



Article

IE System in Modern Japanese Society

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Abstract

This paper explores the transformation of the traditional family system in Japanese society, known as the IE system, to a modern family structure influenced by Western ideologies. Historically, the Japanese state was conceptualized as a family state or *kazokukokka*, with the emperor as the head of the family, as seen in the Meiji Constitution. However, after Japan's defeat in World War II, the allied governments abolished this system, leading to gradual changes in the societal structure. The objective of this research is to investigate how Japanese people have adapted their family system from the traditional IE system to a modern one. The study utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach, employing field research reports and literature related to the contemporary Japanese family system. Data was collected and analyzed using descriptive methods to draw conclusions. The findings of the research highlight that while the IE system was officially removed from the Japanese Constitution, its influence persists in certain aspects of modern Japanese society. Scholars widely agree that remnants of the traditional family system still endure due to the lack of a viable replacement. Eradicating a deeply rooted cultural tradition developed over centuries proves to be a challenging task. This study sheds light on the coexistence of traditional and modern elements within the Japanese family system, presenting a nuanced understanding of how the IE system continues to partially shape family dynamics in contemporary Japanese society.

INTRODUCTION

Every society in any part of the world anywhere in the world lives in groups to form families. Concerning the family is one of the minor elements in the structure of society. In a sheltered family, individuals receive support from others to survive in a small environment than in a larger one, namely society. Community groups form a kinship or separate family system by showing their characteristics. There are differences in the family system in the Western and Eastern hemispheres, and even the differences seem contradictory. As in Western countries, if a couple of young people are bound in a legal marriage bond, they will usually live together, separate themselves from their respective parents and form a small family known as the nuclear family. The nuclear family members only consist of a husband and wife and unmarried children. In the Eastern states, it is customary that married couples continue to live under the same roof with their parents, whether in the home of the male parent or the home of the female parent. This couple is joined in one family, called the extended family (Goode, 2007, p. 90).

Regarding family in general, Morioka defines the traditional family structure typically consists of a husband and wife who work together to provide for their family's well-being. A

strong emotional connection exists between the members of this group, including parents and children, siblings, and certain close relatives. Morioka's definition of family pertains to groups composed of individuals connected through marriage and considered family members. Besides husband and wife and their children, siblings, and close relatives.

While a leading Japanese sociologist Toda Teizo (Torigoe, [1988](#), p. 8), explains the meaning of family is a small group of people with a special relationship, namely husband and wife and children, based on solid emotional ties among its members. Toda, whom Western thinkers strongly influence, defines the family as a small group whose members only consist of a husband, wife, and children. As defined by Toda, the family form refers to the nuclear family.

As an Eastern society, Japanese society initially also carried out a kinship system in the form of an extended family. The system mentioned was established and functioning during the Tokugawa era (1603-1868). The Meiji Minpō, which discusses the constitution of the Japanese state during the Meiji Period (1868-1912), later confirmed this. The law explains that the IE system is a form of the Japanese family system and establishes Japan as a family state or *kazoku kokka* and makes the emperor the highest head of the family.

The Japanese people follow the IE system with complete obedience. They believe its primary goal is to ensure continuity for future generations; this has been consistently maintained in the past and present. The Japanese nation maintains its identity through this IE system, even though its members alternate from generation to generation. As Western countries modernized, some Japanese reformists began to call for abolishing the IE system from their constitution. The reformists influenced by the West cannot do anything other than keep the IE system still in effect (Dore, [1971](#), p. 92).

In 1945, Japan was defeated by allies in the second world war and led to Japan's downfall and compelled it to abandon the IE system. The Japanese kinship system was abolished by the constitution in 1947. The abolition of the IE system from the life of Japanese society answered the wishes of the dissatisfied reformists. In the 1947 constitution, article 24 is stated as follows.

Article 24. Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes, and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis. With regard to choose of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

Article 24 explicitly regulates the human rights of both men and women in forming a family. The basis for forming a family is based on individual desires without the interference of other family members. This article also illustrates that there is an equalization between the rights and obligations of men and women, while in the traditional Japanese family, the rights and obligations of men are higher than those of women; likewise, regarding inheritance which is treated equally between men and women, even though in IE system the inheritance falls into the hands of the eldest son. The ratification of Article 24 in the constitution of the state of Japan has automatically abolished the legitimacy of the traditional Japanese family system and implemented a modern family system that refers to the West.

The abolition of the IE system in Japanese society is a starting point for significant changes in the kinship system of Japanese society. How is the family system in Japanese society after the IE system was abolished from the Japanese Constitution is the issue in this paper? The method used to answer this question is the IE system or traditional Japanese family system as a tool to collect various information from references in the form of field research

reports and literature related to the modern Japanese family system, which still applies the IE system.

Many sociologists, such as Aruga Kizaemon, Fukutake, Vogel, Ochiai, and so on, have conducted research on the IE System. Aruga ([1981](#)) collects more data about the IE System itself and compiles the results of his research to understand the concept of IE. Likewise, Fukutake ([1989](#)) and Vogel ([1971](#)) explained in more detail the IE concept and the role of each member. In comparison, research conducted by Ochiai ([1997](#)), Henry ([1995](#)), Tobing ([2006](#)), and other researchers looked at how the implementation of IE in one community group in Japan. Most of the research described above was carried out in the field on one issue related to IE, and no research has yet been found that summarizes the opinions of experts based on the research results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

IE System

Japanese society is a society that, since the Tokugawa era, has been regulated in the composition of a feudal society consisting of four layers of society, namely *bushi*, *nōmin*, *kōsakunin*, and *shōnin*. *Bushi* is a samurai society, *nōmin* are farmers, *kōsakunin* are artisans, and *shōnin* are traders. Of the four layers of society, farmers are the majority community. The four layers of society run a kinship system called the IE system. The *bushi* or samurai group originally ran this IE system. Then the IE system is also applied to other layers of society. The IE system during the Tokugawa era made Japan a solid and independent country, even though for almost 250 years, the Tokugawa government carried out a *sakoku* policy, namely the policy of closing the country from foreigners or other countries. During the Meiji era, the Japanese constitution known as Meiji Minpō included the IE system.

The IE system was the Japanese kinship system before the second world war. IE in Japanese means family. There is also the term *kazoku*, which means family. The word *kazoku* is generally used to describe families in general. The term *kazoku* can also refer to a contemporary family. While the term IE, besides family, also refers to a custom or habit that regulates family members in carrying out their daily lives as members of IE. To clarify, Japanese experts such as Aruga Kizaemon have provided additional information regarding IE. (Torigoe, [1988](#), p. 8). IE is a unique custom found in Japanese society, meaning different from the family. ... IE is a group that runs a business from family property (*kasen*) and is a family business (*kagyō*). Through an understanding of this, as a unit in social life, the aim is the continuity of IE and each of its members, both those still alive and those who have passed away.

IE as a custom that prevailed in traditional Japanese society until the end of the second world war, not only are a group of individuals forming a large family, but they within their IE also run a business or family business (*kagyō*) with family assets (*kasen*) they have. For example, the farming community's assets are agricultural land and agricultural tools. In the trading world, assets refer to goods and locations where they can be bought and sold. Aruga provides details regarding these family assets (Aruga, [1980](#), p. 187). *Kasan* consists of houses, land, agricultural land, gardens, fish ponds, agricultural and carpentry equipment, household furniture, machinery, livestock, money, various other valuables, both owned and used together in one village, as well as goods or tools used for work are also called *kasen*. All IE members are involved in the family business.

IE is also a unit in society. Apart from running a family business, they also try to maintain the continuity of their IE unit from generation to generation. Members listed in IE are still alive and members who have died. To commemorate the services of their ancestors, each

IE performs an ancestor worship ceremony. In each of them, there is a *butsudan* or altar for worship. The worship of ancestral spirits is led by the chairman IE or *kachō*. In carrying out the worship of ancestral spirits, especially during big celebrations such as *obon matsuri*, quite a lot of funds are needed, especially to prepare all the equipment related to the ceremony. Implementing this worship is the *kachō*'s responsibility, and the ceremony's costs are taken from the household budget. Nakano Takashi (Torigoe, [1988](#), p. 8) explains the cost of this ancestral worship in explaining the meaning of IE is a group different from the *kazoku*, who runs a family business based on family assets (*kasan*), with a household budget carrying out the worship of ancestral spirits, and is a system of combined units IE, or household units.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of an IE is to continuously maintain its identity even though the members of IE alternate. Changes in the composition of members from generation to generation occur due to death, birth, and marriage. Kawashima Takeyoshi (Torigoe, [1988](#), p. 8) explains the changing composition of IE members in the definition of IE. An IE refers to a household that comprises a group of individuals who are not blood-related but share a living space. Even though there are changes in the composition of its members due to death, birth, and marriage, they follow the belief to maintain their identity continuously.

Kawashima Takeyoshi, in his definition above, also alludes to the familial relationship between each member of an IE. Although an IE is a group of individuals who live together and form a family, the family here has a broad scope. Individuals who are members of IE are not only mutually related by blood. Some members are not related by blood at all. The membership structure is explained by Takeda Chosu (Tobing, [2006](#)). IE has four categories of members, namely,

1. Families with direct lineage are related by blood, namely grandmothers, grandfathers, fathers, mothers, children-in-law, etc.
2. Families follow those who do not have direct lineage but are related by blood, namely siblings and their spouses, nephews and their partners, and so on.
3. Families that do not have a direct lineage and are not related by blood, namely adopted children and their spouses, *hōkōnin* (servant, employee or apprentice), and their families.
4. Families that follow IE, which is not related by blood, namely families of servants who have followed IE since their predecessors.

From the categories described above, members of one IE, are quite a lot, and a person can be registered as a member of one IE, through these four categories. A child born in an IE, is immediately part of that IE. However, when the child is an adult, his membership can change based on his position and gender.

The eldest son or county born from a direct lineage and related by blood is the candidate for an heir. Meanwhile, if his other younger brothers are grown up and married, they have to leave IE, and so does her sister; if she is married, she automatically becomes a member of her husband IE. There is also an IE, who enforces that the youngest brother, if they are married, is still allowed to live in their IE, of origin. The goal is that if the head of IE or *kachō* dies and the heir cannot replace the task as *kachō*, this youngest brother will take over the task temporarily until a legitimate replacement for *kachō* is appointed. Younger brothers who are married and leave their IE can join others as *hōkōnin*. Alternatively, if the IE has sufficient wealth, it can divide to form a branch (*bunke*) of the original IE (*honke*). In this new IE, his younger brother becomes *kachō* and membership of IE based on the four categories above.

A rule IE stipulates that the heir is only left to the eldest son so that the assets are not divided. For example, for farmers, the agricultural land they own and inherit from their ancestors is usually less extensive. If this land is divided, there is a possibility that the land will become smaller, and it will not be possible to run a joint business in one group. Besides that, the benefit of this single inheritance is the continuity of IE, its primary goal to be maintained. This kind of inheritance is called primogeniture inheritance, which is only given to a single heir, and the Meiji law guarantees its implementation (Fukutake, [1989](#), p. 37).

Inheritance, given to the eldest son, makes this system carry out kinship from the father's or patrilineal lineage. Kitano Seiichi in (Torigoe, [1988](#), p. 8) explains the meaning of IE is a group in society, IE is considered a historical form of Japan in which the family is generally questioned about its existence in the stereotypical position of IE, and *kazoku*. IE is defined here as a Japanese family that adheres to a patriarchal system. Of the meanings IE put forward by the four experts above, it can be concluded that,

1. IE is different from *kazoku* or families in general.
2. IE is a group of individuals who live together (*seikatsu shudan*) and carry out a life together (*seikatsu kyōdōtai*). Relationships among individuals in this group are blood-related, and some are not.
3. IE has members who are still alive or who have died.
4. IE attaches importance to the continuity of his identity.
5. IE has its mechanism for managing the group.
6. IE has shared assets called *kasan* which are managed jointly within the group as a family business (*kagyō*).
7. IE carry out the worship of ancestral spirits.
8. IE adheres to a patriarchal system and carries out a primogeniture inheritance system.

Based on the definition of IE and the conclusions obtained from it, the mechanism takes place in IE. A group that can be called IE has three main things in carrying out it is IE (Torigoe, [1988](#), pp. 10-13). These three things are,

1. Having assets (*zaisan*) which are family assets (*kasan*) managed in the family business (*kaigyō*). This wealth can be seen in groups IE those who manage agriculture, fisheries, and trade. For example, in the case of farmer groups, their assets are in the form of agricultural land, so they run businesses in the agricultural sector.
2. Performing worship of ancestral spirits who are their predecessors who are descended or based on lineage.
3. Prioritizing the existence of direct descendants from generation to generation and prioritizing shared prosperity to maintain continuity IE.

Kachō In IE system

Kachō in the IE system is the head of the family that leads an IE. *Kachō* has several names related to his position and role IE. Apart from being referred to as a *kachō*, the leader of a IE is also called a *soryo*, someone with a position and authority in government. Another term is *katoku*, namely those who preside over religious ceremonies. These roles, namely *soryo* and *katoku*, cannot be replaced by other family members except by their legal heirs. In kinship

relations, *kachō* is also called *kafuchō*, the head of the family that adheres to a patriarchal kinship system.

Kachō's main task as a leader is maintaining IE's good name and continuity. *Kachō* is not the owner of IE and all of IE's assets. *Kachō* is just someone who is mandated to lead and maintain continuity IE that has been around for a long time, utilized in the present, and prepared for the future. IE is owned by all its members, those who have passed away, those who are still alive, and those who will be born in the future. Therefore, in Japanese culture, there are restrictions on selling IE. They will continue to protect it and will not hesitate to sacrifice their interests for sustainability. Their sacrifices are provisions after death (Vogel, [1965](#), p. 165).

The relationship between *kachō* and its members is between marriage and birth. Their relationship is called *shinzokuteki mibun kankei*, which is a kinship relationship so that the relationship becomes *chokkei*; a direct relationship and is a nuclear family; between *kachō* and *chōnan* (the first son to become heir) and *bōkei*; collateral kinship relations such as *kachō*'s relationship with his siblings. This relationship makes their position different in IE. Boukei has a lower position because one day, he will leave IE, so will his sister. *Hōkōnin* also has a lower position and has the same rights as *bōkei* if there is an opportunity to leave IE by opening a branch IE. The difference in the position of *chokkei* and *bōkei* in IE does not separate them because they have the same *kachō* with authority over them.

Kachō cannot act arbitrarily towards his IE members because rules from the IE system must be obeyed. *Kachō* is not a free man because various rules in the IE system bind him. *Kachō* controls and manages its assets. It does not mean that these assets are his personal property. Even though all IE assets are registered with the Meiji government in his name, they are not his personal property. He is only a representative of his IE. *Kachō* will be embarrassed if wealth is reduced compared to when he first took office. Until now, in Japanese farming society, there is still a sense of shame when wealth is reduced. The *kachō* serves as a representative of the IE and sets an example for all members to follow. They are expected to adhere to the rules of the IE system and comply with all applicable regulations.

Kasan does not belong to *kachō*, but based on capitalism, *kasam* belongs to *kachō*, so this issue has yet to be debated. *Kachō* also manages the pocket money of each member. If anyone works outside IE, the money earned is given to the *kachō*, and *kachō* regulates the use of the money. *Kachō* also has his own pocket money but cannot use it for his personal needs as he pleases because it needs to be recognized and accepted if he has much money.

The *kachō*'s duties and responsibilities to maintain its IE continuity are, firstly, maintaining the safety of each of its members and ensuring their lives. *Kachō* also educates its members and pays attention to their behavior in interacting with fellow IE members and the surrounding community because *kachō* is accountable to its IE and its members to the state.

The second responsibility is for *kachō* to marry off his children and younger siblings. *Kachō* will find a mate that is commensurate with its unmarried members and *kachō* will also assess whether the prospective wife or husband of the IE members has equal status with them. In finding this mate, *kachō* asked for an opinion from another IE who was his *honke* (IE his origin). If it is a daughter who gets married, then after marriage, the responsibility of the *kachō* as a father and as the head of the family moves to the *kachō* from his son-in-law. Married women must obey *kachō* in the new place IE. If her behavior is not liked, this bride can be divorced and returned to her origin.

Regarding the bride who marries the heir, the burden will be more significant. She was expected to be able to give birth to a son who would later become the heir as well. Her position will be safe if she has given birth to an heir. This bride will also become a potential consort for

the *kachō* and will be tasked with managing the household finances IE after the ruling *kachō* resigns, retires, or dies. Due to the heavy burden on daughters after marriage, especially when marrying a potential heir, *kachō* will be very careful in choosing a mate for his daughter and sister.

The third responsibility is that *kachō* is responsible for the welfare of its members, both living and deceased. The *kachō* provides clothing, food, and housing for the surviving members. The food needs of members are prepared by women who are led by the *kachō*'s wife or *shufu*. The food served is eaten together at specific mealtimes by all members IE. Regarding housing for the members, some live in the same house as *kachō* in the main house, and some live in a separate housing that has been provided.

Kachō gives pocket money to each family member, and family members do not have personal wealth, such as housing. While some members own their own homes, typically, ownership is only granted with permission from the *kachō*. Members typically only possess personal wealth through money and movable items such as vehicles. None of the IE member secretly has a few assets, like money, without being noticed by *kachō* because all income IE and IE members are managed by *kachō* (Aruga, 1980, p. 187).

Providing facilities to retired parents or seniors is the fourth responsibility of the *kachō*. The facilities in question include taking care of all the needs of the seniors and fulfilling their living needs, such as clothing, food, and shelter. Elderly or sick people receive care and attention from all members IE. Aruga explained that it is not only a shelter for its members, but it can also function as an institution that guarantees the lives of its elderly members.

The life journey of IE members, such as those who are not as fortunate as their brothers, who lost their jobs, or their sisters who were divorced, makes them no longer able to support their own lives, so if this situation occurs, then *kachō* is responsible for their living expenses. This is *kachō*'s fifth responsibility. Help is given by *kachō* until they can get up and become independent again. If any of her brothers wish to work in the city to gain a more independent life, recommendations from *kachō* are needed. *Kachō* can decide whether its members are allowed to work their way into town. The sixth responsibility of the *kachō* is to organize ancestor worship and provide all the needs related to this worship ceremony.

The weight of responsibility carried by *kachō* made him gain high authority in leading his IE. *Kachō* has absolute power in managing the land and collecting the produce and then has full authority in using the money. *Kachō* is also authorized to control every income and expense in managing IE. Here the *kachō* has the authority to regulate economic matters and social activities of his family members and controls the income distribution for family consumption. In carrying out this challenging task, *kachō* is assisted by his wife or *shufu*, especially in managing money. Expenses for daily needs it is entirely left to the *shufu*, but for significant expenses, the *shufu* needs to notify the *kachō* in advance whether it is permissible or not.

Another responsibility of the *kachō* that is no less important in maintaining the continuity of IE is selecting and educating potential heirs of IE. In general, the heir candidate for IE is the eldest son of *kachō*. This eldest son is called *chōnan*. *Chōnan*, since childhood, received special treatment like the treatment that *kachō* received. For example, when setting up a seat to eat together, *kachō* will get a special seat in the middle of the house called a *yokoza*, and *kachō* will have the privilege of eating first. When taking a bath in *ofuro*, *kachō* also gets the first opportunity to take a bath, then the other family members follow.

Chōnan of an IE is only sometimes worthy or able to lead his IE. When *Chōnan* was still young, while *kachō* had died, for the time being, the task as *kachō* was carried out by *kachō*'s younger brother, who was deliberately told to stay in his native IE. This duty is taken

over until the *chōnan* is old enough to lead his IE and meets the requirements to become a *kachō*.

Some do not have a *chōnan* or do not have the eldest son who is deemed fit to be the heir. Under these circumstances, the *kachō* may designate a second or third son as his heir. *Kachō* can also designate his younger brother, nephew by brother, or another relative with sons as an heir. The appointment of this inheritance is based on patrilineal relations, namely those who have blood relations with *kachō*. If the person appointed as the heir is not a *chōnan*, then the heir will be adopted by a *kachō* to become a *yōshi*.

Aruga asserts that the *kachō* must determine his IE heir. Suppose neither the *chōnan* nor any of the IE members are suitable to be the heir to the IE (Aruga, 1980, p. 192). In that case, the *kachō* can adopt a child from another IE to become the heir regardless of whether the candidate has the same family name as the *kachō* or is still related to the *kachō*. The most important thing about this prospective adopted child or *yōshi* is that they come from an IE who has the same status as their IE. If the *shufu* does not have a son, the *kachō* can also choose the son of his concubine to become the *kachō*. The status of a concubine's child is lower than that of a *shufu*'s *chōnan*'s son, so if a concubine's child is appointed as heir, the permission of the *shufu*'s *chōnan* child must be obtained.

In determining the heir IE, Japanese society does not strictly apply the patrilineal system. This can be seen in IE who only has daughters as heirs. *Kachō* can designate his eldest daughter's son-in-law to be the heir. Before marrying his eldest daughter, *kachō* ensured his future son-in-law was not his IE *chōnan*. If they have agreed to appoint a son-in-law as heir, this son-in-law is called *mukoyōshi*. The original family name of *mukoyōshi* was released, and *mukoyōshi* bore the family name of his wife and received responsibility as heir and then as *kachō* when the *kachō* who was leading retired or died.

To his heir, *kachō* gives securities containing information about his IE. It also contains assets IE (*kasan*), rules that apply in IE (*kahō*) which also regulate clearly and in detail how to act or behave, moral teachings, inheritance rules, etc. The letters also mention the *kagyō* or family business that is run and the habits that are carried out (*kafu*) in the IE as well as the rights and obligations (*kaken*) of each member.

Following Abolition IE System from the Meiji Constitution

As explained in the previous section, the kinship system adopted by Japanese society before the end of the second world war was the IE system. The kinship formed based on the IE system is the extended family, or in Japanese, it is called *daikazoku*. The definition of *kazoku* or family in the IE system is different from the understanding of family in general, namely that apart from being meaningful as a family, IE also has the meaning as a habit or custom that applies in Japanese society. Meanwhile, the meaning of *kazoku* in Japanese can be equated with the meaning of family in English and refers to the modern family.

The Japanese government legally recognized IE in the Meiji era. Family members are recorded in government records. Children born in IE automatically become members of that IE. Other members of IE are those who entered through marriage, adoption, or established branches of IE (Dore, 1971, p. 103).

After the end of the second world war and the abolition of the IE system from the constitution of the Japanese state, Japanese people did not necessarily abandon their strong-rooted traditions. The IE system is still applied in rural communities, especially those that run agricultural businesses. Meanwhile, in urban communities starting to activate industry, the traditional kinship system is beginning to erode due to the demands of industrialization. Apart from the demands of industrialization, eliminating the IE system in Japan facilitated the

absorption of modernization, thereby facilitating the transition from the traditional family system to the modern one (Vogel, [1971](#), p. 91).

Regarding the relationship between industrialization and the family, Goode explained that, along with the development of industrialization and modernization in both Western and Eastern countries, the form of the family underwent quite drastic changes, especially in Eastern countries (Goode, [2007](#), p. 171). Those who mainly adhere to the extended family system switch to the nuclear family system as the family farm in Western society. The existence of this nuclear family follows the demands of industrial progress, namely the existence of a head of the family or a husband who earns a living outside the home. At the same time, the wife takes care of and raises the children inside the house. In this nuclear family, relatives' interests diminish significantly, and one can freely find work according to one's wishes and dedicate oneself wholly to work.

The abolition of the IE system from Japan's constitution shocked Japanese society and raised concerns about their fate in the family. This shock was supported by the many families that broke up after Japan lost the war. The fundamental thing that changed in the Japanese family structure with the abolition of IE was the destruction of the continuity of IE, the loss of the *kachōken*, namely the rights and obligations of the head of the family, the recognition of equality between husband and wife in the household, the abolition of the single inheritance system, and family assets distributed equally among all members. Children are without exception because all children have the same right to receive inheritance (Aruga, [1981](#), p. 5).

The elimination of the IE system in Japan has had various positive impacts, such as the development of Japanese industry and negative ones. The negative impacts seen include changing the traditional economic basis and eliminating productive functions from the family, and even weakening the authority of the head of the family because of the independence of earning a living from its members. Norms that apply in society begin to change due to population migration, the increasing number of female workers, and the development of individualistic thinking due to popular education, which is more concerned with individuals and indifference to parents (Dore, [1971](#), p. 93).

In addition, awareness of IE is reduced in urban communities because the type of work occupied cannot be inherited, such as doctors, teachers, art artisans. They also do not have any obligation to the original IE. Furthermore, opening IE branches related to the economy is difficult in urban areas (Dore, [1971](#), p. 103).

Another negative impact of abolishing the IE system is when family members in cities are more affluent than those in villages and will be reluctant to ask for help. Families in the village are reluctant to ask for help regarding harvesting, while family members in the city need to tell them when they are experiencing financial difficulties. If fellow IE members help each other in trouble, the assistance is no longer based on the obligations of fellow IE members but rather because of personal sentiments (Vogel, [1965](#), p. 172). As the mechanism that runs in the IE system, kinship in IE is based on rules; its members act in their group as an obligation regardless of sentiment or personal comfort. Each IE member has a particular position and position in his IE. After this rule was no longer valid, the relationship between family members was based on sentiment, power, and convenience (Vogel, [1965](#), p. 180).

Regarding the daughters-in-law who live in the nuclear family, they become braver, especially when they are free from the supervision of the parents-in-law. They get pocket money and money for personal needs, such as buying clothes from their husbands. Their income is also derived from IE's profit which is regulated based on equal rights between brothers and sisters (Fukutake, [1967](#), p. 57).

In terms of caring for elderly parents, it was initially the responsibility of the head of the family. After IE is eliminated, elderly care is charged equally to all children. However, there is still a tendency for the eldest child to receive more portions. There are also daughters' husbands who want to avoid being bothered with caring for the senior. Moreover, some older people previously worked as company employees to receive a pension fund so that they do not make it difficult for their children economically (Vogel, [1965](#), p. 173).

The various impacts that can be seen from the elimination of the IE system and the tendency of Japanese society in cities and villages not to immediately change the form of the family based on the new rules, according to Fukutake, the Japanese kinship system after the second world war can be categorized into three major groups, namely nuclear family, an extended family consisting of at least three generations, and families whose members are related (Fukutake, [1967](#), p. 37).

Kinship in Japan is now known as *koseki*, a record of everyone who is a family member. The record contains, among other things, name, place, date of birth, parents' names, siblings' names, and status, i.e., single, married, or divorced permanent address, and so on. The smallest unit of *koseki* is not the individual but the family, and these *koseki* are kept at the sub-district office in their respective areas (Sugimoto, [1997](#), p. 136).

Koseki itself can only record two generations, namely parents and children. If there is a third generation, the first generation will be made a separate *koseki*. Behind the implementation of this *koseki*, the Japanese people still run the IE system, and *koseki* indirectly protects the existence of IE (Sugimoto, [1997](#), pp. 137-138).

Sugimoto divides Japanese families into four categories; category A is a type of family that is still strong in running the IE system, and married couples live in the male parent's house. Category B is a type of family where two adult generations live in the same house. However, in their daily lives, they are like a nuclear family due to the high cost of living, especially in big cities like Tokyo, so they are only separated by a dividing wall, and they can still help each other. Category C is a type of nuclear family that believes in ancestry; even though they live far from their family of origin for work and other reasons, they still attend traditional events held by their extended family, such as traditional weddings, funerals, regional festivals, and worship of ancestral spirits. Category D is a modern nuclear family that carries out modern family ideology (Sugimoto, [1997](#), pp. 165–166).

The emergence of four categories in Japanese society, as stated by Sugimoto Yoshio, shows that there have been changes in the family structure in Japanese society in a relatively short period, namely since Japan lost in the second world war and the enactment of a new constitution in 1947 until around 1997 when Sugimoto made this categorization. Changes in the family structure, which in law are directed to the nuclear family structure as found in Western society, are not all followed by Japanese families. These changes lead to various forms of family, one of which is categorized by Sugimoto above.

The appearance of various family structures in Japanese society after the abolition of the law regarding the form of the Japanese family has sparked debate among sociologists, especially observers of the Japanese family. Aruga maintains that the traditional Japanese family form is a large family that runs the IE system, and elements of the system are still implemented in Japanese families sometime after the IE system was abolished (Aruga, [1986](#)).

IE in Modern Japanese Families

In traditional Japanese society, IE systems running for hundreds of years may no longer be found today. All that remains of this IE system are elements related to IE. Regarding this, Ochiai Emiko explained that there is indeed an IE in Japanese society. When a Japanese woman

is getting married, and her partner is the eldest son. At the same time, the woman is also the eldest child in a family consisting only of daughters, and the two couples will discuss how their parents will be if both need their help when their parents are married. They are elderly and can no longer care for their own needs without the help of others. It shows that there is an awareness of the obligation of a child, especially the oldest child, to take care of their parents. This awareness is still embedded in the eldest child, both girls and boys.

The existence of IE in modern Japanese society can be seen from the presentation of Henry from the results of his research that IE still exists in modern Japanese society but has differences between IE before and after the war. In one village in Japan, it was found that children and women were helping with IE's work but only doing light work, namely making sacks used for farming. Only the husband-and-wife work when the harvest arrives, while their children do not participate (Henry, [2003](#), p. 118).

From Henry's explanation, it is further known that it is challenging to find daughters-in-law in rural communities that are still farming because young women are not willing to become daughters-in-law in farming families, especially if their partner is the oldest child. These young women know that after marriage, they will have obligations as farmers, namely helping their husband's work. In farming families who do not have sons, it is also challenging to find a son-in-law willing to become a *mukoyōshi* due to the responsibilities that will be carried out after marriage, namely, to continue the agricultural business managed by the family. The phenomenon described by Henry also shows that there is still awareness in modern Japanese society of their obligations and responsibilities towards their IE (Henry, [2003](#), p. 120).

Other research related to the existence of IE concepts in modern Japanese society can also be seen from the results of research conducted by Tobing. Tobing indicates that there is still the application of the IE system in Japanese society based on his findings that the form of the family system *nisetai jutaku* to *yonsetai jutaku* still exists. There is still a tradition of ceremonial worship of ancestral spirits as a means of binding family members who live far apart and interactions between communities in one area. Tobing's conjecture about the existence of an IE system in Japanese society today has been proven true through research (Tobing, [2006](#), p. 107).

The research conducted by Tobing was on the Kato family in Ayabe City, Kyoto Prefecture, and the Suzuki family in Sakata City, Yamagata Prefecture, Japan. The Kato family is a descendant of Buddhist priests, who have passed down their duties as priests from generation to generation to their grandchildren. Data regarding Kato's family was obtained in 1992, and it is known that three generations above the current Kato (in 1992) were Buddhist priests and sons of Kato, who is now also a priest. In the Kato family tree, Kato's father is now a *mukoyōshi* who also carries out duties as a Buddhist priest (Tobing, [2006](#), pp. 113-115).

Likewise, the research conducted by Tobing on the Suzuki family shows that the Suzuki family is a fisherman family which has been running a family business in the fishery sector for generations by owning assets in the form of fishing equipment. The Suzuki family is quite a family, so there is a *honke* and a *bunke*. Data regarding the Suzuki family was obtained from the local ward. From these data, it is known that until now (in 1992), the Suzuki family still operates the IE system, especially in the fishing business. They cooperate in catching fish and lend each other tools. They also guard the graves of their extended family together, even though the members of IE are much less (Tobing, [2006](#), pp. 116-117).

In addition to rural areas, Tobing also researched Japanese families in urban areas to see the application of the IE system to those areas. Tobing finds merchant families in the Tokyo town of Shitayama still installing *noren* and *kanban* in front of their shops. After being traced,

it was found that the shop that installed the *noren* with the same family name was one large family led by a family head or *kachō* (Tobing, 2006, pp. 121-122).

The latest research on the IE system was carried out by Chau, who examined IE haka, namely Japanese funerals (Chau, 2021). The research results show that the IE system is still used to determine and arrange funerals because funerals are still associated with families, especially when there are rituals such as obon matsuri, which are related to ancestral spirits. Although there is a possibility that this funeral system will change in the future, the change will not occur fundamentally because the IE system is still deeply rooted in Japanese society.

CONCLUSION

The description of the IE system in Japan above can be summarized as follows. The IE system has been abolished in the Japanese constitution, so the system is no longer valid legally. However, based on the results of research by experts related to the IE system, it is known that in modern Japanese society, there is still an application of the rules contained in the IE system. These rules are applied partially and randomly according to the tendencies and needs of the community. The researchers then agreed that modern Japanese society still applies the IE system in their daily life partially or incompletely. The tendency of people to still apply the rules in the IE system can occur because there is no replacement for the Japanese family system, which is considered by modern society even though they have referred to the West. The culture firmly rooted for hundreds of years, such as the traditional family system, can be removed from the government system. However, it is not easy to eradicate it in people's daily lives. Research on the family system in Japan needs to be carried out further, considering that until now, no family system can replace the traditional Japanese family system. Japanese people are still figuring out what kind of family system suits the current conditions of Japanese society. Of course, many Japanese sociologists have thought about this and have conveyed the idea to Japanese society. What kind of family system is appropriate in today's Japanese society is further work which is also challenging to research?

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