

Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien
German Institute for Japanese Studies

DIJ Forum



Thursday, 17 October 2013, 18.30 h

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The Rise of *Ikumen* (child caring fathers) in Contemporary Japan

The Japanese word, *Ikumen* which originated from *Ikemen* (handsome men) refers to those “cool” fathers who are actively involved in caring for their own children. This word has become well-known among the Japanese public as evidenced by it being nominated one of the top 10 words in 2010 Buzzwords-of-the-Year Contest. In this lecture, we focus on this *Ikumen* phenomenon by describing historical and contemporary social, economic and political factors that contributed to the increase of Japanese fathers’ participation in child care. Antecedents and consequences of fathers’ participation in child care will also be examined from sociological perspectives.

Most of the findings presented in this lecture come from the data collected in two projects, “Gender Sensitive Approaches to Work-Life-Balance” and “Parenting in IT Society.” Our analyses show that workplace factors as well as family socialization are significant factors affecting paternal involvement. Implications of our research findings will also be discussed in relation to policies, education and practice.

Masako Ishii-Kuntz is a Professor in Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences at Ochanomizu University in Tokyo. Her areas of specialization include family sociology, gender studies and quantitative methods. She received her Ph.D. and M.A. in sociology from Washington State University. She has also taught at the University of California, Riverside prior to her current position. She has published three books (plus two in press) and more than 120 peer reviewed articles, book chapters, reviews and research reports. Her recent research focuses on how fathers and mothers of young children utilize IT tools and SNS (social networking service) in their child caring activities.

The lecture will be given in English. It will take place on **Thursday, October 17, 2013 at 6.30 p.m.** at the DIJ. Admission is free, please register at forum@dijtokyo.org

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