

Two Sides of Social Phenomenon, which Instigate Changes in Lifestyle

Yoshihiko AIKAWA

1. Objective and Method

Due to lifestyle changes, women who desire work are increasingly moving to cities. As a result, it is clear from the rearrangement of tabulations in the national census that in rural areas the number of unmarried women has diminished correspondingly.

Meanwhile, migration from urban to rural areas and new farmers are increasing. To clarify awareness regarding these new farmers and migration to rural communities, a questionnaire survey was conducted among graduates of agricultural training centers.

2. Outline of Results

According to the National Census, over the last 30 years, there has been a sharp increase in the ratio of unmarried people of young and middle age. The rate of increase is two-fold in women, and five-fold in men. In the 35~39 year-old age group, 1 in 4 men are un-

married, with this ratio double for women. There is no gap between rural and urban areas in the rate of non-marriage among men and women, but the reasons are different.

In rural areas, the most strongly apparent cause of non-marriage is the relatively large number of unmarried men. Fig. 1 shows that the ratio of unmarried men per 1 unmarried woman increased in the over 30 group, and that the rate of increase is larger in rural districts than in cities. As a result, in rural communities among people in their late 30s, for each unmarried woman there are 2.5 unmarried men, while in cities there are 1.7 men for each unmarried woman.

Recently, agricultural training facilities are being established in various regions. The majority of the trainees are from cities.

For this research, graduates of 3 training institutes, each having different locations and training periods, were given questionnaire surveys regarding their motives for participating in the training.

Institute A, located in Furano City, Hokkaido, had a 1~6 month training period, and many participants were part-time workers. Institute B, in Shintoku Town, Hokkaido, had one year training period and was made up of young women who had quit their jobs to participate. On the other hand, institute C, in Takahata Town, Yamagata had a training period of one week, and consisted of old or middle aged people participating on vacation and students.

From the survey results, strength of awareness (participation motives) was measured; trends in participation motives among

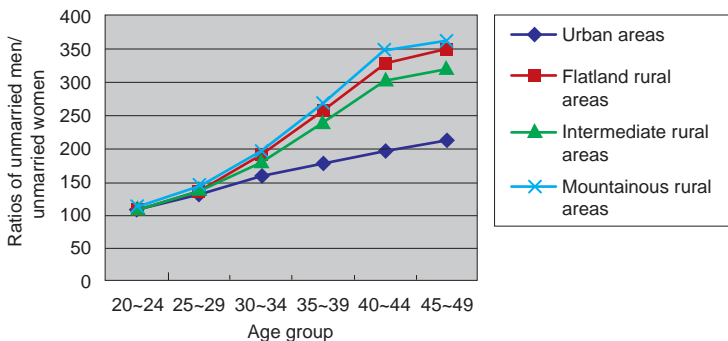


Fig. 1. Ratio of Unmarried Men and Women by Economic Areas and by Age Group

Source: 2000 National Census.

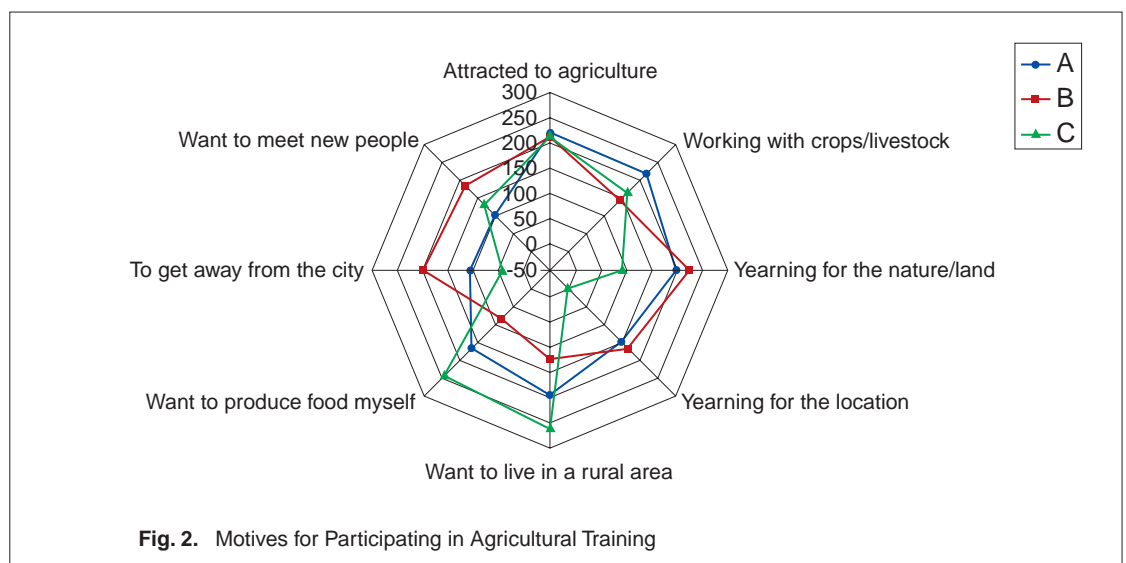


Fig. 2. Motives for Participating in Agricultural Training

training graduates are shown in Fig. 2, and the differences are clear.

The A trainees tended to long for the grandeur of nature and wanted to escape the city, while the B trainees tended to be interested in both dairy farming and nature. In contrast to this, many of the C trainees had a great interest in the rural lifestyle and food self-sufficiency.

3. Related publications

Aikawa, Y. “Ladies’ Farm School Training Facility, in Shintoku Town and Hokkaido Sup-

ports Women with Agricultural Ambitions” *Agriculture and Forestry Economics*, Jul. 11, 2002.

Aikawa, Y. and Ide, H. “Graph Comparison of Rate of Non-marriage in Urban and Rural Areas”, *Agriculture and Forestry Statistical Survey*, Volume 53, Issue 1.

Research Members

Yoshihiko Aikawa, Noboru Hashizume, Tomoko Ichida, Masami Mizuno and Hitomi Nakamichi

Recent Trends of Production and Regulations of Genetically Modified Crops in China

Masashi TACHIKAWA

China is famous for its first attempt at transgenic tobacco production on a commercial scale in the late 80s. Recently its production acreage of GM crops is rapidly increasing. In particular, most of the acreage comes from transgenic cotton, which reaches over 2 million hectares. Now China has become the fourth largest grower of GM crops in the world after the US, Canada, and Argentina.

(1) New Regulatory Framework

In 2001, China’s State Council introduced a new policy framework for GMO issues, called “Regulation on the Safety Administration of Agricultural Biotechnology.” Further, in 2002, the Ministry of Agriculture issued a new set of implementation regulations concerning GMO safety management, import safety management, and labeling. Those regulations are as follows; “Measures for the Safety Evaluation Administration of Agricultural GMOs,” “Measures for the Safety Administration of Agricultural GMO Imports,” and “Measures for Agricultural GMO Labeling Administration.”

As for the import safety regulation, the clause: “the Ministry of Agriculture shall make a decision of approval or disapproval within 270 days after receiving the application” (Article 17) caused trade disputes with the US government. After negotiations between the governments it was agreed to suspend the regulation, and introduce an interim measure for import safety regulation until September 2003. The labeling regulation was put into effect on March 20, 2003. As for the mandatory labeling system, even oil and feed are required to be labeled as such (same as EU system), and a threshold level is not set for unintended

contamination (Table 1).

Table 1. Items under Mandatory GMO Labeling

Soybean	seed, soybean, flour, oil, soy meal
Corn	seed, corn, flour, oil, corn meal
Rapeseed	seed, rapeseed, oil, rapeseed meal
Cotton	seed
Tomato	seed, fresh tomato, tomato sauce

Source: “Measures for Ag GMO Labeling Administration”.

(2) Regulatory System

The Chinese Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is in charge of safety regulation of agricultural GMOs from many aspects; food, environment, and feed. However, at the national level, six ministries consist of the Ag GMO Joint-Ministry Conference System, which discusses and coordinates major problems regarding agricultural GMOs. Every application for safety certificates from the MOA needs to be submitted on a variety by variety basis, and by the provincial government where developers of GMOs are considering actual plantings. This kind of procedure increased the number of applications for GMO safety evaluations. As of the end of 2002, it is reported that forty certificates have been issued from the MOA, and about 30 of them are for GM cotton. Another important point is that all safety certificates for Ag GMOs have a limited time period, typically five years.

(3) Production Situation

Today there are four GM crops which are planted on a commercial basis: cotton, tomato, petunia, and pepper as shown in Table 2. However, cotton is the only crop which is widely grown. Its acreage reaches about 2 million hectares. The GM cotton is mainly grown in the