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A QUEST FOR PARENTAL LOVE : HOW DO JAPANESE MOTHERS CONCEIVE MOTHER'S LOVE ?

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I. Where the Research Question Resides.

As stated often, Japanese families have experienced drastic changes both in the structure and the function after World War II. Remarkable are the decrease of the extended families and the increase of the nuclear. Many are leading a lonesome life in isolated families shrunk in size. Equally noteworthy is the rapid drop of the 'total fertility'; it is reported to be only 1.53 in the 1990 national census. One may wonder if the words 'brothers', 'sisters', and 'siblings' are determined to become meaningless in Japan before long.

Turning to the psychopathology of Japanese society, fathers are said to have lost their authority and power in their homes, and mothers are put in the position almost exclusively responsible for childrearing and household. Clinical psychologists suspect that the confusion or even the reversion of the 'paternal principles' and 'maternal principles' is responsible for the troubles and difficulties in modern Japanese families.

By 'paternal principles' are meant 'decisiveness', 'rigorousness', 'determinedness', 'rationality', 'authoritative', 'discernibleness', or other masculine characteristics which govern the typical father's attitudes. 'Maternal principles', on the other hand, mean fundamental feminine orientations which characterize the typical attitudes in mothers, such as 'warm', 'embracing', 'irrational', 'accepting', 'permissive', 'indecisive', and 'emotional'.

Because of the unprecedented changes of societal structure and values, and probably for many other inexplicable reasons in Post War times, Japanese fathers have come to lose their direction and status in family, and mothers are forced to execute the roles which were once for fathers. Confusion and collapse of underlying principles in a family cannot help inducing problems and deterioration of parent-child relationship. Thus, some ten years ago or so, mass media brought us weekly dozens of case reports about home violence, in which children attack their parents to be hurt seriously or even to death. Fathers and mothers, particularly young parents, have come to grow up only physically without well-preparedness to be parents, and abuse their children. A pediatricist in Kobe once labeled those parents as 'immature parents'.

Starting from the totally desperate conditions, Japan has achieved unimaginable

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recovery in economy and come to be flattered as 'Number One' in the world. Indeed, Japan is now an affluent society and people are living their lives as real wasting consumers.

People who really mind our society, however, claim that although Japan is indeed rich in a physical sense, but Japanese are poor in their mind. There is a big gap between materialistic richness and mental poverty.

And conscientious people worry particularly about inner world of Japanese youngsters who are responsible for the future of Japan. Educators and psychologists often talk about 'kindness', 'compassionate', 'sympathy', and 'empathy' and also of 'love'.

In connection with the 'paternal' and 'maternal principles', it might be appropriate to refer here to the ideal figures of parents in traditional Japanese culture. When asked to play free association, Japanese would typically think of 'Nurturant Mother, Strict Father'. This is indeed a cultural stereotype, but not necessarily of no practical significance. Japanese children say in unison that they want their fathers to be more 'strict' and 'directive', and their mothers be 'warm' and 'caring'. The ideal fathers and mothers can also be seen in home dramas on TV. Stereotypes or ideal pictures of parental figures are of course the products of human minds and held in people's mental sphere. Here, speaking of people's mental sphere is almost equal to discussing belief systems.

The very starting point of the present study was a rather naive interest in obtaining some first-hand data on belief systems among Japanese parents.

II. The Purpose of the Present Study.

From what have been said so far, the purpose of this study should be clear. We wanted to get direct data on Japanese parental belief systems concerning some aspects of parental attitudes and childrearing.

As the first step, we decided to make an analytical approach to maternal love, by using several types of questionnaire. The expected results of this study should be modest in that it deals with only conceptual framework of maternal attitudes without practical information on behaviors. We do not assume any simple correspondence between thoughts and behaviors. But, we do believe it is possible for belief systems to exert significant influences on behaviors under certain conditions. Undoubtedly, information on psychological world facilitates our understanding on behaviors and people. Researchers who found similarities and differences in overt behaviors with their subjects, would certainly want to have data on the subjects' mental life. It is not without reason that psychology is said to be a science of behavior and awareness (including the 'unconscious', needless to say, though). Here we may recollect the often-cited study by Caudill and Weinstein (1969). The authors hypothesized that cultural differences in maternal care and mother-child interaction reflect differences in maternal conception of the infant between Japan and America.

It is not our job here to discuss the issues of inter-relationship of conception and behavior. But we believe that investigators need data and information on conceptual (mental, subjective) realm of their target subjects, if they really want to get better

understanding on the subjects' behaviors and development.

One of the present author's criticisms on the contemporary research in parent-child interaction is that the researchers over-emphasize the 'reciprocity' or 'mutuality' of the interacting two behavior agents. To the present author's eyes, this is too simple-minded and unrealistic.

A parent, as an adult, is never equated to a child or an infant. The two are quite different in many ways. The former has a long history of experience and is a human existence with manifold dimensions of behavioral and psychological functioning; the latter has only a short history of life and is much simpler existence. The former is responsible for taking care of the latter as well as being competent to perform the role. The latter is much less competent in comparison, and be in the position to be taken care of. One knows better the other, and never the reverse. To use a convenient term, the 'discretion' of parents is uncomparably larger than that of children. Mental abilities or psychological powers are of course the forms of the 'discretion'.

Thus, research in parent-child interaction which totally neglect the dimension of 'discretion' in the acting agents, should be criticized as simple-minded and invalid. And here, we can see the significance of the data on parental belief systems or conceptual framework.

It should be stressed here, however, that by saying the above, the present author is not going to deny that parents can be influenced by their children. But, the key point here is that the ways and the effects of the influences from children are mostly defined by the parental 'discretion'. It is possible for parents to get influenced by their children *only because* that parents are capable to sense and understand the meanings of their children's behaviors and states (both physical and mental).

III. Methods

1. Subjects.

Our target subjects were 175 mothers whose children were enrolled in a kindergarten attached to a national university in Hyogo Prefecture. Some of their back-

TABLE 1 Background characteristics of mothers.

Age			Education			No. of children		
Class	Freq.	%	Level	Freq.	%	No.	Freq.	%
~25	1	0.6	H	34	19.5	1	23	13.1
26~30	22	12.6	JC	54	30.9	2	107	61.1
31~35	100	57.1	VS	9	5.1	3	40	22.9
36~40	42	24.0	U	72	41.1	4	4	2.3
41~45	9	5.1	G	4	2.3	NA	1	0.6
NA	1	0.6	NA	2	1.1			
Total	175	100.0	Total	175	100.0	Total	175	100.0

Notes 1) NA; No answer, 2) Freq.; Frequency,

3) Educational level; H: Up to senior high, JC: Junior college, VS: Vocational school,

U: University, G: Graduate school.

ground information are given in Table 1.

For the purpose of comparison, 37 students were recruited from a technical school of public health and nursing in Kobe. They were all female and some of them were married. Their ages and educational levels correspond roughly to those of the senior year students in a regular Japanese university. After graduation, almost all of them usually find a job as health nurses at public health centers or in schools in each community. They receive rather intensive and extensive trainings in care for mothers and infants in addition to more professional medical care and services.

2. Tools of assessment.

All data in this report were collected by the following three types of questionnaire.

1) Questionnaire I. Free association on "Mother's love".

Subjects were asked to put down on a sheet of paper what they thought of when they hear or read the words "Mother's love" (See Appendix A).

2) Questionnaire II. Agreement/disagreement to the statements concerning "Mother's love" and some other related ideas (See Appendix B).

For this form, the subjects were asked to rate on 7-point scales to what extent they agree or disagree to each of 50 statements concerning parent-child relationship and child development.

Through several preliminary surveys and discussions, a total 10 categories were provided to represent major dimensions of "Mother's love" or related maternal feelings and attitudes.

The ten categories are as follows ;

- A. Nature and contents of "Mother's love".
- B. Objects and status of "Mother's love".
- C. View on a child and child development.
- D. Mother-child relationship.
- E. Origin and making of "Mother's love".
- F. Manifestation of "Mother's love".
- G. Function and effects of "Mother's love".
- H. Work and "Mother's love".
- I. Communication and technique to express "Mother's love".
- J. Conditions and prerequisites of "Mother's love".

For each of the above categories, five statements were provided, thus resulted in a total 50 statements.

3) Questionnaire III: Semantic differential type rating of "Mother's love" (See Appendix C).

The subjects were also asked to rate "Mother's love" on seven-point scales in the light of a total 55 pairs of contrastive adjectives. Those 55 pairs are classified into 11 categories as follows ;

- A. Potency (strong vs. weak).
- B. Activity (active vs. static)
- C. Innateness (innate vs. learned)
- D. Abstractness (abstract vs. concrete)
- E. Rationality (rational vs. irrational)
- F. Openness (open vs. closed)
- G. Stability (stable vs. unstable)
- H. Fruitfulness (rewarding vs. non-rewarding)
- I. Uniqueness (common vs. unique)
- J. Neutral (clear vs. turbid)
- K. Evaluation (noble vs. Ignoble)

IV. Results and Discussion.

The analysis of the results on Questionnaire I has not been completed yet, so in this report the focus will be put on the results of other two forms of questionnaire.

1. Results on Questionnaire II.

a) Mean scale score (MSS).

To grasp the overall picture of the responses to Questionnaire II, we computed 'mean scale score' (MSS) for each item (statement) for each group of subjects. Here, each point on each seven-point scale (statement) is taken as a scale point respectively, and a MSS is obtained by dividing the sum of the scale points on each scale by the total number of subjects for each group.

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 2. In order to make the results easier to read, we made Figures 1-a to 1-j.

To pick up some of the most salient tendencies in this results, Japanese mothers might be characterized as follows ;

- 1) The Japanese mothers interpret "Mother's love" as "instinctive and gratuitous love" without expecting no return.
- 2) For them, childrearing is joyful and rewarding job, even if some difficulties accompany it.
- 3) A baby is seen as an independent and separate being from mother, and nobody has the right to kill the baby for any reason.
- 4) A child is born with potentials or competence to grow and develop, and stimulation from environment help the child to exploit the potentials.
- 5) Scolding a child is not always bad, and a child should be scolded severely when necessary. (This may be taken as to show that Japanese mothers are rather practical in their childrearing practices, and this is somewhat different from what we expected.)

Another interesting finding is the difference between mothers and students. As seen in Figures 1-a to 1-j, the student subjects showed more clear-cut attitudes than mothers to most items. Presumably because of their lack of actual experiences in delivering and rearing a child, they have had more decisive and (in a sense) pure judgments.

TABLE 2 Mean scale scores (MSS) and standard deviations (SD) and the results of t-test for Questionnaire II.

Category	Item No.	Mothers		Students		t value	p
		MSS	SD	MSS	SD		
A. Nature & contents of "mother's love".	1	2.05	1.02	2.42	1.11	1.962	
	6	2.25	1.50	2.08	1.63	0.613	
	11	3.09	1.52	3.42	1.83	1.151	
	16	2.75	1.61	2.47	1.50	0.964	
	21	3.91	1.85	4.22	2.04	0.904	
B. Objects & status of "mother's love".	2	2.52	1.47	3.42	1.73	3.262	**
	7	4.20	1.38	3.50	1.56	2.724	**
	12	3.87	1.60	3.56	1.76	1.046	
	17	4.36	1.68	3.92	1.78	1.423	
	22	4.67	1.66	4.44	1.71	0.757	
C. View on a child & child development.	3	4.02	2.18	3.72	2.19	0.754	
	8	2.50	1.35	1.50	0.70	4.319	**
	13	2.11	1.12	1.50	0.70	3.142	**
	18	1.90	1.00	2.03	1.38	0.533	
	23	6.13	1.02	6.56	0.84	2.373	**
D. Relationship with a child.	4	4.93	1.62	4.83	1.93	0.328	
	9	4.97	1.60	5.00	1.55	0.103	
	14	1.72	1.01	1.89	1.56	0.622	
	19	5.58	1.75	4.42	2.20	2.954	**
	24	2.08	1.54	3.17	1.84	3.760	**
E. Origin & formation of "mother's love".	5	4.27	1.79	5.25	1.63	3.045	**
	10	2.51	1.56	2.92	1.95	1.177	
	15	3.67	1.84	3.69	1.83	0.060	
	20	3.88	1.67	3.42	1.68	1.510	
	25	5.08	1.60	4.89	1.60	0.652	
F. Manifestation of "mother's love".	26	3.17	1.51	2.22	1.24	3.543	**
	31	5.57	1.33	5.22	1.69	1.162	
	36	4.06	1.51	5.42	1.32	5.035	**
	41	4.28	1.65	4.00	1.49	0.945	
	46	3.03	1.30	2.58	1.18	1.926	
G. Function & effects of "mother's love".	27	2.71	1.35	2.81	1.88	0.301	
	32	1.79	1.15	1.67	0.72	0.602	
	37	2.35	1.29	1.81	0.82	2.412	**
	42	3.70	1.72	2.81	1.64	2.859	**
	47	2.28	1.25	1.83	1.25	1.975	*
H. "Mother's love" and work.	28	3.47	1.76	3.97	2.16	1.500	
	33	4.60	1.70	3.89	1.75	2.281	**
	38	4.77	1.67	4.83	2.14	0.157	
	43	4.84	1.35	4.58	1.40	1.050	
	48	3.29	1.52	3.03	1.66	0.925	
I. Communication and techniques to express "mother's love".	29	2.90	1.73	2.31	1.67	1.881	
	34	3.88	1.76	4.86	1.87	3.025	**
	39	3.25	1.51	2.61	1.46	2.337	**
	44	3.24	1.65	3.19	1.65	0.166	
	49	3.70	1.60	3.28	1.30	1.480	
J. Conditions or prerequisites of "mother's love".	30	5.90	1.02	6.19	1.17	1.523	
	35	2.04	1.38	1.64	1.05	1.645	
	40	4.62	1.66	4.19	2.07	1.163	
	45	5.28	1.44	4.92	1.48	1.366	
	50	4.09	1.69	4.36	1.73	0.873	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

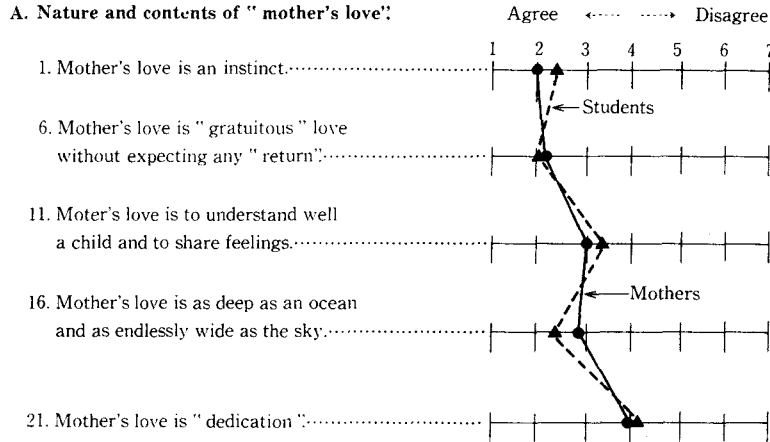


FIGURE 1-a MSS for mothers and students in Category A of Questionnaire II.

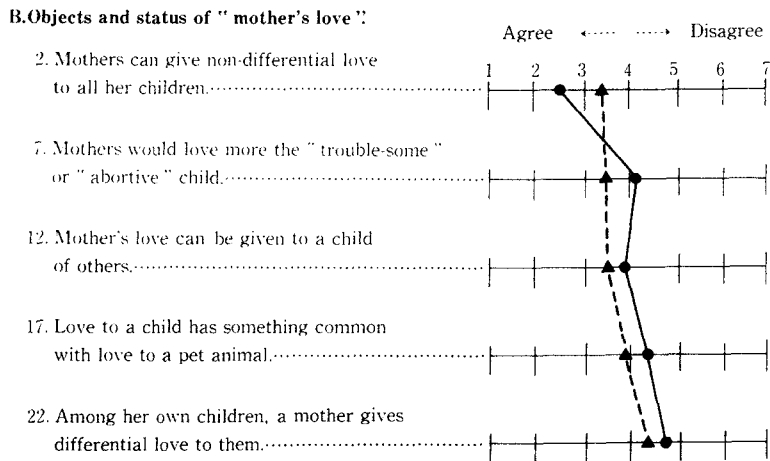


FIGURE 1-b MSS for mothers and students in Category B of Questionnaire II.

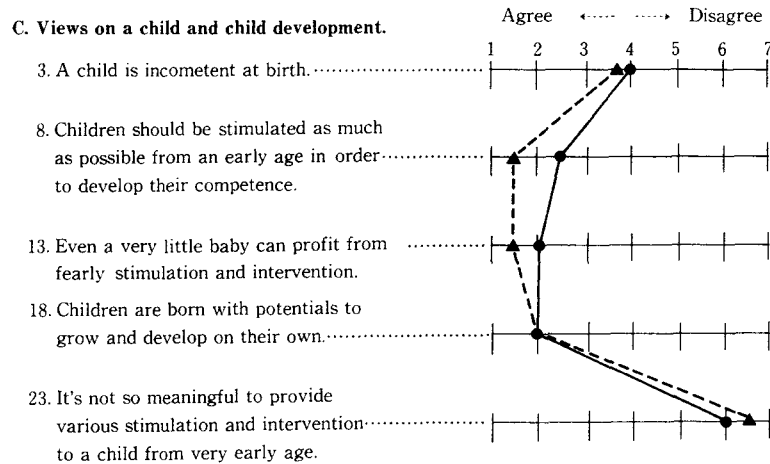


FIGURE 1-c MSS for mothers and students in Category C of Questionnaire II.

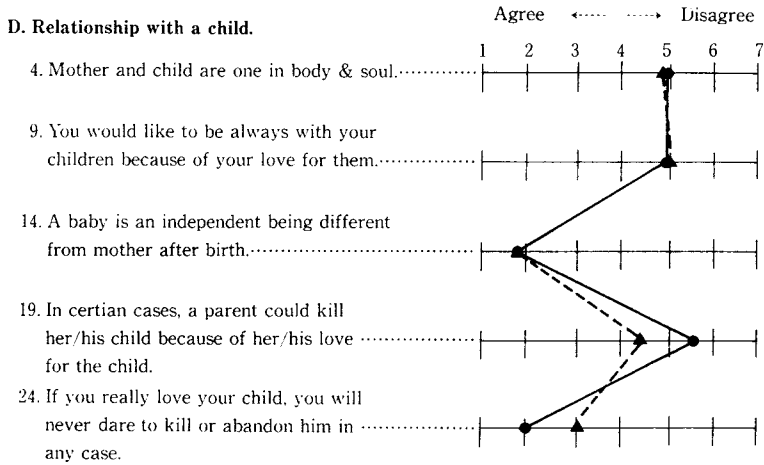


FIGURE 1-d MSS for mothers and students in Category D of Questionnaire II.

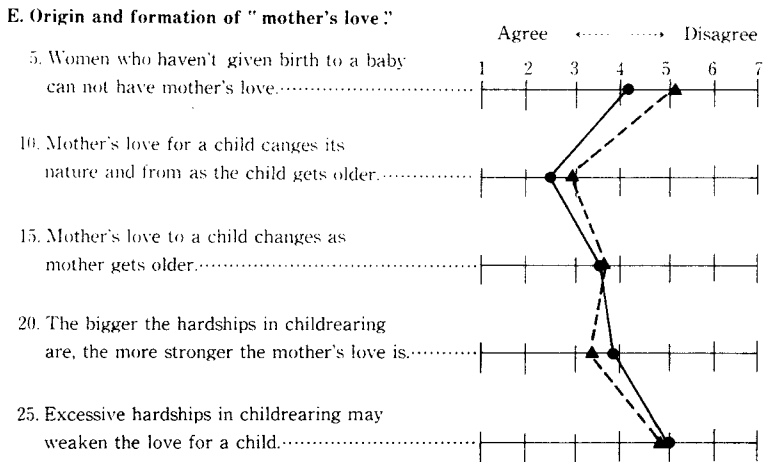


FIGURE 1-e MSS for mothers and students in Category E of Questionnaire II.

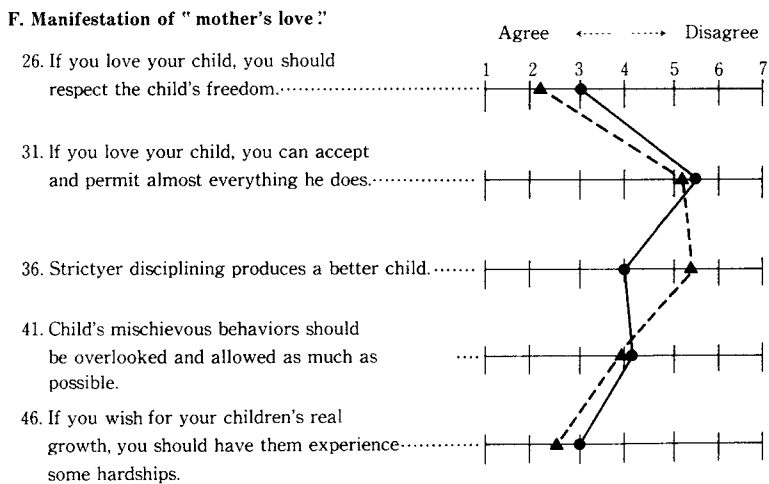


FIGURE 1-f MSS for mothers and students in Category F of Questionnaire II.

G. Function and effects of "mother's love".

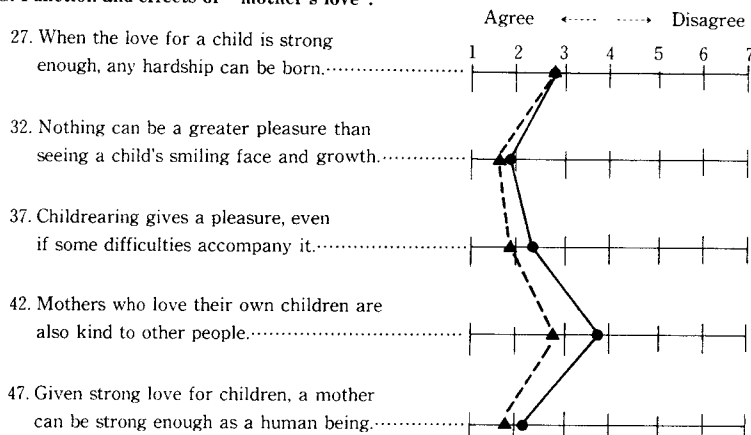


FIGURE 1-g MSS for mothers and students in Category G of Questionnaire II.

H. "Mother's love" and work.

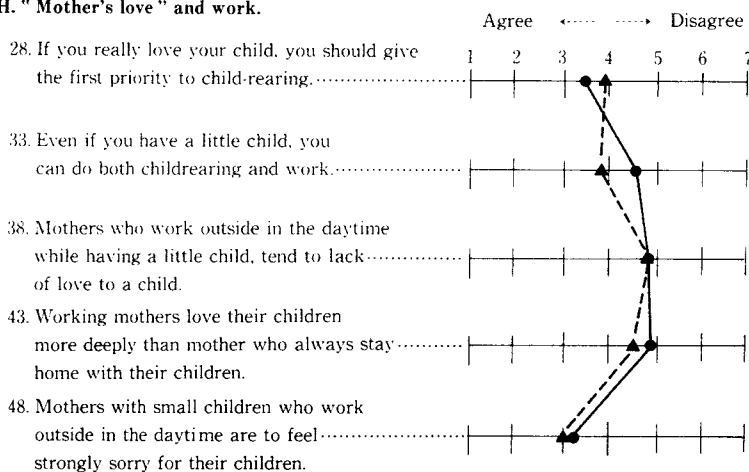


FIGURE 1-h MSS for mothers and students in Category H of Questionnaire II.

I. Communication and techniques to express "mother's love".

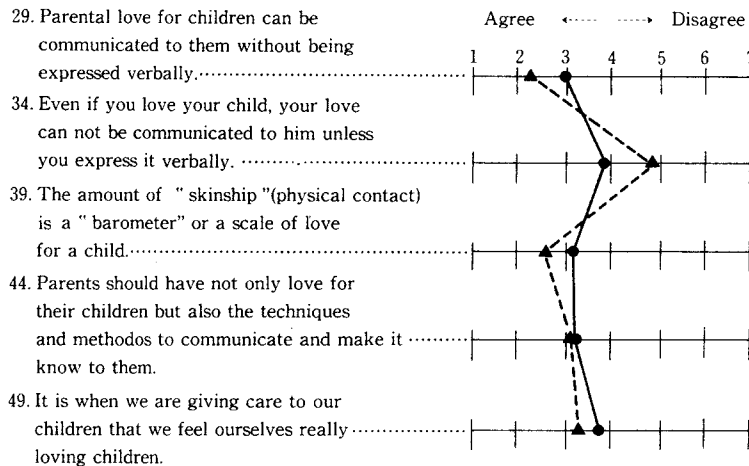


FIGURE 1-i MSS for mothers and students in Category I of Questionnaire II.

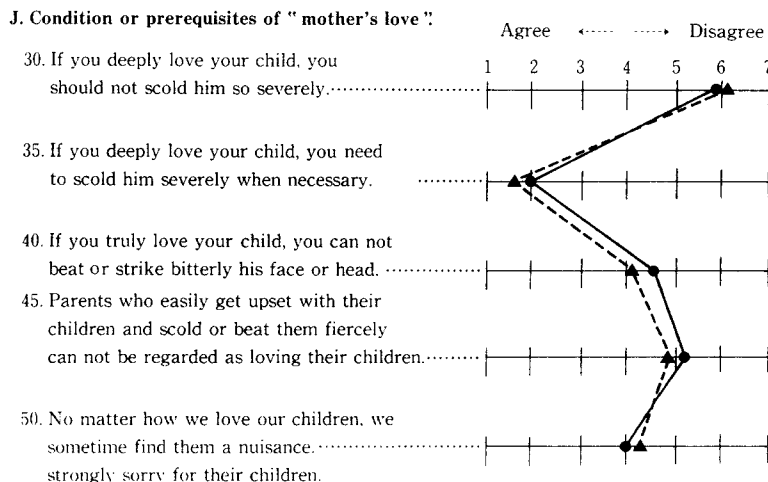


FIGURE 1-j MSS for mothers and students in Category J of Questionnaire II.

b) Relative frequency of responses.

In order to see the overall characteristics of the subjects' attitudes from a little different perspective, relative frequency of their responses to each item in the Questionnaire II was calculated. The result is shown in Table 3. By its nature, this treatment is to endorse the findings mentioned above.

c) Comparison between mothers and students.

With the help of the results of t-test shown in Table 2, let's look at how mothers and students differ in their conceptual framework of 'Mother's love' and other related domains of their attitudes. For the purpose of saving space, the results of this analysis are summarized in Table 4.

2. Results of Questionnaire III.

The data on Questionnaire III were processed by the same procedures as for Questionnaire II.

a) Mean scale score (MSS).

Based on MSS for each item on Questionnaire III, "Mother's love" in our mother subjects' conceptual space is characterized in the following way; a "strong, deep, heavy, consistent" psychological state, and an "embracing, soft, broad-minded, practical, logic-free and fruitful" feeling, and also "joyful, good, noble, beautiful" affection, which is "natural and unique" to women. (See Table 5 and Figure 2-a to 2-k).

b) Relative frequency in Questionnaire III (See Table 6).

Table 6 shows somewhat different patterns of relative frequency of the responses to Questionnaire III between mothers and students.

c) Comparison between mothers and students.

Following the same line of thinking as for Questionnaire II, let's summarize here the contrastive picture of the responses by the two groups of subjects for Questionnaire III.

TABLE 3 Relative frequencies of responses on Questionnaire II.

Category	Item No.	Mothers							Students						
		Scale point							Scale point						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	1	29.9	46.4	14.4	2.6	3.6	1.0	2.1	13.9	50.0	27.8	0	5.6	2.8	0
	6	40.7	27.3	10.8	7.7	7.2	2.6	1.5	50.0	30.6	5.6	0	2.8	11.1	0
	11	13.9	26.8	22.7	13.9	12.9	5.7	2.1	13.9	27.8	19.4	0	22.2	13.9	2.8
	16	25.3	27.3	16.5	14.4	7.7	3.1	3.6	30.6	30.6	22.2	0	11.1	5.6	0
	21	13.9	11.3	14.9	13.4	25.3	10.3	8.8	11.1	13.9	16.7	8.3	19.4	11.1	19.4
B	2	25.8	34.0	20.1	5.2	8.2	2.6	2.1	11.1	33.3	11.1	2.8	33.3	5.6	2.8
	7	2.1	7.7	21.6	26.3	22.7	11.9	5.2	5.6	22.2	38.9	0	16.7	16.7	0
	12	4.6	12.4	34.5	14.9	12.9	10.8	7.7	8.3	19.4	38.9	2.8	11.1	11.1	8.3
	17	3.6	10.3	19.6	17.5	20.1	13.9	12.9	8.3	13.9	27.8	8.3	19.4	13.9	8.3
	22	2.1	5.2	23.2	16.0	15.5	18.0	18.0	2.8	5.6	36.1	2.8	19.4	19.4	13.9
C	3	21.6	11.3	8.8	4.6	17.5	21.6	12.4	19.4	25.0	8.3	0	13.9	25.0	8.3
	8	26.3	29.4	22.2	8.8	8.8	1.5	1.0	61.1	27.8	11.1	0	0	0	0
	13	35.6	28.9	24.2	6.2	1.5	1.0	0.5	66.7	19.4	13.9	0	0	0	0
	18	40.7	35.1	17.5	2.1	1.5	1.0	0	47.2	25.0	19.4	0	5.6	0	2.8
	23	0	1.5	1.0	2.1	17.0	33.0	43.3	0	0	2.8	0	5.6	22.2	69.4
D	4	2.6	7.2	13.4	7.7	24.2	26.8	16.0	5.6	16.7	5.6	0	25.0	27.8	19.4
	9	3.1	6.2	11.9	7.2	26.3	27.3	16.0	0	8.3	16.7	0	33.3	25.0	16.7
	14	54.6	24.2	12.9	4.1	1.5	0.5	0	66.7	11.1	5.6	5.6	8.3	0	2.8
	19	2.1	5.7	8.8	12.4	6.7	15.5	46.9	13.9	5.6	27.8	0	8.3	19.4	25.0
	24	53.6	18.0	5.2	9.3	7.7	3.1	0.5	22.2	27.8	11.1	2.8	22.2	13.9	0
E	5	8.8	10.3	14.9	9.3	28.9	15.5	10.3	2.8	2.8	16.7	0	25.0	27.8	25.0
	10	25.8	36.6	21.1	2.1	3.6	5.2	3.6	33.3	25.0	5.6	2.8	22.2	8.3	2.8
	15	8.8	22.2	24.2	10.3	11.3	11.3	9.8	8.3	22.2	27.8	5.6	13.9	13.9	8.3
	20	7.2	17.0	19.6	14.4	23.7	9.3	6.7	8.3	25.0	33.3	2.8	16.7	8.3	5.6
	25	1.0	4.1	18.6	9.8	13.9	29.4	21.1	2.8	0	27.8	2.8	25.0	25.0	16.7
F	26	10.3	30.9	22.2	9.8	16.5	7.2	1.0	30.6	33.3	30.6	0	2.8	0	2.8
	31	1.0	2.1	7.2	6.7	21.1	35.1	24.7	2.8	11.1	5.6	0	22.2	38.9	19.4
	36	3.6	13.9	18.0	22.2	21.6	14.4	4.1	0	0	16.7	2.8	22.2	38.9	19.4
	41	2.1	14.4	20.1	13.4	20.6	17.5	9.8	0	16.7	33.3	5.6	25.0	16.7	2.8
	46	11.9	20.1	37.1	13.9	9.8	4.6	0.5	11.1	41.7	38.9	0	5.6	0	2.8
G	27	17.5	35.6	19.6	9.3	13.9	1.5	0.5	30.6	27.8	13.9	2.8	13.9	5.6	5.6
	32	51.0	32.0	8.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.5	47.2	38.9	13.9	0	0	0	0
	37	28.4	32.5	24.2	5.7	4.1	2.1	1.0	44.4	30.6	25.0	0	0	0	0
	42	7.7	21.1	20.1	14.9	16.0	10.8	7.2	22.2	30.6	25.0	0	11.1	11.1	0
	47	28.9	35.1	20.6	8.2	2.1	2.1	1.0	52.8	27.8	13.9	0	0	5.6	0
H	28	14.4	19.6	19.1	13.9	13.9	13.4	3.6	19.4	16.7	8.3	0	25.0	19.4	11.1
	33	4.1	9.3	14.9	19.1	14.4	22.2	13.9	2.8	22.2	30.6	5.6	13.9	16.7	8.3
	38	3.1	5.7	18.6	10.3	21.6	20.6	18.0	11.1	11.1	8.3	2.8	13.9	25.0	27.8
	43	1.0	2.6	11.3	24.7	27.8	16.5	13.9	0	8.3	13.9	25.0	25.0	19.4	8.3
	48	10.8	22.2	24.7	16.0	14.9	7.2	2.1	19.4	22.2	30.6	5.6	11.1	8.3	2.8
I	29	21.1	30.9	19.1	4.1	12.4	6.2	4.1	41.7	30.6	8.3	5.6	5.6	5.6	2.8
	34	9.3	17.5	20.6	6.7	22.2	16.5	4.6	5.6	8.3	16.7	2.8	16.7	30.6	19.4
	39	10.8	21.1	32.0	8.2	17.5	6.2	2.1	16.7	47.2	16.7	5.6	8.3	2.8	2.8
	44	13.4	21.6	29.4	13.9	8.2	5.2	6.2	16.7	22.2	27.8	0	27.8	2.8	2.8
	49	7.7	17.0	23.2	14.4	21.6	8.8	5.2	5.6	16.7	52.8	2.8	13.9	8.3	0
J	30	0	1.5	3.1	2.1	20.1	42.3	28.4	0	0	5.6	2.8	16.7	16.7	58.3
	35	40.2	38.1	10.3	1.5	2.1	3.1	2.6	61.1	22.2	13.9	0	0	2.8	0
	40	5.7	8.2	10.8	10.3	31.4	21.1	10.3	11.1	19.4	11.1	5.6	16.7	22.2	13.9
	45	3.1	1.5	7.2	9.8	24.7	32.5	19.1	2.8	5.6	8.3	11.1	38.9	19.4	13.9
	50	4.6	8.2	32.5	15.5	11.9	12.4	12.9	2.8	5.6	38.9	2.8	22.2	11.1	16.7

TABLE 4 Mother-student comparison of responses on Questionnaire II.

Aspects of 'Mother's love'	M vs S	Item #
1. 'Evenness' of 'Mother's love'	M > S	2, 7
2. Effects of stimulation on child development	M < S	8, 13, 23
3. Respect for child's life	M > S	19, 24
4. Ubiquitousness of 'Mother's love'	M < S	5
5. Respect for child's freedom/tender discipline	M < S	26, 36
6. Belief in effectiveness of childrearing	M < S	37, 42, 47
7. Compatibility of childrearing and work	M < S	33
8. Explicit communication 'Mother's love'	M > S	34, 39

A. Potency(strong vs. weak).

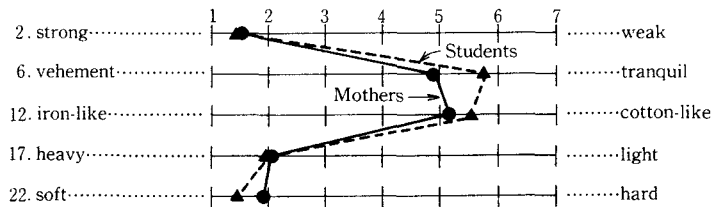


FIGURE 2-a MSS for mothers and students in Category A of Questionnaire III.

B. Activity(active vs. static).

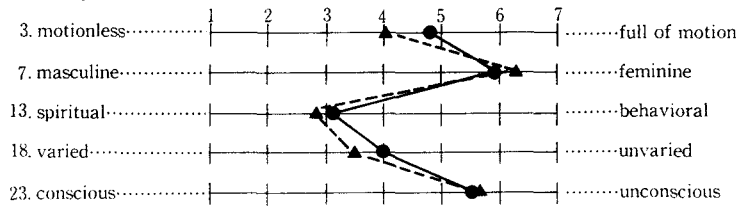


FIGURE 2-b MSS for mothers and students in Category B of Questionnaire III.

C. Innateness(innate vs. learned).

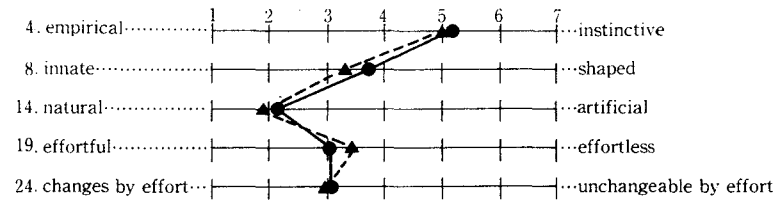


FIGURE 2-c MSS for mothers and students in Category C of Questionnaire III.

D. Abstractness(abstract vs. concrete).

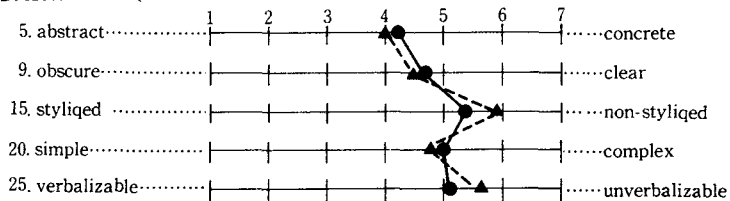


FIGURE 2-d MSS for mothers and students in Category D of Questionnaire III.

E. Rationality(rational vs. irrational).

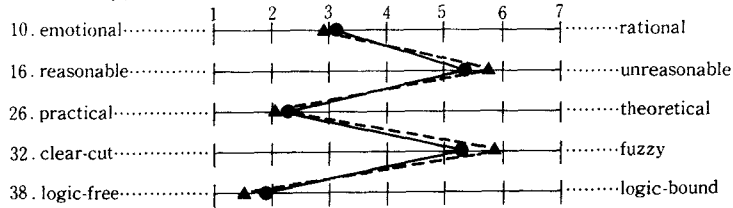


FIGURE 2-e MSS for mothers and students in Category E of Questionnaire III.

F. Openness(open vs. closed).

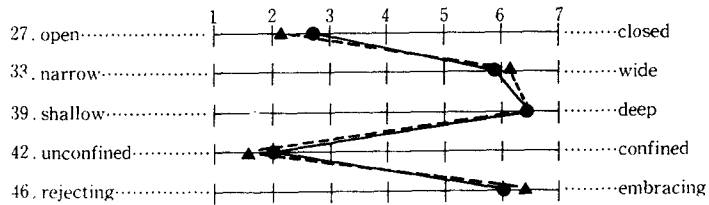


FIGURE 2-f MSS for mothers and students in Category F of Questionnaire III.

G. Stability(stable vs. unstable).

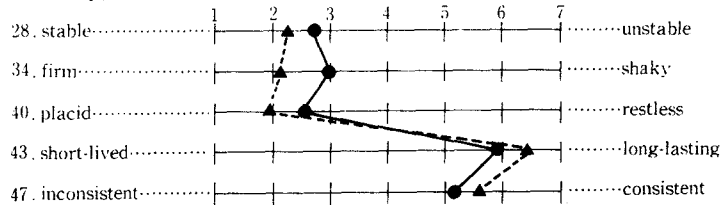


FIGURE 2-g MSS for mothers and students in Category G of Questionnaire III.

H. Fruitfulness(rewarding vs. non-rewarding).

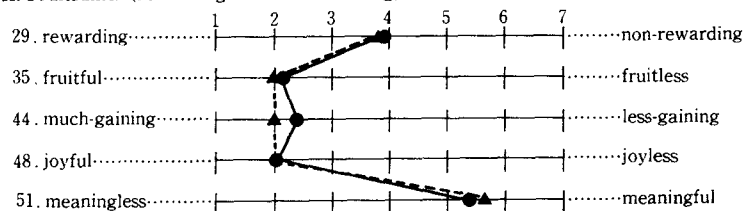


FIGURE 2-h MSS for mothers and students in Category H of Questionnaire III.

I. Uniqueness(common vs. unique).

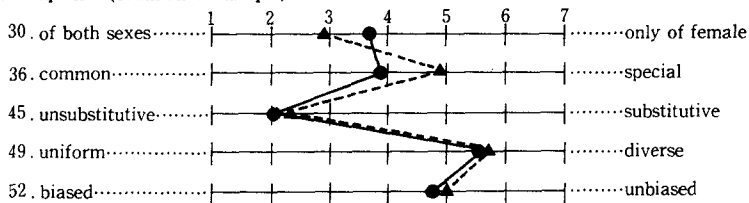


FIGURE 2-i MSS for mothers and students in Category I of Questionnaire III.

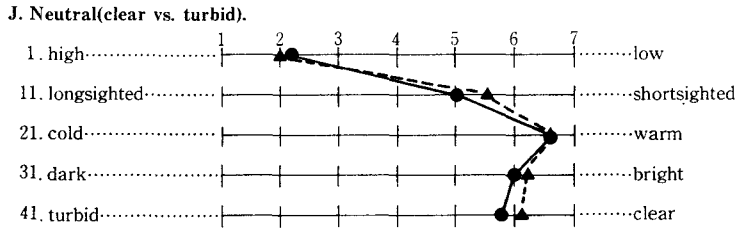


FIGURE 2-j MSS for mothers and students in Category J of Questionnaire III.

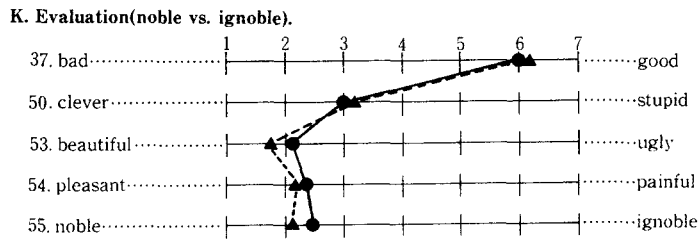


FIGURE 2-k MSS for mothers and students in Category J of Questionnaire III.

V. Summarizing Conclusion.

Major findings in this study are as follows ;

- 1) It was shown that Japanese mothers conceive of “Mother’s love” as “soft, embracing, broad-minded, practical, logic-free”, and “stable, absolute, deep, natural, instinctive, highly-evaluated, gratuitous, womanly” affection toward a child.
- 2) Student subjects showed more clear-cut, decisive attitudes than mothers toward “Mother’s love” and childrearing, suggesting that the concept changes its meanings as the subjects’ experiences and social status change.
- 3) Japanese mothers believe that a baby is a separate independent being, and born with potentials and capacities to grow and develop, and so is competent at birth. Environmental stimulation is seen as effective for an infant from a very early age.

2. Problems left for the future studies.

- 1) To the present author’s best knowledge, there hasn’t been any systematic psychological study on how Japanese mothers think of maternal love. Thus, it can be said that our initial purpose to get the firsthand data on them has been achieved at least to some extent. The findings reported here are, however, still preliminary and partial. In order to reach more solid conclusion, several replication studies are awaited.
- 2) Although it is not reported here, we did conduct factor analyses with the data from Questionnaire II and III for several sub-groups of the subjects. But the factors extracted were not so consistent and were difficult to name. To date, we haven’t reached any solution for this. Subsequent studies will allow us a conclusion.

TABLE 5 Mean scale scores (MSS) and standard deviations (SD) and the results of t-test for Questionnaire III.

Category	Item No.	Mothers		Students		t value	p
		MSS	SD	MSS	SD		
A. Potency (strong vs. weak)	2	1.46	0.65	1.43	0.56	0.258	**
	6	4.82	1.82	5.77	1.31	2.978	
	12	5.27	1.49	5.54	1.60	0.982	
	17	2.09	1.10	1.97	1.04	0.604	
B. Activity (active vs. static)	22	1.94	1.13	1.43	0.56	2.673	**
	3	4.72	1.75	4.00	2.18	1.849	*
	7	5.81	1.16	6.26	1.13	2.137	
	13	3.15	1.60	2.86	1.72	0.983	
18	4.04	1.88	3.46	1.84	1.698		
C. Innateness (innate vs. learned)	23	5.58	1.40	5.74	1.31	0.633	*
	4	5.23	1.61	4.91	1.74	1.076	
	8	3.69	1.88	3.31	1.78	1.118	
	14	2.25	1.18	1.80	0.80	2.187	
D. Abstractness (abstract vs. concrete)	19	3.05	1.85	3.43	1.97	1.115	
	24	3.12	1.69	3.00	1.70	0.389	
	5	4.26	1.93	4.03	1.89	0.656	
	9	4.62	1.74	4.49	1.84	0.406	
E. Rationality (rational vs. irrational)	15	5.35	1.59	5.91	1.50	1.949	
	20	4.99	1.81	4.74	2.03	0.743	
	25	5.19	1.73	5.63	1.46	1.428	
	10	3.21	1.61	2.91	1.67	1.016	
F. Openness (open vs. closed)	16	5.38	1.33	5.71	2.09	0.902	
	26	2.32	1.10	2.09	0.89	1.179	
	32	5.38	1.40	5.89	1.08	2.065	
	38	1.84	1.08	1.54	0.56	1.620	
G. Stability (stable vs. unstable)	27	2.69	1.28	2.14	0.97	2.440	**
	33	5.84	1.21	6.17	1.25	1.489	*
	39	6.48	0.69	6.49	0.61	0.081	
	42	1.98	1.01	1.60	0.85	2.113	
H. Fruitfulness (rewarding vs. nonrewarding)	46	6.09	1.09	6.43	0.81	1.775	
	28	2.67	1.52	2.29	1.38	1.391	
	34	2.98	1.59	2.17	1.01	2.935	
	40	2.51	1.36	1.91	0.95	2.524	
I. Uniqueness (common vs. unique)	43	5.84	1.39	6.40	0.85	2.327	**
	47	5.25	1.65	5.57	1.56	1.073	**
	29	3.81	1.52	3.86	1.52	0.180	
	35	2.21	1.33	1.97	0.95	1.030	
44	2.40	1.58	2.00	1.19	1.439		
48	2.13	1.24	2.14	1.26	0.044		
J. Neutral (clear vs. turbid)	51	5.37	1.65	5.66	1.39	0.987	
	30	3.62	1.86	2.83	1.62	2.376	
	36	3.82	1.81	4.80	1.68	3.003	
	45	2.12	1.38	2.34	1.30	0.882	
K. Evaluation (noble vs. ignoble)	49	5.56	1.45	5.74	1.40	0.685	
	52	4.73	1.59	5.03	1.65	1.029	
	1	2.18	1.24	2.03	0.66	0.704	
	11	5.09	1.55	5.54	1.52	1.598	
K. Evaluation (noble vs. ignoble)	21	6.59	0.70	6.57	0.92	0.122	
	31	5.98	0.98	6.26	0.61	1.649	
	41	5.74	1.20	6.14	0.85	1.905	
	37	5.96	1.08	6.23	0.79	1.424	
	50	3.02	1.52	3.23	1.70	0.744	
K. Evaluation (noble vs. ignoble)	53	2.21	1.20	1.74	0.74	2.261	**
	54	2.35	1.22	2.23	1.00	0.554	
	55	2.51	1.18	2.17	1.04	1.609	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

TABLE 6 Relative frequencies of responses on Questionnaire III.

Category	Item No.	Mothers							Students						
		Scale point							Scale point						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	2	59.8	32.5	4.1	0.5	0	0	0	61.1	36.1	2.8	0	0	0	0
	6	6.7	9.8	6.2	12.4	17.5	27.3	17.5	0	2.8	5.6	5.6	16.7	33.3	36.1
	12	2.6	4.6	4.1	17.0	16.0	34.0	19.1	0	8.3	8.3	2.8	11.1	36.1	30.6
	17	33.5	35.6	15.5	8.2	3.1	0.5	0	33.3	50.0	8.3	2.8	5.6	0	0
B	22	39.7	36.1	10.8	4.6	1.0	2.6	0	61.1	36.1	2.8	0	0	0	0
	3	3.1	11.3	9.8	21.6	7.2	27.8	16.5	13.9	22.2	11.1	2.8	13.9	22.2	13.9
	7	0	0.5	4.6	13.9	13.4	30.4	34.5	0	0	5.6	5.6	0	30.6	58.3
	13	13.4	29.4	19.1	16.5	8.2	7.7	2.6	22.2	36.1	16.7	2.8	11.1	8.3	2.8
C	18	5.7	22.2	12.4	17.0	11.9	16.0	12.4	8.3	38.9	11.1	5.6	16.7	16.7	2.8
	23	1.5	3.6	4.1	9.3	15.5	34.5	26.8	0	5.6	2.8	2.8	16.7	41.7	30.6
	4	2.1	5.2	8.2	14.4	17.0	23.2	27.3	2.8	13.9	5.6	5.6	22.2	36.1	13.9
	8	14.9	19.1	11.9	16.0	12.4	16.5	6.2	19.4	22.2	19.4	8.3	16.7	11.1	2.8
D	14	27.8	38.1	15.5	9.8	4.1	1.0	0	36.1	55.6	5.6	0	2.8	0	0
	19	21.6	24.7	22.7	4.6	7.2	10.3	6.2	22.2	13.9	22.2	2.8	16.7	16.7	5.6
	24	13.9	27.8	26.3	6.7	6.2	8.2	5.7	16.7	30.6	25.0	0	13.9	11.1	2.8
	5	7.7	19.6	8.8	14.4	13.4	21.6	11.3	8.3	19.4	16.7	8.3	11.1	33.3	2.8
E	9	3.6	8.2	14.9	18.6	13.4	23.7	14.9	2.8	13.9	25.0	5.6	13.9	25.0	13.9
	15	1.5	5.7	7.2	10.8	13.9	32.0	25.8	5.6	0	2.8	0	11.1	38.9	41.7
	20	2.6	10.8	8.2	12.4	13.9	23.7	25.8	5.6	16.7	16.7	0	11.1	27.8	22.2
	25	1.5	8.8	9.3	8.2	14.9	25.8	26.8	2.8	0	8.3	5.6	16.7	33.3	33.3
F	10	10.3	29.4	21.1	18.6	7.7	5.2	5.2	19.4	30.6	22.2	13.9	0	11.1	2.8
	16	1.0	3.6	4.1	15.5	20.6	32.5	20.1	0	5.6	2.8	2.8	16.7	44.4	27.8
	26	23.7	37.1	20.6	10.8	2.1	1.0	0	22.2	55.6	16.7	2.8	2.8	0	0
	32	2.6	3.1	4.1	11.3	20.6	34.5	19.1	0	2.8	0	2.8	25.0	36.1	33.3
G	38	44.8	33.0	9.3	5.2	1.5	0.5	0.5	50.0	47.2	2.8	0	0	0	0
	27	18.6	32.5	18.6	17.5	6.7	1.5	0	22.2	47.2	27.8	0	0	2.8	0
	33	0	1.5	3.6	7.7	12.4	37.1	33.0	0	2.8	5.6	0	5.6	36.1	50.0
	39	0	0	0.5	0.5	8.2	28.9	57.2	0	0	0	0	5.6	38.9	55.6
H	42	36.1	36.1	15.5	5.2	0.5	2.1	0	52.8	38.9	5.6	0	2.8	0	0
	46	0.5	0.5	1.0	8.2	12.9	29.4	42.8	0	0	0	5.6	2.8	33.3	58.3
	28	22.2	34.5	14.4	8.8	6.7	7.2	0.5	30.6	47.2	5.6	2.8	11.1	2.8	0
	34	17.5	29.4	14.4	10.8	16.0	5.2	1.5	25.0	50.0	16.7	2.8	5.6	0	0
I	40	22.7	37.1	13.9	10.8	6.7	3.1	1.0	38.9	41.7	13.9	2.8	2.8	0	0
	43	1.5	3.1	0.5	8.2	12.4	31.4	37.6	0	0	2.8	0	5.6	36.1	55.6
	47	3.6	6.2	5.7	11.9	13.9	29.9	24.2	0	8.3	5.6	2.8	22.2	27.8	33.3
	29	4.6	15.5	17.0	28.4	16.0	6.2	7.2	2.8	16.7	25.0	19.4	19.4	8.3	8.3
J	35	36.6	28.9	15.5	7.7	4.1	2.1	0.5	36.1	41.7	16.7	2.8	2.8	0	0
	44	33.5	29.9	12.4	8.8	2.1	4.1	4.1	38.9	36.1	13.9	2.8	5.6	2.8	0
	48	34.0	33.0	19.1	4.1	1.5	0.5	2.6	30.6	41.7	19.4	2.8	2.8	0	2.8
	51	2.1	5.7	4.6	12.4	12.9	27.8	29.9	0	5.6	5.6	2.8	16.7	41.7	27.8
K	31	9.3	24.7	21.6	7.7	12.9	8.2	10.8	19.4	27.8	30.6	2.8	5.6	8.3	5.6
	36	10.8	14.9	16.5	19.6	10.3	15.5	7.2	2.8	8.3	16.7	5.6	19.4	33.3	13.9
	45	44.3	24.7	11.9	7.2	3.6	3.6	0.0	30.6	36.1	16.7	8.3	5.6	2.8	0
	49	1.5	3.6	3.6	9.3	14.4	36.1	26.8	0	8.3	0	2.8	19.4	38.9	30.6
K	52	1.0	8.8	15.5	11.9	19.6	25.8	12.9	0	5.6	22.2	5.6	19.4	25.0	22.2
	1	33.0	40.7	9.3	10.8	1.5	0.5	1.5	22.2	55.6	22.2	0	0	0	0
	11	2.1	4.6	9.8	16.5	19.6	25.3	19.1	2.8	5.6	2.8	2.8	22.2	38.9	25.0
	21	0	0.5	0	1.0	4.1	26.8	62.9	2.8	2.8	0	0	0	27.8	66.7
K	31	0	0	1.0	8.8	13.9	39.7	32.0	0	0	0	0	8.3	55.6	36.1
	41	1.0	0.5	3.1	9.8	16.5	36.1	28.4	0	0	2.8	0	11.1	52.8	33.3
	87	0.5	0	0.5	10.8	11.9	36.1	35.6	0	0	0	2.8	11.1	38.9	47.2
	50	18.6	23.7	17.5	19.6	10.3	3.6	2.1	19.4	19.4	19.4	11.1	25.0	2.8	2.8
K	53	33.0	32.5	12.4	14.9	1.5	0.5	0.5	41.7	41.7	16.7	0	0	0	0
	54	28.4	32.0	16.0	13.9	4.6	0	0.5	25.0	36.1	30.6	5.6	2.8	0	0
	55	22.7	33.0	16.5	21.1	1.5	0	0.5	30.6	30.6	30.6	5.6	2.8	0	0

TABLE 7 Mother-student comparison of responses on Questionnaire III.

Dimensions of 'Mother's love'	M vs S	Item #
1. Tender and soft	M < S	6, 22
2. Feminine	M < S	7
3. Natural	M < S	14
4. Divisible	M < S	32
5. Open	M < S	27
6. Grand	M < S	42
7. Stable	M < S	34, 40, 43
8. Gender-free but special	M < S	30, 36
9. Beautiful	M < S	53

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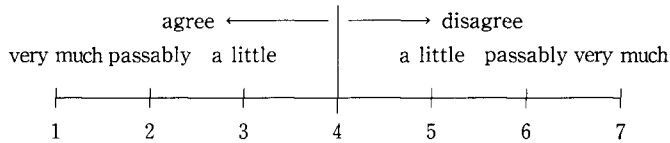
APPENDIX A Questionnaire I: Free association on "Mother's love".

What do you think of when you hear or read the words of "Mother's love"? Please put down very briefly in the space below what came to your mind.

1.
2.
3.

APPENDIX B Questionnaire II: Agreement/disagreement to the statements concerning "Mother's love" and related ideas.

A number of statements concerning "Mother's love" and other related ideas are given below. Please read carefully each statement and circle the number on the seven-point scale which correspond to your judgment to each statement.



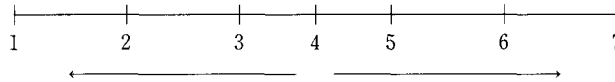
1. Mother's love is an instinct. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. A mother can give non-differential love to all her children. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. A child is incompetent at birth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Mother and child are one in body and soul. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Women who haven't given birth to a baby can not have mother's love. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Mother's love is "gratuitous" love without expecting any "return". 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Mothers would love more the "troublesome" or "difficult" child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Children should be stimulated as much as possible
from an early age in order to develop their competence. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. You would like to be always with your children because of your love for them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Mother's love for a child changes its nature and form as the child gets older. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. Mother's love is to understand well a child and to share feelings with him. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. Mother's love can be given to a child of others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Even a very little baby can profit from early stimulation and intervention. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. A baby is an independent being different from mother after birth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. Mother's love to a child changes as mother gets older. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. Mother's love is as deep as an ocean and as endlessly wide as the sky. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. Love for a child has something in common with love for a pet animal. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. Children are born with potentials to grow and develop on their own. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. In certain cases, a parent could kill her/his child
because of her/his love for the child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. The bigger the hardships in childrearing are, the stronger the mother's love is. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. Mother's love is "dedication". 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. Among her own children, a mother gives differential love to them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. It's not so meaningful to provide various stimulation
and intervention to a child from a very early age. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. If you really love your child, you will never dare
to kill or abandon him in any case. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. Excessive hardships in childrearing may weaken the love for a child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. If you love your child, you should respect the child's freedom. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. When the love for a child is strong enough, any hardship can be born. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. If you really love your child, you should give the first priority to childrearing. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
29. Parental love for children can be communicated
to them without being expressed verbally. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
30. If you deeply love your child, you should not scold him so severely. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
31. If you love your child, you can accept and permit almost everything he does. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32. Nothing can be a greater pleasure than seeing a child's smiling face and growth. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33. Even if you have a little child, you can do both childrearing and work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34. Even if you love your child, your love cannot be
communicated to him unless you express it verbally. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

- 35. If you deeply love your child, you need to scold him severely when necessary. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 36. Stricter disciplining produces a better child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 37. Childrearing gives Parents a pleasure, even if some difficultkes accompany it. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 38. Mothers who work outside in the daytime while having
a little child, tend to lack love for the child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 39. The amount of "skinship" (physical contact) is
a "barometer" or a scale of love for a child. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 40. If you truly love your child, you can not beat or strike bitterly his face or head. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 41. Child's mischievous behaviors should be overlooked
and allowed as much as possible. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 42. Mothers who love their own children are also kind to other people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 43. Working mothers love their children more deekly than
mothers who always stay home with their children. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 44. Parents should have not only love for their children but also the
techniques and methods to communicate and make it known to them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 45. Parents who easily get upset with their children and scold
or beat them fiercely can not be regarded as loving their children. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 46. If you wish for your children's real growth,
you should have them experience some hardships. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 47. Given strong love for children, a mother can be strong enough as a human being. ... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 48. Mothers with small children who work outside the home
in the daytime should feel guilty for their children. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 49. It is when we are giving care to our children
that we feel ourselves really loving children. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 50. No matter how we love our children, we sometimes find them a nuisance. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX C Questionnaire III: Semantic differential type rating on "Mother's love"

Fifty five pairs of contrasted adjectives are given below. Please make your judgment how "Mother's love" is close to either of the two extremes on each pair of the adjectives.

very much passably a little a little passably very much



- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. high | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | low |
| 2. strong..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | weak |
| 3. motionless..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | full of motion |
| 4. empirical | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | instinctive |
| 5. abstract | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | concrete |
| 6. vehement | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | tranquil |
| 7. masculine | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | feminine |
| 8. innate..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | shaped |
| 9. obscure | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | clear |
| 10. emotional | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | rational |
| 11. longsighted | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | shortsighted |
| 12. iron-like | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | cotton-like |
| 13. spiritual..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | behavioral |
| 14. natural | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | artificial |
| 15. stylized | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unstylized |
| 16. reasonable | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unreasonable |
| 17. heavy | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | light |
| 18. varied..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unvaried |
| 19. effortful | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | effortless |
| 20. simple | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | complex |
| 21. cold..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | warm |
| 22. soft | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | hard |
| 23. conscious | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unconscious |
| 24. changes by effort | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unchangeable by effort |
| 25. verbalizable | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unverbalizable |
| 26. practical | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | theoretical |
| 27. open | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | closed |
| 28. stable..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | unstable |
| 29. rewarding | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | non-rewarding |
| 30. of both sexes | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | only of women |
| 31. dark | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | bright |
| 32. clear-cut | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | fuzzy |
| 33. narrow | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | wide |
| 34. firm..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | shaky |
| 35. fruitful | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | fruitless |
| 36. common..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | special |
| 37. bad | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | good |
| 38. logic-free | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | logic-bound |
| 39. shallow | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | deep |
| 40. placid..... | 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 | restless |

41. turbid	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	clear
42. unconfined	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	confined
43. short-lived	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	long-lasting
44. much-gaining	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	less-gaining
45. unsubstitutive	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	substitutive
46. rejecting	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	embracing
47. inconsistent	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	consistent
48. joyful	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	joyless
49. uniform	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	diverse
50. clever	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	stupid
51. meaningless	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	meaningful
52. biased	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	unbiased
53. beautiful	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	ugly
54. pleasant	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	painful
55. noble	1—2—3—4—5—6—7	ignoble

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