

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)  
**DIJ Social Science Study Group**



**July 23, 2014, 18:30**

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***The Challenge of 'Work-Food-Balance':  
Working Mothers and their familial Meal-Supply Strategies***

Following the enactment of the 'Basic Law for Food Education' (*shokuiku kihonhō*) in April 2005, expectations towards mothers to provide healthy meals for their family are higher than ever. The law results from a debate on a decline of family meals, and was triggered by survey results in particular, which point towards unhealthy eating habits of school children. With its enactment, ideals of what constitutes a 'good mother' especially put pressure on working mothers, as the demands are hardly compatible with their working reality.

Using the qualitative approach of Philipp Mayring and the research design of German meal-supply studies of working mothers' households (Ingrid-Ute Leonhäuser 2009, Uta Zander 2011), I analyse the factors that influence the current meal-supply of working mothers in Japan and their strategies of balancing work, family life and meal-management. To this end, I present first results of an online-survey conducted in 2013 and in-depths interviews carried out from March to July 2014. Based on the findings, I will discuss different types of Japanese meal-managers.

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The DIJ Social Science Study Group is organized by P. Holdgrün and C. Hommerich.  
All are welcome to attend, but registration ([holdgruen@diptokyo.org](mailto:holdgruen@diptokyo.org)) is appreciated.

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