

## ABSTRACT

Average life expectancy in Japan climbed sharply after World War II, and is today at the highest level in the world. This increased life expectancy has gradually altered the way Japanese people think about and conceptualize marriage and the family.

The "salaryman" has been the driving force behind Japan's postwar economic miracle, but unquestioning devotion to work has made him a virtual stranger in his own home. Having given their best years - and most of their time - to their employers, many men enter retirement unable to relate to wives who have long since given up on their "wet leaves" - a nickname for husbands who, cut adrift from the routine of office life, have no idea how to spend their newly acquired free time.

A split pension system slated to go into effect in April 2007 enables divorced women to access up to half of their ex-husbands' future pension payments, making divorce more financially feasible for women who have not held full-time jobs. Modern Japanese women are more independent. They are better educated, so it is easier for them to find work. They are more independent financially, but also in a psychological sense. It's hard to say exactly why any couple gets divorced, but the pension change has given women a stronger reason than ever to turn their thoughts into actions. In the last decade, divorce among middle age couple have been rising until now. This phenomenon leads to the question as follows: **what are the factors that cause *jukunen rikon* in Japan?**

These factors divided into two parts which is internal and external factors. Internal factors consist of the passivity of husband-wife relationship, domestic violence, sexless marriage and extra marital affairs. External factors consist of economic factors (a split pension system) and socio-cultural factors which is changing in postwar generation of Japanese women and social expectation of Japanese women. These factors will be analyzed by Peter Blau's Social Exchange theory.

From these factor, it can be concluded that women tend to divorce cause they feel dissatisfaction from their husband. Their needs of affection and love cannot be fulfilled by their husband. Japanese women's way of thinking has been changing, while their husband still in the old concept of women. According to Blau's Social Exchange theory, the imbalance of the exchange relationship between husband and wife can lead to conflict that will cause a divorce.

Keyword: *jukunen rikon*, split pension system, retired husband, social exchange theory.