the family which can only have a job of inadequate or indefinite income, the unemployed family, the delinquent family, and the family which expends money planlessly because of ignorance of the household management. It cannot sufficiently display its function of production and consumption and so cannot be appreciated as a sound social unit by society ; so to speak, the underprivileged family.)

Type I : *The compound family*. (It includes multiple-combinations of the factor which composes the above-stated family types. There can be various kinds of combinations, for example, type CD that is composed of the aged and the children only, type AEF that is composed of the sick mother and the many children, type GH that includes the unemploy-

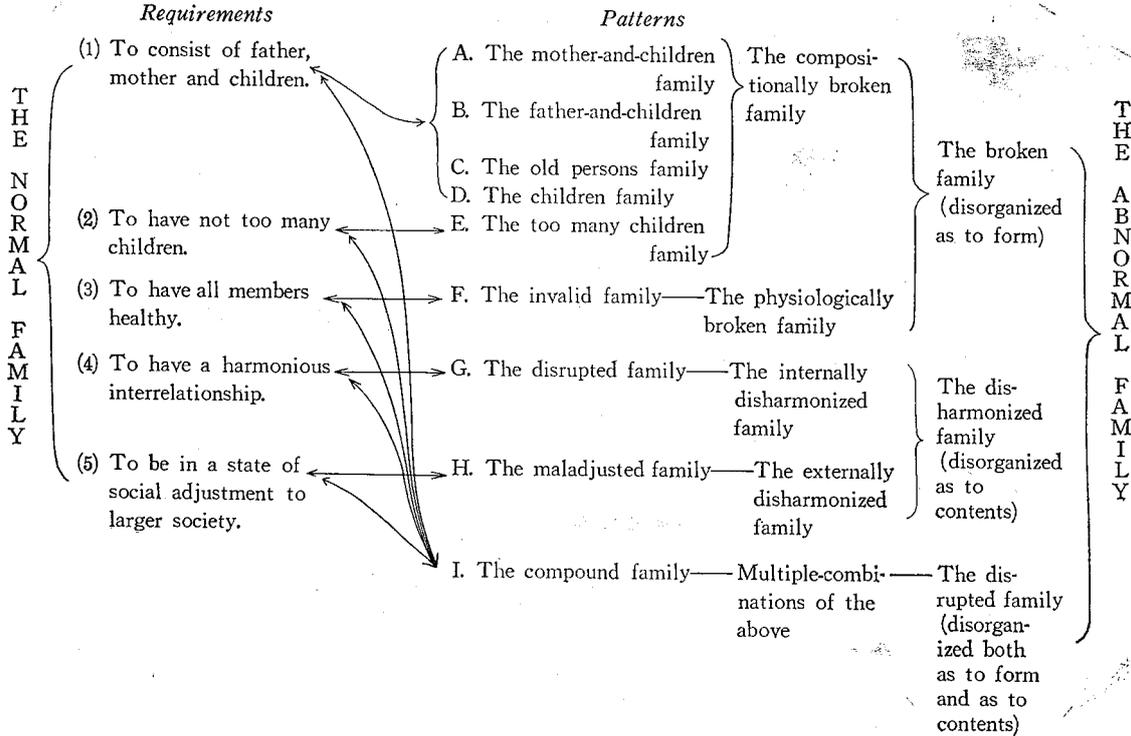
ed husband who is on bad terms with his wife, type EH that is composed of the delinquent father, the mother and the many children, and so on.)

The correlations of these nine types to the five above-stated requirements of the normal family are co-ordinated as follows: Types A, B, C and D are correlated to the first requirement, Type E is to the second, Type F to the third, Type G to the fourth and Type H to the fifth respectively. Again, Types A, B, C, D and E are *the compositionally broken family*, Type F is *the physiologically broken family*, and Type H *the externally disharmonized family*. Type I is correlated to all five conditions of the normal family and includes *the compound broken family* (for example, Type AEF or Type CD in which the factors of the broken family are accumulated in diversity), *the compound disharmonized family* (Type GH in which the factors of the disorganized family are variously accumulated) and *the compound broken-and-disharmonized family*, namely, *the disrupted family* (for example, Type CG, Type EH or Type FG that is the combination of the broken family and the disharmonized family). These correlations can be clearly shown in the diagram (see Diagram I).

Thus, we can say that the patterns of the abnormal family are the patterns of the poor family and are those of poverty which are classified by the present situation of the family. There are many studies understanding the standard of living as a matter of cost of living and measuring it by some economic scales.<sup>24)</sup> The minimum quantity of the material stuff required for human existence such as food, clothing and shelter is almost fixed. However, if we try to prove it by the synthetic index as price, it is not so easy to make a definite yard-

(Erratum for SEKI's paper, p. 15. Diagram I.)

**Diagram I.** The Correlation Between the Normal Family and the Abnormal Family.



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**Diagram I.** The Correlation Between the Normal Family and the Abnormal Family.

*Requirements*

*Patterns*

T  
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N  
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R  
M  
A  
L  
  
F  
A  
M  
I  
L  
Y

- (1) To consist of father, mother and children.
- (2) To have not too many children.
- (3) To have all members healthy.
- (4) To have a harmonious interrelationship.
- (5) To be in a state of social adjustment to larger society.

- A. The mother-and-children family      The compositionally broken family
- B. The father-and-children family      The broken family (disorganized as to form)
- C. The old persons family
- D. The children family
- E. The too many children family
- F. The invalid family—The physiologically broken family
- G. The disrupted family—The internally disharmonized family      The disharmonized family (disorganized as to contents)
- H. The maladjusted family—The externally disharmonized family
- I. The compound family—Multiple-combinations of the above      The disrupted family (disorganized both as to form and as to contents)

T  
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stick ; because, especially in present Japan, the so-called "poverty-line"<sup>25)</sup> has undergone changes in accordance with the fluctuations of the monetary value, the inflation.<sup>26)</sup> Therefore, if it is granted to understand poverty from our point of view being stated in this paper, we shall be able to measure the standard of living rather easily by observing the present situation of the family. Not to mention, all aspects of the standard of living cannot be explained by this way. However, the family as a group can be one of the steady yardsticks for measuring poverty.

In addition, through the family structure, it is actually possible to understand the level of living dynamic. The present situation of the family looks like the temporary and static state of the family, but it is more than that. As stated above, the family as a group is constantly changing, growing or declining. According to birth, death or removal of the family member, its composition changes ; according to the changes of their age composition, it grows or declines ; and, besides, its interrelationship usually moves to and from the situations between conflict and harmony or adjustment and maladjustment. The family is a dynamic group. The present situation of the family, therefore, denotes the phase that the dynamic family group like this is shown as a sectional diagram by cutting it in the point of time of present. In this phase, we can see at the same time both the remains of its past phase and the germination of its future phase. The former denotes the factors which are considered as the causes of poverty and the latter the factors by which the rise and fall of the family status in society can be predicted. Accordingly, we shall be able to take adequate remedies to meet poverty according to the types of the poor family, since both the causes of poverty in the

past and the trend of the family welfare in the future are shown in the present phase. From the point of view of understanding poverty as a phenomenon of family disorganization, the method to get rid of poverty is nothing but to reorganize the family structure, in other words, to let the abnormal family revert to the normal family.<sup>27)</sup> The measures according to the family types are roughly considered as follows :

Type A (the mother-and-children family): In this family type itself is shown the cause of poverty, namely the past situation of the family that they have lost the father by death, divorce, separation or desertion. And the future situation of this family can be predicted by observing the working capacity of the mother and the number and the age composition of the children. For them, it is necessary to take measures to recover the function of production until it will return to the normal family. For example, to give the mother an adequate job until the children will grow up to the productive age and become a strong supporter of the households, and, if it is difficult to do so, to give public assistance concerning the family living in general, or otherwise, to counsel remarriage of the mother according to the situation.

Type B (the father-and-children family) : As the first step, to consider the remarriage of the father, because, in Japan, the remarriage is easier for man than for woman; or to give children in charge of public welfare service according to the circumstances.

Type C (the old persons family) : This family expresses the past situation that it has lost the children due to some reasons or has been deserted by them or has none who has responsibility to support the old persons. There is no possibility that it will return to the normal family. This is a type

that the family as a succession of generations is going to decay. For this, it is necessary to give public assistance according to the Daily Life Security Law or the Old Persons Welfare Law.

Type D (the children family) : In opposition to the former, this is a family whose function of production will develop according to the growth of the children. It is necessary to give them special protection by the public welfare system until they can be independent.

Type E (the too many children family) : To make an adequate measure to reduce the expenses of bringing up children, for instance, to give aids for education, livelihood, medical treatment and so on. According to the cases, to give the breadwinner better job or to counsel the family planning.

Type F (the invalid family) : As the sickness of the family member is the cause of poverty, the recovering from it is crucial. Not to mention of helping the expenses of medical treatment, in the case that the breadwinner is invalid, it is necessary to give assistance for vocational rehabilitation to the member who shall be able to take his place and to do the function of production. According to the cases, various measures can be considered; for instance, applications of the Tuberculosis Prevent Law, the Physically Handicapped Person's Welfare Law or the Mental Hygiene Law and so on.

Type G (the disharmonized family) and Type H (the maladjusted family) : The levels of living cannot be improved merely by the physical or economic considerations. The stabilization of the daily life can be maintained by the harmonious interrelationship of the family members as well as the adjustment of the family unit to society. From this viewpoint, to both Type G and Type H, it is useful to teach how to control the family relationships and how to promote its adapta-

bility to society. Therefore, we have need of contriving the adequate techniques to control it and to promote it in Japan. In addition, to the family which wastes money planlessly, it may be, in most cases, effective to give guidance of managing household with patience.<sup>28)</sup>

Type I (the compound family) : In this type, apparently the measures are conspicuously difficult, because many factors are accumulated and various conditions are complicated within it. The conditions appeared complex, however, can be simplified by resolving them into each factor as stated above. Accordingly, it must be not so difficult as appearance, if we consider the measure corresponding to each factor and solve them one by one.

Table I shows that these types are actually applied to poor families in Obihiro City comparing 1964 with 1953. (As an example of the poor family, we take up the families on public assistance which can be considered as the lowest class approved by both law and society ; because the characteristics of the standard of living in general can be distinctively shown in the way of life of the lower class and that of the lower class in different areas can be easier compared with each other than that of the upper.) In 1953 Type F is the most, 37.9 per cent. The next is Type I (25.6 per cent) and every factor of this type is connected with F. It expresses a serious interrelationship between disease and poverty. Type A is the third (21.3 per cent), but, if we consider the families concerning A of Type I, the mother-and-children family amounts to 42.9 per cent. The fourth is Type C, 13.3 per cent. There is none of Types B, E and G and is a few case of Type D and Type H. It suggests that lack of mother, too many children, or family discord can hardly cause poverty by working

independently. General situations in 1964 are almost same as in 1953, although the percentage of Type F increases.

**Table I.** Public Relief Families Classified According to the Types of the Abnormal Family: Obihiro City.

Pattern \ Year	1953	1964
Type A. The mother-and-children family	21.3%	23.3%
Type B. The father-and-children family	—	1.4
Type C. The old persons family	13.3	11.1
Type D. The children family	0.7	—
Type E. The too many children family	—	1.2
Type F. The invalid family	37.9	53.5
Type G. The disrupted family	—	0.3
Type H. The maladjusted family	1.2	5.8
Type I. The compound family	25.6	3.4
Type AF	21.6	—
Type BF	2.0	—
Type DF	0.3	—
Type EF	1.7	—
Total	100.0	100.0
Number of families	301	787

According to Table II, the situation of Hokkaido Prefecture in relating to the main theme of this paper is not so different from that of Obihiro City, and we can also understand that the situations in towns and villages as well as in cities are almost same. Of 41,456 families on public assistance in Hokkaido Prefecture, 28.9 per cent is *the compositionally broken family* (including Types A, B, C, D and E) and 48.5 per cent is *the physiologically broken family* (Type F); namely, 77.4 per cent of them is *the broken family*.<sup>29)</sup> This is, in contrast to *the disharmonized family*, really visible and so anyone can easily take notice of this type. The social caseworkers who are in contact with the poor family can measure its levels of living first by observing

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the form of the family (whether *the broken family* or not) and analysing the harmonizing condition of it, and then by seeing the job of the breadwinner and studying his income. According to our studies, those families on public relief which are employed have such jobs as day laborer, laborer in small factories or shops, odd-job man, entertainer, home worker, peddler, second-hand dealer, masseur, carpenter, or dormitory nurse, and 56.4 per cent of the total relief families have no jobs.

**Table II.** Classification of Public Relief Families According to the Patterns of the Abnormal Family: Hokkaido Prefecture, August 1, 1966.

Pattern of Abnormal Family	Place		
	Cities	Towns and Villages	Hokkaido Prefecture
Type A	14.0%	12.1%	13.2%
Type B	1.1	0.8	1.0
Type C	11.4	13.3	12.2
Type D	0.5	0.3	0.4
Type E	2.0	2.2	2.1
Type F	48.4	48.7	48.5
Type G	0.7	0.3	0.5
Type H	8.2	5.7	7.2
Type I	13.7	16.6	14.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of families	24,637	16,819	41,456

And we have another finding in this long term research. In 1964, the writer could fortunately recontact with 12 families which were interviewed by him in 1953. Thus, we could do the intensive case study of these families and trace their life history during these eleven years and understand how they followed the courses of vicissitudes of life in developing their family cycle. We analysed the causes of the vertical mobility of these public assistance families and classified them into three types according to their status change : the rising up fam-

ily, the settling down family and the ups-and-downs family.

1. The rising up family

This is the type of the family which has rid itself of the public assistance and improved the level of living. The main causes of the improvement are two. The one is that the breadwinner of the family has gotten a better job and the other is that the young children has grown up and gotten a nice job. The former type of the family rises up rapidly from the bottom of the society and the latter slowly. The characteristics of both type can be seen by the composition of the family in terms of the normal or the abnormal family stated above. Such families as the mother-and-children family, the children family, and the too many children family belong to this group.

The vocational training and guidance for the breadwinner and the suitable education for the children are necessary to improve their living conditions. It is desirable to establish the social institutions of counselling for children of these families.

2. The settling down family

This is the type of family which has continuously received public assistance for these eleven years and been deposited as a lower class in the city. Two types of the abnormal family belong to this type : the old persons family and the seriously disrupted family. In the former case, the long term relief is of course necessary, and in the latter, children desert their old parents after they have grown up. And so, it is necessary for these families to have family counsellor for regulating the relationship among the members.

3. The ups-and-downs family

This is the type of family which has received public assistance intermittently. Most of them depend on the relief for two or three months a year on the occasion of emergency

and they repeat it every year as if routine. The main causes of such mobility are the bad job of the breadwinner, the sudden accident or illness of the family member, the many children and the planlessness of housekeeping.

In terms of the types of the abnormal family, they are the too many children family, the under-privileged family and the family including invalid members. As most of them need the public assistance in winter, it is necessary to make guidance of domestic life for the mistress.

In this paper, we have explained that the disorganization of the normal family is, from the point of view of the function of production and consumption of the family, directly related to poverty and can be shown as actual types of the abnormal family. On the contrary, however, there can be many cases that poverty breaks down the family structure and results in the family disorganization. The relationship between poverty and the family disorganization is reciprocal. Not to mention, however, there can be exception, as all families do not necessarily become poor, even though the family structure would be broken down. In the cases that they have such property enough as they do not become poor until the family structure will return to normal, or some of the family members can act for one whose function has been missed or can supplement it by their co-operation, the family disorganization will not immediately and explicitly result in poverty. In Japan, according to our studies,<sup>30)</sup> there are not so many families which have so stable structure. On the contrary, the families whose bases are shaken by the social and economic changes during and after the war have increased. Most of them are, so to speak, the latent poor class which implicitly contains the motives of poverty. Therefore, if one of them

comes up to the surface, others are influenced by it, and the family falls into the poor class. For example, supposing the family has four children, it is not explicitly poor in so far as the father is in good health and earns income; however, if he dies on a sudden and the family can not get income, it becomes the mother-and-children family and, at the same time, the too many children family, and, besides, the invalid family, when the mother becomes sick owing to overwork. It is Type I (AEF) and becomes indigent more and more.

Thus, in Japan, by analysing the family structure (whether the normal family or the abnormal family), we can measure the level of living and the family status in society. The normal family and the abnormal family have many important effects upon the formation of personality and the organization of society. They are closely concerned with social pathology.<sup>31)</sup>

#### Notes

Most of the data on which this paper is based have been presented in the author's following publications: Kiyohide Seki, "Patterns of Family Disorganization and Poverty," *Japanese Sociological Review*, Tokyo: Japan Sociological Society, No. 20 (February, 1955); "The Poor Class and Its Living Conditions in a Japanese City," *The Annual Report on Cultural Science of the Faculty of Letters of Hokkaido University*, No. 4 (April, 1955); *A Study of the Mother-and-children Family*, Sapporo: Hokkaido Prefectural Government, 1953; *Social Stratification and the Types of Poverty in Hokkaido, (Obihiro City)*, Sapporo: The Office of Hokkaido Reclamation Committee (Mimeographed), 1954; and *The Outline of Social Welfare Services in Hokkaido*, Sapporo: The Central Committee of Community Chest of Hokkaido (Mimeographed), 1950; *The Urban Family*, Tokyo: Seishin Shobō Book Co., 1966; and some parts of this paper were read at the 9th International Seminar on Family Research, 1965, and at the 11th Pacific Science Congress, Tokyo, 1966. In doing these researches the author is indebted to the Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Education of the Japanese Government, the Hokkaido Prefectural Government, Obihiro City and the Rockefeller Foundation for the grants.

- 1) Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Tübingen, 1922, SS. 194-197; W. F. Ogburn and C. Tibbits, "The Family and Its Functions, in *Recent Social Trends in the United States*, New York: Mc Graw-Hill, 1933, pp.

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664-679.

- 2) The so-called "Engel's laws." (Ernst Engel, *Die Lebenskosten belgischer Arbeiter-familien früher und jetzt*, Berlin : 1895); "Very poor," "poor" and "above the line of poverty." (Charles Booth ed., *Life and Labour of the People in London Vol. I : East London*, London : Williams and Norgate, 1891, 3rd ed., p. 33, pp. 37-62, pp. 131-155); The "primary" poverty and the "secondary" poverty. (B. Seebohm Rowntree, *Poverty, A Study of Town Life*, London : Mcmillan, 1901, p. viii, pp. 86-87, p. 296, and *Poverty and Progress*, Longmans, 1941); Subsistence standard of living, comfort standard of living, efficiency standard of life or living, standard of luxury, and normal standard of living. (N. L. Sims, *Elements of Rural Sociology*, New York : Thomas Y. Crowell, 1934, Chap. xxviii, pp. 681 ff.); insufficiency, minimum subsistence, health and decency, comfort, and luxury. (I. M. Rubinow, "Poverty," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. by Seligman, Vol. XII, 1930, pp. 284-292, and C. Brinkmann, "Standards of Living," *Ibid.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 322-324.); Herman Miller, "The Dimensions of Poverty," in Ben B. Seligman, *Poverty as a Public Issue*, New York : Free Press, 1965, pp. 20-51.
- 3) Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, New York : Huebsch, 1922, Chap. V ; C. J. Galpin, *Rural Social Problems*, New York : Century, 1924, Chap. III ; N. L. Sims, *op. cit.* ; T. S. Mc Mahon, *Social and Economic Standard of Living*, Boston : Heath, 1925, Chap. I ; H. B. Hawthorn ; *The Sociology of Rural Life*, New York : Century, 1926, Chap. V ; F. H. Streightoff, *The Standard of Living among the Industrial People of America*, Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1911.
- 4) H. P. Fairchild, *Outline of Applied Sociology*, New York : Mcmillan, 1916, pp. 139-142.
- 5) Kiyohide Seki, *The Urban Family*, Tokyo, 1966.
- 6) "Family disorganization," in *Dictionary of Sociology*, ed. by H. P. Fairchild, Ames : Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1955, p. 96 ; R. E. Faris, *Social Disorganization*, New York : Ronald Press Co., 1948, Chap. 10, pp. 264 ff. ; M. A. Elliott and F. E. Merrill, *Social Disorganization*, New York : Harper and Brothers, 3rd ed. 1950, Chap. XV, pp. 329 ff. ; C. C. Zimmerman, *Family and Civilization*, New York : Harper and Brothers, 1947 ; E. R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, rev. ed., 1939 ; G. C. Atteberry and others, *Introduction to Social Science*, Vol. I, New York : Mcmillan, 1950, pp. 183-199 ; W. Waller and R. Hill, *The Family, A Dynamic Interpretation*, New York : The Dryden Press, rev. ed., 1951, Part Six, pp. 453 ff. ; In the United States the study of family disorganization is chiefly concerned with the breakdown of the husband and wife relationship, however, in Japan it is adequate to consider it in fairly broader sense because of her family system. We should like to understand it as a state of lack of the normal family relationship and, as actual types of the disorganized family, to point out nine types (Type A-I), which will be explored later.
- 7) Fairchild, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

- 8) Booth, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147; Rowntree, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-145.
- 9) Booth, *op. cit.*, p. 146; H. M. Leyendecker, *Problems and Policy in Public Assistance*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955, p. 161.
- 10) Rowntree, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-140; E. Suzuki, *Principles of Rural Sociology in Japan*, Tokyo: Jichosha, 1940, Chap. 4 and "Terminal Rhythms in the Japanese Family Cycle", in *The Family and the Village Community*, Tokyo: Nikko-shoin, 1941, Vol. II, (both in Japanese); Paul C. Glick, "The Family Cycle," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 12, 2 (April, 1947), pp. 164-174; J. H. Kolb and E. de S. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952, Fourth ed., pp. 150 ff., Chap. 17, pp. 305 ff.; T. Lynn Smith, *The Sociology of Rural Life*, New York: Harper, 1947, Chap. 16, pp. 379-381; E. L. Kirkpatrick, R. Tough, M. L. Cowles, *The Life Cycle of the Farm Family in Relation to Its Standard of Living*, 1934.
- 11) About the typology of the family from the standpoint of the normality and abnormality of its structure and function, in other words, the systematic classification of the normal family and the abnormal family, we have never heard. There have been, however, some examples similar to this. Engel set up the typical family for the need of determining the standard of living concretely (Engel, *op. cit.*, S. 5). On the contrary, there is an opinion that the typical family is merely an imaginary concept and statistical myth (G. C. Atteberry and others, *op. cit.*, p. 171). Fairchild has used the term of the typical family, the "standard" family, or the average family (Fairchild, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84, p. 141). Zimmerman has advocated a study of good family versus bad family (Carl C. Zimmerman, *Outline of the Future of the Family*, Cambridge: The Phillips Book Store, 1947, pp. 113-119; cf. C. Kirkpatrick, *The Family: As Process and Institution*, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1955, p. 80; E. W. Burgess and H. J. Locke, *The Family: From Institution to Companionship*, New York: American Book Co., Second ed., 1953, pp. 689-692). These are entirely different from our point of view in this paper. Though we can find the word the normal family or the abnormal family in several books, it is not so systematically defined. (See T. L. Smith and associates, *Social Problems*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1955, p. 245, p. 258, p. 267; Elliot and Merrill, *op. cit.*, p. 15, p. 329, p. 331; Elizabeth Bott, "Norms and Ideology: The Normal Family" in *A Modern Introduction to the Family*, ed. by N. W. Bell and E. F. Vogel, The Free Press, 1960, pp. 435-452; E. M. Goldberg, "The Normal Family-Myth and Reality" in *Social Work with Families*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965, pp. 11-27; M. F. Nimkoff and Russel Middleton, "Types of Family and Types of Economy", in *Readings on Economic Sociology*, ed. by Neil J. Smelser, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965, pp. 73-84.)
- 12) In Japan, the term of family planning is used as a synonym of birth control. However, it should be considered not only as concerning the quantity of family, but also as concerning the control of the interrelationship of the family members, and moreover, even if it is chiefly concerned with the birth

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- control, it might be more effective that we consider it as a dynamic family planning in relation to the levels of living of the family unit in future.
- 13) In Japan, the family which is regarded as meeting the first requirement of the normal family, that is, composed of father, mother and children, is 81.9 per cent of the whole family in Japan and 87.8 per cent in the six major cities (T. Toda, *The Family Composition*, Tokyo: Kobundo, 1937, p. 368, pp. 504 ff.). The reason why we treat the families which include the other members besides these three elements as following it is that, under the Japanese family system, these families should be regarded as the normal family, *if they meet all other requirements*. The childless family which is composed of young husband and wife is the normal family in so far as it meets all other requirements, however, it will naturally become Type C, if they have no children in their old age. As a Japanese proverb, "a child is the cramp-iron between mother and father," the childless family is rather unstable. In this sense, we select the expression of father, mother and children prior to that of husband, wife and children.
  - 14) According to the Censuses of 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1955 and 1960, the average population per household in Japan is 4.89, 4.93, 4.99, 5.02, 4.97, and 4.56 respectively. Therefore, if we imagine the average family based on these numbers, it may be composed of father, mother and three children. However, according to our researches on the poor family, we tentatively consider the number of children as three or four.
  - 15) About the health, there may be the definition from the medical point of view (see the Charter of the World Health Organization), however here we use the term in sociological sense.
  - 16) The Japan Human Science Society, ed., *A Study of the Social Tension*, Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten, 1953 (in Japanese).
  - 17) "Social adjustment," Fairchild's *Dictionary of Sociology*, pp. 257-276.
  - 18) This is different from the term of broken home (*kesson kazoku* in Japanese) which is mainly used by the students of the juvenile delinquency. (S. and E. Glueck, *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1950, p. 122; D. R. Taft, *Criminology*, New York: Mcmillan, 1947, pp. 138 ff.; E. H. Sutherland, *Criminology*, Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1924, pp. 143-145). According to *Dictionary of Sociology* (p. 142), it is "a family in which one or both the parents are removed." Therefore, the broken family (*hason kazoku* in Japanese) is used here in broader sense than it. (About the broken family, see Leyendecker, *op. cit.*, p. 5; Smith and associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 256 ff.)
  - 19) It is *hacho kazoku* in Japanese. It is a family which has an internal or external conflict-tension relationship. (See "maladjustment", *Dictionary of Sociology*, p. 181.)
  - 20) It is *hakai kazoku* in Japanese. It needs no detailed explanation.
  - 21) In Japan, it is not always definite how demarcate the age between adult and minor. According to the Child Welfare Law and Labour Standard Law, the definition of the boy or juvenile is one who is under eighteen years of

- age, but, according to the Juvenile Delinquency Law, he is under twenty years of age. Here we define it as the age class which is not yet approved as adult by society in general, namely that which is before joining the Adult Ceremony as a national event in Japan. This age class must not be able to get such an adequate income as supporting their household, even if they work. The Law of Loaning the Mother-and-children Welfare Fund regulates its object as the women who have no husband and maintain their children under twenty years of age. That this is different from the provision of the Child Welfare Law is significant.
- 22) The reason why we regard the physically or mentally handicapped as the same category as the invalid is that the former is in the almost same situation as the latter, if we understand it as that they cannot sufficiently do their function as family members. However, the measures for them should be, of course, different according to the cases.
  - 23) Concerning that the family discord causes the poverty, see T. Makino, "The Types of the Family," *Shakaigaku Taikai*, Tokyo: Nikko-shoin, Vol. I, p. 61, p. 97 (in Japanese). The standard of living cannot be gauged merely by monetary unit.
  - 24) K. Okawa, *Measuring the Standard of Living*, Tokyo, 1953; K. Mori, ed., *Standard of Living*, Tokyo, 1953; H. Arisawa, ed., *Standard of Living in Japan*, Tokyo, 1954 (all above in Japanese); D. W. Douglas, "Cost of Living" and "Family Budget," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* ed. by Seligman Vol. IV, pp. 478-483 and Vol. VI, pp. 73-78; E. L. Kirkpatrick, *The Farmer's Standard of Living*, New York: Century, 1929; Others see footnote 2.
  - 25) Peter Townsend, "Measuring Poverty," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. V, No. 2 (June, 1954); Booth, *op. cit.*, p. 132; Rowntree, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-118, pp. 295-305.
  - 26) According to the regulation of the Constitution of Japan (Article 25), the Ministry of Welfare has set up the standard of security which should fit the minimum standard of living of the people. During seven years from April 1946 to July 1953, this standard has been revised thirteen times in accordance with the rise in prices. It shows how difficult it is to make a definite yardstick.
  - 27) Of 368 mother-and-children family. 24 per cent wants to remarry and 42 per cent looks forward that her children grow into manhood. (Seki, *The Mother-and-children Family*, pp. 390-394). We can understand the fact as the state that the abnormal family is waiting for recovery to the normal family.
  - 28) Type H is caused by the external as well as the internal conditions of the family. Poverty is of course related to the social and economic conditions of the society. If Type H increases in our society, therefore, we have to pay attention not only to the abnormality of the family but also to that of society. It is concerned with the social disorganization and social reorganization, and also with the national levels of living.

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- 29) As to the whole Japan, we have no statistics classified the public assistance families according to the patterns of abnormal family yet. However, thanks to the research data of the Ministry of Welfare and the large cities as Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe, we can recognize the fact that the proportion of the mother-and-children family, the father-and-children family, the old persons family, the invalid family and the family which includes the physically or mentally handicapped is very high among the public assistance families.
- 30) Seki, "The Poor Class and Its Living Conditions in a Japanese City," pp. 38-39.
- 31) In this paper, we have intently analysed the interrelationship between the family and poverty, although poverty is concerned with the social and economic conditions outside the family as already stated. We have not referred to the family composed of one person, because it appears as the children family, the old persons family, the invalid family, or the maladjusted family in so far as concerning poverty. The idea in this paper might be useful in making social welfare policy in the countries which are still under the influences of the traditional familism and whose social circumstances are rather similar to those of Japan.