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Men in the Making

An Analysis of Parental Guidebooks on the Upbringing of Boys and Male Teens in Japan

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Abstract (English)

This thesis investigates the traits and expectations defining masculinity in contemporary Japan, as depicted in parenting guidebooks on the upbringing of boys and male teens. Employing Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, Bourdieu's theories on "male habitus" and "heritage", and Sedgwick's ideas on the "homosocial continuum" and the "erotic triangle", along with insights from Japanese masculinity scholars like Ishii-Kuntz Masako, Hidaka Tomoko, and Romit Dasgupta, the study conducts a qualitative discourse analysis of three Japanese guidebooks. It analyzes the content as well as the arguments, communication strategies, and stylistic devices employed in these books to reveal contemporary understandings and ideals of masculinity in Japan. Furthermore, by relating these contemporary ideals to "salaryman masculinity", the thesis evaluates how current portrayals of masculinity align with or diverge from the established norms of Japanese hegemonic masculinity, thereby offering insights into its potential evolution.

Abstract (German)

Diese Arbeit untersucht die Merkmale und Erwartungen, die Männlichkeit im zeitgenössischen Japan prägen, wie sie in Erziehungsratgebern für Jungen und männliche Jugendliche dargestellt werden. Unter Anwendung von Connells Konzept der hegemonialen Männlichkeit, Bourdieus Ausarbeitungen zum „männlichen Habitus" und „Erbe", sowie Sedgwicks Theorien zum „homosozialen Kontinuum" und „erotischen Dreieck" und unter Berücksichtigung von Einsichten aus der japanischen kritischen Männlichkeitenforschung von Wissenschaftler*innen wie Ishii-Kuntz Masako, Hidaka Tomoko und Romit Dasgupta führt die Studie eine qualitative Diskursanalyse mit drei japanischen Erziehungsratgebern durch. Dabei werden sowohl der Inhalt als auch die Argumente, Kommunikationsstrategien und stilistischen Mittel dieser Bücher untersucht, um zeitgenössische Vorstellungen von Männlichkeit in Japan zu enthüllen. Darüber hinaus wird durch den Vergleich dieser zeitgenössischen Ideale mit der „Salaryman-Männlichkeit" bewertet, wie aktuelle Darstellungen von Männlichkeit mit den etablierten Normen der japanischen hegemonialen Männlichkeit übereinstimmen oder von ihnen abweichen, und bietet somit Einblicke in deren potentielle Weiterentwicklung.

1. Introduction

Wedding potential, high education, a successful career…these are just some of the 'qualities' expected of Japanese men, as outlined in the parenting guidebook *Otoko no ko no sodatekata* (2009). But why are these specific expectations being emphasized? What influences have contributed to the persistence of these masculinity ideals in Japan? And how do these traits shape perceptions of Japanese masculinity today?

In this paper, I explore the traits and characteristics that Japanese boys are encouraged to develop. I will examine the expectations they are meant to meet, what is considered desirable or undesirable in men, and what this reveals about the contemporary understanding of masculinity in Japan.

Historically, men and masculinities have received relatively little attention in the field of gender related studies. While there were early attempts to address this, such as the men's liberation writings of the 1970s, substantial research in this area was lacking until Tim Carrigan, Raewyn Connell, and John Lee published their seminal paper "Toward a new sociology of masculinity" in 1985. This paper introduced a feminist approach to studying masculinity, challenging the social determinism of sex-role theory and refining the concept of "hegemonic masculinity", which had been initially discussed in *Ockers & disco-maniacs: a discussion of sex, gender and secondary schooling* in 1982. Eleven years later Connell published *Masculinities* (1995), which to this day remains highly influential in critical Men's Studies, as well as in disciplines like Sociology, Women's Studies, and Education (Wedgwood 2009: 332).

Connell's model views masculinity as a social practice shaped by, responding to, and influencing existing social structures (Treiblmayr 2016: 105). A key concept in her work is hegemonic masculinity, which emerges in specific historical contexts against other competing possibilities (Treiblmayr 2016: 105-106). This dominance is not solely maintained through violence or coercion but also relies on consent or at least tolerance (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 833, 847; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87). The concept of hegemonic masculinity has contributed significantly to the upswing and increasing establishment of critical Men's Studies since the 1990s (Treiblmayr 2010: 403).

Although, in view of globalization, the concept of "transnational business masculinity" has been proposed as a new form of hegemonic masculinity, characterized by individualism and market

dominance, hegemonic masculinities still vary depending on the structures of a respective society (Meuser 2010: 332). Now while the construction of masculinities in a global context is undeniably significant, masculinities that emerge outside of European and North American milieus are often overlooked in international academic discourse. In particular, research on East Asian masculinities remains relatively limited compared to the extensive studies on European and North American masculinities (Taga 2004: 129, 137-138).

Nonetheless, in Japan, Critical Masculinity Research has already established a solid foundation and a substantial body of work on Japanese masculinities by both domestic and international scholars exists. This research primarily focuses on examining the formation and evolution of hegemonic masculinity in Japan over several decades[1], as well as exploring various (mainly non-hegemonic) "Japanese masculinities" and their construction[2]. Additionally, numerous studies address gender roles within Japanese families[3], with a particular focus on fatherhood[4], and investigate the crafting processes of Japanese masculinities across different settings and time periods[5].

According to Critical Masculinity Research in Japan[6], the so-called "salaryman masculinity" is considered the Japanese hegemonic form of masculinity. During Japan's economic boom between the 1960s and 1980s, salarymen[7] became the emblem of Japanese masculinity and continued to embody the archetypal male citizen until long after: a heterosexual, fertile and physically fit employee (Dasgupta 2013: 2). Even today, the figure of the salaryman still shapes Japanese everyday life and the image of the 'ideal' man – albeit not as strongly as it did a few decades ago.

Some researchers, such as Itō Kimio 伊藤公雄, who has done a lot of research in the fields of Culture Sociology and Gender Studies in Japan, and Taga Futoshi 多賀太, a well-known

[1] E.g. Dasgupta 2013, Hidaka 2010, Pliassova 2011, Shibata 2007, etc.
[2] E.g. Charlebois 2013, Holtzman 2018, Light 2003, Luschmann 2018, etc.
[3] E.g. Bleicher 2015, Holloway 2010, Ishii-Kuntz 2018/2021/2022, Ishii-Kuntz/Yeung 2013, Sakuragi et al. 2022, Tanaka 2008 etc.
[4] E.g. Mizukoshi et al. 2013, Morishita 2006, Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004, Ishii-Kuntz 2013, Steinberg et al. 2000, Stoica 2021, etc.
[5] E.g. Light 2003, Low 2003, Taga 2003 etc.
[6] See Hidaka 2010, McLelland/Dasgupta 2005, Pliassova 2011 among others.
[7] The term salaryman (*sararīman*, サラリーマン) refers to male office workers in the private sector, typically holding secure, well-paid positions based on seniority. Traditionally, these employees pledged lifelong loyalty to their company. Today, the term broadly applies to heterosexual men fulfilling the roles of fathers and breadwinners (Shibata 2007: 202; Pliassova 2011: 37; Luschmann 2018: 21).

representative in the research fields of Japanese Masculinity Studies, Gender Studies, and the Sociology of Education, have however argued that the salaryman masculinity is under attack from a variety of forces and therefore bound to change or be replaced (Gender Summit 2019; McLelland/Dasgupta 2005: 96-97). Given that many significant studies[8] on this topic are over a decade old, it remains uncertain whether salaryman masculinity still represents hegemonic masculinity in Japan today (see also, chapter 3.5.2.). Hence, it is crucial to examine contemporary expectations for Japanese boys through the lens of Japanese hegemonic masculinity, assessing whether these characteristics are being reproduced or if deviations are occurring.

The family, as a child's initial point of contact with society, plays a crucial role in shaping their perceptions of gender, including masculinity and femininity. Given the significant responsibility of child-rearing, parents often turn to parenting guidebooks for detailed advice. These guidebooks not only serve an educational purpose but also reflect prevailing societal expectations and desires for boys. Consequently, analyzing them offers valuable insights into contemporary understandings of masculinity in Japan.

Advice literature is a popular genre in Japan, known for providing practical guidance on meeting societal expectations and achieving personal goals. It thus serves as an important resource for examining prevailing notions and ideals of masculinity. Despite its widespread appeal and accessibility compared to academic texts, this genre remains surprisingly underexplored in scholarly research, offering a unique opportunity to grasp the nuanced and evolving understandings of masculinity within contemporary Japanese society (Gomez 2020; Ozaki 2017).

This study employs a qualitative discourse analysis of three selected guidebooks on raising boys and male teens to uncover current perceptions of masculinity in Japan. Using Siegfried Jäger's (2015) methodology, I will examine the thematic foci, goals, and ideological approaches to masculinity in these guidebooks. In doing so, I will not only focus on the explicitly desired character traits presented in the guidebooks but also seek to uncover the underlying, often subliminal ideals of masculinity as conveyed in the books. By identifying the contemporary understandings of masculinity, I will be able to relate them to salaryman masculinity, thereby assessing how current portrayals of masculinity align with, diverge from, or transform the established norms associated with Japanese hegemonic masculinity. This approach will reveal potential shifts in gender expectations and highlight deviations from 'traditional' masculine ideals.

[8] Dasgupta 2013, Hidaka 2010, Taga 2004, etc.

Consequently, this thesis tries to find answers to the following research questions: What are Japanese boys supposed to be like according to the guidebooks? What characteristics, qualities and values are considered desirable in Japanese men? What are the underlying expectations of masculinity within the books? And what does this tell us about the ideals regarding masculinity in Japan? Is the salaryman masculinity really changing or being challenged? If yes, in what way? Deriving from these questions, the following main research questions are going to be answered: What image of masculinity is constructed in three Japanese parental guidebooks and what arguments, communication methods, and stylistic devices are used to employ this? To what extent do these descriptions coincide with the "salaryman masculinity"?

To answer these questions, the following guidebooks are included in the analysis:

① Morotomi, Yoshihiko 諸富祥彦

2009 *Otoko no ko no sodatekata. 'Kekkon-ryoku' 'gaku-ryoku' 'shigoto-ryoku'. 0 ~ 12 saiji no oya ga saiteigen to shite oku beki koto.* 男の子の育て方。「結婚力」「学力」「仕事力」。0〜12 歳児の親が最低限としておくべきこと。[How to raise boys. 'Marital', 'academic' and 'work' skills. Minimum requirements for parents of 0–12-year-olds]. Tōkyō: WAVE shuppan WAVE 出版 [WAVE Publishing].

② Ōta, Keiko 太田啓子

2020 *Kore kara no otoko no ko-tachi e. 'Otokorashisa' kara jiyū ni naru tame no ressun.* これからの男の子たちへ。「男らしさ」から自由になるためのレッスン。 [To the boys of the future. Lessons in freedom from 'masculinity']. Tōkyō: Ōtsuki shoten 大月書店 [Ōtsuki Bookstore].

③ Yanagisawa, Yukio 柳沢幸雄

2020 *Haha-oya ga shiranai to yabai. 'Otoko no ko' no sodatekata.* 母親が知らないとヤバイ。「男の子」の育て方。[Mothers are in trouble if they don't know this. How to raise 'boys']. Tōkyō: PHP kenkyūjo PHP 研究所 [PHP Research Institute].

The selection of these books was based on a quantitative structural analysis of all parental guidebooks that were available in Japanese and international online retailers[9] and the bookstore Kinokuniya 紀伊国屋. The online search for the guidebooks was conducted with a number of selected keywords[10].

To support my analysis, I will engage deeply with Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, Bourdieu's ideas on the "male habitus" and "heritage", and Sedgwick's theories on the "homosocial continuum" and the "erotic triangle". Given the study's dual focus on gender

[9] Kadowaka Group Book Walker, Kinokuniya 紀伊国屋, Rakuten Books 楽天ブックス, Japanese Amazon.
[10] See chapter 5.2.

theory and Japanese Studies, it is crucial to incorporate critical Masculinity Research in Japan. This includes first and foremost the late Romit Dasgupta's influential research on salaryman masculinity, Hidaka Tomoko's ethnographic study on generational changes in hegemonic masculinity, and Ishii-Kuntz Masako's 石井クンツ昌子 research on fatherhood and men's involvement in childcare.

Consequently, the following chapter, Chapter 2, provides an overview of current Masculinity Research in Japan, detailing its historical context and key focus areas, and clarifies the relevance of this study. Chapter 3 then delves into theoretical foundations, exploring concepts such as hegemonic masculinity, the role of the breadwinner, the idea of a crisis of masculinity, transnational business masculinity, and the homosocial continuum. This section also examines homosociality in the Japanese context, tracing the historical development of 'ideal' masculinities and the contemporary status of the salaryman archetype.

In the subsequent chapter, Chapter 4, the study then examines Japanese family dynamics and parent-child-relationships, with particular attention to the roles of mothers and fathers. Following this, Chapter 5 presents the methodology section, detailing the qualitative discourse analysis approach used in the study. It outlines the research process, including the structural analysis and the selection of the research corpus.

In the penultimate Chapter 6, the analysis of three chosen Japanese parenting guidebooks is provided. This chapter examines each book's background, cover, chapters, overall content, and includes a detailed analysis of selected text passages. It also compares the three guidebooks offering key insights into contemporary notions of masculinity in Japan and relating these findings to the concept of salaryman masculinity. Lastly, the final chapter, Chapter 7, summarizes and interprets the study's findings in a broader context.

By analyzing three parenting guidebooks, this research aims to uncover the contemporary understandings of masculinity in Japan and assesses whether the 'traditional' notion of the salaryman archetype is undergoing transformation.

2. State of Research and Significance of the Study

Critical Masculinity Research originally traces back to US-American Men's Studies, where feminist theory and discussions on men's roles in transforming patriarchy laid the groundwork for examining masculinity critically. In Japan, a similar development occurred, influenced by the

Women's Liberation Movements of the 1970s. Feminist researchers and journalists began addressing masculinities in the 1980s, initially focusing on translating 'Western' studies. However, despite early investigations into gender roles and some pioneering isolated works[11], comprehensive academic studies on Japanese masculinities were sparse until the mid-1990s (Taga 2004: 136-137; Németh 2014: 10-12).

A turning point came in the mid-1990s when a group of prominent feminist researchers published the seven-volume collection *Nihon no feminizumu* (日本のフェミニズム, *Feminism in Japan*), which included a volume on Japanese Men's Studies. This development prompted researchers[12] to delve into Masculinity Studies, leading to calls for the establishment of *danseigaku* (男性学 Men's Studies) complementary to *joseigaku* (女性学 Women's Studies). In 1992, Itō Kimio 伊藤公雄, a leading figure in Japanese Men's Studies, inaugurated the first Men's Studies course at Kyōto University (Taga 2004: 136-137; Németh 2014: 10-12). The 1990s thus marked a pivotal period in Japanese Men's Studies, significantly shaping contemporary Critical Masculinity Research in Japan (Taga 2004: 136-137; Németh 2014: 10-12).

Over time, the relationship between masculinity and gainful employment, especially in relation to health issues, has become a central topic in Japanese Masculinity Research, sparking major public debates (Cook 2019: 51). Simultaneously, studies have also explored men's responsibilities outside of paid work, including intimacy, sex, care-work, and relationships. These themes are also widely discussed in the public sphere, with the conversation mostly focusing on what men *should* and *should not* do, such as the expectations placed on *sōshokukei danshi*[13] (草食系男子 lit. "herbivore men"), or criticism of *otaku*[14] (おたく) and irregularly employed men known as *freeters* (*furiitā*[15] フリーター; Cook 2019: 52-53).

Another strong focus lies on the examination of non-hegemonic, or so called "alternative" and "subordinate" masculinities. Emerging in the early 2000s, this research covers a wide range of

[11] Such as Kasuga Kisuyo's 春日キスヨ epistemological study with single fathers *Fushikatei o ikiru* (父子家庭を生きる Living as a father and son) in 1989.
[12] Foremost among them Watanabe Tsuneo 渡辺 恒夫 (a pioneer in empirical approaches to Masculinity Studies) in his book *Datsudansei no jidai: andorojinasu o mezasu bunmeigaku* (脱男性の時代―アンドロジナスをめざす文明学 The Age of abandoning masculinity: studies towards an androgynous civilization) of 1986.
[13] *Sōshokukei danshi* refers to young men who express little interest in sexual and/or romantic relationships with women.
[14] *Otaku* are fans of things mostly related to popular culture, often with obsessive tendencies.
[15] *Freeter* are (young) people who are not in full-time employment.

topics including beauty care, transgender experiences, masculinities within families, fatherhood, marriage, illness, and violence.

Beyond this, there is considerable academic interest in various aspects of male bodies, including athletic, military, commodified, or fantasized bodies etc. (Cook 2019: 53). However, research on masculinity in relation to sexuality and gender identity remains underdeveloped compared to other areas[16] (Cook 2019: 54). What's more, intersectionality also continues to receive insufficient attention within *danseigaku*, often neglecting the examination of masculinities in relation to race, class, or dis_abilities. Cook also criticizes Japanese Masculinity Research for not adequately addressing how women contribute to the construction of male norms and ideals (Cook 2019: 54).

To this day, Masculinity Research in and around Japan continues to examine the salaryman in relation to Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity (Cook 2019: 50). Current research on salaryman masculinity reveals a nuanced exploration of its continuity and transformation across generations. Tomoko Hidaka's book *Salaryman Masculinity: Continuity and Change in Hegemonic Masculinity in Japan* (2010) is foundational in tracing the generational shifts in hegemonic masculinity through life-history narratives of salarymen, illustrating both persistence and subtle changes amidst Japan's socio-economic transformations. A similar study by Ekaterina Pliassova, *Identity Shifts in Hegemonic Masculinities: The Case of Japanese Salarymen* (2011), complements Hidaka's publication by delving into the evolving identity of younger salarymen, revealing how contemporary discourses of gender and masculinity intersect with work and personal life. Romit Dasgupta's *Re-reading the Salaryman in Japan: Crafting Masculinities* (2013) further expands the analysis by situating the salaryman within broader gender constructs, offering a critical examination of how masculinities are crafted and performed within Japanese corporate culture. Meanwhile, James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki's *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa* (2003) moves beyond the hegemonic stereotype of the salaryman to explore marginalized masculinities, highlighting the diversity and fluidity within contemporary Japanese male identities. Yoshio Shibata's study, *Salaryman Subjectivity in Modern Japan* (2007), emphasizing the historical production of salaryman masculinity through Foucauldian and Bourdieuian frameworks, underscores the role of modern power technologies in

[16] Although there is a range of publications on heteronormativity, homosexuality, and trans* men, overall, the research is still less developed than other research areas (Cook 2019: 54).

shaping this subjectivity.

Many of these studies point to a transformation in salaryman masculinity; however, since Dasgupta's 2013 publication, there have been no major new studies specifically addressing the evolving nature and contingent aspects of salaryman masculinity in Japan. While my search for sources is naturally constrained by linguistic, financial, and access limitations, the absence of prominent, more recent publications in this area indicates that there remains significant room for further research. Concurrently, extensive research has emerged on "new", "popular", or "idolized" Japanese masculinities. Some discussions within this research propose that male identities have diverged from 'traditional' roles, however, this approach can be problematic. Categorizing or indexing masculinities through labels or buzzwords that fall under so-called "new" or "soft" masculinities (such as *ikumen*[17] イクメン, *bentō danshi*[18] 弁当男子, *or suiitsu danshi*[19]スイーツ男子, etc.) obscures the complex and diverse life experiences of men, while also designating some life realities as "new" or "trendy" that may not necessarily be new at all (Holtzman 2018: 283; Luschmann 2018: 5; Cook 2019: 53).

The scarcity of recent studies on the contingency of hegemonic masculinity in Japan, combined with the growing tendency to differentiate and consolidate contemporary masculinities into various fixed categories, raises important questions about the current understanding and ideals of masculinity in Japan and what these notions reveal about the state of salaryman masculinity.

Examining how masculinity is portrayed in parental guidebooks on raising boys will illuminate the prevailing idealized masculinities in Japan, reflecting broader societal values. Moreover, the analysis will also reveal how these ideals either align with or diverge from 'traditional' salaryman masculinity. Consequently, this approach will not only clarify the expectations surrounding masculinity in Japan but also offer insights into the evolution of salaryman masculinity by highlighting shifts in gender norms and expectations.

[17] The term *ikumen* refers to fathers actively involved in childcare. The term combines the Chinese character for childcare, *iku* (育), with the English word "men". It also alludes to the term *ikemen* (イケメン), meaning a handsome or stylish man, derived from *iketeru* (イケてる) = cool or good-looking, implying that active fatherhood is cool (Mizukoshi et al. 2016: 213).

[18] Men who bring home-cooked meals to work.

[19] Men who prefer sweets and are viewed as feminine due to the association of sweets with women's preferences.

3. Theoretical Frameworks and Contexts of Masculinity: Analyzing Concepts, Influences, and Evolutions

In a contemporary everyday understanding, masculinity is often reduced to a person's *behavior*. This essentialist perspective implies that those who deviate from behaviors typically associated with masculinity[20] are consequently deemed 'unmanly', or more accurately, 'feminine'. This binary view of gender, which contrasts masculinity with femininity, implies that masculinity is defined primarily in opposition to femininity, fundamentally relying on this contrast for its definition and thus lacking an independent existence. Although this dichotomous view of gender emerged in 19th-century Europe under bourgeois ideology and is therefore relatively recent, it has become deeply entrenched in many societies and was widely disseminated or enforced in many areas of the world in the course of colonization (Connell 2000: 87-89).

When people later began to explore what masculinity truly *is* and how it should be defined, they encountered significant challenges. Early attempts to define masculinity[21] and its 'essence' often fell into essentialist traps and positivist social science approaches struggled to formulate a definition free from dichotomous ideas (Connell 2000: 88-89). Subsequent definitions went one step further and recognized the differences between 'biological' sex and social gender, however, they still failed by normatively prescribing masculinity as 'how men should be'. This approach was also problematic because, paradoxically (or ironically), only very few people were (and to this day are) able to meet the *male norm*, raising questions about the validity of a norm that few people achieve. Semiotic approaches, which understood masculinity through a system of symbolic differences contrasting male and female roles, defined masculinity as "non-femininity", with the phallus symbolically positioned as the *signifier* and femininity defined by *deficiency*. While this approach has been influential among feminist, post-structuralist, and cultural theorists, its applicability remains limited (Connell 2000: 90-91).

Against this background Raewyn Connell argues that masculinity (and femininity) should not be defined as object (something natural, a character trait, a behavior, a norm), but should be understood through the processes and relationships that lead individuals to live gendered lives.

[20] Behavior associated with masculinity could entail being aggressive instead of gentle, or rational instead of emotional, etc. (Connell 2000: 87).
[21] E.g. approaches of Sigmund Freud or Lionel Tiger.

According to this understanding, masculinity is, in essence, a *position within gender relations*, encompassing the practices, physical, cultural, and personal experiences through which men and women assume their positions (Connell 2000: 91). Gender is thus not defined by a rigid structure of biological determinants but constructed through historical processes that regulate the body[22].

Connell views gendering as a *social practice*, characterized by its omnipresence, fragility, and capacity for change. Every form of masculinity (as a configuration of practice) is situated within a network of relational structures that can evolve along different historical trajectories. Consequently, masculinity, like femininity, is subject to internal contradictions and historical ruptures (Connell 2000: 93-94).

Connell identifies three key conditions that underpin the structure of social gender:

a) Power relations: The ubiquitous subordination of women to men, reflecting male dominance.

b) Production relations: The gender-based division of labor and its economic consequences, including the advantages men gain due to their lower contribution to social labor and the distribution of capital.

c) Emotional attachment structure (cathexis): The practices shaping and realizing (sexual) desire, which are integral to the gender order (Connell 2000: 94-95).

This Connellian framework of masculinity – as a position in gendered practice, shaped by dynamic, relational, and contradictory social processes – provides the theoretical foundation for this study. Within the parenting guidebooks, there is a frequent conflation of masculinity with 'being a man', a blurring that is also evident throughout the analysis of the guidebooks. Nonetheless, it is essential to recognize that masculinity, as conceptualized in this framework, is not intrinsically linked to being a man but represents a set of socially negotiated roles and expectations. Accordingly, this paper perceives masculinity as a dynamic and socially constructed concept, distinct from fixed identities, shaped by cultural norms and relational practices rather than inherent traits.

[22] See, for example, the work of Gayle Rubin or Judith Butler.

3.1. Masculinity and Upbringing: Exploring Bourdieu's Male Habitus and Concept of Inheritance

Gender formation[23] processes are inherently complex, dynamic, and influenced by prevailing discourses. This is equally true for the formation of gender identity, which begins in early interactions and is shaped by the accumulation of meanings attributed to the *self* (Bird 1996: 122).

Gender identity is a historically contingent construct, influenced by discursive processes. As Bird (1996) notes, while socialization sets the conditions for interaction, it does not dictate how individuals internalize these meanings (Bird 1996: 122). Men's experiences are therefore shaped by social institutions and historical contexts, and they navigate both shared and individual meanings of masculinity to form their gender identity (Bird 1996: 122).

Overall, parents and the family environment play an important role in the formation of gender identity in early childhood. As primary socializers, parents (or guardians) often unwittingly reinforce existing gender structures and model gender-specific behaviors through their roles at work, within the family, and in society. The parents themselves are in a dynamic process of reproducing and deconstructing the stereotypical gender norms, influenced by social institutions and personal views on gender (Kane 2012: 3-4). However, the gendering process involves not only parents but also other family members, media, educational institutions, and peers. Even the children themselves are active participants in this process, rather than passive recipients of gender norms (Kane 2012: 21). In an examination of parental advice books for the upbringing of boys, it is also vital to consider how the adoption of educational measures and goals recommended in the advice books can directly impact boys' gender development.

In this context, the work of Pierre Bourdieu is particularly important. In his work Bourdieu describes the "male habitus" as a system of dispositions that influences how individuals perceive, think about, and act in the world. He defines this habitus as a relatively stable set of internalized attitudes and practices, developed through socialization, which functions as a "substitute for instinct" for its *bearers*. This habitus reproduces the dispositions of previous generations and is characterized by a "de-feminization" (Baader et al. 2012: 11-12; Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 42).

[23] Building on Taga Futoshi's definition, this paper employs the expressions "gender formation" and "formation of masculinities" to describe "the process by which individuals acquire knowledge about gender differences and become associated with a specific gender identity" (Taga 2003: 138).

However, this theoretical elaboration does not fully address how the habitus is actually 'formed' during childhood (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 40-41). Bourdieu attempts to address this gap by proposing that the "libido dominandi" – the desire to dominate other men and subordinate women – forms the basis of the male habitus. In this regard, the homosocial male sphere, where competition among men is a significant factor, plays a crucial role in shaping the habitus (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 42).

The narrow focus on male homosocial peer groups limits however the view of other socialization contexts, such as the family (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 42). Here, the Bourdieuian concept of *inheritance* becomes important. This concept refers to the intergenerational transmission of a variety of characteristics, as well as economic, social, and cultural capital and power. In this understanding, inheritance is not reduced to a purely material meaning but must be apprehended in a broader social sense – as a continuous, ambivalent, and conflict-ridden process. According to Bourdieu, the course and outcome of this inheritance process depends on the extent of the potential inheritance, and on the attitude of the heirs to their inheritance (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 43). Although Bourdieu's concept of inheritance refers primarily to power and social status, it also proves productive for tracing complex processes of intergenerational transmission of gendered dispositions (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 44; Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 51). It therefore plays a substantial role in the analysis of the connection between upbringing and the formation of masculinity.

Altogether, familial upbringing and the associated inheritance processes are crucial in shaping masculinities, particularly through parent-child relationships that significantly influence the development of a boy's habitus during childhood and adolescence (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 53). Consequently, the analysis of the parental guidebooks will strongly focus on how these parent-child dynamics are portrayed, with Bourdieu's theoretical framework serving as a foundational tool for this investigation.

3.2. Connell's Framework on Masculinities

In 1993, Raewyn Connell published *Masculinities*, which remains one of the most influential theories in the field of Critical Men's and Masculinity Studies. Connell's theory provides a critical feminist analysis of historically specific masculinities while recognizing the varying degrees to which individual men reproduce *dominant* forms of masculinity (Wedgwood 2009: 329). A key

element of Connell's work is the elaboration of different forms of masculinity, all formed in relation to hegemonic masculinity (see chapter 3.2.1). Differentiating between various forms of masculinity and recognizing their plurality offers many advantages; at the same time, Connell warns against using these forms as rigid categories (e.g. stating that there is only 'one' form of 'black masculinity' etc.). Rather, they offer a framework for analysis through which gender relations and social structures can be analyzed. In this, it is crucial to examine the relationships between these masculinities as well (Connell 2000: 97).

Connell identifies three fundamental non-hegemonic masculinities: subordinate, complicit, and marginalized[24]. Subordinate masculinity, for instance, includes men who are effeminate or homosexual and face subordination through practices such as homophobic statements and actions (Connell 2000: 99; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87). Complicit masculinity describes men who do not embody hegemonic masculinity but benefit from its patriarchal dividends, contributing to its preservation (Connell 2000: 100; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87). Marginalized masculinity refers to men marginalized by other social structures such as class or race, relative to the dominant group's hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2000: 102; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87)[25]. While these categories are not rigid or static, they interact reciprocally with hegemonic masculinity and offer a useful framework for analyzing and understanding gender relations and social structures (Connell 2000: 97, 99; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87).

Connell initially linked the concept of hegemonic masculinity with the concept of "hegemonic femininity", later renamed "emphasized femininity" due to the asymmetrical positions of masculinity and femininity in patriarchal gender orders. Although the focus on hegemonic masculinity has often overshadowed the connection to emphasized femininity, the latter remains crucial for maintaining patriarchal structures[26] (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 848).

[24] Additionally, Connell and Messerschmidt also describe the development of the so-called "protest masculinity", a compensatory hypermasculinity constructed primarily in local working-class milieus and among ethnically marginalized men (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 847-848; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87).

[25] While hegemony, subordination, and complicity are interconnected within the gender order's internal dynamics, marginalization intersects social gender with structures such as class or race, leading to additional interaction patterns among various masculinities (Connell 2000: 101-103).

[26] This is because binary gender models are inherently relational, defining masculinities in contrast to real or imagined forms of femininity. Additionally, women also play significant roles in constructing masculinity. Therefore, the concept of emphasized femininity should not be overlooked (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 848).

3.2.1. Hegemonic Masculinity: Definition and Characteristics

The concept of hegemonic masculinity, developed by Connell in the 1980s, remains a cornerstone in Critical Masculinity Studies (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 829-830; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 85). Originating from Gramsci's analysis of class relations, *hegemony* refers to the social dynamics by which a group achieves and maintains a leading position through cultural and institutional means (rather than physical violence; Connell 2000: 98; Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 832). This dominance is dynamic and historically relative, requiring a continuous alignment between cultural ideals and institutional power (Connell 2000: 98; Meuser 2010: 328). Against this background the concept of hegemonic masculinity was coined.

According to Connell, hegemonic masculinity emerged as a phenomenon of occidental modernity. Laclau and Mouffe argue that hegemony depends on the 'openness' of society; thus, the closed society of the Middle Ages did not allow for a hegemonic form of politics and therefore also no hegemonic masculinity(ies) (Meuser 2010: 328-329). Historian Wolfgang Schmale links the European concept of hegemonic masculinity to the Enlightenment and the rise of the bourgeois model of society. By the late 18th century, Enlightenment ideals of masculinity had permeated rural 'Western' societies and were tied to capitalism, nationalism, and imperialism throughout the 19th century. This model spread to the working class and became increasingly dominant, reaching a hegemonic status between 1860 and 1880 (Treiblmayr 2016: 107).

Essentially, hegemonic masculinity is a form of masculinity that legitimizes the inequality between women and men or femininity and masculinity in a given social and historical setting. Hegemonic masculinities can arise where there is a connection between an ideal and an institutionally anchored power base. They are common and embedded all around us as part of our everyday lives. Hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed, static, or descriptive concept, but abstract and constructed in relation to various non-hegemonic masculinities and in relation to women (Connell 2000: 98; Treiblmayr 2016: 106; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87, 89-90).

Connell/Messerschmidt (2005) describe masculinities as "configurations of practice" that vary according to gender relations in particular social settings. Therefore, hegemonic masculinities (can) evolve over time, incorporating elements of other (hegemonic) masculinities and adapting to new contexts to maintain supremacy (Connell 2000: 98; Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 833, 836, 847; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87).

To expand the concept of hegemonic masculinity, it is vital to distinguish between

“hegemonic masculinities” and “dominant masculinities”. These terms are often incorrectly interchanged in academia, where dominant forms are mistakenly identified as hegemonic masculinities (Meuser 2010: 327; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 89). Dominant masculinities and femininities, unlike hegemonic masculinities and emphasized femininities, are “the most celebrated, common, or current form of masculinity and femininity in a particular social setting” but are not always linked to gender hegemony (Messerschmidt 2020: 24-25). They do not necessarily legitimize a hierarchical relationship between genders but gain meaning in relation to other masculinities and femininities. While hegemonic masculinities can be dominant, dominant forms are not inherently hegemonic unless they legitimize an unequal gender order (Messerschmidt 2020: 25).

Hegemonic masculinities are not necessarily the most powerful or common patterns but are normative ideals that embody the most honored way of being a man in a particular context. They require all other men to relate to them and justify the subordination of women. Men can either embrace or distance themselves from hegemonic masculinity based on their own desires (Connell 2000: 98; Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 832, 838, 841, 846; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 87-88).

Despite its widespread use, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has faced scrutiny and criticism, particularly concerning who is seen as embodying it and its frequent association with solely negative traits. These criticisms highlight the need to view hegemonic masculinity as a fluid *positioning through discursive practices* rather than *a fixed type of man* (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 838, 841, 846; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 87-88).

After assessing the criticisms, Connell/Messerschmidt (2005) revised the concept, emphasizing four key points:

1) The dynamics and internal contradictions of hegemonic masculinities should be recognized, including the potential for movement toward gender equality (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 829; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 88).

2) A holistic understanding of gender hierarchy must be applied, which considers the agency of women and subordinate groups, as well as the intersection of gender with other social inequalities (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 829; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 88).

3) A nuanced treatment is needed regarding the embodiment of masculinities within contexts of privilege and power, and how hegemonic masculinities can be contested and transformed (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 829; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 88).

4) The geography of masculinities must be explicitly addressed by analyzing them at local, regional, and global levels to understand how processes such as economic restructuring and migration reshape gender patterns[27] (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 829; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 88).

3.2.2. Being the Breadwinner: Hegemonic Masculinity and the Role of Gainful Employment in Japan

In analyzing hegemonic masculinity, the breadwinner role is crucial (Meuser 2010: 329). This role, traditionally defined as the primary income earner in a family, remains influential in shaping gender dynamics (Yodanis/Lauer 2007: 1308). Despite evolving gender norms, these roles continue to affect the distribution of financial resources and responsibilities within households, often driven by binary gender expectations (Manchester et al. 2019; Yodanis/Lauer 2007: 1310).

Especially in Japan and in relation to the salaryman masculinity, the breadwinner role is still of great significance. This is attributable not only to entrenched gender norms but also to structural factors. The Japanese social policy system has historically been predicated on the male breadwinner model, where men are expected to be lifelong employees, and women are typically in non-regular or part-time employment. This system supports the notion that men are the primary earners while women handle domestic responsibilities and childcare. Although 'non-traditional' family structures such as single parents and dual-income households are increasingly common, the Japanese social system largely continues to uphold the 'traditional' model. This arrangement still profoundly impacts employment practices, job opportunities, birth rates, and family dynamics in Japan (Osawa 2004: 54; Osawa et al. 2013).

Given the societal expectations associated with the breadwinner role and the pressure it places on boys and young men, it is crucial to examine the significance of this role within the parental guidebooks on the upbringing of boys. This includes a critical analysis of how employment and work culture are depicted in the parenting guidebooks, as well as the division of labor between parents and the representations of work conveyed in the books. Understanding these portrayals can

[27] Connell and Messerschmidt argue that the influence of the "global" is often exaggerated, while the impact of the "regional" is underrecognized. Research indicates that regional masculinities are not necessarily dominated by global trends, though economic and migratory changes can alter local patterns of femininity and masculinity (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 850).

reveal whether 'traditional' gender roles are reinforced or challenged, thereby illuminating the evolution of salaryman masculinity.

3.3. The Crisis of Masculinity and Transnational Business Masculinity

The concept of a "crisis of masculinity" has long been discussed in mass media and popular science, referring to shifts in a previously stable male identity. This crisis is associated with a diversification of male identities and a perceived 'loss of power' (Meuser 2010: 325). On the one hand, this pluralization allows for the expression of various forms of masculinity; however, by pointing to a crisis, a hegemonic form of masculinity among men is constantly reasserted. Moreover, the crisis is often seen as a devastating consequence of feminism, which is said to have produced a society of misandry and contempt for men (Connell 2000: 105-107; Gourarier 2019: 186; Meuser 2010: 325-327).

Meuser distinguishes two dimensions of this crisis: the individual dimension, which relates to the fragility of masculinity and the need for constant validation, and the social dimension, which concerns the erosion of male hegemony (Meuser 2010: 325-327). Altogether, the crisis rhetoric must be viewed critically as it assumes a 'crisis-free time' – in other words, a prior, stable system that is now disrupted. If we follow Connell's understanding of masculinity, however, we know that masculinity is not a stable system in itself but rather a configuration of practice *within* a system of gender relations. One could accordingly speak of a transformation or restructuring of the configuration or a crisis of the entire gender order, but not of a crisis of masculinity. Moreover, research has shown, how very difficult it is to find a historical period in which men did not feel threatened in their masculinity (Connell 2000: 105-107; Gourarier 2019: 186-187; Meuser 2010: 325-327). Thus, the so-called crisis is more about changes in specific contexts – such as family, employment, intimate relationships, the economy, the state, and global interactions – rather than a fundamental transformation of masculinity itself (Connell 2000: 107; Meuser 2010: 325). In analyzing the guidebooks, it is crucial to examine how masculinity dynamics are addressed in relation to these contexts. This involves investigating whether these texts reflect concerns about a perceived crisis in masculinity.

Moreover, the crisis of masculinity prompts questions about the relevance of hegemonic masculinity in new global social contexts. Meuser argues that in an industrial society, masculinity is closely tied to work and career, suggesting that masculinity is fundamentally linked to paid

employment. However, changes in employment patterns are increasingly challenging the 'traditional' male breadwinner role (Meuser 2010: 329). Flexible working hours, increased female participation in previously male-dominated fields, and a re-evaluation of female labor all contribute to this shift, 'endangering' spaces for male homosocial interaction (Meuser 2010: 330). Of course, this trend does not necessarily or fundamentally call hegemonic masculinity into question, as even men with unstable employment or lower income contributions may still adhere to hegemonic ideals (Meuser 2010: 330).

Given the turbulent impact of globalization on power relations, Connell and Wood posit the hypothetical emergence of a so-called "transnational business masculinity" as a new form of hegemonic masculinity. This model, epitomized by the modern manager, is marked by individualism, flexibility, and egocentrism, reflecting a departure from 'traditional' norms such as linear career advancement and emphasizing a strong belief in one's own agency. This also entails several other changes. For instance, while heterosexual orientation was pivotal for hegemonic masculinity within industrial society, this requirement appears to be slowly diminishing in the context of transnational business masculinity (Meuser 2010: 333). The increasing political influence of homosexual men raises questions about whether homosexual masculinity can coexist with hegemonic masculinity. Treiblmayr notes the potential for a "new homonormativity" but also emphasizes that global homophobia persists (Treiblmayr 2010: 405). Additionally, there is a new approach to careers: whereas in the 1960s career success was conceptualized as linear progression with a focus on job security, today security is no longer a dominant factor. Instead, the success of the modern manager is now determined by interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively within a team (Meuser 2010: 332; Treiblmayr 2010. 405). This evolution suggests that hegemonic masculinity is becoming more flexible, with blurred boundaries between different forms of masculinity (Meuser 2010: 333).

To gain a comprehensive understanding of contemporary masculinity in Japan, it is imperative to examine how global economic changes, cultural exchanges, and international gender norms intersect with and transform 'traditional' Japanese masculinity ideals. Specifically, analyzing the impact of transnational business masculinity is crucial for a nuanced exploration of contemporary Japanese masculinity and its representation in the guidebooks.

3.4. The Homosocial Continuum: Understanding Male Bonds and Masculinity

As discussed in relation to Bourdieu's concept of "libido dominandi", male homosocial relationships are integral to the construction of masculinity. Especially in the context of Japan, understanding homosociality is crucial for defining current hegemonic structures. Male homosocial relationships significantly influence the process of "becoming *shakaijin* 社会人[28]" and boys' expectations of masculinity. It is therefore essential to address "male bonding" and its role in forming power structures and ideologies within male relationships.

In her seminal work *Between men: English literature and male homosocial desire* (1985), Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick explores the complex relationship between the homosocial continuum, homosexuality, and homophobia. Sedgwick focuses on the meaning of desire, distinct from love and sexuality, and examines the continuum between male homosexuality and heterosexuality, noting its discontinuity compared to the continuous relationship between female homosocial and homosexual bonds (Sedgwick 2016: 4-5; Hammarén/Johansson 2014: 1-11).

Homosociality is an oxymoron referring to the social bonds or intimate relationships between people of the same sex that are non-sexual, distinct from and often opposed to homosexuality (Sedgwick 2016: 1-3). Sedgwick explains that male homosocial relationships are policed by homosexual panic and homophobia, evident in how male friendships often cannot exceed a certain level of intimacy without being labeled as gay. Consequently, homosocial bonds enforce compulsory heterosexuality, reinforcing a heterosexist society and reproducing homophobic thinking (Sedgwick 2016: 3-4). Additionally, these bonds enable men to uphold male privilege by objectifying and othering women and distinguishing themselves from femininity (Sedgwick 2016: 4-5).

Sedgwick also discusses René Girard's concept of the "erotic triangle", suggesting that bonds of love and rivalry can be equally powerful. Both Girard and Freud (in his oedipal father-mother-child triangle) view the erotic triangle as symmetrical, unaffected by any change in the gender of one of its participants. Sedgwick, however, argues that this perspective overlooks the significance of power distribution, which is inherently asymmetrical and rooted in gender

[28] A working adult; full-fledged member of society (Rōmaji Desu 2022).

dichotomies. She contends that changing the gender of one participant cannot simply replicate the dynamics of emulation and identification (Sedgwick 2016: 21-24). Accordingly, Sedgwick describes an asymmetrical male/male/female triangle, wherein women act as conduits for homosocial bonds between men. In this configuration, homosocial power operates through women while simultaneously excluding them, thus inscribing the subordinate status of women and reinforcing gender arrangements even within male homosocial or homosexual relationships (Sedgwick 2016: 25; Ringrose 2022: 245). Sedgwick furthermore suggests that what may be portrayed as rivalry by the triangle, is in reality often an attraction between men, indicating an underlying continuum of male homosocial desire. However, this desire is continually suppressed by maintaining the heterosexual order (Hammarén/Johansson 2014: 4; Stratton 2010: 19-22).

Considering that according to Connell's theory of masculinities relationships between men are characterized by hierarchical structures and different forms of masculinity are exercised (determined by multiple factors[29]), it is no surprise that homosocial relationships are in many ways believed to amplify and enhance the *establishment* of hegemonic masculinities (Kersten 1997: 103).

Bird argues that homosocial interactions contribute to the continuum of hegemonic masculinities through three forms: emotional detachment, competitiveness, and the (sexual) objectification of women (= reinforcing gender subordination; Bird 1996: 120-121). She asserts that fundamental changes in hegemonic masculinity are impeded by male homosocial interactions and that altering gender norms requires a de-genderization of meaning, with the criteria by which men are measured[30] needing to cease to exist (Bird 1996: 131).

Overall, male homosocial interactions crucially influence the conceptualization of masculine identities and the maintenance of gender norms, significantly impacting the preservation and progression of hegemonic masculinities (Bird 1996: 122). As part of the analysis of the three guidebooks, attention will be given to the depiction of male friendships and romantic relationships, and their significance within the texts. Additionally, the analysis will explore whether these guidebooks contain references to an erotic triangle.

[29] E.g. (social) class, sexuality, gender, age, (dis)abilities, or ethnicity.
[30] Referring to emotional detachment, competitiveness, and objectification of women.

3.4.1. The Role of Homosocial Relationships in Shaping Masculinity in Japan

In the context of Japan, significant changes in the perception of homosocial bonds can be observed from the premodern period to the modern era. In premodern Japan, male friendship was openly lived without fear of being deemed unreasonable (Murayama 2022: 38). Until the late 19th century (the end of the Tokugawa-period[31] until the middle of the Meiji-period[32]), Japan had a distinct cultural tradition of men's love and desire for other men. Some argue that homosexual relations among men were even celebrated as a "masculinizing practice". *Shikidō* 色道, "the way of sexual behaviors", consisted of *nanshoku* 男色 = male-male sexuality[33] and *joshoku* 女色 = male-female sexuality. *Nanshoku* spread within Buddhist monastic communities in the 9th century and among the samurai class in the 12th century. Male homosexual relations were not seen as a threat to family lineage continuity and were believed to bring masculinity to a man, whereas *joshoku* supposedly made a man weak (Cook 2019: 54; Taga 2004: 130; Vincent 2012: 3-4).

In the early 20th century, however, male love became viewed as feudal, perverse, and immature, while heterosexuality, associated with modernity, became the norm. This diremption in men's forms of relationships represented one of the most striking features of Japan's entry into modernity. Consequently, in the course of the 20th century a dual tendency emerged: preserving male homoeroticism as something precious yet relegating it to the past (Vincent 2012: 3-4). Vincent (2000) thus situates the origins of heteronormativity and homophobia within Japanese modernism in the early Meiji years (Vincent 2000: 40).

Today, heteronormativity remains a pervasive metanarrative in Japanese male homosocial relationships (Hirata 2014: 297). This is evident from an early age in school curricula, where heterosexism is reinforced through subjects such as moral education, health education, and physical education – boys are compelled to date women and exhibit sexual interest in them to be accepted by their male peers (Taga 2005: 180; Hashimoto et al. 2017: 387).

However, not only heteronormativity but also hierarchical thinking plays a crucial role in Japanese male homosocial relationships. According to Hidaka's research, already in childhood boys often play in gender-segregated groups with their play classified as 'dangerous' or

[31] Also referred to as "Edo period" (1603 until 1868).
[32] From January 25th, 1868, until the emperor's death on July 30th, 1912.
[33] *Nanshoku* relations usually consisted of the *nenja* (念者), the older lover, who was often of upper status and the *chigo* (稚児), the younger loved one, who was often of lower status (Taga 2004: 130).

'competitive' and unsuitable for girls. Boys' play emphasizes age-related hierarchies, with the oldest boy often assuming leadership, reflecting a microcosm of their future working lives. These hierarchies persist even in indoor play, such as video games, emphasizing competition and hierarchy. Boys therefore internalize rank and competitive thinking from an early age (Hidaka 2010: 35-36, 39-40). In the analysis of the guidebooks, I will examine whether and how these early ingrained hierarchical dynamics and competitive values are addressed, and if they are linked to preparing boys for their future roles.

Dasgupta's examination of homosocial bonding among salarymen further illustrates the importance of hierarchical group affiliation. He explores how corporate masculinity is intertwined with same-sex friendships, noting that corporate organizations are bastions of 'traditional' and heterosexual patriarchal privilege (Dasgupta 2013: 133-136).

During Japan's high economic growth (1960s-1980s), homosocial bonds within companies and with male customers were often prioritized over cross-gender relations. These bonds are crucial for professional success and included *senpai-kōhai*[34] 先輩後輩 or *oyabun-kobun*[35] 親分子分 relationships, as well as group-based interactions such as *bōnenkai*[36]忘年会, *shinnenkai*[37] 新年会, travelling together or after-work *nomikai*[38] 飲み会 and golf meetings, etc.[39] (Dasgupta 2013: 133, 136). This is also strongly emphasized by Taga (2004), who explains that group acceptance and participation in successful groups is considered necessary and more respectful in Japan's salaryman culture than, for example, displaying individual aggressiveness (Taga 2004: 135). At the same time, however, same-sex relationships can challenge established rules and assumptions about masculinities. Dasgupta describes a constant tension between same-sex relationships that are accepted or sanctioned by official corporate ideologies and dominant workplace discourses, and unregulated friendships that challenge and undermine these accepted relationships (Dasgupta 2013:

[34] A *senpai* 先輩 is a person who has belonged to an organization (e.g. school, university, company, etc.) or group for a longer time and is therefore superior in rank to younger members. The person does not necessarily have to be older; they are simply more 'experienced' within the organization. Conversely, a *kōhai* 後輩 is the person who joined an organization/group later.

[35] The *oyabun* 親分 has the role of chief/leader (literally "parent status"), whose protégés/apprentices are the *kobun* 子分 (literally "child status").

[36] Meaning "end of year celebrations".

[37] Meaning "New Year celebrations".

[38] Meaning "Drinking parties".

[39] Such group activities are intended to blur the boundaries between work time and free time. The aim is to improve mutual communication and create an almost family-like atmosphere in the workplace, convincing employees that the company is the basis of their *seikatsu* 生活 (life or livelihood) (Shibata 2007: 232-233).

133, 136).

Overall, Dasgupta identifies five key aspects of the homosocial continuum among salarymen: hierarchical and power-based relationships, the importance of *tsukiai*[40] 付き合い and group-based interactions, the role of women as conduits for male interaction, the facilitation of intimacy through alcohol, and generational changes in *ikigai*[41] 生き甲斐 (Dasgupta 2013: 133-136).

Hierarchical structures are pivotal in facilitating intimacy in *senpai-kōhai* and *oyabun-kobun* relationships. These relationships often adopt a familial dynamic of interdependency and obligation, similar to parent-child or sibling relationships, though studies often overlook the underlying sexual currents in these interactions (Dasgupta 2013: 137-138).

Tsukiai relationships, based on social interaction and related to work and community-based networks, are crucial for corporate homosocial relations. These relationships, driven by commitment and social responsibility, contrast with deeper, more intimate friendships formed outside the workplace (Dasgupta 2013: 139-140).

In *tsukiai* relationships, women play a crucial role as conduits between men, particularly in *kyabakura*[42] キャバクラ or female hostess clubs, where they facilitate male bonding and reinforce salaryman masculinity (Dasgupta 2013: 139-140; Taga 2004: 135). Another important factor in forming and reinforcing male homosocial interactions is alcohol, enabling behaviors that would otherwise be taboo, such as same-sex physical contact. Only after the consumption of alcohol would some of the salaryman be able to break away from their respected role of *kaisha no ningen*[43] 会社の人間 and become intimate with their work colleagues. The term *nominikēshon* 飲みニケーション, a compound of the two words *nomu* 飲む (to drink) and the English word "communication", underscores the role of alcohol in enabling intimacy (Dasgupta 2013: 146-147).

Finally, Dasgupta points to a change in *ikigai* of salarymen and a corresponding alteration in homosocial relationships. While the workplace was once seen as the primary space for same-sex companionship and emotional fulfillment, younger salarymen now tend to socialize less with work colleagues outside of work, preferring the company of their partners or families (Dasgupta 2013:

[40] *Tsukiai* are social interactions related to work (Dasgupta 2013: 139-140).
[41] *Ikigai* describes a method of finding out what is elemental to one's happiness in life but is also often simply translated to "life purpose" (Kizuna 2022).
[42] Bars where hostesses entertain customers by conversing with them and preparing alcoholic drinks for a fee.
[43] Meaning "company employee; person of the company".

148).

In summary, salaryman masculinity is heavily dependent on homosocial ties. *Senpai-kōhai* and *oyabun-kobun* relations, as well as group-based activities, form an integral part of the homosocial reproduction of masculinity. As part of the analysis of the guidebooks, this study closely examines the significance of male friendships and how they are represented in the books. Additionally, it investigates whether these homosocial interactions are discussed in connection with the professional sphere or mentioned independently of it.

3.5. Defining Masculinities in Japan

Since the formation of masculinities is shaped by socio-cultural, temporal, and local factors, and thus varies widely, this chapter will delve into the distinct formations of Japanese masculinities. To understand contemporary perceptions of masculinity and uncover the potential subliminal influences of masculinity ideals reflected in the parental guidebooks, it is essential to explore their historical evolution. Additionally, the analysis of these guidebooks will consider the persistent values that continue to shape present-day conceptions of masculinity, making an examination of historically rooted masculinity ideals indispensable.

The first sub-chapter will therefore provide a brief overview of the historical influences on the development of 'idealized' and hegemonic masculinities in Japan, highlighting the foundational values embedded in these masculinities and their lasting impact on contemporary perceptions. The second sub-chapter will closely examine what has long been regarded as Japanese hegemonic masculinity – the salaryman masculinity – and its changes.

3.5.1. Historical Perspectives and Characteristics of 'Ideal' and Hegemonic Masculinities in Japan

During the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), neo-Confucianism profoundly influenced the ethos and conduct of the samurai class. Confucian principles designated men to the public sphere (outer sphere; *soto* 外) and women to the domestic sphere (inner sphere; *uchi* 内), reinforcing a strict gender division and male dominance, especially among the ruling elite. While this division primarily applied to the samurai, women in agricultural and artisanal communities continued to work alongside men. Conceptions of masculinity during this era varied by class and region. The subsequent modernization of Japan did not lead to a liberation or equality of the sexes but instead

reinforced and reconstructed the gender hierarchy and division. The gender model that had been limited to the samurai class was eventually extended to the broader population and institutionalized as the dominant ideal (Taga 2004: 129-131).

With the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the opening of Japan to trade and an exchange with other countries, the Japanese government accelerated the adoption of many European and North American ideologies. The until then predominant "*ie*"-system[44], which emphasized Confucian hierarchy[45] and patriarchal family structures by positioning the father as head of the family (*kachō* 家長; paterfamilias) and legally disempowering women, was combined with 'Western' notions of the nuclear family (Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 41; Lebra 2007: 250). (Low 2003: 82-83, 86-88, 91; Shibata 2007: 1, 38, 40, 53; Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 164; Pliassova 2011: 31-36; Luschmann 2018: 21). This period saw the rise of the *ryōsai kenbo*[46] 良妻賢母 ideology, assigning women domestic roles and men financial responsibility. Men moreover underwent a "Caucasianization" or "Westernization", increasingly adapting to 'Western' ideals of masculinity and strongly differentiating themselves from other East Asian masculinities to present Japan as a global power. Hence, from the late 19th century, 'Western' nations had been important in the production of Japanese masculinity and Japanese men's own perception (Low 2003: 82-83, 86-88, 91; Shibata 2007: 1, 38, 40, 53; Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 164; Pliassova 2011: 31-36; Luschmann 2018: 21).

Another defining characteristic of Japan's modernization project termed *fukoku kyōhei*[47] 富国強兵 (e.g. to 'catch up' with and compete with European and North American powers) was the development of a modern military power. During the Taishō period (1912-1926), Japan's military expanded significantly and achieved numerous victories, including the acquisition of German-held territories in China during World War I. Through references to the notion of *bushidō*[48] 武士道 the soldiers were reassured of their Japanese identity, creating a shift between 'traditional' Japanese ideals of masculinity and more 'Westernized' Caucasian ideals. In the 1930s and during the Pacific War, Japanese masculinity became increasingly associated with mental and physical strength and

[44] The word *ie* 家 can be translated to house, residence, family, household but also lineage. The *ie*-system was not officially abolished until 1947.
[45] Elderly people are placed above younger ones and men above women.
[46] Meaning "good wife, wise mother".
[47] Meaning "rich nation, strong army".
[48] Meaning "the way of the warrior". The concept of *bushidō*, however, does not reflect the actual lived experience of the warrior during the Edo period; instead, it retrospectively formulated an ideal – an 'invented tradition' that never truly existed.

combat prowess. However, after Japan's defeat in World War II and its occupation by the US, Japan's military power was dissolved under the New Constitution (1947), and military objectives were replaced by a focus on economic progression (Low 2003: 82-83, 86-88, 91; Shibata 2007: 1, 38, 40, 53; Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 164; Pliassova 2011: 31-36; Luschmann 2018: 21; University of Pittsburgh n.a.).

In the interwar period, the lack of social recognition for an industrial working class led to the rise of new masculinity ideals in the form of the so-called *kigyō senshi*[49] 企業戦士 or *mōretsu shain*[50] 猛烈社員, who were supposed to rescue the nation from its economic slump. The new standards for a 'real man' then consisted of steady employment, heterosexual marriage, and being the breadwinner for the family. In addition, male paternal authority receded into the background as emphasis shifted from physical prowess to corporate performance, giving rise to the "salaryman masculinity" and its female counterpart, the *sengyō shufu*[51] 専業主婦 (Low 2003: 82-83, 86-88, 91; Shibata 2007: 1, 38, 40, 53; Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 164; Pliassova 2011: 31-36; Luschmann 2018: 21).

The term salaryman (*sararīman*, サラリーマン) describes an employee with a lifetime position in the private sector, based on seniority principle (*nenkō joretsu* 年功序列)[52], who commits 'eternal' loyalty to the company. Nowadays the term is used in a broader sense, referring to every heterosexual man who fulfils the archetypal role as a father and breadwinner as a *sararīman* (Shibata 2007: 202; Pliassova 2011: 37; Luschmann 2018: 21).

A core of the salaryman ideology is the gendered division of labor, linking masculinity with the public sphere and wage labor, and femininity with the private sphere and household. Heterosexual marriage and a nuclear family model underpin the hegemonic status of the *sararīman* and the subordinate, emphasized femininity of the mother and housewife (Luschmann 2018: 22-23). As the household breadwinner, the salaryman customarily demanded his wife's attention and services in an authoritative manner. This relationship model, known as *teishu kanpaku*[53] 亭主関白

[49] Meaning "corporate warriors".
[50] Meaning "fiercely dedicated employees".
[51] Meaning "full-time housewife".
[52] However, in the postwar era even blue-collar workers who were employed by large companies were considered salarymen.
[53] Derived from the terms *teishu* (亭主), meaning "master of the house", and *kanpaku* (関白), a high-ranking political title for the chief advisor to the emperor, the term refers to a "domineering husband" or a "husband who exerts control over the household".

was considered ‘normal’ until the 1970s. Within this framework, the salaryman embodied heterosexuality, serving as both the provider for and dominator of women (Taga 2004: 132).

The ‘golden age’ of the salaryman emerged a few decades after World War II, coinciding with Japan’s economic peak, and ended in the early 1990s with the bursting of the economic bubble. The substantial economic growth during the 1960s and 1980s enabled Japanese firms to offer comprehensive welfare systems and lifetime employment guarantees. However, this also meant that companies demanded maximum efficiency from their employees. The practice of *sābisu zangyō*[54] サービ残業 became widespread, leading to numerous cases of *karōshi*[55] 過労死 in the 1980s, and prompting public debate on the issue (Pliassova 2011: 38).

The collapse of the economic bubble led to a decline in lifetime employment, increased unemployment, and a rise in part-time and temporary work, causing existential anxiety and insecurity. This shift also impacted hegemonic masculinity in Japan, as the salaryman lifestyle became difficult to maintain. Transnational capitalism and changing corporate values resulted in wages being based on performance rather than seniority (Pliassova 2011: 37- 41; Luschmann 2018: 21-25).

The new generation of salarymen emphasized physical fitness, health, personal hygiene, and a stronger identification with the father figure. Nonetheless, men continue(d) to contribute significantly less to household chores and child-rearing than women. Even today, this disparity persists, with men often taking on easier tasks and leaving more demanding household duties to their wives. Simultaneously with the changes in salaryman masculinity, there has also been a formation of ‘alternative’ masculinity identities, such as *otaku* or *ikumen*[56], etc. However, despite these changes, the principles of salaryman masculinity remained intact during the ‘lost decades’ following the economic bubble’s burst, regaining some prominence as the economy gradually recovered (The Economist 2005: 41; Pliassova 2011: 37- 41; Luschmann 2018: 21-25).

It is imperative to note that, although the term “*sararīman*” is nearly synonymous with masculinity in contemporary Japanese discourse, salarymen have always been a minority. In 1960,

[54] Meaning “unpaid overtime work”.
[55] Meaning “death because of overwork”.
[56] It should be noted however, that Ishii-Kuntz does not see *ikumen* as an alternative masculinity, but as a shift in hegemonic ideals which now also include an engaged father figure. After all, the *ikumen* discourse (as part of a government initiative led by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare) is also closely linked to the Japanese government’s concern about Japan’s low childbirth rate (Cook 2019: 52).

1980, and 2000, more than half of all male employees[57] in Japan worked in small companies[58], and the percentage of white-collar workers in 2000 was only 46%. Thus, the prototypical salaryman always represented a minority (Taga 2004: 133).

Despite changes in masculinity ideals, women's roles as mothers and housekeepers became more entrenched over the decades. Even with the emergence of new roles such as the "working woman", women were (and to this day are) still expected to manage household and children. The ideology of lifelong employment, incompatible with child-rearing, continued to exclude women from full participation in the labor market for a long time. The salaryman lifestyle reinforced the perception of women as sexual commodities in roles such as nightclub workers, hostesses, or secretaries. Measures to improve women's employment largely failed, or at least did not succeed to the desired extent. For instance, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) of 1985 aimed to give women equal work opportunities. While the law succeeded in increasing the number of women working full-time after marriage, the newly introduced two-track system predominantly relegated most women to the more regulated *ippan shoku*[59] (一般職) sector with limited career advancement rather than the *sōgō shoku*[60] (総合職) sector demanding long hours and significant stress, incompatible with family responsibilities. Consequently, many women end(ed) up in *ippan shoku* jobs, resulting in little improvement compared to the pre-legislation period (Hidaka 2010: 170; Pliassova 2011: 35-39). Nonetheless, the law theoretically allowed greater career advancement for women.

Facing a declining birth rate and an aging society, Japan faces new economic challenges that further hinder gender equality due to insufficient resources to improve conditions for families and create better-paid jobs for women. Other governmental measures, like the "Angel Plan"[61] of 1994, intended to help women balance family and full-time work and reduce stigma against working mothers, largely failed due to poor public reception (Pliassova 2011: 35-39). However, despite struggles with implementing government campaigns and resistance to gender equality,

[57] Not including agriculture.
[58] Companies with fewer than 100 employees.
[59] Meaning "general employment".
[60] Meaning "career employment".
[61] In 1994, the Japanese government introduced the "Angel Plan" to address the declining birthrate by supporting couples in childrearing. This initiative aimed to alleviate the pressures associated with parenting by providing counseling services to families and promoting a more equitable distribution of childrearing responsibilities between mothers and fathers (Haub 2010).

progress has occurred. For example, the revised EEOL sexual harassment legislation of 1997 has reduced workplace harassment, and groups like *ikujiren* いくじれん advocate for greater male involvement in household work and childcare (Hidaka 2010: 178, 181).

3.5.2. The Salaryman Doxa Today: Continuity or Change in Hegemonic Norms?

After examining the evolution of 'ideal' and hegemonic masculinities in Japan, we must consider to what extent salaryman masculinity remains hegemonic today. Current media suggests that the ideological dominance of the salaryman has been challenged by the 'soft power' of Japanese popular culture, with youthful masculinities from the pop-idol industry and 'feminized' forms like herbivore men or *otaku* gaining prominence (The Economist 2008: 60; Dasgupta 2013: 2). This topic is also extensively discussed in academic circles. For example, Dasgupta argues that despite the erosion of salaryman masculinity during the 'lost decade' after the bursting of the economic bubble, some foundational assumptions remain ideologically dominant today. He posits that masculinity is still linked to the public sphere (work) while femininity is tied to the domestic sphere (home), interconnected through institutionalized heterosexual marriage (Dasgupta 2013: 8-9). Despite changes in workplace practices, lifelong employment, seniority, loyalty, and internal skills would development still underpin Japanese corporate culture (Dasgupta 2013: 4-5).

Hidaka identifies three areas that have altered salaryman masculinity over time: economic changes, shifts in gender relations, and social changes (Hidaka 2010: 178). Economic fluctuations since World War II, particularly the decline in lifelong employment, have increased the number of non-full-time workers (*freeters*), challenging the 'traditional' salaryman ideal[62] (Hidaka 2010: 179). Government efforts to reform gender policies[63] and increase female workforce participation have also impacted salaryman masculinity, reducing the role of men as the sole family providers. Additionally, family dynamics have shifted, with more men prioritizing family life and actively participating in childcare, and many younger salarymen finding their *ikigai* in family rather than work[64]. Hidaka further notes a disengagement from the patriarchal family model, in a sense that

[62] *Freeters* are often understood as a negative counter-image of the salaryman identity, but their increase may indicate a possible change in the socio-economic preconditions for the ideal of masculinity and therefore changes in the hegemonic salaryman masculinity (Hidaka 2010: 179).

[63] Including the Angel Plan of 1994, the Sam campaign (a campaign by the Japanese government designed to promote fathers' involvement in childrearing of 1999), and the latest revision of the EEOL in 2006.

[64] Consequently, companies had to shift to more family-friendly policies because they could no longer assume that their employees will align the interests of their family with the interests of their workplace (Hidaka 2010: 165-167).

younger generations have come to view childbearing as a choice rather than a duty (Hidaka 2010: 165-167). However, despite these changes, heteronormativity, gender segregation and marriage would remain central to hegemonic masculinity (Hidaka 2010: 165, 167). Thus, while Hidaka acknowledges changes in salaryman masculinity, some aspects of it continue to reflect hegemonic ideals. Given that many participants in Hidaka's study felt threatened by the rise of working women and *freeters*, this could indicate a genuine challenge to the hegemonic status of the salaryman and a noticeable struggle to maintain it.

Similarly to Hidaka, Taga highlights that economic fluctuations, gender equality policies, and demographic changes have redefined hegemonic masculinity. The extension of life expectancy and retirement issues have led to negative perceptions of salarymen[65], exacerbated by the increase in female workers and the expectation for men to participate in domestic work (Taga 2004: 134, 140; Hidaka 2010: 168). While some participants in Taga's study reevaluated 'traditional' masculinity and faced conflicts with existing ideals, they still saw "becoming a mature and self-reliant adult" (*ichininmae ni naru* 一人前になる) as fundamental for Japanese men. Many participants assumed they would eventually secure a 'decent' job and marry a woman, reinforcing career and heterosexual marriage as central to hegemonic Japanese masculinity (Taga 2003: 150; Taga 2004: 136).

The study by Pliassova reveals some alterations in salaryman masculinity that have not yet appeared in Hidaka's study. Her research indicates evolving attitudes towards gender equality among younger men, who increasingly respect career women and support their wives in pursuing their career ambitions. As a result, the 'traditional' breadwinner role may be eroding, thereby diminishing the legitimacy of salaryman masculinity (Pliassova 2011: 86-91f). Pliassova's findings moreover note a growing willingness among men to engage in childcare and pursue a better work-life balance (Pliassova 2011: 82-84, 86-91). However, despite these shifts, 'traditional' gender roles and the hegemonic salaryman ideal would continue to be upheld by many institutions[66] (Pliassova 2011: 86-91). Therefore, although Pliassova's research shows that younger men's masculine identities differ from and evolve beyond those of older generations, salaryman masculinity remains the prevailing form of hegemonic masculinity for now (Pliassova 2011: 41).

[65] Retired men became a target of the media, disparaging them with derogatory terms, such as *sodaigomi* 粗大ごみ (meaning "bulky waste") and *nureochiba* 濡れ落ち葉 (meaning "wet fallen leaves") (Taga 2004: 134; Hidaka 2010: 168).
[66] Such as school or family, etc.

Based on currently available research, it remains uncertain whether salaryman masculinity still holds hegemonic status in Japan today, as many significant studies[67] are over a decade old. While there have been notable shifts in the formation and expression of hegemonic masculinity compared to previous decades, it is unclear if salaryman masculinity has been replaced or surpassed as the ideal. Given that the Covid-19 pandemic has reinforced 'traditional' values, heightened conservative attitudes, and underscored entrenched gender segregation, more recent studies are essential to accurately determine the current status of salaryman masculinity (Yusaku: 2020; The Japan Times 2021; Ishii-Kuntz 2022: 3; Sakuragi et al. 2022: 2). To address this gap, this study aims to provide a contemporary perspective on the contingency and hegemonic status of salaryman masculinity by comparing the portrayals of masculinity in the selected guidebooks to the salaryman model. However, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the current status of salaryman masculinity, additional empirical research will be necessary.

4. Japanese Family Structures and Parental Roles

The institution of the family reflects significant insights into prevailing notions of masculinity. Family dynamics, including parental employment patterns, attitudes towards caregiving, marital relations, sibling interactions, and parent-child relationships, offer valuable insights about gendered expectations and roles. Consequently, this study will thoroughly investigate family structures and the roles of mothers and fathers in its analysis of the guidebooks. It will explore the family models depicted in the books, the expectations set for each parent, the portrayal of these roles, their expected behaviors, and the dynamics of their relationships with their children.

Given that some guidebooks present specific notions of father figures, mother figures, and implicitly family constellations – each reflecting various family models and historically conditioned roles – it is crucial to consider the historical context. Therefore, the following subsections will provide an overview of the evolution of the Japanese family model and the roles of mothers and fathers.

[67] Dasgupta 2013, Hidaka 2010, Taga 2004, etc.

4.1. Families in Japan

Historically, Japanese families were extended, often including at least three generations. However, family size has steadily decreased over the decades. In the 1920s, the "modern family" model emerged as the ideal for the growing middle class, a trend that intensified after World War II with a shift towards nuclear families. This transition resulted in a diminished role for grandparents and other extended relatives in child-rearing (Ishii-Kuntz 2003: 253; Shibata 2007: 332; Raymo et al. 2014: 843).

In 1947, the *ie*-system was officially abolished, granting equal status[68] to both wives and husbands under the new Civil Code. Despite this, research indicates that the patriarchal ideology of the *ie*-system continued to influence family dynamics and gender perceptions long after its formal abolition, perpetuated through mechanisms such as the *koseki*[69] 戸籍 (Lebra 2007: 250; Hidaka 2010: 15-16, 41).

The postwar period saw the idealization of the 'American way of life', where mass media promoted the "salaryman family" as the norm, symbolized by the "three sacred insignia" (refrigerator, electric washing machine, and television) representing family happiness. The family model thus became much more defined, emphasizing the role of the housewife and deepening the gendered division of labor. Children aspired to become salarymen or marry one, further entrenching 'traditional' gender roles (Shibata 2007: 328-329, 332, 334, 339, 356, 358, 367-368). During Japan's economic growth, the image of the salaryman as the breadwinner and the woman as the domestic worker was solidified, with the role of the housewife gaining status as a symbol of achievement for many women (Yamamoto 2019: 182).

Since then, economic changes, urbanization, globalization, and the rise of individualism have partially transformed the Japanese family model (Hidaka 2010: 16). Although the "Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society", enacted in 1999, advocates for shared responsibility in child-rearing and family care, the unequal distribution of unpaid labor remains a major gender issue in Japan (Ishii-Kuntz 2021: 55-56). Recent literature suggests that while there is a growing trend toward more equal sharing of domestic and parental duties, 'traditional' gender roles persist, and significant gender disparities continue (Ishii-Kuntz 2003: 253-254; Ishii-Kuntz 2021: 56-58). This

[68] For example, in terms of property, parental authority over children and inheritance.
[69] The *koseki* is an official record of a household cycle, recording the entry and exit of family members through marriage, divorce, birth, adoption, and death (Lebra 2007: 250).

disparity is especially pronounced in child-rearing practices.

In April 1992, Japan enacted the "Childcare Leave Law", allowing parents to take a leave until their child turns one year old. This leave can be utilized by both mothers and fathers and can also be split between them (Pliassova 2011: 59-60). Although employers must approve leave requests, they are not required to pay employees during this period[70] (Pliassova 2011: 59-60). Moreover, despite increased female participation in the labor market and a rise in Japanese men taking parental leave over the past decades[71], parental leave is often still viewed as a 'choice', indicating lower commitment to work. As a result, over 80% of parental leave is still taken by women[72] (Pliassova 2011: 59-61). Pliassova argues that without substantial social and financial support, such policies may remain underutilized due to stigma and practical challenges (Pliassova 2011: 59-61).

Recent policy changes aim to address this issue. As of October 2022, Japanese men can take up to four weeks of leave within the first eight weeks after their child's birth. Additionally, since April 2023, companies with over 1,000 employees are required to disclose the percentage of male employees who take childcare leave (The Mainichi 2022). While these measures are promising, their effectiveness in increasing paternity leave and reshaping gender roles is yet to be seen. For meaningful progress, more efforts are needed to challenge entrenched gender norms and normalize men's participation in childcare and domestic work.

Furthermore, Japan must diversify its family models to move beyond entrenched heteronormativity and binary gender norms. Embracing 'non-traditional' gender socialization is crucial for advancing gender equality and facilitating the inclusion of diverse family structures, such as those involving queer, gender-fluid, or non-binary parents (Ishii-Kuntz 2021: 55-56, 58-59). Despite a rise in both qualitative and quantitative research on sexual and gender minority (SGM) families in Japan over the past decade (Ishii-Kuntz 2021: 59-61) and some progress towards more supportive LGBTQIA+ policies[73] significant legal barriers remain. The prohibition of same-

[70] However, some insurance provisions offer income support (Pliassova 2011: 59-60).
[71] In 2021, 14% of Japanese men took paternity leave, a significant increase from around 2% in 2015 (Ishii-Kuntz 2021: 56; The Mainichi 2022). However, in 2020, most men (56.9%) took less than five days of childcare leave, compared to 10 to 12 months taken by 31.1% of women (Pliassova 2011: 59-61). For comparison, a 2022 study by the Austrian Chamber of Labor found that also only 20% of fathers in Austria participate in parental leave (Gründler 2022).
[72] While there are also public day-care centers and kindergartens available in Japan, it is often argued that these facilities are insufficient, leaving parents no choice but to take care of the children themselves (Pliassova 2011: 59-60).
[73] In June 2023, the Japanese parliament passed the first Japanese law on sexual orientation and gender identity, calling for "more understanding" and the avoidance of "unfair discrimination" against people of the LGBTQIA+ community (Doi/Worden 2023).

sex marriage[74] and the legal barriers faced by non-heterosexual and non-cisgender couples in parenting[75] impede the development of a more inclusive family model.

4.2. The Role of the Mother

The role of the mother is central in studies of families and education in Japan. While the image of the full-time, urban middle-class mother is prevalent, motherhood, like womanhood, is diverse and historically fluid (Lebra 2007: 399; Yamamoto 2019: 182). Recent decades have seen a diversification in the discourse on motherhood, highlighting various mothering practices, such as those of working-class mothers. However, research on Japanese mothers in poverty or those outside 'traditional' family structures[76] remains limited (Lebra 2007: 399; Yamamoto 2019: 182).

Historically, the role of women in Japan has evolved from the *ryōsai kenbo* ideology of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the post-World War II *sengyō shufu* ideal (Hidaka 2010: 30-31). During the late 1920s, women's roles were linked to the consumer economy, with expectations to manage household resources efficiently to aid the national economy (Shibata 2007: 72). This caretaking role has persisted, with women predominantly responsible for household supply and sustenance (Ishii-Kuntz 2022: 3). In the post-war era, the "wise mother" aspect of the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal intensified, emphasizing a mother's deep involvement in child-rearing, which increasingly conflicted with working outside the home[77] (Holloway 2010: 176, 178).

Overall, the emotional connection between mother and child is highly valued in Japan. Traditionally, intimacy between mother and child was demonstrated through physical contact such as prolonged breastfeeding and co-sleeping and bathing together. Nowadays, this (prolonged) mother-child bond is evident through the mother's extreme devotion to the child's academic success (Lebra 2007: 256).

The role of mothers in fostering educational achievement became central in the post-war

[74] Japan is the only G7 nation that does not allow same-sex marriage (The Japan Times 2022).
[75] In Japan, only married couples are permitted to adopt children. Since same-sex marriage is prohibited, it is therefore impossible for many couples to have children. Some couples opt for fostering. Although this is allowed for same-sex couples in Japan, the process of becoming a foster parent comes with many strict conditions and hurdles (for example, a certain annual income, a certain size of the child's living area, limited working hours for the foster parents, etc.). Hence, this option is also impossible for many people (Ryall 2022).
[76] For example, single mothers.
[77] It is important to note that despite societal pressures to conform to the ideal of the dedicated housewife and mother, many women have historically worked outside the home, often under extremely poor conditions (Holloway 2010: 173-175).

period, epitomized by the *kyōiku mama* 教育ママ (educational mother) archetype. This model emphasized emotional support and dedication, reflecting the sacrificial nature of motherhood. However, the *kyōiku mama* later faced media criticism for allegedly compromising their children's happiness and potentially harming their future well-being[78]. Current expectations continue to demand significant maternal involvement in children's education[79], despite evolving views on women's roles (Holloway 2010: 30, 147-148, 205; Bleicher 2015: 29). This highlights the pivotal role of the mother figure in various aspects of children's lives and underscores how motherhood has become a central component of women's identities in Japanese culture[80] (Lebra 2007: 398).

The significance of the mother's role and the stringent expectations surrounding it are highlighted by the frequent and intense criticism that mothers endure. They are burdened with unrealistic expectations regarding their children's academic success, influenced by societal pressures and economic challenges. Their professional roles, whether part-time or self-employed, are often criticized for potentially undermining their children's educational outcomes[81]. Additionally, politics, media, and government often blame mothers for broader societal issues, such as declining birth rates and a perceived lack of patriotism (Tanaka 2008: 586-587; Holloway 2010: 200).

In Holloway's interviews with Japanese mothers, the ideal maternal figure was described as cheerful, hardworking, and confident. In their upbringing many of these women sought to balance older educational methods, such as *mimamoru* 見守る (observing from a distance), with more interactive approaches. Their goal was to foster a disciplined environment through calm reasoning and explanations, rather than relying on emotional outbursts or physical punishment (Holloway 2010: 197).

The depiction of the mother figure in the guidebooks provides valuable insights into societal expectations for Japanese women and the prevailing ideals of femininity. These guidebooks often

[78] Since 2007, "monster parents" *monsutā pearentsu* モンスターペアレンツ have become a major issue in Japan's educational system. This expression refers to parents who excessively interfere in their children's school life and make unreasonable demands on teachers (Bleicher 2015: 7, 9).
[79] For instance, by preparing school materials, supervising homework, creating a good study atmosphere at home etc. (Holloway 2010: 30, 147-148, 205; Bleicher 2015: 29).
[80] Of course, historically, and continuing today, the roles of mother and housewife have not been fulfilling or desirable for everyone. Many women have faced conflicts between their personal aspirations and societal expectations. It is therefore no surprise that the intersection of womanhood and motherhood has been a significant focus in nearly all phases of Japan's modern feminist movements (Lebra 2007: 253).
[81] Conversely, working mothers might also act as role models and lead their children to develop high educational aspirations (Tanaka 2008: 587).

subliminally outline the behaviors and characteristics deemed ideal for mothers, reflecting broader cultural norms and pressures. While this focus may not directly align with the primary objective of this thesis, it is essential for understanding the implicit contrast between what is expected of women and what of men. By highlighting the traits and responsibilities specifically assigned to mothers (not parents in general), these portrayals simultaneously clarify which characteristics are *not* associated with masculinity. Thus, examining how maternal roles are represented in the guidebooks on raising boys is crucial, as it reveals not only the idealized image of motherhood but also the broader implications for gender expectations and the shaping of masculine identities.

4.3. The Role of the Father

Paternal ideals, much like masculinities, are dynamic constructs that society continuously negotiates, constructs, and challenges (Stoica 2021: 83). Economic shifts, such as the increase in working mothers, the availability of childcare, and the reduced involvement of extended family in domestic duties have contributed to uncertainties about paternal roles (Steinberg et al. 2000: 1271).

Historically, during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), Japanese fathers were actively involved in raising and disciplining their children[82]. However, by the Meiji era[83] and pre-World War II, they primarily took on the role of breadwinners, leaving mothers as caregivers (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75; Stoica 2021: 17). As the male head of the household, fathers wielded control over financial resources and all related family members. The paternal figure was often portrayed as authoritarian and feared by children to a degree comparable to natural disasters such as "earthquakes, thunder, and fires" (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75; Stoica 2021: 17). This stern and formidable image, which prevailed until World War II, was significantly influenced by Confucian principles and the *genpu jibo* (厳父慈母; stern father, kind mother) belief, which dictated that fathers should maintain emotional distance and exercise strict discipline (in contrast to mothers; Stoica 2021: 19). Despite many Japanese fathers historically showing warmth and emotional closeness the enduring notion that nurturing characteristics are inherently maternal continues to dominate contemporary perceptions of fatherhood in Japan (Stoica 2021: 20).

Post-World War II, the role of the father as the family head was increasingly supplanted by the mother. The *sararīman* became the new ideological, as well as the actual, pillar of the family

[82] However, physical care was provided by mothers and maids even back then (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75; Stoica 2021: 17).
[83] From January 25th, 1868, until the emperor's death on July 30th, 1912.

in postwar Japan (Stoica 2021: 20-21). Men's intense work focus drove Japan's postwar economic success but limited their involvement in family life. The "1.57 shock" of 1989, marking a significant drop in birth rates, spurred efforts to increase paternal participation in childcare (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75). This led to the rise of the *ikumen* in the 1990s, which emphasized more engaged fatherhood, contrasting with earlier images of distant paternal roles (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 77).

Since the mid-2000s shared parenting has become more common. However, despite the growing acceptance of involved fatherhood among younger generations and the popularity of the ikumen concept, men's participation in childcare remains significantly lower than that of women (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 77, 80; Stoica 2021: 36). While more progressive gender attitudes among men and their partners can lead to greater paternal involvement, practical issues like demanding work schedules and inadequate workplace flexibility remain significant barriers (Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004: 782; Ishii-Kuntz/Yeung 2013: 253). Men who place less emphasis on the breadwinner role tend to be more involved in childcare, but changing abstract beliefs alone is not enough (Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004: 788).

To increase fatherly engagement, it is crucial to implement workplace reforms that support parental roles, provide better support for women, and promote more egalitarian gender norms (Ishii-Kuntz/Yeung 2013: 256; Stoica 2021: 37). This also includes creating more childcare facilities and enacting radical political measures to enhance women's employment and ensure equal income between men and women (Stoica 2021: 37). Finally, it is imperative to reform the distribution of household and child-rearing responsibilities. Numerous studies highlight significant differences in the types of childcare activities undertaken by Japanese men and women. Fathers who spend time with their children predominantly engage in 'fun' activities, such as going for walks or eating meals together (without preparing the meals). In contrast, mothers are more involved in the day-to-day physical care of the children (Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004: 780).

Notably, the academic discourse in Japan has largely neglected the father-child connection, focusing instead primarily on men's participation in child-rearing. Given the relatively recent development of Masculinity and Fatherhood Studies in Japan, this gap is understandable but highlights the urgent need for further research in these areas.

It is important to examine how fathers are portrayed in the guidebooks, including the tasks and character traits attributed to them. These portrayals offer significant insights into societal

expectations for Japanese men, the characteristics linked to masculinity, and the standards to which young boys are expected to conform.

5. Research Methodology, Structural Analysis and Corpus Selection

The following chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in this study. It begins by outlining the methodological framework, detailing the approaches and techniques utilized in the qualitative discourse analysis. The subsequent sub-chapter then presents the structural analysis of all relevant guidebooks identified through selected key terms. Additionally, this section explains the criteria used to select the three guidebooks for the detailed analyses, ensuring that these publications represent a diverse range of perspectives within the discourse of parental guidebooks for the upbringing of boys and male teens. By systematically addressing these elements, this chapter lays the groundwork for the detailed examination of the guidebooks' content.

5.1. Qualitative Discourse Analysis Methodology

This study employs a qualitative discourse analysis, following the methodological framework established by Siegfried Jäger (2015). By identifying discourses as networks of statements, this approach reveals the knowledge pertinent to a specific time, society, and context – in this case, the expectations surrounding masculinity presented in contemporary Japanese parenting books on raising boys.

The method of qualitative discourse analysis extends beyond the mere examination of sentences or expressions. It aims to identify both linguistic and non-linguistic *statements* within a complex and intertwined *whole*, thereby drawing conclusions about the contemporary understandings of masculinity reflected in the discourse on the upbringing of boys. For instance, guidebooks aimed specifically at mothers inherently suggest that women are primarily responsible for child-rearing, thus excluding this responsibility from 'male duties' and reinforcing a distinct separation between masculinity and parental care.

While individual texts might have limited impact, discourses, which encompass a potentially limitless number of texts and statements (including recurring content, arguments, structural forms, strategies, and symbols), exert a significant and lasting influence on society (Jäger 2015: 50-52). Discourses therefore always exert *power* by 'transmitting' knowledge that shapes

reality(ies) as well as individual and collective *action* (Jäger 2015: 73). Jäger emphasizes that discourse(s) (strands) and dispositives[84] have a historical dimension – they possess a past, a present and a future – and are interwoven, making it challenging to isolate them completely from each other (Jäger 2015: 120). The representations of masculinity(/ies) within the guidebooks are intricately intertwined with a wide range of past and present discursive events, social discussions, and images related to relationships, friendships, family, education, and work. These discursive developments interact with and influence one another.

The goal of a discourse analysis is to explore extensive discursive processes over time and to reveal their power dynamics, disruptions, and transformations (Jäger 2015: 121). However, achieving this would require extensive research, which is beyond the scope of this master's thesis. Therefore, my focus will be on the qualitative completeness of analyzing the three selected guidebooks, with a minor emphasis on the broader structural analysis of the available material. The pursuit of qualitative completeness involves conducting a "detailed analysis" (org. "Feinanalyse") of selected text passages from the guidebooks until no new information emerges (Jäger 2015: 134). This process will allow me to identify trends and key themes in contemporary conceptions of masculinity. These findings will then be compared to the established notion of salaryman masculinity to assess potential divergences and shifts.

5.2. Structural Analysis and Criteria for Corpus Selection

Advice literature is a popular and widespread genre in Japan, with bookstores offering a broad selection of how-to books, life guides, and self-help handbooks on various topics. Despite its prevalence and appeal, this genre has received relatively little attention in academic research (Gomez 2020; Ozaki 2017). In addition to its popularity, advice literature provides a practical representation of societal expectations and goals. Unlike fictional works, which often convey values and expectations implicitly, advice books offer explicit guidelines on achieving specific objectives. They provide detailed descriptions of the envisioned 'end goals' and outline the steps for achieving them.

In examining guidebooks on raising boys, the guidance provided to parents/guardians regarding child-rearing practices, along with the envisioned "outcomes", reveals key insights into

[84] In this context, a dispositive describes "a processual context of knowledge [...] that materializes in speaking/thinking – doing and objectivities" (Jäger 2015: 73).

prevailing societal expectations of masculinity. These expectations and desired traits will then be examined through the lens of Japanese hegemonic masculinity, identifying potential alignments or deviations from this ideal.

The selection of materials for this study involved several phases. Initially, I identified the corpus based on the availability and repeated visibility (twice or more) of parental guidebooks in Japanese online bookstores, international online retailers and the Japanese bookstore Kinokuniya 紀伊国屋書店 in Shinjuku, Tōkyō.

The online search for the guidebooks was conducted with the following keywords: *otoko no ko no kyōiku* 男の子の教育 (education of boys), *musuko no kyōiku* 息子の教育 (education of sons), *katei kyōiku* + *otoko no ko* 家庭教育 + 男の子 (home education + boys), *katei kyōiku* + *musuko* 家庭教育 + 息子 (home education + son), *otoko no ko no sodatekata* 男の子の育て方 (how to raise boys), *musuko no sodatekata* 息子の育て方 (how to raise a son), *otoko no ko* + *sodatsu* 男の子 + 育つ (boys + to bring up), *musuko* + *sodatsu* 息子 + 育つ (sons + to bring up), *otoko no ko no sodateru hōhō* 男の子の育てる方法 (ways to raise boys), *musuko no sodateru hōhō* 息子の育てる方法 (ways to raise your son).

After reviewing the available materials through online searches and bookstore visits, I identified 49 guidebooks that were available for purchase two or more times until May 11th 2024[85]. In a further step I conducted a broad structural analysis of these guidebooks, examining key subjects, objectives, and paratextual elements (such as titles, blurbs, and designs) and assorted them categorically. The following categories emerged in this step:

1) Books targeting specific parents/guardians.
2) Books mentioning desirable ‘male’ characteristics in the title or cover.
3) Books reflecting essentialist beliefs about ‘masculine’ characteristics.
4) Books focusing on specific age groups or developmental stages of boys.
5) Other topics.

For some books, the categories can overlap. This categorization allowed me to identify the primary areas of interest within the discourse and to determine the main focus and evident goals of the respective books. It also enabled me to discern whether the books adopt conservative, neutral, or

[85] Find the list of all guidebooks in appendix 1.

progressive approaches, aiding in the selection of three books with fundamentally different positions for the detailed analysis.
As part of the structural analysis, the following observations were made:

1) A general search, without specifying a particular audience, parent, or guardian, showed that many books (15 in total) are distinctly aimed at mothers[86], but *none* are exclusively aimed at fathers (or other guardians).

2) Desirable traits for boys, as mentioned in the titles, blurbs, or covers, include self-reliance (*jiritsu-ryoku* 自立力), independence (*jiritsu* 自立), self-confidence (*jishin* 自信), marriage skills (*kekkon-ryoku* 結婚力), work skills (*shigoto-ryoku* 仕事力), academic skills (*gaku-ryoku* 学力), learning skills (*manabu chikara* 学ぶ力), serious motivation (*honki de yaru ki o dasu* 本気でやる気を出す), success (*seikō* 成功), not becoming a criminal or *hikikomori*[87] (「*hanzaisha*」「*hikikomori*」*ni sasenai*「犯罪者」「引きこもり」にさせない), strong heart/mind (*kokoro ga tsuyoi* 心が強い), desire to win (*kachitai kimochi* 勝ちたい気持ち), undaunted spirit (*kujikenai kokoro* くじけない心), honesty to rely on others (*hito o tayoru sunaosa* 人を頼る素直さ), talent (*sainō* 才能), independent thinking (*jibun de kangaerareru* 自分で考えられる), self-esteem (*jiko kōteikan* 自己肯定感), survival skills (*sekai o ikinuku chikara* 世界を生き抜く力), intelligence and strength (*kashikoku tsuyoi ko* 賢く強い子), feminist mindset (*feminisuto danshi* フェミニスト男子), knowledge of consent (*dōi* 同意), empathy (*kyōkan* 共感), listening skills (*kiku chikara* 聞く力).

3) The 'masculine' characteristics attributed to boys in the titles, blurbs, or covers tend to have negative connotations, including playing around (*asonde bakari* 遊んでばかり), the tendency to become a criminal or *hikikomori* (「*hanzaisha*」「*hikikomori*」*ni sasenai*「犯罪者」「引きこもり」にさせない), disobedience (*iu koto kikanai* 言うこと聞かない), restlessness (*ochitsukanai* 落ち着かない), being hard to raise (*sodatenikui* 育てにくい), inability to listen (*hanashi o kikenai* 話を聞けない), laid-back nature (*maipēsu* マイペース). In addition, many

[86] This is made explicit in the title or somewhere else on the book cover.
[87] *Hikikomori* refers to people who withdraw into their homes for long periods of time and avoid social contact of all kinds as much as possible.

books expressed the sentiment that boys were incomprehensible to their mothers or difficult to tame.

4) Among the guidebooks focused on specific age groups, seven focus on the age group 0-6 years (*0〜6 saiji* 0〜6 歳児), one each on ages 6-12 (*6 sai kara 12 sai made* 6 歳から 12 歳まで) and 0-12 (*0〜12 saiji* 0〜12 歳児), two are limited to the upbringing of boys under 9 (*9 sai made* 9 歳まで) and 10 (*10 sai made* 10 歳までに) and one book is restricted to the education of boys starting from the age of 10 (*10 sai ni nattara* 10 歳になったら). Additionally, one book targets the upbringing of boys in primary school (*shōgakusei* 小学生) and five books focus on parenting during puberty (*shishunki* 思春期).

5) Books in the "other topics" category cover themes such as specific educational needs (e.g., focusing on the child's personality (*sono ko rashisa o taisetsu ni suru ko-sodate* その子らしさを大切にする子育て); educating the child's body and heart/mind (*karada to kokoro no sodatekata* カラダとココロの育て方); raising sons who realize dreams (*yume o kanaeru otoko no ko no sodatekata* 夢をかなえる男の子の育て方); scolding and praising boys (*otoko no ko no shikarikata homekata* 男の子の叱り方ほめ方); upbringing detached from masculinity (*otokorashisa kara jiyū ni naru* 男らしさから自由になる); etc.), parenting tips from specific people (*Kayoko obāchan no otoko no ko no sodatekata* カヨ子おばあちゃんの男の子の育て方) or the impact of parenting on one's own life (*otoko no ko no sodatekata o shinken ni kangaetetara otto to no sekkusu ga shū san kai ni narimashita* 男の子の育て方を真剣に考えてたら夫とのセックスが週３回になりました).

Based on this analysis, I selected three books with diverse positions and approaches for the main analysis, ensuring that all five categories were covered. After a detailed examination of the main topics, foci, and the content of each book, I decided on the following three:

① Morotomi, Yoshihiko 諸富祥彦
2009 *Otoko no ko no sodatekata. 'Kekkon-ryoku' 'gaku-ryoku' 'shigoto-ryoku'. 0 ~ 12 saiji no oya ga saiteigen to shite oku beki koto.* 男の子の育て方。「結婚力」「学力」「仕事力」。0〜12 歳児の親が最低限としておくべきこと。[How to raise boys. 'Marital', 'academic' and 'work' skills. Minimum requirements for parents of 0–12-year-olds]. Tōkyō: WAVE shuppan WAVE 出版 [WAVE Publishing].

The first book appears slightly conservative or neutral and covers categories 2 and 4.

② Ōta, Keiko 太田啓子
2020 *Kore kara no otoko no ko-tachi e. 'Otokorashisa' kara jiyū ni naru tame no ressun.* これからの男の子たちへ。「男らしさ」から自由になるためのレッスン。 [To the boys of the future. Lessons in freedom from 'masculinity']. Tōkyō: Ōtsuki shoten 大月書店 [Tokyo: Ōtsuki Bookstore].

The second book presents a more progressive viewpoint and covers category 5.

③ Yanagisawa, Yukio 柳沢幸雄
2020 *Haha-oya ga shiranai to yabai. 'Otoko no ko' no sodatekata.* 母親が知らないとヤバイ。「男の子」の育て方。[Mothers are in trouble if they don't know this. How to raise 'boys']. Tōkyō: PHP kenkyūjo PHP 研究所 [PHP Research Institute].

The third book takes a more conservative stance and covers categories 1, 2, 3, and 4.

The selected guidebooks were published over a 12-year period (2009–2021), including two recent titles from 2020 and one older publication from 2009. Although one might argue that the inclusion of the older book could limit insights into contemporary notions of masculinity, its continued prominence in current online bookstore searches and its availability at Kinokuniya underscore its lasting relevance. This persistence suggests that the ideals and expectations surrounding masculinity may not have experienced significant changes during this period. Including a slightly older book in the analysis moreover allows for an exploration of potential shifts in educational practices and expectations for boys over time.

Additionally, despite their varying foci and approaches, it is possible that these books share substantial overlaps in target audiences, expectations for boys and parents, family models, and, importantly, the conceptualizations and ideals of masculinity they convey, revealing continuities and persistent themes in societal perceptions of masculinity.

6. Analysis and Findings from Selected Guidebooks

In the following chapters, I will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the guidebooks, examining various aspects such as the institutional context, book cover designs, imagery, chapter structure, main content areas, and target audience, along with the background information on the authors. This will be followed by a detailed examination of a selected segment from each book, focusing on the institutional context, text surface, linguistic and rhetorical tools, and content-ideological

statements. Subsequently, I will compare the findings from the individual guidebook analyses, looking for intersections and distinctions between them. Overall, the analysis will address the following question:

What is the primary aim of each book? What is said, what is not? What content is included, and what is omitted? How do the authors support their arguments or counter opposing viewpoints? What patterns of argumentation emerge? Are there any contradictions or inconsistencies in the authors' arguments? Who is the intended target audience, and who is not addressed? What opinions are presented and are multiple viewpoints offered or is a singular perspective asserted? What types of knowledge are implied? Do the books include illustrations, and if so, what messages do they convey? What expressions are used, and for what purpose? What subliminal messages are communicated? What rhetorical and stylistic devices are employed, and for what effects? What understandings of gender are represented (e.g., essentialist vs. constructivist)? What family structures are assumed by the authors? What educational measures are proposed? Are different educational approaches suggested for male and female guardians? What expectations are placed on boys and their character traits? Is there a differentiation in the education of boys and girls, and if so, how? What image of "manhood" is depicted in the books? What character traits or qualities are deemed necessary or desirable for men? What forms of masculinity are rejected? What qualities are considered positive or negative in boys?

These questions will guide the analysis to uncover the underlying ideals and expectations of masculinity as presented in the guidebooks.

6.1. The First Guidebook

The guidebook *Otoko no ko no sodatekata. 'Kekkon-ryoku' 'gaku-ryoku' 'shigoto-ryoku'. 0 ~ 12 saiji no oya ga saiteigen to shite oku beki koto.* 男の子の育て方。「結婚力」「学力」「仕事力」。0〜12 歳児の親が最低限としておくべきこと。[How to raise boys. 'Marital', 'academic' and 'work' skills. Minimum requirements for parents of 0–12-year-olds] from 2009 is one of a total of five works in a book series by Morotomi Yoshihiko. The other books of the series focus on the upbringing of girls (Morotomi 2010; there is therefore a clear distinction between the education of boys and girls), the upbringing of only-children (Morotomi 2013), parenting advice for single parents (Morotomi 2015) and parenting advice for children in puberty (Morotomi 2021).

The author was born in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1963. He went on to study at the Faculty of

Humanities at Tsukuba University, graduating in 1986 and completing his doctorate in education in 1992. After working as a visiting researcher at the University of East Anglia in the U.K. and at an Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in the U.S. he became a lecturer and assistant professor at the Faculty of Education at Chiba University for 11 years. Currently he is employed as a professor at the Faculty of Literature at Meiji University. Alongside his university career he is also the president of the Japan Transpersonal Association (*Nihon toransupāsonaru gakkai kaichō* 日本トランスパーソナル学会会長), as well as a board member of multiple counseling associations[88].

Throughout his life Morotomi has already written over 100 books on education and psychology and appeared on multiple radio and TV programs. His research focus includes school counseling, education, parenting, couples and love, as well as loneliness and the meaning of life. He is also a licensed clinical psychologist and educational counselor (Morotomi 2009; Morotomi Yoshihiko's home page 2024; Meiji University 明治大学 n.a.).

6.1.1. Cover Analysis of the First Guidebook

(Img. 1)

The cover of the book is designed with vibrant and lively colors. The intense yellow and red make it stand out prominently on the shelf among other books.

By removing a red cover strap the cover reveals a cheerfully smiling child's face drawn in simple black lines on a yellow background. The short hairstyle and the context provided by the title of the book suggest that the child is supposed to be a boy.

Below the illustration, the author's name Morotomi Yoshihiko (諸富祥彦) is displayed along with the book's title and subtitle on the left: *Otoko no ko no sodatekata. 'Kekkon-ryoku' 'gaku-ryoku' 'shigoto-ryoku'. 0 ~ 12 saiji no oya ga saiteigen to shite oku beki koto.* In the bottom right-hand corner, the name of the publishing company, "WAVE shuppan" (WAVE 出版), is printed.

[88] Including *Nihon kaunseringu gakkai riji* 日本カウンセリング学会理事 [Board member of the Japan Counseling Association], *Nihon kaunseringu gakkai nintei kaunserā-kai riji* 日本カウンセリング学会認定カウンセラー会理事 [Board member of the Board of Certified Counselors of the Japan Counseling Association], *Nihonkyōiku kaunserā kyōkai riji* 日本教育カウンセラー協会理事 [Board member of the Japan Association of Educational Counselors], *Kyōshi o sasaeru kai daihyō* 教師を支える会代表 [Representative of Teacher Support Group].

The red cover strap features the title, author, and publisher in white letters. Moreover, it provides additional information about the book's content. The front caption reads "Parenting filled with the ultimate joy and love"[89] and on the back it states "The way parents treat their boys during their infancy and elementary school years is crucial to raising them to be 'marriageable' and 'employable' men."[90] Next to this statement on the back of the strap there is a small drawing of a smiling boy's head in the same art style as the cover illustration.

Additionally, the back of the red strap lists five key points, offering a closer look at the book's content and some examples of educational advice:

- [No matter how good your grades are, boys' schools are not recommended][91]
- [Be sure to have your child 'help out'][92]
- [The lovey-dovey period between the ages of 0 and 6 is extremely important][93]
- [Mothers should clean up after themselves at home][94]
- [From 'praise parenting' to 'joyful parenting'][95]

Overall, the book cover gives a fresh, youthful, and inviting impression. The smiling boy's face represents the happy future that could await readers and their sons who follow the book's guidance. The specific educational goals mentioned in the title, along with the brief examples on the red cover strap, clearly outline what readers can expect from the book's content.

6.1.2. Table of Contents Analysis of the First Guidebook

Altogether the publication is organized into six chapters, each divided into several sub-chapters. The first chapter, "The basics of boys' 'discipline' – the power of 'self-confidence' and 'firmness' are a boy's 'treasure for life'" (*Otoko no ko no 'shitsuke' no kihon – 'jishin' to 'funbaru' no chikara ga otoko no ko no 'isshō no takara* 男の子の「しつけ」の基本 -「自信」と「ふんばる」の

[89] *Saikō ni tanoshikute, ai ni michita kosodate* 最高に楽しくて、愛に満ちた子育て.
[90] *'Kekkon dekiru' 'shūshoku dekiru' otoko ni sodateru ni wa, nyūyōji + shōgakkō jidai no oya no sesshikata ga, totemo taisetsu*「結婚できる」「就職できる」男に育てるには、乳幼児+小学校時代の親の接し方が、とても大切.
[91] *Donna ni seiseki ga yokute mo danshikō wa osusume dekinai* どんなに成績がよくても男子校はおすすめできない.
[92] *'Otetsudai' o kanarazu saseru* 「お手伝い」を必ずさせる.
[93] *0 ~ 6-sai no raburabu ki ga chō jūyō* 0~6 歳のラブラブ期が超重要.
[94] *Haha-oya wa ie no naka de mikirei ni suru koto* 母親は家の中で身綺麗にすること.
[95] *'Homeru ko-sodate' kara 'tomo ni yorokobu ko-sodate' e* 「ほめる子育て」から「ともに喜ぶ子育て」へ.

力が男の子の「一生の宝」), covers the fundamentals of disciplining boys. The emphasis on "self-confidence" (*jishin* 自身; Morotomi 2009: 18) and the "ability to persevere or make an effort" (*funbaru no chikara* ふんばるの力; Morotomi 2009: 17) are mentioned as particularly desirable qualities in boys and future men. Other desired traits in boys include the ability to overcome difficulties (*konnan o norikoeru chikara* 困難を乗り越える力; Morotomi 2009: 32), courage (*yūki* 勇気; Morotomi 2009: 40) and to not be overconfident (*jishin kajō* 自信過剰; Morotomi 2009: 66). Additionally, the importance of a loving mother-son relationship is stressed, thereby placing the responsibility of child-rearing on the mother. The extent of the mother's self-sacrifice is evident in the sub-chapter heading "Mothers should stay home during the 'watchful waiting period' between the ages of 12 and 18" (*12 sai ~ 18 sai no 'mimamori-ki' ni koso, okāsan wa ie ni iru beki* 12 歳～18 歳の「見守り期」にこそ、お母さんは家にいるべき).

The second chapter, "Let's nurture 'footwork ability' by 'helping out'" (*'Otetsudai' de 'futtowāku-ryoku' o sodateyō*「お手伝い」で「フットワーク力」を育てよう), focuses on cultivating the willingness to help in children. It highlights this trait as a desirable aspect of masculinity.

Chapter three, "Overcoming the 'weakness of being defeated' – 'study methods' and 'lessons'" (*'Utareyowasa' o kokufuku suru – 'benkyōhō' to 'naraigoto'*「打たれ弱さ」を克服する -「勉強法」と「習い事」), addresses school education, academic success, and extracurricular achievements. It suggests that boys should have a high self-image (*jiko imēji ga takai* 自己イメージが高い; Morotomi 2009: 104), they should be smart (*atama ga ii* 頭がいい; Morotomi 2009: 111), and athletic (*tokui na supōtsu o mi ni tsukesaseyō* 特異なスポーツを身につけさせよう; Morotomi 2009: 119). The sub-chapter headings subtly imply that boys should excel academically by advising parents on selecting schools that nurture their success (Morotomi 2009: 124). Additionally, the chapter also promotes a career-oriented mindset by emphasizing the importance of career education at home (Morotomi 2009: 129).

The fourth chapter, "Improve 'communication skills' – Raise them to be a 'capable man'" ('*Komyunikēshon-ryoku' o migaite – 'dekiru otoko' ni sodateyō*「コミュニケーション力」を磨いて -「デキる男」に育てよう), implies that to become 'capable men' (*dekiru otoko* デキる男; Morotomi 2009: 133), boys need to have excellent communication and conversation skills

(*komyunikēshon nōryoku* コミュニケーション能力; *kaiwa nōryoku* 会話能力; Morotomi 2009: 134, 135). It is moreover considered desirable for boys to become popular in school (*kurasu no ninkimono* クラスの人気者; Morotomi 2009: 145).

Chapter five, "'Play' teaches us everything about life" ('*Asobi' ga jinsei no subete o oshiete kureru*「遊び」が人生のすべてを教えてくれる), intertwines boyishness and play. This connection allows freedom to be wild, suggesting an innate disposition for boyish curiosity (*kōkishin* 好奇心; Morotomi 2009: 155), silliness (*bakabakashii asobi* バカバカしい遊び; Morotomi 2009: 152), imagination (*hassō-ryoku* 発想力; Morotomi 2009: 152), and creativity (*kurieitibu na chikara* クリエイティブな力; Morotomi 2009: 164). It also includes the belief that boys *naturally* play 'wildly' and fight with peers, which is seen as healthy and important for them to develop "various senses" (*tatakai gokko de samazama na kankaku ga sodatsu* 戦いごっこでさまざまな感覚が育つ; Morotomi 2009: 158). Beyond this, boys are expected to enjoy their future work (*shigoto o tanoshimu* 仕事を楽しむ; Morotomi 2009: 155), be popular with girls (*atarashii jidai no moteo* 新しい時代のモテ男; Morotomi 2009: 160), be social (*shūdan asobi o saseru* 集団遊びをさせる; Morotomi 2009: 168) and be tough and assertive (*ningen kankei ni tafu ni naru*; 人間関係にタフになる; *asāshon* アサーション; Morotomi 2009: 178). Here we can note a big gap to the book's representation of the play of girls, who are often taught to refrain from 'wild behavior' or even denied enjoying silly or imaginative play.

Finally, the sixth chapter, "Raising a 'marriageable man' – How to overcome 'dangerous adolescence'" ('*Kekkon dekiru otoko' o sodateru – 'abunai shishunki' no norikoekata*「結婚できる男」を育てる –「あぶない思春期」の乗り越え方), addresses raising a marriageable son and navigating puberty. The headings reveal that sons are expected to be heterosexual and date while still in school (*kanojo ga dekinikui!?* 彼女ができにくい!?; Morotomi 2009: 191), and that it is regarded as 'natural' for boys to have a rebellious phase (*hankōki* 反抗期; Morotomi 2009: 208). This freedom is often denied to girls, for whom rebellion is perceived as more negative and worrisome than for boys, as it is not considered 'natural'. Additionally, there is a concern that boys could become perverts some day (*uchi no ko wa hentai?* うちの子はヘンタイ?; Morotomi 2009: 186). Once again, the question arises as to whether this concern would have been raised in a guidebook on the upbringing of daughters as well.

6.1.3. Comprehensive Analysis of the First Guidebook

The book spans 236 pages and initially appears slightly conservative, highlighting specific life goals and qualities that boys should achieve on the cover. It is specifically targeted at educating boys aged 0-12. While occasional references are made to "mothers and fathers" (*okāsan to otōsan* お母さんとお父さん) or neutrally to "parents" (*oya* 親 or *oyago-san* 親御さん), the introduction and majority of the book predominantly address mothers, making them the primary target audience.

Morotomi writes exclusively in the present tense, the only exceptions being the description of potential future scenarios and the narration of past events as examples. The book primarily focuses on conveying positive and negative judgements, such as pointing out, "If you have done this in your upbringing so far, it's not good…; reacting like this is not good, because…" (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 135). It also provides specific guidance and advice, for instance, by stating, "In this situation, do/say… instead of…; for boys, this is so and so…" or offering recommendations like "In such a case, I suggest...; if this is the case, then..." (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 143).

The author employs several rhetorical strategies to convey his messages. These include comparisons, such as in the statement, "This is the same logic as […]" (*Kore wa […] to iu ronri to onaji desu* これは[…]という論理と同じです; Morotomi 2009: 35); examples of specific scenarios, like "For example, 'today, I couldn't score a single shot in soccer...'" (*Tatoeba, 'kyō wa sakkā zenzen shūto ga hairanakattan da…'* たとえば、「今日はサッカー全然シュートが入らなかったんだ…」; Morotomi 2009: 142); and the citation of statistics or other data, as seen in "The following data also proves this" (*Tsugi no dēta mo sore wo shōmei shiteimasu* 次のデータもそれを証明しています; Morotomi 2009: 192).

The text also utilizes direct questions, such as "What would you answer?" (*Anata wa nan to kotaemasu ka?* あなたは何と答えますか?; Morotomi 2009: 142), and requests, like "However, if at some point your child finds out what they want to do with their life, be sure to support them in that endeavor" (*Shikashi, izure ka no jiten de, okosan ga 'jibun no jinsei de shitai koto' o mitsukeru koto ga dekitara, sore o zenryoku de ōen shite agete kudasai* しかし、いずれかの時点で、お子さんが「自分の人生でしたいこと」を見つけることができたら、それを全力で応援してあげてください; Morotomi 2009: 131). Additionally, it employs threats of a "negative future" if the advice is not followed, as in "However, if children repeatedly have the experience of having their mother clean up their messes, […] they may grow up to be irresponsible

adults" (*Keredo, 'okāsan ni shirinugui shite morau' taiken o kurikaeshiteiru to, […] musekinin na otona ni natte shimaimasu* けれど、「お母さんに尻ぬぐいしてもらう」体験をくり返していると […] 無責任な大人になってしまいます; Morotomi 2009: 35).

Furthermore, the book frequently references psychologists and experts in education, as in "Adlerian psychology, which is extremely useful for raising children […]" (*Ko-sodate ni taihen yaku ni tatsu Adorā shinrigaku dewa*, […] 子育てに大変役に立つアドラー心理学では、 […]; Morotomi 2009: 150). Lastly, Morotomi repeatedly uses corny, narrative descriptions to potentially evoke emotional responses in the reader (see, for example, Morotomi 2009: 5).

Regarding its content, the book heavily emphasizes the mother's role in her son's upbringing. Statements such as "The most fundamental element of child-rearing is the mother's own 'love and happiness'" (Morotomi 2009: 8) underscore her integral role. Above all, she must be loving, happy, stable and calm (Morotomi 2009: 9) but also understanding and empathetic (Morotomi 2009: 142). Moreover, she is expected to be selfless and self-sacrificing, always available for her son, even at the expense of her professional aspirations (Morotomi 2009: 37). While Morotomi encourages mothers who desire careers to pursue them (Morotomi 2009: 29-30), in other sequences he advises otherwise. For instance, in statements such as: "[…] You might start thinking, 'Since my child doesn't need as much attention anymore, maybe I should go back to work'. But please take a moment to pause and reflect" (Morotomi 2009: 38). This also underscores the author's presumption that it is primarily the mother's role to nurture and raise the children.

In addition to her child-rearing responsibility, the mother is also expected to be a "a shining example of a woman" for both her son and her husband[96]. This includes maintaining her husband's sexual interest and presenting herself attractively in front of her son's male friends through her "cool and chic" appearance: "For boys, when they reach about the sixth grade, they will be walking down the street with their friends and, spotting their friends' mothers, will say things like, 'Your mom is pretty cool, isn't she? She's so stylish'. When your son hears things like this, he will be secretly happy" (Morotomi 2009: 199-200). A mother who has "thrown away her womanhood" (Morotomi 2009: 199) by neglecting her appearance at home, according to this guidebook, may risk demotivating her son from wanting to marry, as he sees the potential 'disappointment' that awaits him: „They think, 'This is what happens to women after they get married', 'They wear nice

[96] See the sub-chapter "Mothers should be 'a somewhat good woman' in the house too!".

clothes to show off outside, but at home they wear clothes covered in lint. They care about what others think, but father isn't that important', and so on. They end up with a negative image of marriage, thinking, 'Love ends after marriage...Is that the reality?'" (Morotomi 2009: 200-201). In addition to the insight into the desired qualities and characteristics of boys, the book therefore also provides a precise idea of the 'ideal' mother figure.

Alongside all these expectations of the mother, the book also discusses homosocial competition among siblings over the mother's love, particularly between sons: "In addition to having their pride hurt, boys tend to develop a complex, thinking 'I'm not as loved by our mother as he [the brother] is', and their minds tend to become distorted" (Morotomi 2009: 77). This connects to Sedgwick's homosocial triangle, putting the mother as a conduit between her sons. It, moreover, once again emphasizes the loving and caring role of the mother and her significance in her sons' lives.

In some sections, Morotomi provocatively describes the mother-child relationship as akin to that of lovers[97]. The author's description of the mother-child relationship being 'OK as lovers' can be understood in the context of Freudian psychoanalysis, particularly his theory of the Oedipus complex. Freud proposed that during the phallic stage of development, typically between ages 3 and 5, boys experience desire for their mother and see their father as a rival. This complex is believed to be resolved through the process of identification with the father and internalization of social norms. Morotomi's characterization may be seen as referencing this Freudian concept, albeit in a more casual manner, suggesting a closeness or intensity in the mother-son relationship (Online Lexikon für Psychologie & Pädagogik 2024).

Additionally, the book draws parallels between the dynamics of husband-wife and mother-child relationships. For example, it states: "Wouldn't it be extremely upsetting if your husband told you, 'You are terrible at laundry. I redid it myself.' Be careful not to do the same thing to your children" (Morotomi 2009: 93). This is one of several instances where an analogy to the mother's own feelings is used to foster understanding of the son's behavior.

The book also refers to 'traditional' nuclear family roles, for example, by suggesting that fathers should "help" with child-rearing and housework, thereby implying that these tasks are primarily the mother's responsibility (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 51). Additionally, it reinforces

[97] For example, in the sub-chapter "The relationship between a boy and his mother is 'OK as lovers!'" *Otoko no ko to okāsan no kankei wa 'koibito de OK!'* 男の子とお母さんの関係は「恋人で OK！」(Morotomi 2009: 26).

stereotypical attributions of gendered behavior, not only for sons, but also for mothers. For instance, it suggests that the best way for mothers to relieve stress is to "sing all their anger out' at karaoke and then eat something sweet to calm their nerves" (Morotomi 2009: 215), revealing gender-specific stereotypes. It can be assumed that different stress management activities would be suggested for men. At the same time, heteronormativity permeates the entire book in the discussion of marriage, family or dating (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 293).

The book contains numerous essentialist statements, attributing boys' behavior or interests to biological or congenital factors, such as predispositions in the brain (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 135), hormones (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 106), or DNA (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 5) and asserts alleged 'inherent' gender differences between girls and boys (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 100). Morotomi also reiterates that certain behaviors and characteristics are 'programmed' into children. For example, he states, "Recent brain research has shown that boys' brains are innately programmed to be restless, rebellious, eager to be first, and fond of fighting and joking around. Girls' brains, on the other hand, are programmed to accept what they are told and to master it by imitation. Writing *kanji*[98] characters exactly as they are shown in the stroke order or copying what the teacher tells them to do on the blackboard is a pain for boys who are clumsy with their hands and like to move around, but it's a piece of cake for girls" (Morotomi 2009: 105). Consequently, the book maintains an essentialist and binary gender understanding, distinctly separating the upbringing of boys and girls (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 4) and assigning different stereotypical qualities[99], behaviors[100] or characteristics[101] to each. These assigned traits are distinctly labeled as "masculine/manly/boyish" and "feminine/womanly/girlish".

The separation based on gender is also evident in the parent-child relationship. For example, it is repeatedly mentioned that the mother cannot understand her son because he is of a different gender (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 30). In this context Morotomi also emphasizes that boys should be

[98] *Kanji* (漢字) are logographic characters used in the Japanese writing system, originating from Chinese characters.
[99] Like, for example, in "[...] Girly' ability to communicate and be flexible [...]" (*[...] komyunikēshon nōryoku ya jūnansei ga aru 'onna no koppo-sa [...]'* [...] コミュニケーション能力や柔軟性がある「女の子っぽさ [...]」; Morotomi 2009: 161).
[100] Like, for example, in "Boys are born with an innate love of working for their peers = team" (*Otoko no ko wa umaretsuki, nakama = chiimu no tame ni hataraku koto ga suki na yō ni dekiteiru ikimono na no desu* 男の子は生まれつき、仲間=チームのために働くことが好きなようにできている生き物なのです; Morotomi 2009: 100).
[101] Like, for example, in "A 'manly boy' who is proud and easily hurt [...]" (*Puraido ga takaku, kizutsukiyasui 'ika ni mo otokorashii otoko no ko' [...]* プライドが高く、傷つきやすい「いかにも男らしい男の子」[...]; Morotomi 2009: 161).

praised for having a penis, while girls should be told that they "DON'T have a penis" (implying they lack something) but can have babies instead, without any mention of a vulva (Morotomi 2009: 189-190). This suggests that having a penis equates to being a man, and being able to have babies equates to being a woman. This perspective disregards the existence of men who lack a penis and the womanhood of individuals who are unable to bear children. Such a viewpoint aligns with Bourdieu's concept of the male habitus, which is predominantly characterized by "de-feminization". The strong focus on reinforcing the notion of "you are a man" contributes to this de-feminization process.

In one section, Morotomi discusses the pressures and expectations imposed on children based on their gender. However, rather than critically examining or challenging societal norms he attributes this to 'naturally' gendered behavior (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 114). At the same time, he suggests that girls ironically benefit from being overlooked and judged solely on their appearance, as it teaches them to accept mediocrity and learn strategies for presenting themselves (Morotomi 2009: 115). In doing so, sexist structures are reframed as positive.

Conversely, the book also contains some sporadic 'feminist' influences. For instance, it highlights the importance of educating boys about the portrayal of assault in pornography, and states that it is something the fathers should discuss with their sons (Morotomi 2009: 205). It also stresses the need for boys to "value women as human beings" (*ningen toshite taisetsu ni suru* 人間として大切にする; Morotomi 2009: 207) and emphasizes that a woman showing skin by wearing short clothes is not an invitation or justification for sexual harassment, because "everyone's body belongs to themselves" (*jibun no karada wa jibun no mono* 自分の体は自分のもの; Morotomi 2009: 206).

The book implicitly suggests that boys lack adequate sex education, although this issue is never explicitly addressed. It observes that boys often contact counseling centers to seek information about their bodies and sexual thoughts, implying a deficiency in formal education on these subjects (Morotomi 2009: 202). Morotomi then asserts that it is the parents' responsibility to teach their children about bodily changes and sexual intercourse (Morotomi 2009: 202-203). Within this framework, the book portrays the development of sexual desire in boys as a 'natural part' of growing up and depicts boys as inherently sexual beings.

In summary, the author upholds a heteronormative and conservative perspective on gender

and family roles, alongside an essentialist view of masculinity. However, the book occasionally includes viewpoints that highlight gender equality.

6.1.4. Detailed Analysis of Three Selected Sub-chapters

For the detailed analysis, I chose the first three sub-chapters " 'Play' is where all the power of boys comes from" ('*Asobi' kara otoko no ko no subete no chikara ga umareru*「遊び」から男の子のすべての力が生まれる) , "Boys' silly play creates 'imagination'" (*Otoko no ko no bakabakashii asobi ga 'hassō-ryoku' o umu* 男の子のバカバカしい遊びが「発想力」を生む) and "The 'curiosity' to enjoy work can only be acquired through play" (*Shigoto o tanoshimu 'kōkishin' wa asobi de shika mi ni tsukanai* 仕事を楽しむ「好奇心」は遊びでしか身につかない) of chapter 5 "'Play' teaches us everything about life" ('*Asobi' ga jinsei no subete o oshiete kureru*「遊び」が人生のすべてを教えてくれる). The three sub-chapters span over a total of 8 pages (pages 150-157), consisting of 93 lines and 32 paragraphs, and are clearly marked by their titles in bold font. I found these sections to be representative of the entire work and therefore the most suitable for a more detailed analysis.

Each sub-chapter heading is preceded by a small drawing in black, white and grey. The first image shows a little bucket of sand with a shovel and a hand rake; in the second illustration we see a small boy's head[102]; and the third drawing shows a soccer ball. These graphics seem arbitrary and unrelated to the content of the sub-chapters. The images could therefore be exchanged, without affecting the understanding or expectations of the content. Despite their potential interchangeability, however, these small illustrations hint at the types of play and behavior associated with boys in this book.

Taking a closer look at the surface of the text, all three sub-chapters feature sentences emphasized in bold font, underscoring key concepts such as the importance of physical and mental engagement in play and the role of creativity and originality in both personal and professional development (see: Morotomi 2009: 151, 153). Additionally, the use of Japanese quotation marks 「」 highlight specific words and phrases (e.g., 「*Komyunikēshon nōryoku*」「コミュニケーション能力」; Morotomi 2009: 151). This formatting emphasizes the book's focus on these traits as crucial for boys' growth and success. The only exclamatory sentence in the text passage "That's a

[102] The same boy featured on the back of the book's cover strap.

shame!" (*Kore de wa mottainai!* これではもったいない!; (Morotomi 2009: 157) reflects concern over the loss of 'original' curiosity, signaling the book's intention to stress the value of maintaining innate curiosity throughout development.

In terms of content, the first sub-chapter discusses how "play" fundamentally benefits a boy's future, by referring to Adlerian psychology. According to this, boys need three skills to lead a happy life: 1) The ability to work and be useful, 2) The ability to make friends and companions, 3) The ability to build good relationships with the opposite sex and marry (Morotomi 2009: 150). In modern society, Morotomi notes, acquiring all three skills is challenging. He argues that play helps develop them by increasing physical and mental capabilities, improving communication skills and the willingness to work, as well as fostering devotion, and the ability to overcome difficulties. Morotomi therefore urges mothers to let their sons play freely.

The second sub-chapter explores in more detail how "silly play"[103] fosters creativity in boys and is guaranteed to make them better employees in the future. Playfulness and curiosity, which can be acquired through this silly play, would enhance imagination, thus promoting inventiveness in adulthood (e.g., new product development skills). Morotomi warns that forbidding boys from engaging in fun activities can lead to apathetic adults with no passion or direction.

Although the second and third sub-chapter are divided, they overlap significantly in content. The third sub-chapter reiterates the previous sub-chapter's message, examining how playfulness and creativity help boys enjoy studying and work. Their curiosity and unconventional thinking would become a source of motivation, making even mundane tasks interesting. Morotomi asserts that creativity is crucial in "Japan's mature society", where everything "is already established" (Morotomi 2009: 157). He warns that boys who simply memorize and follow instructions could lose their inherent curiosity, which he argues to be more pronounced in boys than in girls.

Rhetorically, Morotomi begins the first sub-chapter with a general introduction to the three

[103] Morotomi never provides a precise definition of what he means by "silly play". Instead, he offers several examples to illustrate his point: "Competing with friends to see who can stuff the most dung beetles in their pockets, expanding the scope and number of players in tag until about 30 people are running around the school, and competing to see who can jump off the swings in the funniest way... they just do trivial things that make you sigh" (*Dango mushi o docchi ga takusan poketto ni tsumerareru ka tomodachi to kyōsō suru, onigokko no han'i to ninzū ga dondon kakudai shite 30-nin kurai de gakkō no mawari o hashirimawaru, buranko kara ika ni omoshiroi kakko de tobioriru ka o kisou nado, hontō ni tameiki ga deru kurai, kudaranai koto bakari shiteimasu* ダンゴ虫をどっちがたくさんポケットに詰められるか友だちと競争する、鬼ごっこの範囲と人数がどんどん拡大して 30 人くらいで学校の周りを走り回る、ブランコからいかに面白いカッコで飛び降りるかを競うなど、本当にため息が出るくらい、くだらないことばかりしています; Morotomi 2009: 152-153).

essential skills boys need for happiness (according to Adler, whom Morotomi refers to), relating them to contemporary Japanese society (Morotomi 2009: 150-151). He connects these skills to the reader's (possible) desires for their sons and skillfully links them to his actual point: the importance of play "This is where boys' 'play' becomes important!" (*Sokode, taisetsu ni natte kuru no ga otoko no ko no 'asobi' desu* そこで、大切になってくるのが男の子の「遊び」です; Morotomi 2009: 151). While doing so, he also regularly emphasizes that these skills aim to ensure a "happy life", thereby reinforcing their relevance to the reader (Morotomi 2009: 151-152). Morotomi then concludes by directly urging mothers to let their sons play more (Morotomi 2009: 152), illustrating his point with an example (Morotomi 2009: 152). The main objectives of this sub-chapter are to introduce the necessary skills for a boy's happy life, convince the reader of the importance of play, and highlight its relevance in boys' lives.

Morotomi rhetorically opens the second sub-chapter by appealing to the mother's feelings, using examples, to reinforce his point (Morotomi 2009: 152). He redefines the negative connotation of silly play into something positive[104] and underlines this notion with some examples of successful inventors and entrepreneurs (Morotomi 2009: 153). The author further strengthens his argument by highlighting the negative consequences of insufficient play[105]. This chapter also ends with a direct appeal to the reader (the mother), urging them to consider the kind of adult they want their son to become, before restricting play (Morotomi 2009: 155). The main aim of this sub-chapter therefore is to underscore the importance of silly play through positive and negative examples.

In the third sub-chapter, Morotomi begins his argument by discussing boys' 'innate' imagination and consolidates the idea of what imaginative play can look like in the minds of the reader, by giving a few examples (Morotomi 2009: 155-156). He once again stresses the importance of curiosity for boys (Morotomi 2009: 156-157) through repeated references to their future and Japanese society (Morotomi 2009: 157), thereby creating a sense of urgency for mothers to cultivate this trait. This feeling of pressure is then reinforced at the end of the sub-chapter by once more outlining the negative future awaiting boys who lack creativity and curiosity[106]. The aim of the third sub-chapter is to use emotional pressure to convince the reader of the importance of

[104] The experience of playing silly games nurtures the ability to think outside the box, which is a great asset for boys when they grow up and start working" (*Bakabakashī asobi no keiken wa, otoko no ko ga otona ni natte shigoto o shite iku ue de ōki na buki to naru 'hassō-ryoku' o hagukumimasu* バカバカしい遊びの経験は、男の子が大人になって仕事をしていくうえで大きな武器となる「発想力」をはぐくみます; Morotomi 2009: 153).

[105] Including a lack of imagination, lethargy, and not knowing what one wants to do (Morotomi 2009: 154-155).

[106] Including the inability to be creative, being boring, and not being good at work (Morotomi 2009: 157).

creativity and to illustrate even more precisely how valuable it is in a man's life.

Altogether the book does not advocate for play simply because it is enjoyable, fun, and allows children freedom and self-expression. Instead, the author argues that play serves a specific purpose: it helps transform boys into responsible and capable members of society.

Linguistically, the entire book is written in *keitai*[107] (敬体), directly addressing the readership (specifically the mothers)[108] in a formal first-person narrative style. This creates the sense of a respectful, yet interpersonal connection between reader and author. This personal level is reinforced by the frequent use of the grammatical sentence ending "*yo ne*" (よね), which can best be translated into English as "isn't it?" or "isn't that right?" (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 153). Additionally, Morotomi repeatedly makes references to the mother's point of view (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 152) and directly urges the reader to implement (or refrain from) specific parenting practices (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 151). This enhances the more interpersonal reading experience, supporting Morotomi in convincing the audience of his own argument.

The author further bridges the gap between the reader and the text by describing relatable everyday scenarios (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 156) or by using the sentence ending "*deshō*" (でしょう) (which in this context can best be translated to "might ..., won't they?"; e.g. Morotomi 2009: 156), to generate emotional confirmation of what is being said and to suggest feelings or experiences to lead to his argument. Furthermore, Morotomi employs a conversational narrative style of writing to maintain reader interest and strengthen relatability. Repetition of statements and arguments consolidate his points in the reader's mind (e.g. he repeatedly points out that the 'ultimate goal' is for the boys to live a happy life).

To emphasize the importance of his educational proposals, Morotomi exerts pressure on the reader using various linguistic and rhetorical means. One notable method is his use of the word ending "*-shimau*" (-しまう) in connection with 'irreversible', negative effects on the boys' future (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 154). This conveys a sense of finality and urges the readers to follow his

[107] In grammar, the *keitai* (or desu-masu style (*desu-masu-tai* です・ます体)) is a predicate style and a part of Japanese polite language. *Ketai* conveys a respectful manner to the reader. The *jōtai* (常体) form (or da-de aru style (*da-de aru-tai* だ・である体) on the other hand, is used in informal conversations. In written text, it is often used in scientific papers like a thesis or proposal. *Jōtai* conveys a direct and frank sentiment to the reader (Kabushikigaisha awādo 2024).

[108] By addressing her as "Mom" (*okāsan* お母さん) and by formulating direct requests to her, like, for example, in "Please, let him play" (*Asobasete agete kudasai* 遊ばせてあげてください; Morotomi 2009: 152).

advice while they still can. Additionally, he frequently refers to the future, depicting it with various negative outcomes to issue warnings. These descriptions also often include generalizations (e.g. Morotomi 2009: 157). To create distance between his described future scenarios and "actual" facts/events, Morotomi repeatedly uses the grammatical word ending "*gachi*" (がち), which translates as "to tend to", "to be likely to" or "to be apt to" (Morotomi 2009: 155, 157).

Moreover, throughout the sub-chapters, Morotomi repeatedly uses the word fragment "*bakari*" (ばかり), which in this context can be best translated to "nothing but" or "only", to reinforce the expression of negative feelings. For example, phrases such as "Only do stupid things" (*Kudaranai koto bakari shiteimasu* くだらないことばかりしています; Morotomi 2009: 152, 153).

In a next step, I extracted and analyzed all the nouns, verbs, and adjectives from the three sub-chapters to identify any notable features in their formulation, 'mood', or thematic focus. For the nouns, I examined whether they could be categorized into specific semantic fields, such as politics, illness, military, history, and so on. Discourse fragments often contain recurring semantic elements of similar levels, which can be seen as isotopies. These semantic references enhance clarity and help outline and structure the meaning of the text, therefore facilitating a better understanding of the author's language (Jäger 2015: 106).

In the stratification of nouns, terms related to the isotopy of "adult life" (in other words, terms that have nothing do with "boys play" per se) stand out, emphasizing a future-oriented perspective. Terms include work (*shigoto* 仕事), marriage (*kekkon* 結婚), society (*shakai* 社会), university (*daigaku* 大学), company (*kaisha* 会社), wife (*okusan* 奥さん), housewife (*sengyō shufu* 専業主婦), first-class company (*ichiryū kaisha* 一流会社), product development (*shōhin kaihatsu* 商品開発) and employee (*shain* 社員) (Morotomi 2009: 150-157).

Additionally, the mention of various "abilities" and "skills" are striking: Communication skills (*komyunikēshon nōryoku* コミュニケーション能力), cooperation skills (*kyōryoku* 協力), talents (*nōryoku* 能力), ability to immerse (*mugamuchū-ryoku* 無我夢中力), concentration skills (*shūchū-ryoku* 集中力), creative skills (*hassō-ryoku* 発想力), problem-solving skills (*mondaikaiketsu-ryoku* 問題解決力), ability to play to one's heart's content (*zonbun asobu chikara* 存分遊ぶ力), creative skills (*sōzō-ryoku* 創造力) and originality (*dokusō-ryoku* 独創力) (Morotomi 2009: 150-157).

Notable adjectives include both extremes – positive ones associated with a promising future and great qualities, and negative ones describing undesirable traits caused by insufficient play. Positive ones include happy (*kōfuku na* 幸福な), favorable (*ryōkō na* 良好な), important (*taisetsu* 大切), well (*umaku* うまく), liked (*suki na* 好きな), interesting (*omoshiroi* 面白い), delightful (*yorokobashii* 喜ばしい), fun (*tanoshii* 楽しい), new (*atarashii* 新しい), famous (*yūmei na* 有名な), earnest (*majime* 真面目), free (*jiyū na* 自由な), good (ii いい) and original (*dokusōteki na* 独創的な). Negative ones encompass trivial/insignificant (*kudaranai* くだらない), apathetic (*mukiryoku na* 無気力な) and boring (*tsumaranai* つまらない). Furthermore, expressions that describe essentialist beliefs can also be found among the adjectives, like in the cases of naturally (*shizen to* 自然と) as (it) is (*sono mama* そのまま), and originally existed (*motomoto atta* もともとあった) (Morotomi 2009: 150-157). The stratification of verbs revealed no significant patterns or notable features.

Overall, two idioms are used in the three sub-chapters. The first saying is "s*hian no waza* 至難の業" meaning "Herculean task" or "next-to-impossible undertaking" and is used to describe the (almost impossible) task to fulfill all three Adlerian skills for a happy life (Morotomi 2009: 150). The second saying "*mune ni te o ateru* 胸に手を当てる" translates directly as "put one's hand to one's chest" and means "to self-reflect" or "to think seriously about something". This idiom is used when Morotomi asks the reader directly to think about what kind of adult they want their son to become (Morotomi 2009: 154).

In the selected text passage, we can find one collective symbol in the three sub-chapters, namely that of the salaryman. Although not explicitly mentioned, the skills Morotomi (or Adler, whom he refers to) deems essential for a man's happiness, align with the symbolic pillars of salaryman masculinity[109]. This collective symbol serves two purposes: to put pressure on the reader by showing them what skills are to be acquired and what expectations weigh on their sons; and to create a connection with the reader's knowledge habits. The image of masculinity is closely linked to the image of a salaryman. It can therefore trigger a feeling of familiarity. However, the collective symbol is not entirely stable, as it is tied to two prerequisites:

1) it assumes the reader's (the mother's) desire for their son to embody salaryman masculinity = to

[109] Heterosexuality, a good education (= following the rules of the *gakureki shakai* 学歴社会 = academic meritocracy; education-conscious society), being the breadwinner and a good employee (see also Dasgupta 2013: 58-59).

be professionally successful, to have good (homosocial) friendships and to marry (a woman); 2) it assumes the reader's knowledge of societal expectations.

6.1.5. Preliminary Conclusion of the First Guidebook

In summary, this discourse fragment provides insights into the numerous social expectations and demands placed on boys from a young age. The text moreover conveys the idea that boys must be educated early to become the men society wants them to be. Although the book attempts to break free from "old-fashioned" thinking to some extent[110], it still records stereotypical images of 'boyish' behavior and 'male' characteristics. Simultaneously, femininity is devalued, as girls are denied a vivid imagination and creativity (Morotomi 2009: 156).

In terms of content and ideology, the text reveals numerous expectations for boys. The book outlines desirable abilities and qualities, as well as expectations, that boys should develop to become productive adults later in life. These include work ability and usefulness to the world (*shigoto shi, yo no naka no yaku o tatsu* 仕事し、世の中の役に立つ; Morotomi 2009: 150); ability to make friends and companions (*tomodachi ya nakama o tsukuru nōryoku* 友達や仲間を作る能力; Morotomi 2009: 150); ability to have romantic relationships and marry (*isei to ryōkō na kankei o kizuki, kekkon suru nōryoku* 異性と良好な関係を築き、結婚する能力; Morotomi 2009: 150); admission to a good university (*ii daigaku ni hairu* いい大学に入る; Morotomi 2009: 150); entry into a prestigious company (*ii kaisha ni hairu/ichiryū kigyō ni iru* いい会社に入る/一流企業にいる; Morotomi 2009: 150); academic and professional ease (*benkyō ya shigoto ni komaranai* 勉強や仕事に困らない; Morotomi 2009: 151); effective communication (*komyunikēshon nōryoku* コミュニケーション能力; Morotomi 2009: 151); ability to cooperate (*kyōryoku* 協力; Morotomi 2009: 151); selflessness (*mugamuchū-ryoku* 無我夢中力; Morotomi 2009: 151); imagination (*hassōryoku* 発想力; Morotomi 2009: 151); problem-solving skills (*mondaikaiketsu-ryoku* 問題解決力; Morotomi 2009: 151); playfulness (*omou zonbun asobu chikara* 思う存分遊ぶ力; Morotomi 2009: 152); inventiveness (e.g. in generating new products) (*atarashii shōhin kaihatsu no aidia* 新しい商品開発のアイディア; Morotomi 2009: 153); enthusiasm (*jibun kara 'kore ga yaritai'* 自分から「これがやりたい」; Morotomi 2009: 154);

[110] For example, in the remark that it is no longer the norm for the wife to be at home and look after the children (Morotomi 2009: 151).

goal-setting (*jibun ga nani o shitai ka wakaru* 自分が何をしたいかわかる; Morotomi 2009: 155); passion (*nani ni mo nomerikomu koto ga dekiru* 何にものめり込むことができる; Morotomi 2009: 155); avoidance of lethargy (*mukiryoku na otona ni naranai* 無気力な大人にならない; Morotomi 2009: 155); enjoyment of work (*shigoto o tanoshimu* 仕事を楽しむ; Morotomi 2009: 155); curiosity (*kōkishin* 好奇心; Morotomi 2009: 155); natural enjoyment in studies and work (*benkyō ya shigoto no naka ni mo shizen to omoshirosa o mitsukedaseru* 勉強や仕事の中にも自然と面白さを見つけ出せる; Morotomi 2009: 156); motivation (*mochibēshon* モチベーション; Morotomi 2009: 156); ingenuity and originality (*jibun nari ni sōi kufū shite hatten saseru* 自分なりに創意工夫して発展させる; Morotomi 2009: 156); creativity (*kurieitivuiti* + *dokusō-ryoku* クリエイティヴィティ + 独創力; Morotomi 2009: 157); professional success (*shigoto de kachinuku* 仕事で勝ち抜く; Morotomi 2009: 157); thoughtful study habits (beyond mere completion and memorization) (*nanimo kangaezu ni 'konasu' 'oboeru' benkyō o shinai otoko*) 何も考えずに「こなす」「覚える」勉強をしない男; Morotomi 2009: 157); special skills (*daredemo dekiru shigoto shika makaserarenai otoko ni naranai* 誰でもできる仕事しか任せられない男にならない; Morotomi 2009: 157); excitement (*tsumaranai ningen ni naranai* つまらない人間にならない; Morotomi 2009: 157); and competence at work (*shigoto ga dekinai ningen ni naranai* 仕事ができない人間にならない; Morotomi 2009: 157).

At the same time, the text reveals essentialist ideas: Heteronormativity (*isei to ryōkō na kankei o kizuki, ren'ai shi, kekkon suru nōryoku* 異性と良好な関係を築き、恋愛し、結婚する能力; Morotomi 2009: 150); belief in boys' inclination towards silly games (*bakabakashii shika omoenai asobi* バカバカしいしか思えない遊び; Morotomi 2009: 152); belief in boys' playful spirit (*asobigokoro* 遊び心; Morotomi 2009: 153); belief in boys' general tendency of seeing and doing interesting things (*omoshiroi koto o mitsukeru meijin* 面白いことを見つける名人です; Morotomi 2009: 155); belief in boys' greater creativity compared to girls (*onna no ko de areba mimuki mo shinai […]* 女の子であれば見向きもしない […]; Morotomi 2009: 156); belief in boys' primal curiosity (*motomoto atta hazu no kōkishin* もともとあったはずの好奇心; Morotomi 2009: 157).

These characteristics, expectations and essentialist prerequisites confirm that the

fundamental pillars of salaryman masculinity are still held up in this publication:

1) Completing a *good education* (scholar success),

2) Joining a *top-rate company* and working happily and *successfully* (breadwinner role),

3) Having a *good relationship* with the 'opposite' sex, demonstrated through *marriage* (heterosexuality),

4) Establishing and maintaining friendships (thinking of the great importance of homosocial relationships in work life).

Notably, since these are all attributes that a boy aged 0-12 does not yet possess, it can be said that in this context, salaryman masculinity remains the idealized "goal" of masculinity toward which all the guidance in the book is aimed.

However, in addition to the core characteristics of salaryman masculinity, traits associated with transnational business masculinity, such as exceptional communication skills, cooperation skills, selflessness, creativity and inventiveness, problem-solving skills, enthusiasm, passion and originality also appear. In this respect, characteristics that used to be associated with salaryman masculinity conversely tend to have a negative connotation. For example, instead of always approaching everything seriously, there now seems to be the requirement to approach everything with joy and ease. Rather than being lethargic[111], there now is a demand to always be full of energy. While conformity and completing tasks sufficiently were important in the past, individual thinking and agency seem to be more desirable at present. Instead of being a man who can easily adapt to any work environment (who is commutable) and be trusted with any task, specific knowledge, skills and talent are more valued. Finally, instead of being a simple (ordinary) person, being creative and exciting seems to be more sought after.

Overall, success at work is not (only) made dependent on dedication, performance, adaptability and conformity (anymore), but on the enthusiasm, passion, creativity, autonomy and 'originality' of each individual worker. This suggests a shift from 'traditional' salaryman values to those of transnational business masculinity. Thus, we can observe a potential gradual evolution from salaryman masculinity to transnational business masculinity, particularly in terms of expected work qualities.

[111] Although being lethargic was never regarded positive, it was in line with the 'traditional' image of the overworked salaryman.

6.2. The Second Guidebook

The guidebook *Kore kara no otoko no ko-tachi e. 'Otokorashisa' kara jiyū ni naru tame no ressun.* これからの男の子たちへ。「男らしさ」から自由になるためのレッスン。 [To the boys of the future. Lessons in freedom from 'masculinity'] by Ōta Keiko 太田啓子 was published in 2020, making it a relatively recent work. The book has already been translated into Taiwanese and Korean and is also set to be published in China (Shōnansha 2022: 2).

In addition to this guidebook, Ōta published another book in 2024 together with Tanaka Toshiyuki 田中俊之 called *Ibara no michi no otoko no ko-tachi e. Jendāresu jidai no otoko no ko ikujiron* いばらの道の男の子たちへ。ジェンダーレス時代の男の子育児論 [To the boys on a thorny path. A theory on raising boys in a genderless era]. The titles of her works indicate that Ōta promotes an approach to education that aims to break down gender-specific prejudices.

Ōta graduated from International Christian University (*Kokusai kirisutokyō daigaku* 国際基督教大学), has been working as a lawyer since 2002 and is currently a member of the Shōnan Joint Law Office (*Shōnan gōdō hōritsu jimusho* 湘南合同法律事務所) in Fujisawa, Kanagawa. In her legal practice, she mainly focuses on family matters such as divorce and inheritance as well as civil cases involving sexual harassment, sexual assault and various compensation claims. She is a member of the *Association of young lawyers protecting tomorrow's freedom* (Asuwaka) (*Ashita no jiyū o mamoru wakate bengoshi no kai (asuwaka)* 明日の自由を守る若手弁護士の会 (あすわか)) and has been an initiator of the Angry Women Association (*Okoreru joshi kai* 怒れる女子会) since 2014. Moreover, she also co-authored a number of publications[112] and has been featured in newspapers, magazines, and TV programs (Ōta 2020; Shōnansha 2022: 2).

[112] These include: "Welcome to the Constitution Café" (*Kenpō kafe e yōkoso* 憲法カフェへようこそ), "Now I understand! A quick translation of the act on the protection of specially designated secrets" (*Kore de wakatta! Chōyaku tokutei himitsu hogohō* これでわかった！ 超訳特定秘密保護法), and "Japanese Feminism since 1886: The battle of the sexes" (*Nihon no feminizumu since 1886 sei no tatakai hen* 日本のフェミニズム since 1886 性の戦い編; Ōta 2020).

6.2.1. Cover Analysis of the Second Guidebook

(Img. 2)

Unlike the cover of the first book, this guidebook has a much calmer and softer feel. The pastel yellow background and a simple drawing of a boy in a hoodie, with black hair, white skin, and a slightly pastel pink cheek, make the cover appear gentle.

The boy is shown from his head to the top half of his chest, posed sideways with a faint smile. The main title, "To the boys of the future" (*Kore kara no otoko no ko-tachi e* これからの男の子たちへ), is written in black and follows the right-hand corner above and to the side of the drawing. Below the title, the authoress's name, Ōta Keiko (太田啓子), is printed in a smaller font on the right, with the publishing company "Ōtsuki Shoten" (大月書店) in the bottom right corner. On the left side of the cover, we see the sub-heading "Lessons in freedom from 'masculinity'" (*'Otokorashisa' kara jiyū ni naru tame no ressun*「男らしさ」から自由になるためのレッスン). The back of the book has no additional illustrations or content information.

6.2.2. Table of Contents Analysis of the Second Guidebook

The guidebook is organized into six chapters, each divided into several sub-chapters. Additionally, there are three sub-chapters featuring interviews with experts to provide a deeper insight into specific topics. These sections are highlighted with gray paper and a different font.

The first chapter "The gender bias that hangs over boys' daily lives" (*Otoko no ko no nichijō ni kakaru jendābaiasu no maku* 男の子の日常にかかるジェンダーバイアスの膜) addresses daily gender bias in parenting and its impact on boys. Ōta highlights expressions like "gender bias" (ジェンダーバイアス; Ōta 2020: 19) and "toxic masculinity" (*yūgai na otokorashisa*「有害な男らしさ」; Ōta 2020: 21). She views gender bias a significant problem in parenting (Ōta 2020: 19) and deliberately distances herself from essentialist gender beliefs. The sub-chapters discuss specific cases of gender bias, such as comparing boys and girls, or assuming boys are stupid and violent (Ōta 2020: 24-26). Stereotypical 'boys' play' like "*kanchō*"[113] (カンチョー; Ōta 2020:

[113] *Kanchō* is a prank, mainly played by children, in which a finger is thrust into the butthole of another person.

28) and "skirt flipping"[114] (Ōta 2020: 31) are also examined.

Chapter two "The curse placed on boys" (*Otoko no ko ni kakerareru noroi* 男の子にかけられる呪い) explores Critical Masculinity Research (Ōta 2020: 38) and boys' homosocial bonds and relationships (Ōta 2020: 41). It examines power struggles (Ōta 2020: 46) in male homosocial relationships, starting from early childhood, and how toxic environments can fuel violent dynamics, using examples like incels[115] (Ōta 2020: 56). It also addresses harmful beliefs about boys' and girls' popularity (Ōta 2020: 54, 60, 62). The chapter concludes with an interview featuring writer and representative of Momoyama Shoji[116], Kiyota Takayuki 清田隆之: "Why are boys like that?" (*Otoko no ko tte, dōshite ā nan deshō ka?* 「男子って、どうしてああなんでしょうか?」; Ōta 2020: 69). Overall, Ōta's approach is multifaceted and versatile, including girls in the discussion of boys' upbringing (instead of using them as a form of 'contrast'), showing her reluctance to separate children based on binary gender spheres.

Chapter three "Things boys should know before having sex" (*Sekkusu suru mae ni danshi ni shitte oite hoshii koto* セックスする前に男子に知っておいてほしいこと) discusses various aspects related to sex, such as pornography (Ōta 2020: 110), contraceptives (Ōta 2020: 116), and sex education (Ōta 2020: 106, 108). Terms like 'communication' (*komyunikēshon* コミュニケーション; Ōta 2020: 113) and 'consent' (*dōi* 同意; Ōta 2020: 119) are particularly noteworthy. Ōta emphasizes the need for good communication and consent before engaging in the 'responsibility' (*sekinin* 責任; Ōta 2020: 123) of sex, making communication skills an essential quality for boys. The chapter concludes with an interview featuring primary school teacher Hoshino Toshiki 星野俊樹, who has spent much of his career working on "life and sexuality lessons" and focusing on education "that respects diversity": "How can we create a classroom where diversity is respected?" (*'Tayōsei ga sonchō sareru kyōshitsu o tsukuru ni wa?* 「多様性が尊重される教室をつくるには?」; Ōta 2020: 129).

In chapter four "How to teach boys about sexual harassment and sexual violence"

[114] Skirt flipping is the act of intentionally flipping up somebody's skirt to expose the underwear or lower half of the body.
[115] Incel, short for "involuntary celibate", refers to a subculture of heterosexual men who claim to be unable to find sexual or romantic partners and adhere to an ideology of hegemonic masculinity. These men frequently express misogynistic views and, in extreme cases, resort to violence against women.
[116] Momoyama Shoji is a group led by Kiyota Takayuki that collects and shares people's love stories to analyze and discuss contemporary views on romance, gender, and the struggles of men and women.

(*Sekuhara・seibōryoku ni tsuite danshi ni dō oshieru?* セクハラ・性暴力について男子にどう教える?) Ōta emphasizes the importance of teaching boys about the conditions and consequences of sexualized violence, advocating against shielding them from this topic, but to include it in their upbringing. Given that, due to patriarchal structures, boys and men tend to deal with these matters less than girls and women[117], this point is highly relevant.

The fifth chapter "Considering expressions that create misunderstandings" (*Kanchigai o umu hyōgen o kangaeru* カンチガイを生む表現を考える) delves into the problems of sexist media and the portrayal of sexual violence as entertainment. The terms "heterosexual" (*iseiai* 異性愛; Ōta 2020: 187) in connection with the word "privileged" (*tokkenteki atsukai* 特権的扱い; Ōta 2020: 187) stand out, highlighting how the book recognizes heterosexual desire as a privileged sexuality in society. This chapter also concludes with an interview with entertainer and essayist Kojima Keiko 小島慶子: "As a mother, what can you pass on to your sons and daughters?" (*Haha-oya toshite, musuko・ musume-tachi ni nani o tsutaeraremasu ka?* 母親として、息子・娘たちに何を伝えられますか?; Ōta 2020: 205).

Chapter six "To the boys of the future" (*Kore kara no otoko no ko-tachi e* これからの男の子たちへ) outlines the desired traits and wishes for boys, framed as requests or appeals directly addressed to them. These include not denying their own weakness (Ōta 2020: 236), not laughing about sexual violence (Ōta 2020: 239), resisting homosocial peer pressure (Ōta 2020: 240), thinking about what it means to buy sexual services (Ōta 2020: 241), being aware of their own privilege (as men) (Ōta 2020: 245), fulfilling their responsibility as privileged individuals through real action (Ōta 2020: 247), not passively participating in injustice (Ōta 2020: 250), believing that society can change (Ōta 2020: 252), building relationships based on equality (Ōta 2020: 254) and creating a "new common sense" together (Ōta 2020: 256).

6.2.3. Comprehensive Analysis of the Second Guidebook

The book, spanning 262 pages, initially seems progressive, especially with its subtitle suggesting that masculinity is something one can live freely from, implying that it is not confined to physical traits. The reference to the future in the title could be interpreted as an invitation to envision a 'new

[117] Considering, how many girls are taught from a young age to avoid certain places, not to wear certain clothes, to cover certain parts of their bodies, or to take certain protective measures (such as watching their drinks), etc.

kind' of masculinity – one that is more flexible and liberated from 'traditional' constraints.

The book does not seem to target a specific audience. While it discusses the upbringing of boys, it is not exclusively appealing to parents or guardians. There are also chapters and paragraphs directly addressing teen boys (or girls) (e.g. Ōta 2020: 124), and the book's general tone (e.g. Ōta 2020: 51) makes it accessible to everyone interested in promoting a more egalitarian society, even if they are not necessarily parents or teenagers themselves. It includes little specific child-rearing advice (as in "do this to avoid this…" etc.), focusing instead on enlightening readers about gender issues in upbringing, including gender bias, sexual harassment, abuse, and structural sexism.

The book's central message is to recognize, challenge, and liberate oneself from toxic and harmful[118] patterns of masculinity. It advocates for an intersectional approach and encourages readers to apply this perspective in their parenting practices (Ōta 2020: 83). The book addresses issues such as sexuality, gender identity, disability, structural class differences, and race- and gender-based privilege. The authoress also references transnational movements like "Black Lives Matter" to illustrate the concept of privilege (Ōta 2020: 248) and includes examples of anti-heteronormativity (Ōta 2020: 187-188).

Like Morotomi, Ōta also writes exclusively in the present tense. Unlike in the first book, which used fictional scenarios to generate understanding and comprehensibility, this guidebook includes real-life experiences from the authoress's work life as a lawyer (Ōta 2020: 23), as a mother raising her sons (Ōta 2020: 54-55), and as a woman (including her own childhood; Ōta 2020: 29, 66). She effectively connects her examples to her explanations and concludes with personal wishes and aspirations, such as "I want them to grow up to be adults who can do such things" (*Sō iu koto ga dekiru otona ni sodatte hoshii no desu* そういうことができる大人に育ってほしいのです; Ōta 2020: 180) or "[…] I hope that men from now on will consciously understand this" (*[…] Kore kara no otoko-tachi wa ishikiteki ni rikai shite hoshii to omoimasu* […] これからの男たちは意識的に理解してほしいと思います; Ōta 2020: 62). She also makes guidance-oriented assertions to the audience, such as "[…] I think it is important for adults around them to help by providing information" (*[…] Shūi no otona ga jōhō teikyō nado tedasuke o suru koto ga hitsuyō da to omoimasu* […] 周囲の大人が情報提供など手助けをすることが必要だと思います; Ōta 2020: 124). Furthermore, Ōta supports her arguments with references to prominent feminists, such

[118] To women as well as men themselves.

as Simone de Beauvoir (Ōta 2020: 6), social scientists (e.g. Ōta 2020: 22), and scholars in Gender and Masculinity Studies, including Itō Kimio 伊藤公雄 (Ōta 2020: 38). She incorporates direct quotations, such as from Emma Watson (Ōta 2020: 67) and utilizes statistics like the results of a survey conducted by the daily newspaper Asahi Shinbun 朝日新聞 on how people learn about the meaning of sex (Ōta 2020: 105). Additionally, she draws on media references (e.g. Ōta 2020: 32) and specific incidents, such as cases of violence perpetrated by incels (e.g. Ōta 2020: 57) to underscore and illustrate her points.

What we can see from a closer examination is that the second guidebook contains fewer expectations and wishes for boys, distancing itself consciously from essentialist ideas, by suggesting that masculinity (and femininity) is *learned*, not *biologically determined* (e.g. Ōta 2020: 6). It recognizes that gendered behavior (and in this case specifically masculinity) is structural and performative rather than individual and inherent.

We can also note a rejection of essentialist ideas in the intense criticism directed at societal discourse and parents rather than criticizing boys and their behavior (e.g. Ōta 2020: 47, 48). Adults are encouraged to pass on knowledge to their children and to (not) teach certain ways of thinking and acting (e.g. Ōta 2020: 30) instead of holding children responsible for their 'boyish' / 'girlish' behavior.

Using examples from family[119] and society[120], Ōta critically emphasizes the normalization and everyday occurrence of sexist patterns. The authoress also addresses misogyny (e.g. Ōta 2020: 42) and the devaluation of femininity (e.g. Ōta 2020: 93) while noting that women can also participate in upholding sexist or patriarchal structures (Ōta 2020: 8).

She moreover specifies the types of masculinities she discusses[121], thereby avoiding universalizing all men. Stereotypical gender roles and expectations are recognized as such and critically examined, discussing concepts like salaryman (Ōta 2020: 44), *daikokubashira* 大黒柱[122] (Ōta 2020: 43), trophy wives[123] (Ōta 2020: 88) and the breadwinner role in relation to care work

[119] For example, by talking about care work (Ōta 2020: 64), or naming examples of the different treatment of children based on their gender (Ōta 2020: 19-20), etc.
[120] For example, the trivialization of sexual harassment in children's TV series (Ōta 2020: 197), etc.
[121] Like, for example in "Men who are not homosexuals or other sexual minorities" (*Dōseiaisha nado no seiteki shōsūsha de wa nai dansei* 同性愛者などの性的少数者ではない男性; Ōta 2020: 42)
[122] "*Daikokubashira*" literally means "the main pillar" of a house, but it is commonly used metaphorically to refer to the primary breadwinner or the 'central figure' who supports and holds a family or group together.
[123] A "trophy wife" is a younger, attractive woman married to a wealthy, often older man, primarily seen as a status symbol of his success and prestige.

(Ōta 2020: 89, 206).

Beyond that, the authoress generally rejects distinctions between girls and boys (e.g. Ōta 2020: 26) and deliberately includes girls in the guidebook (e.g. Ōta 2020: 54). In the introduction Ōta states her dislike for categorizing children as 'typically female' or 'typically male' (Ōta 2020: 4, 5). Instead, she frequently uses terms like "child-like" (*kodomo rashii* 子供らしい; Ōta 2020: 34). This 'neutral' wording extends to how she addresses child-rearing individuals, using terms like "parent/s" (*oya* 親; Ōta 2020: 55), "adults" (*otona* 大人; Ōta 2020: 26), "persons" (*mono* 者; Ōta 2020: 258), or "mothers or fathers" (*okāsan ya otōsan* お母さんやお父さん; Ōta 2020: 9), and also to spouses, using "partner" (*pātonā* パートナー; Ōta 2020: 51) instead of "wife" or "husband". Although the frequent reference to boys and girls suggests a cis-normative, binary understanding of gender, specific mentions of cis and trans people (e.g. Ōta 2020: 83, 239) break down this assumption and reveal a broader meaning of gender.

Another central theme of the book is sexual violence. Ōta considers it essential that boys are not taught to view girls or women as sexual objects (e.g. Ōta 2020: 62), as this fosters sexualized violence (Ōta 2020: 66). The authoress seems to perceive sexual violence as the pinnacle of violent conduct (e.g. Ōta 2020: 161). Therefore, children should be sufficiently educated on this matter.

In its close attention to sex education, the book also discusses sex work (e.g. Ōta 2020: 228, 242) and pornographic media. This section reflects some gender stereotypes, particularly in the portrayal of adult videos (AVs). Ōta suggests that AVs produced for women are more realistic and align with women's actual sexual needs. These needs include gentler sex (Ōta 2020: 112), the feeling of being loved and valued (Ōta 2020: 114), and – even more than physical pleasure – good communication and a sense of security (Ōta 2020: 115). While communication and consent are indeed fundamental prerequisites for sex, the book seems to assume that women do not enjoy or watch deviant or wilder forms of sex (and vice versa, that boys don't watch AVs showing gentler forms of sex too) and suggests that for women sex is always associated with feelings of love. This should be viewed critically. Nevertheless, Ōta's ideological stance is clear: It is feminist, antipatriarchal, anti-essentialist, anti-sexist, and critically emancipatory.

6.2.4. Detailed Analysis of the Sub-chapter "*Otoko no ko no ijiwaru wa kōi no uragaeshi' mondai*"

For the detailed analysis, I chose the sub-chapter "The 'meanness of boys is the reflection of their fondness' problem" ('*Otoko no ko no ijiwaru wa kōi no uragaeshi' mondai*「男の子の意地悪は好意の裏返し」問題) from chapter 1, "The gender bias that hangs over boys' daily lives" (*Otoko no ko no nichijō ni kakaru jendābaiasu no maku* 男の子の日常にかかるジェンダーバイアスの膜), spanning 2½ pages (pages 33-35) with 36 lines and 7 paragraphs.

While every main chapter is marked by a small comedic cartoon drawing in black and white, the beginning of each sub-chapter is signaled by larger, thicker fonts without pictures or graphics. Notable visual elements also include sentences in direct speech, such as "I love you, so I wanted you to understand" (*'Ai shiteiru kara wakatte hoshikatta'*「愛しているからわかってほしかった」; (Ōta 2020: 35), which are used within fictional conversations to create a more engaging and relatable text, allowing readers to emotionally connect with the scenarios presented. Additionally, the use of Japanese quotation marks「」around expressions like "toxic masculinity" (*'yūgai na otokorashisa'*「有害な男らしさ」; Ōta 2020: 35) draws special attention to these terms, emphasizing their significance in the text.

In terms of content, the passage critically examines the statement, "Boys are always mean to girls they like" and addresses the tendency of adults to make such claims to children. It argues that such statements encourage girls to suppress their anger, which can lead to the internalization of harmful behaviors. Conversely, boys might view these harmful actions as innocuous, thereby missing the opportunity to learn appropriate ways to express their emotions. Ōta acknowledges that children might engage in teasing as a misguided expression of affection; however, she emphasizes that adults should not condone this behavior. Instead, they should guide children to understand that such actions are ineffective in conveying their feelings.

Finally, she illustrates the consequences of remarks like "He does it because he loves you", referencing divorce and domestic violence scenarios where victims cannot become angry, and perpetrators justify their violence as expressions of love. Ōta raises concern that seemingly minor influences in boys' lives could foster toxic masculinity and urges adults to prepare boys to recognize and avoid these pitfalls.

Overall, the sub-chapter aims to highlight the danger of minor gender-biased comments and the everyday, structural nature of toxic gendering processes. This passage is suitable for the detailed analysis as it is representative of the style and content of the entire book.

Rhetorically, Ōta begins the sub-chapter with a description of an everyday situation, drawing on her own experiences where adults often tell children "He does it because he likes you" (Ōta 2020: 33). She then interrupts this personal digression to point out how harmful it is to talk to boys and girls this way (Ōta 2020: 33), thereby introducing her main point: the unconscious instilling of gendered thinking and its consequences. This part of the text serves as a prologue to the topic.

The main part elaborates on this more closely, by opening her arguments with potential counterarguments[124], which Ōta then counters directly and all the more strongly[125]. She repeats herself in some of her statements to emphasize her point and strengthen her argument (for example: "It is true that children cannot express their affection towards someone they like smartly […][126]" and "It can't be helped that children are not good at expressing their emotions at a young age […][127]" etc.). Moreover, the authoress specifically addresses the consequences of such a statement on children's development (Ōta 2020: 34) and expands the importance of her argument by also including potential long-term consequences in adult life (e.g. disrespectful behavior towards women; Ōta 2020: 35). In this, she supports her own credibility by mentioning her experience with divorce cases (Ōta 2020: 35). The descriptions of these experiences are, however, much more abstract than those in the first guidebook. Finally, she concludes the sub-chapter by voicing her personal concern about boys succumbing to the "traps of toxic masculinity" (Ōta 2020: 35) and expressing hope that they will be able to live freely without falling into these pitfalls. She connects with readers as a fellow parent, encouraging them to raise their children in a manner that avoids

[124] "It is true that children cannot express their affection towards someone they like smartly […]" (*Tashika ni, ki ni naru dareka ni taishite kodomo wa kōi o sumāto ni hyōgen dekinai […]* たしかに、気になる誰かに対して子どもは好意をスマートに表現できない […]; Ōta 2020: 33); "Some boys may realize this on their own as they grow up […]" (*Sō iu hatarakikake ga nakute mo, seichō no katei de jiriki de kidzuku otoko no ko mo iru deshō ga […]* そういう働きかけがなくても、成長の過程で自力で気づく男の子もいるでしょうが […]; Ōta 2020: 34).

[125] "However, I think there is a risk that […]" (*Demo, […] risuku ga aru to omoimasu* でも、[...] リスクがあると思います; Ōta 2020: 34); "[…] but it's better to realize it earlier […]" (*[…] kidzuku no ga hayai ni koshita koto wa nai deshō shi […]* […] 気づくのが早いに越したことはないでしょうし […]; Ōta 2020: 34).

[126] *Tashika ni, ki ni naru dare ka ni taishite kodomo wa kōio sumāto ni hyōgen dekinai […]* たしかに、気になる誰かに対して子どもは好意をスマートに表現できない […].

[127] *Kodomo ga osanasa kara jōzu ni kanjō hyōgen dekinai no wa shikatanai koto desu […]* 子どもが幼さから上手に感情表現できないのは仕方ないことです […].

such challenges (Ōta 2020: 35).

In her pattern of argumentation, Ōta is inferring something small (the statement “Boys are always mean to girls they like”) to something big (the almost inconspicuous cultivation of toxic masculinity traits in young boys). In other words, she uses micro-level situations (a common message to children) to point to structural issues (the transmission of structures of inequality between women and men). In the sub-chapter, her argumentative strategy includes suggestions through personal experiences (“often heard and seen” *yoku mikiki suru* よく見聞きする), describing familiar situations (boys tease girls and adults say it is because he likes them), and connecting to broader social issues (the serious problem of domestic violence).

The book is written in *keitai* (敬体) but does not directly address the reader (e.g. in the form of direct appeals etc.). This creates a greater sense of distance between the authoress and the reader compared to the first book. However, Ōta overcomes this distance by sharing personal experiences “[…] I myself have often seen and heard […]” (*[…] watashi jishin mo yoku mikiki shita […]* 私自身もよく見聞きした; Ōta 2020: 33) or “I often see and hear [...]” (*[…] nado o yoku mikiki shimasu* […] などをよく見聞きします; Ōta 2020: 35), giving the audience insight into her life as a mother, woman and lawyer. This openness helps create a more intimate reading experience.

She further fosters a feeling of closeness between the authoress and the reader through ‘narrative’ writing. For instance, she opens the sub-chapter with a playful sentence, reading as if she were telling a story: “When raising kids... or rather, what I have often seen and heard myself [...]” (*Kosodate o shite iru to ... to iu yori, watashi jishin mo yoku mikiki shita koto ga aru iikata desu ga [...]* 子育てをしていると･･･というより、私自身もよく見聞きしたことがある言い方ですが [...]; Ōta 2020: 33). These storytelling elements are emphasized by dialogically narrative expressions, like “indeed/certainly…” (*tashika ni…* たしかに…; Ōta 2020: 33), “it is…, isn’t it?/right?” (*de wa arimasu yo ne* ではありますよね; Ōta 2020: 34), “of course/naturally/certainly” (*mochiron* もちろん; Ōta 2020: 34), “surely/undoubtedly” (*kitto* きっと; Ōta 2020: 33) or “whether it is or not” (*de arō ga nakarō ka* であろうがなかろうか; Ōta 2020: 34) etc. The frequent use of hypothetical statements in quotation marks adds a dramatic flair and enhances the narrative quality of the text. For example, sentences such as “‘Apologize!’” (‘*Ayamarinasai!’*「謝りなさい!」; Ōta 2020: 33) or “‘But he probably likes you, so please forgive him’” (*‘Demo, kitto ano ko wa anata ga suki na no yo, yurushite agete’*「でも、きっと

あの子はあなたが好きなのよ、許してあげて」; Ōta 2020: 33) contribute to this storytelling effect.

A further examination of the language reveals a frequent use of 'uncertain' sentence endings, such as "I believe/I think" (*da to omoimasu* だと思います; Ōta 2020: 33), "I feel like/I have the feeling that" (*ki ga shimasu* 気がします; Ōta 2020: 34), or "perhaps/maybe/possibly" (*kamoshiremasen* かもしれません; Ōta 2020: 35). Additionally, expressions like "feels *as though*" (*yō ni kanjiru* ように感じる; Ōta 2020: 33), "*as if* it *would* decrease" (*heru ka no yō na* 減るかのような; Ōta 2020: 34) or "I am worried that it *might*" (*natte shimawanai ka to ki ni naru* なってしまわないかと気になる; Ōta 2020: 35) make the text appear somewhat restrained and defusing. Conversely, the text gains more impact and certainty by providing answers to potential counterarguments, reinforced by words such as "on the contrary/instead" (*kaette* かえって; Ōta 2020: 34) or "instead/rather/if anything" (*mushiro* むしろ; Ōta 2020: 34) along with more definite statements like "must not/it is wrong to" (*shite wa ikenai* してはいけない; Ōta 2020: 34) or "that is why/it is because of that" (*kara desu* からです; Ōta 2020: 34). In summary, Ōta uses a contrasting and narrative style to link the sections of the text and create coherence.

Notably, in sentences where Ōta mimics an adult speaking to a child, she employs 'female language' characteristics. This is evident in the use of words, fragments, and phrases such as "*-nasai!* ～なさい!"[128] (as opposed to the male command forms like e.g. "*-ro* ～ろ", or the neutral form "*-te* ～て"), "*deshō* でしょう"[129] (as opposed to the male "*-darō* ～だろう"), "*anata* あなた"[130] (as opposed to the male "*kimi* 君" or "*omae* お前") "*na no yo* なのよ"[131] (as opposed to the male "*-da yo* ～だよ"). A contrast to this can be seen two pages further on, where Ōta writes a hypothetical remark a man might say and uses the word "*kimi* 君" (rather than the female "*anata* あなた"). This raises the question of whether there is an unconscious reproduction of gender bias, suggesting an assumption that a woman is lecturing the child.

The text also includes enumeration forms such as "*-tari (-tari) suru*" (～たり (～たり) す

[128] A more polite imperative ending that signifies a sense of authority.
[129] Used to infer and state something that the speaker has not confirmed. Here it can be translated as "right?" or "is it not?".
[130] Meaning "you".
[131] An expression to emphasize something.

る)[132] and "*-shi -shi*" (～し、～し)[133] to give examples or signal parallel descriptions. We can see this, for example, in "...and getting angry..." (*okottari*, 怒ったり; Ōta 2020: 34) or "and wishing..." (*inotteimasu shi* 願っていますし; Ōta 2020: 35). Naturally, this form of listing entails longer sentences. Nevertheless, they are easy to understand and do not disrupt the reading flow.

Similarly to Morotomi, Ōta's repeated use of the word ending "*shimau*" (-しまう) expresses the (almost) 'irreversible' negative effects of the „He's mean to you because he likes you" statement on boys. This is evident in phrases like "come to hate/dislike/grow sick of something" (*iya ni natte shimau* 嫌になってしまう; Ōta 2020: 34), "to do something unkind/ill-tempered" (*ijiwaru shichau* 意地悪しちゃう; 34) or "suppress the desire to get angry or lecture others" (*okottari, kōgi shitai kimochi o soide shimau* 怒ったり、抗議したい気持ちを殺いでしまう; Ōta 2020: 34).

The text does not use collective symbols but assumes the reader's familiarity with a certain knowledge in two instances. First, it presumes an understanding of the common adult remark, "He's mean to you because he likes you", which is often used to rationalize behavior [134]. Second, it assumes awareness that in cases of domestic violence, both victims and perpetrators may misconstrue or justify violent behavior as expressions of love.

In analyzing all nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the sub-chapters, I tried to identify any notable features in their formulation, tone, or thematic emphasis (Jäger 2015: 106). One notable feature is the frequent use of the verb "*saseru*" (させる) and its negation "*sasenai*" (させない), meaning "to (not) make (somebody/something)" or "to (not) let (somebody/something)". This can be seen in phrases like "make them feel bad" (*iya na omoi o saseru* 嫌な思いをさせる; Ōta 2020: 34), "make them internalize it" (*naimenka o sasete shimau* 内面化をさせてしまう; Ōta 2020: 34), or "don't let them misunderstand" (*kanchigai o sasenai* 勘違いをさせない; Ōta 2020: 34). While this expression conveys something 'abstract' and 'distant', it also serves as a request to the readership to follow Ōta's advice.

There are no notable peculiarities or patterns in the distribution and use of adjectives, as only a few are present throughout the text. However, an analysis of the nouns reveals a significant

[132] *-tari (-tari) suru* is used to give examples of several actions or matters.
[133] '*-shi - shi*' is used when multiple things are listed together and when evaluating something.
[134] At one point, the statement is even only referred to as "a certain saying" (*aru iikata* ある言い方).

concentration of terms related to "communication", including words like, way of speaking/saying (*iikata* 言い方), saying something to someone / approaching somebody (*koe kake* 声かけ), expression (*hyōgen* 表現), misunderstanding (*kanchigai* 勘違い), ways of expression (*hyōgen hōhō* 表現方法), expression of emotions (*kanjō hyōgen* 感情表現), explanation/excuse (*benmei* 弁明), statement (*gensetsu* 言説). The frequent occurrence of these communication-related nouns underscores Ōta's emphasis on the role of effective interaction and understanding. She stresses how easily and unconsciously adults can transmit harmful behaviors to children through their communication and underpins the need for boys to express their own feelings appropriately while encouraging girls to voice their concerns openly.

Furthermore, the stratification of nouns reveals that the book addresses not only the upbringing of boys but also encompasses girls and children in general. A closer examination shows numerous references to girls (*onna no ko* 女の子), female/woman/women (*josei* 女性), woman/women/girl(s) (*joshi* 女子), alongside neutral terms like child/children (*kodomo* 子ども) and child rearing (*kosodate* 子育て).

6.2.5. Preliminary Conclusion of the Second Guidebook

In summary, this discursive fragment urges the audience to reflect on their conduct and recognize how they unconsciously pass on gender bias and toxic behaviors. The single example of the text passage[135] serves to highlight the everydayness, structural and performative nature of gendering practices and their significant consequences for children and their future selves. At the same time, Ōta offers hope by pointing out that breaking down binary gender roles and halting the transmission of harmful gendered practices can help address issues like domestic violence.

Unlike the first guidebook, this one does not specifically name desired characteristics or expectations of boys. However, it highlights traits including freedom from toxic masculinity; knowledge and strength to overcome toxic masculinity structures (*'yūgai na otokorashisa' ni ochiiru koto naku jiyū ni ikirareru*「有害な男らしさ」におちいることなく自由に生きられる; Ōta 2020: 35); recognition of bad behavior in oneself (*kidzuku no ga hayai […]* 気づくのがはやい […]; Ōta 2020: 34); smart expression of feelings (*kōi o sumāto ni hyōgen dekiru* 好意を

[135] Saying "He does it because he loves you" to a child.

スマートに表現できる; Ōta 2020: 33; *jōzu ni kanjō hyōgen dekiru* 上手に感情表現できる; Ōta 2020: 34); appropriate communication of feelings (*[…] kimochi wa tsutawareru* […] 気持ちは伝われる; Ōta 2020: 34); consideration for others' feelings (*[…] aite ni iya na omoi o sasenai* […] 相手に嫌な思いをさせない; Ōta 2020: 34); self-reflection and awareness of the emotional impact of one's actions on others (*[…] aite ga iyagaru koto o shite wa ikenai* […] 相手が嫌がることをしてはいけない; Ōta 2020: 34); respect for others (*aite e no sonchō o kaku taido […]* 相手への尊重を欠く態度 […]; Ōta 2020: 35); avoidance of teasing and pestering (*karakau yō na chokkai o dasanai* からかうようなちょっかいを出さない; Ōta 2020: 33-34) and nonviolence, honesty and non-abusiveness *tsuma o nagurinagara […] uso o tsuite* 妻を殴りながら […] 嘘をついて; Ōta 2020: 35).

As opposed to the first guidebook, this book does not replicate essentialist, stereotypical or hegemonic images of masculinity. Instead, it invites readers to reject these conventional norms and embrace a form of masculinity that transcends patriarchal limitations. Ōta subtly outlines this alternative masculinity as one that is non-violent, introspective, and characterized by the articulate expression of emotions and thoughts. It emphasizes the importance of fostering meaningful connections through kindness and respect towards oneself and others.

As previously noted, the book critically examines stereotypical gender roles and expectations, specifically addressing aspects of hegemonic masculinity, including work culture and roles such as the salaryman (Ōta 2020: 43-44), the *daikokubashira* 大黒柱 (Ōta 2020: 43), and the breadwinner (Ōta 2020: 89, 206). While these elements are critically scrutinized within the book, my analysis found no other evidence of salaryman masculinity embedded in the text.

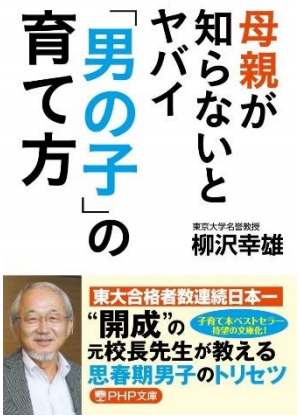
6.3. The Third Guidebook

The guidebook *Haha-oya ga shiranai to yabai. 'Otoko no ko' no sodatekata.* 母親が知らないとヤバイ。「男の子」の育て方。[Mothers are in trouble if they don't know this. How to raise 'boys'.] by Yanagisawa Yukio 柳沢幸雄 was published in 2020, marking it as a fairly recent publication alongside the second guidebook. Originally released in 2017, I have analyzed the revised edition for this study. In addition to this parenting guidebook, Yanagisawa has authored numerous other books focused on parenting advice, particularly on raising sons, and has also

published extensive research on environmental chemicals and the so-called "sick-building syndrome"[136].

Born in 1947, Yanagisawa graduated from Kaisei High School (*Kaisei kōtōgakkō* 開成高等学校) and the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Tokyo (*Tōkyō daigaku kōgakubu kagaku* 東京大学工学部化学). His career path includes roles as a system engineer at Nihon Yunibakku (日本ユニバック; later Nihon Yunishisu 日本ユニシス) and now BIPROGY) until 1974, followed by pursuing master's and doctoral degrees in chemical engineering at the University of Tokyo[137]. He also served as an associate professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, and later as a professor at the Graduate School of Frontier Sciences at the University of Tokyo[138]. From 2011 to 2020, he was the principal of Kaisei Junior and Senior High School (*Kaisei chūgakkō・kōtō gakkō* 開成中学校・高等学校), and since April 2020, he has been the principal of Kitakamakura Girls' School *Kitakamakura joshigakuen gakuen-chō* 北鎌倉女子学園学園長. Moreover, Yanagisawa is globally recognized for his research on sick-house syndrome (*shikkuhausu shōkōgun* シックハウス症候群) and chemical sensitivity (*kagaku busshitsu kabinshō kenkyū* 化学物質過敏症研究; BIPROGY 2024, Yanagisawa 2020).

6.3.1. Cover Analysis of the Third Guidebook



(Img. 3)

In contrast to the previous two books, the design of this guidebook's cover stands out significantly. This cover is predominantly white. However, it incorporates strategically placed colored accents such as the words "mother" (*haha-oya* 母親) in red and "boy" (*otoko no ko* 男の子) in blue within the otherwise black title. These color choices symbolically align with stereotypical associations of blue for boys and red (or pink) for girls. The title boldly occupies the center of the upper half of the cover, with varying font sizes: "Mothers are in trouble if they don't know this" (*Haha-oya ga shiranai to yabai* 母親が知らないとヤバイ) is slightly smaller on the right, while "About raising 'boys'" (*'Otoko no*

[136] Certain health problems and illnesses that occur in connection with living in certain housing or indoor spaces.
[137] *Tōkyō daigaku daigakuin kōgakukei kenkyūka kagaku kōgaku senkōshūshi・hakushi katei shūryō* 東京大学大学院工学系研究科化学工学専攻修士・博士課程修了.
[138] *Tōkyō daigaku daigakuin shinryōikisōsei kagaku kenkyūka kyōju* 東京大学大学院新領域創成科学研究科教授.

ko' no sodatekata 「男のこ」の育て方) larger on the left. Below this, Yanagisawa Yukio's (柳沢幸雄) name appears in smaller black font on the right, accompanied by "Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo" (*Tōkyō daigaku meiyo kyōju* 東京大学名誉教授) in an even smaller format above it.

The lower half of the book is covered by a cover strap, featuring a photograph of the author on the left, depicting him from the chest up. He is dressed in a slightly unbuttoned white shirt, a gray suit jacket, wears small glasses, and shows a gentle smile with narrowed eyes, presenting a friendly demeanor. Adjacent to the photograph is the statement "Number one in Japan for consecutive years in the number of students accepted to Tokyo University" (*Tōdai gōkakushasū renzoku nihon ichi* 東大合格者数連続日本一)[139] in white lettering on an elongated red rectangle. Below this, in a blue oval with yellow lettering, it reads "The long-awaited paperback edition of the bestselling parenting book!"[140]. In black font, the strap further advertises "A guide to adolescent boys from the former headmaster of 'Kaisei'"[141] with "adolescent boys" (*shishunki danshi* 思春期男子) and "guide" (*torisetu* トリセツ) highlighted in blue. Finally, at the bottom of the front cover there is the name of the publishing company "PHP Bunko" (PHP 文庫) and its logo (a small tree) in white lettering in an elongated red oval.

Turning to the back cover, beneath two scan codes, we again find the book title prominently displayed in bold font followed by Yanagisawa Yukio's name. Below these, against a pastel yellow background, is a synopsis in black font: "Disliking one's mother is instinctual, 'diligent studying' is not expected, and reading can include comics and light novels... How to deal with a teenage boy who, from a mother's perspective, seems like an 'alien' is explained with key points. If approached correctly, even the challenging parent-child relationship during this period can be managed successfully. The author, who served as the principal of 'Kaisei' for nine years, gently addresses troubled mothers in this long-awaited paperback edition of the bestseller with 60,000 copies

[139] This statement suggests that the author, in his role as principal of Kaisei Junior and Senior High School, is linked to the school's remarkable achievement of consistently producing the highest number of students accepted into Tokyo University – Japan's top university – thereby potentially enhancing his credibility as an educator and reinforcing his trustworthiness in nurturing the best in children.

[140] *Kosodate hon besutoserā taibō no bunkoka!* 子育て本ベストセラー待望の文庫化!.

[141] *'Kaisei' no moto kōchō sensei ga oshieru shishunki danshi no torisetsu* '開成'の元校長先生が教える思春期男子のトリセツ.

sold!"[142].

The cover strap lists the titles of all seven chapters, numbered in yellow circles with the main titles in red and subtitles in smaller black letters:

❶ Parents are baffled! Let's understand the reality of boys (*Oya wa wake ga wakaranai! Otoko no ko no jittai o rikai shiyō* 親はワケがわからない! 男の子の実態を理解しよう)

❷ Learn at home! Let's make sure to enforce important rules (*Katei de mi ni tsukeru! Taisetsu na rūru o tettei saseyō* 家庭で身につける! 大切なルールを徹底させよう)

❸ Don't be negative! Turning on your child's 'motivation switch' (*Hitei shinai! Kodomo no 'yaru ki suitchi' o irete ageru* 否定しない! 子どもの「やる気スイッチ」を入れてあげる)

❹ Don't expect average marks! What parents can do for their children when it comes to studying and exams (*Heikinten o motomenai! Benkyō, juken de oya ga dekiru koto* 平均点を求めない! 勉強、受験で親ができること)

❺ Don't worry! How to keep an eye on their school life and friends (*Shinpai shinakute ii! Gakkō seikatsu, tomodachi e no me no kubarikata* 心配しなくていい! 学校生活、友達への目の配り方)

❻ Being brave! Let's be prepared and fulfill our role as parents (*Yūki o dasu! Oya toshite no kakugo to yakuwari o shikkari to motō* 勇気を出す! 親としての覚悟と役割をしっかりと持とう)

❼ Let's support them! To help them become independent adults who can play an active role in society (*Ōen shiyō! Shakai de katsuyaku dekiru jiritsu shita otona ni naru tame ni* 応援しよう! 社会で活躍できる自立した大人になるために)

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[142] *'Haha-oya o kegirai suru' no wa honnō, 'kotsukotsu benkyō' wa motomenai, dokusho wa komikku ya ranobe mo ari ・・・・・・ Haha-oya kara mitara 'uchūjin' to shika iiyō ga nai yō na shishunki danshi to tō tsukiaeba yoi ka o, pointo kaisetsu. Tadashiku sessureba, muzukashii kono jiki no oya-ko kankei mo umaku iku. "Kaisei" no kōchō o 9 nen kan tsutometa chosha ga, nayameru okāsan-tachi ni yasashiku katarikakeru, 6-man bu no besutoserā, taibō no bunkoka!* 「母親を毛嫌いする」のは本能、「コツコツ勉強」は求めない、読書はコミックやラノベもあり・・・・・・。母親から見たら "宇宙人" としか言いようがないような思春期男子ととう付き合えばよいかを、ポイント解説。正しく接すれば、難しいこの時期の親子関係もうまくいく。"開成"の校長を 9 年間務めた著者が、悩めるお母さんたちにやさしく語りかける、6 万部のベストセラー、待望の文庫化!.

6.3.2. Table of Contents Analysis of the Third Guidebook

As mentioned in the description of the cover, the guidebook is organized into seven chapters, each compromising several sub-chapters. The first chapter, "Parents are baffled! Let's understand the reality of boys" (*Oya wa wake ga wakaranai! Otoko no ko no jittai o rikai shiyō* 親はワケがわからない！ 男の子の実態を理解しよう), aims to enlighten readers about aspects of their sons' development they might not be aware of. Aimed primarily at mothers, the chapter implies that the mother's different gender may make it challenging for her to understand her son. This assumption is reinforced by sub-chapter titles, explaining that phrases like "shut up" from a teenage boy mean nothing more than "hey, mom" (Yanagisawa 2020: 22) or that it is a boy's *instinct* to hate his mother (Yanagisawa 2020: 30). The son's behavior is therefore characterized by 'natural' aversions towards the mother, anger issues (Yanagisawa 2020: 35), rebelliousness (Yanagisawa 2020: 43) and heightened sexual interest (Yanagisawa 2020:38). This begs the question of whether similar characteristics would be highlighted when discussing adolescent girls.

Chapter two, "Learn at home! Let's make sure to enforce important rules" (*Katei de mi ni tsukeru! Taisetsu na rūru o tettei saseyō* 家庭で身につける！ 大切なルールを徹底させよう), delves deeper into family life at home and crucial rules applicable to both parents (Yanagisawa 2020: 63) and children (Yanagisawa 2020: 72). It provides advice on how parents can implement certain rules effectively (Yanagisawa 2020: 81), focusing on areas like studying and money management. Moreover, certain desired characteristics in boys are evident, including "self-management skills" (*jiko kanri nōryoku* 自己管理能力; Yanagisawa 2020: 58) and "life skills" (*ikiru chikara* 生きる力; Yanagisawa 2020: 63).

Another notable aspect of this chapter is the sub-chapter titled "'Earthquakes, thunders, fires, fathers'. 'Father's orders' cannot be avoided" (*'Jishin・kaminari・kaji・oyaji'. 'Oyaji no meirei' wa zettai ni sakerarenai*「地震・雷・火事・親父」。'親父の命令'は絶対に避けられない), which references the authoritarian and intimidating father figure prevalent in East Asian cultures before World War II. Rooted in Confucianist and *genpu jibo* beliefs, this image advocates extreme strictness and emotional distance in paternal relationships and upbringing (Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75; Stoica 2021: 17-19). The sub-chapter revives this concept, promoting the implementation of a strict father role as head of the family. The father's rules/orders must be followed by the children above all else. This naturally also raises questions about why the mother's rules or

commands should hold less significance. It is clear from this sub-chapter that the book promotes stereotypical gender roles in parenting.

The third chapter, “Don't be negative! Turning on your child’s ‘motivation switch’” (*Hitei shinai! Kodomo no ‘yaru ki suitchi’o irete ageru* 否定しない! 子どもの「やる気スイッチ」を入れてあげる), broadly addresses “positivity” in upbringing and the lives of boys. It advocates not only reprimanding negative behavior, but also encouraging good behavior with praise (Yanagisawa 2020: 112). Upon closer examination of this chapter, it becomes evident that it is considered desirable for boys to exhibit passion and identify their strengths in specific areas (Yanagisawa 2020: 99) rather than being a generalist, who is above average in everything (Yanagisawa 2020: 99). A further inspection of the sub-chapters also reveals that boys should always strive to do their best (Yanagisawa 2020: 106) and exercise self-control (Yanagisawa 2020: 123) rather than act impulsively (Yanagisawa 2020: 123).

Chapter four, “Don’t expect average marks! What parents can do for their children when it comes to studying and exams” (*Heikinten o motomenai! Benkyō, juken de oya ga dekiru koto* 平均点を求めない！勉強、受験で親ができること), focuses on school and academic performance. The sub-chapter titles underscore the various desired traits and characteristics in boys, such as academic abilities (Yanagisawa 2020: 154), concentration abilities (even in noisy environments) (Yanagisawa 2020: 151), appreciation of reading (Yanagisawa 2020: 167) and understanding the importance of deadlines (Yanagisawa 2020: 172).

The fifth chapter, “Don’t worry! How to keep an eye on their school life and friends” (*Shinpai shinakute ii! Gakkō seikatsu, tomodachi e no me no kubarikata* 心配しなくていい！学校生活、友達への目の配り方), explores boys’ development in social realms, such as school, friendships, romantic/sexual relationships, club activities, interactions with teachers, and part-time jobs etc. It introduces several wishes and expectations for boys, including time management (Yanagisawa 2020: 185), financial literacy (Yanagisawa 2020: 206) and heterosexuality (Yanagisawa 2020: 194).

Chapter six, “Being brave! Let’s be prepared and fulfill our role as parents” (*Yūki o dasu! Oya toshite no kakugo to yakuwari o shikkari to motō* 勇気を出す！親としての覚悟と役割をしっかりと持とう), delves into the responsibilities of parenthood and how parents can positively influence their child through exemplary behavior. The increased focus on fathers (*chichi-oya* 父親,

otōsan お父さん), whose involvement in family life had received only brief mention in the book so far, is particularly striking.

The sub-chapter "Even if there are only a few conversations, the presence of the father must be felt (about fathers)" (*Kaiwa wa sukunakute mo chichi-oya no sonzaikan o dasu (chichi-oya ni tsuite)* 会話は少なくても父親の存在感を出す(父親について)) asserts that while the father's presence is important, deeper conversations with his children are not necessarily required. This notion is consistent with the strict father image and reflects a binary division of labor where the family order is assumed (Yanagisawa 2020: 223). Conversely, the author also stresses that fathers who are not involved in family life is frowned upon (Yanagisawa 2020: 229) and should try to understand the mother's feelings (Yanagisawa 2020: 229).

Finally, the seventh chapter, "Let's support them! To help them become independent adults who can play an active role in society" (*Ōen shiyō! Shakai de katsuyaku dekiru jiritsu shita otona ni naru tame ni* 応援しよう! 社会で活躍できる自立した大人になるために), discusses how parents can assist their children in becoming independent adults who contribute effectively to society. Independence and being an asset to society emerge as important qualities expected of boys. Moreover, sub-chapter titles reveal that creativity (*sōzōryoku* 創造力; Yanagisawa 2020: 238), resilience in the face of failure (*zasetsu o ajiwau koto* 挫折を味わうこと; Yanagisawa 2020: 246), the ability to live independently (*'hitori gurashi'*「一人暮らし」 and *seikatsu-ryoku o yashinaeru* 生活力を養える; Yanagisawa 2020: 249), decision making skills (*sentaku suru chikara* 選択する力; 260), financial independence (Yanagisawa 2020: 257), and nurturing dreams (*yume o motsu kodomo* 夢を持つ子ども; Yanagisawa 2020: 268) and talents (*sainō o hikidasō* 才能を引き出そう; Yanagisawa 2020: 268) are all considered desirable traits in boys.

6.3.3. Comprehensive Analysis of the Third Guidebook

This 270-page publication initially presents itself as conservative, with a title that addresses mothers and a cover that highlights essentialist beliefs[143] and prescribed qualities for boys[144]. Furthermore, the content is specifically aimed at the upbringing of adolescent boys. Like the

[143] "It is instinctive for them to […]" ([…] *no wa honnō* [...] のは本能).
[144] "[…] them become independent adults who can play an active role in society" (*Shakai de katsuyaku dekiru jiritsu shita otona ni naru* […] 社会で活躍できる自立した大人になる […]).

authoress and author of the other two guidebooks Yanagisawa also writes exclusively in the present tense.

While it occasionally uses neutral terms like "parent" (*oya* 親; e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 7) or "adult" (*otona* 大人; Yanagisawa 2020: 55), the book primarily addresses mothers, sometimes mentioning fathers separately (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 50) or referring to them as "male parents" (*otoko oya* 男親; Yanagisawa 2020: 215). This separation can, for example, also be seen when the author recommends the reader to "consult about something with their husband" (*[…] goshujin to sōdan shite* ご主人と相談して; Yanagisawa 2020: 117). As a result, fathers are somewhat removed from daily childcare responsibilities and must be brought into the fold by the mother. The main responsibility for child-care and family life evidently lies with women, who are expected to update their husbands on their children's lives (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 230) and moreover also initiate the relationship with their spouse (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 221). Nevertheless, the man is depicted as the retaining "decision-making authority" (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 222). Despite Yanagisawa's assertion that the "husband is the partner" (*pātonā de aru go-shujin* パートナーであるご主人; Yanagisawa 2020: 221), the portrayal of fathers being minimally involved in child-rearing and the hierarchically portrayed relationship between spouses calls this claim into question.

Overall, the book adopts a didactic tone, as evidenced by statements like "Parents often tell their children almost automatically 'go study!'. [...] However, this is a mistake when it comes to home education" (*Oya wa kodomo ni, kuchiguse no yō ni 'benkyō shinasai' to iimasu. [...] Shikashi, kore wa katei kyōiku to shite machigatteimasu* 親は子どもに、口癖のように「勉強しなさい」と言います。[...] しかし、これは家庭教育として間違っています; Yanagisawa 2020: 63). The book moreover offers practical advice, such as "The most important thing adults should be careful about is to avoid giving children any extra income" (*Otona ga ichiban ki o tsuketai no wa, rinji shūnyū o kyokuryoku ataenai koto desu* 大人がいちばん気をつけたいのは、臨時収入を極力与えないことです; Yanagisawa 2020: 60), and educates readers on common scenarios like "In many cases, they are reluctant to tell their parents about this kind of mugging, so they keep quiet about it" (*Kō shita katsuage ni kanshite, oya ni wa iinikukute damatte iru kēsu mo ōi* こうしたカツアゲに関して、親には言いにくくて黙っているケースも多い; Yanagisawa 2020: 73).

In his explanations Yanagisawa frequently references Japanese society as in "Today's

society is […]" (*ima no shakai wa* 今の社会は; Yanagisawa 2020: 176), and the Japanese people as a whole as in "Japanese people are […]" (*nihonjin wa* 日本人は; Yanagisawa 2020: 94). He appeals to the mothers' emotions (Yanagisawa 2020: 35), and draws comparisons to their feelings such as "If your mother-in-law says something like, 'The woman next door is a great cook, so why are you so bad at cooking?', you might lose motivation, right?" (*'O tonari no okusan wa sugoku ryōri ga jōzu na no ni, naze anata wa ryōri ga heta na no?' nado to shūtome ni iwaretara, yaru ki o naku shimasu ne* 「お隣の奥さんはすごく料理が上手なのに、なぜあなたは料理が下手なの?」などと姑に言われたら、やる気をなくしますね; Yanagisawa 2020: 92). He also creates pressure through fictional scenarios such as "However, if he keeps eating his mother's food, he will never be able to get a girlfriend and will never be able to get married" (*Shikashi, itsu made mo haha-oya no gohan o tabete itara kanojo mo dekimasen. Kekkon mo dekimasen* しかし、いつまでも母親のご飯を食べていたら彼女もできません。結婚もできません; Yanagisawa 2020: 251). This rhetorical approach aligns with patterns seen in the first guidebook.

Other strategies include generalizations as in "Ladies talk is fun when it's between women" (*Rediisu tōku wa, josei dōshi da to tanoshii mono desu* レディーストークは、女性同士だと楽しいものです; Yanagisawa 2020: 115), and both direct and indirect requests (Yanagisawa 2020: 109, 121). Yanagisawa also often shares his own opinions (Yanagisawa 2020: 22) or personal stories (Yanagisawa 2020: 96) and supports his arguments with statistics and studies (Yanagisawa 2020: 53, 123). Moreover, he uses various examples to illustrate his points, from hypothetical situations readers might encounter with their own children (Yanagisawa 2020: 50) to examples of poor parenting (Yanagisawa 2020: 90) and references to successful individuals (Yanagisawa 2020: 93). Notably, throughout the book the author repeatedly uses the phrase "*mizu o mukeru*" (水を向ける) meaning "to fish for information" or "to skillfully draw someone out" (Yanagisawa 2020: 190).

A closer examination of the text reinforces the first impression of the book being more conservative. Similar to the first guidebook, the author contends that mothers are inherently unable to fully understand their sons due to the gender differences between them (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 3). Boys are described as "aliens" (*uchūjin* 宇宙人; Yanagisawa 2020: 3) to their mothers or referred to as "living beings" (*ikimono* 生き物; Yanagisawa 2020: 7). Conversely, the author posits that fathers, sharing the same gender as their sons, can comprehend them better (e.g. Yanagisawa

2020: 6). We therefore see a strong gender division in the relationship between parents and their children. At the same time, the separation between parents and children of different genders also introduces a form of sexualization into the parent-child relationship[145]. What is more, the author repeatedly points to a romantic bond between mothers and sons (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 29; 33), comparing the love for a son to that for a husband (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 219). This echoes Freudian psychoanalysis, suggesting an ostensible Oedipal relationship where the son serves as a substitute partner:

> Only the relationship with the son brings the mother unrestricted satisfaction; it is indeed the most perfect, least ambivalent of all human relationships. The mother can transfer to the son the ambition she had to suppress in herself and expect from him the fulfillment of all that remains to her of her masculinity complex. (Freud 2012: 1522)

Overall, the author regards gendered behaviors as "programmed into people" (*puroguramu sareteiru* プログラムされている; Yanagisawa 2020: 31) or biologically determined (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 4). Consequently, he rejects the idea that such behaviors are socially acquired or learned (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 31). Despite acknowledging "social equality between men and women" (*shakaiteki ni wa danjo byōdō* 社会的には男女平等; Yanagisawa 2020: 4), Yanagisawa argues for a strong distinction in child rearing based on "natural or genetic differences" between the (dichotomous) sexes (Yanagisawa 2020: 5). This stance is underscored by stereotypical descriptions of boys and girls[146] and by labeling certain (negative) behaviors of boys as natural during their development[147]. For example, the book uses terms like "natural" (*jizen* 自然 (Yanagisawa 2020: 40) to describe angry and violent behaviors, implying that these must be tolerated or accepted by parents (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 36). It is likely that similar (negative) behaviors in girls would be interpreted very differently.

Furthermore, the book portrays pubescent boys as highly sexual beings (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 39). Like Ōta, Yanagisawa discusses the limited sex education in schools and asserts that parents, preferably the fathers (Yanagisawa 2020: 195), must inform children about sex. However,

[145] The book, for instance, highlights examples such as girls' preference for not washing their underwear with their father's and boys' reluctance to bathe with their mothers (Yanagisawa 2020: 31, 191).
[146] E.g. boys cannot communicate well (Yanagisawa 2020: 4), boys have a stronger sex drive than girls (Yanagisawa 2020: 31), girls like to talk a lot (Yanagisawa 2020: 115).
[147] For example, it is stated that boys are inherently inclined to be rude to their mothers, who must endure this behavior as part of their sons' development (Yanagisawa 2020: 6).

unlike in the second guidebook, Yanagisawa does not criticize the inadequate sex education in schools (Yanagisawa 2020: 47), despite his position as a school principal where he could advocate for change. Instead, he suggests that pornographic magazines (*ero hon* エロ本) serve as essential sources of information about sex (Yanagisawa 2020: 47), despite their "portrayal of unrealistic sex" (Yanagisawa 2020: 48). This diverges sharply from the second guidebook's critique of erotic materials (produced for the male-gaze) being used as educational tools.

Moreover, the book exhibits strong heteronormativity (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 28-29, 38-39) in its detailed exploration of boys' sexual behavior and interests. While there is a brief mention of LGBTQIA+ individuals (Yanagisawa 2020: 203-204), thereby acknowledging the possibility that children may have non-heterosexual sexualities, the book barely hints at the possibility that one's own child might be non-heterosexual (or non-cisgender) (Yanagisawa 2020: 204). The author's lack of *serious* consideration for the possibility of a queer child is evident in the book's predominantly heteronormative tone and its minimal coverage of sexuality (a mere two pages in total). Instead, more emphasis is placed on the need to teach children about queerness in general. In this context, the author describes a hypothetical situation where the reader's son's friend comes out to him during a school trip. Yanagisawa writes: "Although this is an area where parents cannot easily intervene, they must prevent the occurrence of events that might not want to be experienced" (Yanagisawa 2020: 203). The meaning of "unwanted event" is ambiguous. It could refer to the experience of a friend coming out, but it could also be interpreted as insinuating that Yanagisawa perceives queer people to be assaultive.

The heteronormative portrayal of relationships also aligns with the book's conservative and stereotypical depiction of families. It positions the man as the primary breadwinner (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 51), while the mother is responsible for child-rearing and household management (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 229). This image is reinforced by repeatedly describing the man as "head of the family" (*kachō* 家長; e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 229) and *daikokubashira* (大黒柱です; e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 51). Alongside his role as a frightening figure of authority who sets household rules (Yanagisawa 2020: 52) the father is also portrayed as a 'fun dad', less strict than the mother (Yanagisawa 2020: 230). He is expected to be a role model for his sons (Yanagisawa 2020: 224), implying that the mother primarily handles 'serious' aspects of parenting and cannot serve as a role model for her male child. Furthermore, the book valorizes stereotypical images of the 'successful father' (Yanagisawa 2020: 121), stressing his dedication to provide for the family

(e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 215, 224) and demanding immense gratitude from his children for ensuring their well-being (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 51; with statements such as: "We would not have any food on the table without him" Yanagisawa 2020: 224). Conversely, the book does not acknowledge or emphasize the mother's work in planning, purchasing and preparing meals, thereby rendering her contributions invisible. This underscores a gendered division of labor, where paid work is designated as a male responsibility, while unpaid work is assigned to women.

Throughout the book, Yanagisawa discusses boys expressing their masculinity/boyishness (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 6) and "living as men" (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 224) without clearly defining what this entails. However, the text occasionally alludes to this through references to the salaryman life course and its associated values, as for instance described on pages 100-102. Overall, the book's approach and the author's ideological stance can be characterized as conservative, heteronormative, and essentialist.

6.3.4. Detailed Analysis of the Sub-chapter "*Chūkōsei danshi no atama no naka wa 'sei no koto' de ippai. 'Doko de shiriatta ka' dake chūi shite oku*"

For this detailed analysis, the sub-chapter "The minds of junior and senior high school boys are full of 'sex'. Just be careful about 'where they met'" (*Chūkōsei danshi no atama no naka wa 'sei no koto' de ippai. 'Doko de shiriatta ka' dake chūi shite oku* 中高生男子の頭の中は'性のこと'でいっぱい。「どこで知り合ったか」だけ注意しておく) was selected. This sub-chapter spans 5 pages (pages 38-42), consists of 62 lines and 15 paragraphs, and is divided into three subsections.

The first subsection "Boys' sexual desires cannot be controlled by their own consciousness or wisdom" (*Otoko no ko no seiyoku wa, jibun no ishiki ya chie de wa kontorōru fukanō* 男の子の性欲は、自分の意識や知恵ではコントロール不可能), covers the first 2 ½ pages following the sub-chapter heading. Its title is in a slightly larger font, marked by two small gray triangles pointing up and down resembling arrowheads at the beginning and ending of the sentence. The second subsection, "Older women satisfy the desire for knowledge" (*Toshi ue no josei was chishikiyoku o mitasu zonzai* 年上の女性は知識欲を満たす存在), spans just under a page in the middle of the sub-chapter. The third subsection, "The important point is 'where did they meet?" (*'Doko de shiriatta ka' ga jūyō pointo* 「どこで知り合ったか」が重要ポイント), covers a little more than a page. Unlike the first subsection, the titles of these subsections are in bold font and

marked by a gray square above the sentence.

The sub-chapter's headline stands out visually due to its larger, bold font. It is marked by a light gray rectangular background and a small school building illustration. This illustration is repeated under each sub-chapter heading throughout the book. In addition, three sentences within the text are highlighted in bold font, indicating particularly important content.

The last page features three short sentences, again in bold font, in a rectangular box with gray lines, signaled by a dark gray, angular speech bubble with the word "POINT!" above the box. These three sentences succinctly summarize the content of the sub-chapter. The text passage also emphasizes certain sentences or expressions using bold font, as seen in "There are two reasons why men become aware of women" (*Dansei ga josei o ishiki suru dōki wa futatsu arimasu* 男性が女性を意識する動機は二つあります; Yanagisawa 2020: 38), which visually highlights the statement's importance. Additionally, Japanese quotation marks「」are used to draw attention to expressions like "'hard to handle'" (*'atsukaikaneru'*「扱いかねる」; Yanagisawa 2020: 39), signaling their significance within the text.

The sub-chapter discusses boys' "sexual awakening" and its impact on their school and leisure activities. It suggests that boys 'naturally' become preoccupied with romantic and sexual thoughts during puberty, which can lead to distractions in school and extracurricular activities as well as them staying out late with girls. The section was chosen as it reflects the writing style, argumentation patterns, and content representative of the entire publication.

Yanagisawa advises mothers (the readers) on how to handle their sons becoming sexually active or starting to date, especially older girls or women they meet online. While he notes that it is normal for boys to date older girls, who satisfy their curiosity due to more life experience, he stresses the importance of knowing where or how their son met his girlfriend and suggests getting to know the girl personally and intervening if necessary. The primary aim of this sub-chapter is to contextualize boys' development[148], inform about safety risks, and provide guidance on managing them. The argumentation strategies in the text include relativization, as seen for instance in the statement, "Your son may be dating a girl much older than him, but that is quite normal" (*Kono toshigoro nara, toshiue no josei to tsukiaitai to omou no wa, yoku aru koto desu* この年頃なら、年上の女性と付き合いたいと思うのは、よくあることです; Yanagisawa 2020: 40), and

[148] Explaining that the boys' behavior is 'completely natural'.

generalization, exemplified by claims such as “Middle and high school boys’ heads are filled with thoughts of sex” (*Chūkōsei danshi no atama no naka wa, sei e no omoi de ippai* 中高生男子の頭の中は、性への思いでいっぱい; Yanagisawa 2020: 39).

Yanagisawa begins the chapter by referencing familiar feelings of mothers to create relatability (Yanagisawa 2020: 38), then moves straight into content[149]. He transitions from a general to a specific explanation, marked by the sentence “However, these two things don’t necessarily happen at the same time” (*Shikashi, kono futatsu wa kanarazu shimo dōji ni wa okorimasen* しかし、この二つは必ずしも同時には起こりません; Yanagisawa: 38).

The author also uses his experience as a school principal to draw comparisons with the feelings of both the son and the mother (Yanagisawa 2020: 39). He acknowledges the mother’s feelings to reaffirm her perspective[150] while also describing the boy’s experiences to foster understanding on his behalf[151] (Yanagisawa 2020: 39-40). Simultaneously, Yanagisawa highlights potential dangers for boys through a somewhat alarming narrative, such as scenarios where boys might end up in protective custody (Yanagisawa 2020: 40), directly urging the readers to closely monitor their sons and prevent them from encountering trouble (Yanagisawa 2020: 40).

Throughout the sub-chapter, Yanagisawa repeats the pattern: he opens with a familiar situation and reference to the mother’s feelings (Yanagisawa 2020: 40), provides a general explanation (Yanagisawa 2020: 41) addresses the boy’s feelings to create understanding (on the part of the reader; Yanagisawa 2020: 41), adopts a slightly worrying narrative by hinting at potential dangers/risks the boys could be exposed to (Yanagisawa 2020: 41-42), and ends with an appeal and a direct request to the reader (Yanagisawa 2020: 42).

The book is written in *keitai* (敬体), with Yanagisawa sometimes directly addressing the audience[152] but simultaneously referring to the reader (the mother) in the third person (“the mother/mothers” (*haha-oya* 母親) and not in first person (*okāsama/okāsan* お母様/お母さん)).

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[149] “There are two reasons why men become aware of women. […]” (*Dansei ga josei o ishiki suru dōki wa futatsu arimasu. […]* 男性が女性を意識する動機は二つあります。 […]; Yanagisawa 2020: 38).

[150] “However, if you feel that your son is having a seminal discharge, as a mother, you should be a little more observant” (*Tada, musuko ni seitsū ga aru to kanjitara, haha oya to shite, sukoshi kansatsu-ryoku o surudoku subeki desu* ただ、息子に精通があると感じたら、母親として、少し観察力を鋭くすべきです; Yanagisawa 2020: 39).

[151] “[…] are they becoming obsessed with meeting women and satisfying their sexual desires” *([…] josei to shiriai, seiyoku o mitasu kōdō ni muchū ni natteinai ka* […] 女性と知り合い、性欲を満たす行動に夢中になっていないか; Yanagisawa 2020: 39-40).

[152] E.g. in formulating requests with “please” (*kudasai* ください).

This creates an ambivalent reading experience.

Despite its respectful language, the book exhibits a narratological style with embellishing or dramatizing expressions, such as "well " (*maa* まあ; Yanagisawa 20202: 38), "And what's more" (*shikamo* しかも; Yanagisawa 20202: 39), "to this I say" (*watashi wa sore ni taishte kō iimasu* 私はそれに対してこう言います; Yanagisawa 20202: 39), "after all" (*datte* だって; Yanagisawa 20202: 39), "it's just that" (*tada sore ga* ただそれが; Yanagisawa 20202: 40), "anyhow/in any case" (*izure ni shitemo* いずれにしても; Yanagisawa 20202: 42), "in the first place" (*somosomo* そもそも; Yanagisawa 20202: 42).

The narrative formulations are also expressed in the segments where the author describes the reader's feelings[153], depicts situations the readers may have experienced with their sons[154], suggests potential behavior of the son[155] to provide specific advice[156], or uses a situation he has personally experienced[157] to strengthen his statement.

The narrative style is further enhanced by indirect, suggestive questions with the question particle *ka* (か) such as, "is he not meeting…?" (*atteinai ka* 会っていないか; Yanagisawa 20202: 39) or "is he not absorbed in thinking about sexually gratifying behavior?" (*seiyoku o mitasu kōdō ni muchū ni natteinai ka* 性欲を満たす行動に夢中になっていないか; Yanagisawa 20202: 39-40).

To address the audience and instruct them on actions to take or avoid, Yanagisawa frequently uses the particle "*beki*" (べき), which translates to "should" or "ought to", indicating the recommended action or state. Examples include "ought to be careful" (*ki o tsukeru beki desu*

[153] Like, for example, in "The mother might be very upset […]" (*Haha-oya wa ōkiku dōyō shimasu […]* 母親は大きく動揺します […]; Yanagisawa 2020: 38).
[154] Like, for example, in "[…] the son having his first crush on a girl in his class is 'cute'" (*[…] kurasu no onna no ko ni hatsu koi o suru musuko no koto wa 'kawaii' […]* […] クラスの女の子に初恋をする息子のことは「かわいい」 […]; Yanagisawa 2020: 38).
[155] Like, for example in "[…] and often meet with the girl until late?" (*[…] shotchū sono ko to osoi jikan made atte inai ka* […] しょっちゅうその子と遅い時間まで会っていないか; Yanagisawa 2020: 39).
[156] Like, for example, in "Please do not let them ever wander around downtown until late!" (*Osoi jikan made hankagai o samayō yō na koto wa zettai ni sakesasete kudasai* 遅い時間まで繁華街をさまようようなことは絶対に避けさせてください; Yanagisawa 2020: 40).
[157] Like, for example, in "Some mothers express this disappointment at school conferences. I respond by saying […]" (*Kō shita shitsubōkan o, gakkō no kondankai de uttaeru haha-oya mo imasu. Watashi wa sore ni taishite kō iimasu. […]* こうした失望感を、学校の懇談会で訴える母親もいます。私はそれに対してこう言います […] Yanagisawa 2020: 39).

気をつけるべきです; Yanagisawa 20202: 41) or “should show” (*shimesu beki desu* 示すべきです; Yanagisawa 20202: 42). This usage subliminally expresses urgency and helps Yanagisawa make firm statements.

Another expression Yanagisawa uses to encourage action is “*shite miru*” (してみる), meaning “do something and see” or alternatively also “try something”, as seen in “try to ask” (*tazunete mimasu* 尋ねてみます; Yanagisawa 20202: 41) or “try meeting them” (*atte mite* 会ってみて; Yanagisawa 20202: 42).

Additionally, the author often employs the phrases “*shinakute wa ikemasen/wa narimasen*” (しなくてはいけません/はなりません), meaning “you have to/you must” and “*shite wa ikemasen/wa narimasen*” (してはいけません/はなりません) meaning “don’t/must not”. These phrases express a definite and strong command or prohibition, such as “you have to pay attention/be cautious” (*chūi shinakute wa narimasen* 注意しなくてはなりません; Yanagisawa 20202: 40) or “you have to make them listen” (*kikasenakereba narimasen* きかせなければなりません; Yanagisawa 20202: 42). The most straightforward and simple form of appeal in the text is the direct request with the word “please” (*kudasai* ください), like in “please be thorough” (*tettei shite kudasai* 徹底してください; Yanagisawa 20202: 42).

The cohesiveness of the sentences is often created using the words “*toki*” (とき) which can be translated here as “when”, “*nara*” (なら) meaning “if”, and “*desu kara*” (ですから) meaning “because/since”. Examples include “when they are in a good mood” (*kigen ga ii toki* 機嫌がいいとき; Yanagisawa 20202: 41) or “when they want to date” (*otsukiai shitai toki* お付き合いしたいとき; Yanagisawa 20202: 41); “if it’s a school girl” (*joshi gakusei nara* 女子学生なら; Yanagisawa 20202: 38); “if it’s an unrelated place” (*kankei no nai basho nara* 関係のない場所なら; Yanagisawa 20202: 40) or “if it’s an unrelated place” (*kankei no nai basho nara* 関係のない場所なら; Yanagisawa 20202: 41); “because they are immature” (*mijuku desu kara* 未熟ですから; Yanagisawa 20202: 39) or “since they are middle/high school students” (*chūkōsei desu kara* 中高生ですから; Yanagisawa 20202: 40).

A closer look at the text also reveals that Yanagisawa frequently uses the expressions “*kamoshiremasen*” (かもしれません) meaning “perhaps/maybe/possibly” to express a slight uncertainty when describing the reader’s feelings, as in “perhaps you are surprised, but” (*odoroku kamoshiremasen ga*, 驚くかもしれませんが; Yanagisawa 20202: 40) or “maybe you feel”

(*kanjiru kamoshiremasen ga* 感じるかもしれません; Yanagisawa 20202: 38). Conversely, he also repeatedly uses the word "*deshō*" (でしょう), which can be translated here as "would (be)", to enhance the validity of his statements. This is seen in statements such as "It would be safe to assume that the same is true for the son" (*Sore wa musuko mo dōyō da to omotte ii deshō* それは息子も同様だと思っていいでしょう; Yanagisawa 20202: 39) or "it would be natural" (*atarimae no koto deshō* 当たり前のことでしょう; Yanagisawa 20202: 39).

The text suggests that certain situations, behaviors and developments are 'completely normal', implying essentialist ideas. Examples include "it is a characteristic of men to" (*dansei no tokuchō de ari* 男性の特徴であり； Yanagisawa 2020: 39), "it's only natural" (*atarimae no koto* 当たり前のこと; Yanagisawa 2020: 39), "it is quite natural" (*goku shizen na koto desu* ごく自然なことです; Yanagisawa 2020: 40).

The stratification of nouns also reveals essentialist indications, suggesting that boys' desire for sex from middle or high school onwards is a 'natural' development of growing up. This is seen in the use of words, like preliminary step (*zendankai* 前段階), creature (*ikimono* 生き物), existence (*zonzai* 存在), sexual experience (*seitaiken* 性体験), sexual desire (*seiyoku* 性欲), sperm (*seieki* 精液), control (*kontorōru* コントロール), unnaturalness (*fushizensa* 不自然さ), gender/sex (*sei* 性), sex (*sekkusu* セックス). Asexual or aromantic individuals are excluded from this description. Moreover, by repeatedly referencing to "middle and high school boys" (*chūkōsei danshi* 中高生男子), Yanagisawa subliminally conveys that it is unnatural for children to show interest in sex at an earlier or later age.

Additionally, the assumption that all boys are heterosexual is evident by only referring to girls as partners: girl (*onna no ko* 女の子), female/woman (*josei* 女性), girlfriend (*gārufurendo* ガールフレンド), (to make) children (*kodomo (o tsukuru)* 子供 (を作る)). These implications also refer to the reader's prior knowledge (or assumption) that men are more sexual than women. Though this is not immediately obvious, the repeated description of boys' 'innate and strong' interest in sex and the emphasis on this being a "feature/characteristic/peculiarity" (*tokuchō* 特徴) of boys convey this notion to the audience. Furthermore, the description: "You got married and gave birth to your son" (*kekkon shite, musuko-san o undan desu kara* 結婚して息子さんを産んだんですから; Yanagisawa 20202: 39), referring exclusively to the romantic relationship

(marriage) and the birth of the child, not to sex for pleasure, is used in relation to the mother, reinforcing the idea that men are more sexual than women. This contrasts with the verb "to satisfy/fulfill/gratify" (*mitasu* 満たす), used several times in connection with the son's sexual interest. Moreover, the text consciously distinguishes between romantic feelings and sexual desire in relation to boys (e.g. Yanagisawa 2020: 38-39).

The stratification of verbs reveals Yanagisawa's frequent use of the word "to feel/to sense" (*kanjiru* 感じる), mainly in the context of the mother's intuition about her son's life, such as "when you feel that something is unnatural" (*fushizensa o kanjiru toki* 不自然さを感じるとき; Yanagisawa 20202: 40) or "when you sense that your son has sexual desires" (*seiteki na yokkyū ga aru koto o musuko ni kanjiru toki* 性的な欲求があることを息子に感じるとき; Yanagisawa 20202: 38).

In the stratification of adjectives, essentialist descriptions like quite natural (*goku shizen na* ごく自然な) and natural (*atarimae* 当たり前) stand out, as do expressions that reinforce and emphasize the importance of something, such as definitely (*kanarazu shimo* 必ずしも), firmly (*shikkari* しっかり), neatly (*kichin* to きちんと), absolutely (*zettai ni* 絶対に), and especially (*toku ni* 特に).

6.3.5. Preliminary Conclusion of the Third Guidebook

At first glance, the analyzed text passage seems to contain only a small number of desirable abilities and qualities for boys, along with expectations they should fulfill. However, a closer look reveals more characteristics than initially thought. These include the following: (heterosexual) marriage and fatherhood as milestones of adulthood (*kekkon shite, musuko-san o unda […] atarimae no koto deshō* 結婚して息子さんを産んだんですからさんを産んだ […] 当たり前のことでしょう; Yanagisawa 2020: 39); responsible learning and participation in extracurricular activities (*yaru beki benkyō ya bukatsu* やるべき勉強や部活; Yanagisawa 2020: 39); concentration ability (*benkyō mo nani mo te ni tsukanaku naru* 勉強も何も手につかなくなる […]; Yanagisawa 2020: 39); avoidance of curfew violations for late-night outdoor activities (*hodō sareru* […] *osoi jikan made hankagai o samayō* 補導される […] 遅い時間までをさまよう; Yanagisawa 2020: 40); independence from financial transactions in relationships (*okane nado ga karanda kankei ni natteinai* お金などがからんだ関係になっていない; Yanagisawa 2020: 40); having a middle or

high school romance (*chūgakusei kara kōkōsei ni kakete wa […] gārufurendo ga dekita* 中学生から高校生にかけては […] ガールフレンドができた; Yanagisawa 2020: 40); eagerness for knowledge (*chishikiyoku* 知識欲; Yanagisawa 2020: 41); enjoyment of learning (*shiranai koto ga kichi no jijitsu ni kawatte iku koto ga tanoshii* 知らないことが既知の事実に変わっていくことが楽しい; Yanagisawa 2020: 41); and filial respect, obedience and gratitude toward parents (*oya no okane de gakkō ni iki, gohan o tabeteiru no dakara, koko zo to iu tokini wa, oya no iu koto o kikasenakereba narimasen* 親のお金で学校に行き、ご飯を食べているのだから、ここぞというときには、親の言うことをきかせなければなりません; Yanagisawa 2020: 42).

Regarding the essentialist ideas, the following traits and characteristics are emphasized: development of sexual desire (*seiteki na yokkyū* 降性的な欲求; Yanagisawa 2020: 38); heterosexuality (*josei ni koigokoro o daite, nantoka otsukiai shitai* 女性に恋心を抱いて、何とかお付き合いしたい; Yanagisawa 2020: 38); high sexual drive (contrasting with girls who prioritize romantic love over sexual desire) (*seiyoku o daite 'kono hito to sekkusu o shitai' to omou no wa dansei no tokuchō de ari* 性欲を抱いて「この人とセックスをしたい」と思うのは男性の特徴であり; Yanagisawa 2020: 39; *sei ni kyōmi o motte sore bakari ni honrō sareru* 性に興味を持ってそればかりに翻弄される; Yanagisawa 2020: 39); frequent masturbation (*dashitai to omottara […] jibun nari ni shori shite* 出したいと思ったら […] 自分なりに処理して; Yanagisawa 2020: 38); segregation of love and sex (as opposed to girls, for whom these are said to be interrelated) (*koigokoro to wa kankei naku, josei ni seiyoku o daite* 恋心とは関係なく、女性に性欲を抱いて; Yanagisawa 2020: 38-39); lack of control over sex urges (*jibun no ishiki toka chie de kontorōru suru ni wa mada mijuku* 自分の意識とか知恵でコントロールするにはまだ未熟; Yanagisawa 2020: 39); interest in older women (*toshi ue no josei to tsukiaitai to omou no wa, yoku aru koto desu* 年上の女性と付き合いたいと思うのは、よくあることです; Yanagisawa 2020: 41); and passion for romantic love (*ren'ai ni moemasu* 恋愛に燃えます; Yanagisawa 2020: 41).

Examining the desired characteristics, expectations, and essentialist prerequisites for boys, two markers of the fundamental pillars of salaryman masculinity can be identified:

1) Academic performance,

2) Heterosexuality, which manifests itself in sex and marriage

Additionally, the text emphasizes fertility as a significant aspect of masculinity. This perspective is reflected in the description of parenthood being a natural part of maturity, coupled with frequent references to "releasing semen" in the context of sexual thoughts and masturbation (Yanagisawa 2020: 38-39). This notion of male fertility harks back to the image of the "archetypal male citizen" prevalent during Japan's economic boom in the 1960s and 1980s – a male figure characterized by heterosexuality, fertility and physical fitness (Dasgupta 2013: 2). Based on this excerpt, we surprisingly see a callback to 'traditional' characteristics of salaryman masculinity.

However, despite these 'traditional' aspects the text also promotes the idea of boys finding passion and developing their strengths rather than being generalists (as mentioned in chapter three) and encourages creativity and talent (as discussed in chapter seven of the guidebook). Accordingly, we can also find characteristics of transnational business masculinity in the book. Considering the results of the detailed analysis and the portrayal of a stereotypical, 'traditional' father figure in the book, which align with older ideals of salaryman masculinity, it appears that there is a blend of salaryman masculinity with elements of transnational business masculinity.

6.4. Comparative Examination of Findings from the Three Guidebooks

After a thorough examination of the individual guidebooks, this chapter aims to synthesize the gathered information, presenting a comprehensive overview based on both comprehensive and detailed analyses. Through the analyses, five key themes emerged that are consistently addressed across all three guidebooks. These themes are discussed on the following pages. Additionally, the final sub-chapter explores how the contemporary portrayal of masculinity in the guidebooks aligns with, diverges from, or evolves the 'traditional' salaryman archetype.

6.4.1. Work, Education and Leisure Activities

The first guidebook authored by Morotomi Yoshihiko suggests preparing boys for the workforce from an early age and therefore constructs a precise archetypical image of the future 'ideal worker'. It posits qualities like creativity, flexibility, imagination, expertise, divergent thinking, and communication skills as vital for attaining the status of a 'competent employee'. By framing these traits as indispensable, the guidebook reinforces the deeply ingrained notion that men are destined for employment – a cornerstone of masculinity. This focus on work readiness ties directly into the broader cultural narrative in Japan, where the transition from a student (*gakusei* 学生) to a "member

of society" (*shakaijin* 社会人) assumes critical importance in Japanese culture, particularly for men, for whom work serves as a significant source of social identity (Roberson 1995: 293). Scholars like Pliassova and Dasgupta argue that it is only through entering the workforce and moving beyond childhood that men achieve full recognition as adults. This entry into full-time work, closely tied to the salaryman model, is considered one of the most critical markers of Japanese hegemonic masculinity due to its encompassing societal expectations (Pliassova 2011: 47; Dasgupta 2013: 59). The guidebook reflects this view by stating that "the ability to work and be useful" is a central aspect of leading a fulfilling life, further underscoring how deeply embedded these ideas are within the construction of masculinity in Japan.

Additionally, while the first guidebook acknowledges the potential for the mother to be employed – a point that is entirely omitted in the third guidebook – it still strongly supports a heteronormative nuclear family model with a clear division of labor. This depiction reinforces traditional and conservative gender roles, where the father works full-time outside the home and the mother, if employed, typically takes on part-time work while managing childcare and household responsibilities.

To equip boys for the demands of work life and their future careers, the first guidebook provides strategies for achieving academic excellence through diverse learning methods, objectives, and environments. It also offers guidance on selecting schools and supporting boys who may struggle with exams. Moreover, the guidebook highlights the role of extracurricular activities, such as sports, in building self-confidence, linking these activities to career preparation and skill development. Consistent with broader societal expectations, the first guidebook emphasizes the significant role of parents in the learning process. This focus on parental involvement echoes research findings that highlight the strong educational and societal pressures placed on Japanese mothers to actively support their children's academic success (Holloway 2010: 147-152; Bleicher 2015: 29). The goal of the first book is to guide parents on shaping boys into "capable men" (*dekiru otoko* できる男) by emphasizing work readiness and academic success. It also focuses on fostering 'essential' qualities through extracurricular activities, such as athleticism, communication skills, and creativity.

In stark contrast, the second guidebook by Ōta Keiko makes no mention of any requirements or expectations in relation to work life, academic performance, or extracurricular activities. Instead, it critiques insufficient sexual education in schools and addresses gender biases,

highlighting how boys are often unfairly labeled as unintelligent. The book delves into strategies for preventing sexual misconduct among boys but does not discuss requirements for work, career aspirations, or the acquisition of any supplementary skills and talents.

The third guidebook by Yanagisawa Yukio dedicates a significant portion to the realms of school and education. It extensively discusses selecting suitable schools, effective learning strategies, objectives, and methods and also offers advice on how the parents can support their child with studying. In this, it emphasizes that parents should be actively involved in their child's education, a stance that mirrors the well-known *kyōiku mama* 教育ママ (educational mother) stereotype prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s. This stereotype, characterized by a mother's intense dedication to her child's academic success, has been widely discussed in various studies (Hidaka 2010: 31; Bleicher 2015: 21). However, while drawing from this established expectation, the guidebook advocates for a more balanced approach, cautioning against exerting excessive pressure on children. This recommendation contrasts with the rigorous, pressure-driven image of *the kyōiku mama*, a figure criticized for creating excessively demanding educational environments, as discussed in studies by Holloway (2010: 30, 147-148, 205) and Bleicher (2015: 29).

Yanagisawa moreover emphasizes the value of afterschool activities, suggests their occasional prioritization over academic studies, and asserts that balancing extracurricular activities with schoolwork teaches boys essential time management skills. Despite advocating for a balanced approach, the author underscores the importance of cultivating concentration skills and a broad range of qualities essential for adulthood and professional life, which align closely with attributes of transnational business masculinity, including creativity, decision-making prowess, financial independence, and resilience.

Additionally, the third guidebook also reflects a stereotypical nuclear family model characterized by a binary division of labor. The portrayal of parental roles conveys a specific image of work, with the father as the hard-working primary breadwinner and the mother as the homemaker and caregiver. The possibility of the mother being employed is never addressed.

The first and third guidebook offer a detailed guidance and practical strategies aimed at instilling 'essential' traits and skills in boys during their formative years to better equip them for adult professional roles. By prioritizing early development and readiness, these guidebooks, therefore, strive to smooth the transition from student life to becoming a *shakaijin* (社会人, working adult). This focus directly aligns with theoretical perspectives on this critical stage. As

discussed by Pliassova (2011) and Dasgupta (2013), the shift from youth-oriented masculinity to the more rigid expectations of *shakaijin* involves abrupt and significant changes that profoundly influence various aspects of life, including personal appearance, daily routines, political views, social interactions, and emotional relationships. Dasgupta further emphasizes that the sudden nature of this transition can result in substantial stress and emotional turmoil as individuals adjust to their new roles (Pliassova 2011: 47; Dasgupta 2013: 59). By fostering traits considered valuable for adult males in Japan from a very young age, the guidebooks, in a sense, seek to mitigate the stress and instability often linked to the transition into *shakaijin* life. Conversely, they simultaneously contribute to reinforcing and affirm the standards set for "being a man" and the characteristics associated with masculinity.

6.4.2. Friendships and Romantic Relationships

The first guidebook places significant emphasis on friendships and (heterosexual) romantic relationships. Central to this perspective are two of the book's three alleged 'essential' elements for a boy's happiness: 1) the ability to cultivate friendships and 2) the capacity to establish meaningful relationships with the opposite sex, culminating in marriage. In discussing this topic, the publication puts a strong focus on cultivating communication skills. Morotomi underscores the relevance of friendships beyond childhood, suggesting that good interpersonal skills lay the foundation for professional success. This assertion resonates particularly in the realm of corporate homosocial relationships (*tsukiai* 付き合い), which are pivotal in the life of a salaryman, as extensively discussed by Dasgupta (Dasgupta 2013: 133, 135-136).

Furthermore, the first guidebook places importance on heterosexual romantic relationships and marriage even during the school years – a noteworthy aspect considering the book addresses the upbringing of children aged 0-12. It endeavors to instill values and expectations associated with 'traditional' heterosexual marriage, including delineated spheres of work and household responsibilities. This is exemplified through narratives about the mother figure, highlighting the book's emphasis on the parents' healthy marital relationship as a model and inspiration for the boys.

Conversely, the second guidebook addresses friendships primarily through criticism of trivialized boys' play, such as *kancho* and skirt flipping. It delves deeply into homosocial dynamics, exploring their potential dangers, including incel ideologies and other sexist and misogynistic cultures.

In addressing romantic relationships and sexuality, the second guidebook emphasizes communication and consent while also critically examining problematic customs like the practice of exchanging chocolates on Valentine's Day[158] and challenging conventional ideas about what it means to be a "popular boy". Marriage is broached solely within the context of preventing domestic violence, reflecting the guidebook's narrower focus on romantic relationships.

The third guidebook also delves into the importance of friendships, portraying school and club activity peers as essential support networks who understand each other in ways that adults cannot. It provides parents with strategies for addressing situations where their sons form friendships with peers of concern, as well as guidance on dealing with bullying in school settings. Additionally, the guidebook emphasizes the importance of boys learning to interact with peers of different ages in homosocial circles, linking this skill to their future roles as employees. As highlighted in Hidaka's study (see Hidaka 2010: 35-36, 39-40), this focus reveals the intention to prepare boys early on for hierarchical, homosocial relationships they will encounter later in life.

Concerning romantic relationships, the third guidebook advises parents on how to manage their sons' dating experience. Focusing on the upbringing of adolescent boys, it extensively covers the topic of sexual intercourse, viewing romantic and sexual relationships as integral parts of growing up. In this sense, it is deemed desirable for boys to possess social skills that enable them to engage in romantic and sexual relationships.

6.4.3. Family Dynamics, Parental Roles and Child-Rearing

The first guidebook primarily depicts the 'traditional' nuclear family model, consisting of the father, mother, and child(ren). Additionally, the guidebook occasionally acknowledges the presence of multigenerational households[159].

The depiction of motherhood in the first book aligns with Holloway's characterization of

[158] In Japan, the Valentine's Day custom involves women giving chocolate to men, primarily as a way to express romantic interest. Although newer variations like "friend chocolate" (*tomo choko* 友チョコ, given to male platonic friends) and the act of purchasing chocolate for oneself have gained popularity, the central expectation of women giving chocolates to men remains largely unchanged (Ōta 2020: 52-53). Ōta critiques this chocolate-giving custom for reinforcing gendered expectations and exerting social pressure, particularly on boys, by visibly ranking their popularity based on the quantity of chocolates they receive. This practice can lead to feelings of inadequacy or exclusion, transforming a day intended for affection into a public evaluation of one's "desirability", and thereby becoming a source of stress rather than joy for those who feel left out.

[159] For instance, it mentions that when the father is busy (presumably with wage labor), female family members, including the grandmother, bathe with the son (Morotomi 2009: 189).

the maternal figure as consistently cheerful, diligent, and confident (Holloway 2010: 197) and resonates with Lebra's research, which highlights the profound emotional bond between mother and child. Historically, this bond was manifested through practices such as prolonged breastfeeding, co-sleeping, and shared bathing – some aspects of which are addressed in the guidebook (Lebra 2007: 256). The guidebook portrays the mother-child relationship as exceptionally intimate, built on the mother's understanding and empathy. It even suggests that a mother and her son can share a "lover-like" bond, reflecting Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex. Overall, Morotomi repeatedly emphasizes the crucial role of mothers in nurturing and supporting their children throughout their lives, particularly during puberty. Although the guidebook recognizes that mothers might employment, it generally discourages full-time employment. This highlights the first guidebook's view of the mother as central to the son's emotional and psychological development.

In contrast, the depiction of the father's role remains peripheral, primarily centered around providing as the breadwinner and offering occasional support in childcare and household duties. Within Bourdieu's framework of inheritance, which illuminates the intricate intergenerational transmission of gender-specific habitual dispositions (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 44; 51), these dynamics significantly influence the child's understanding of family dynamics, fatherhood, marital relationships, and the (gendered) division of responsibilities. This is also consistent with Kane's analysis of how parents reproduce stereotypical gender orders in their children (Kane 2012: 3-4).

The first book also stands out for its closer examination of sibling relationships, particularly highlighting the competitive dynamic among male siblings vying for maternal attention. This focus aligns with Sedgwick's concept of homosociality where the mother acts as the central channel through which the sons interact and compete. Theoretical perspectives emphasize that male competition within homosocial settings plays a critical role in shaping the male habitus (Schwarzenbacher/Başer 2023: 42). In this context, the competition for maternal affection creates a unique dynamic that significantly impacts boys' development and social interactions. By addressing these dynamics, the book provides practical parenting strategies, such as how to offer praise effectively, the importance of making requests rather than issuing commands to children, and the concept of "shared joy" as an alternative to straightforward praise.

The second guidebook, authored by a full-time working single mother, immediately challenges 'traditional' breadwinner-homemaker stereotypes by presenting a diverse familial

landscape. It underscores the involvement of *all* parents in child-rearing, yet it does not prescribe specific family structures – whether single-parent households, non-heterosexual families, nuclear families, multi-generational households, blended families, or families in which the child is raised by other caregivers than the parents, etc. This inclusive approach extends to a broader consideration of family dynamics, although it offers fewer detailed insights into sibling relationships and interactions between caregivers and children. This stands in stark contrast to the first and third book, which present a more 'traditional' and limited perspective on family structure.

The second guidebook conveys the importance of fostering a relationship between caregivers and children based on mutual respect and equality. It advocates for adults to appropriately influence children, equipping them with sufficient knowledge and awareness to navigate social contexts critically. Emphasis is placed on adults interrogating their own gender biases and critically examining their behaviors to ensure they do not perpetuate societal norms unconsciously.

An educational approach frequently highlighted by the second book involves explaining the caregiver's viewpoint to the child slowly and step-by-step, aiming to foster understanding of the adult's perspective. This approach reflects the interactive parenting style described in Holloway's study, which relies on calm explanations and reasoning rather than strong emotional reactions (or even physical punishment; Holloway 2010: 197).

The third guidebook depicts a markedly 'traditional' and heteronormative family structure. In this, the father is portrayed as the sole breadwinner, working extensively to provide for the family, while the mother is illustrated managing household responsibilities and child-rearing. Yanagisawa repeatedly highlights the father's relentless work, with an implied expectation of gratitude from the child, while the mother's contributions are notably left unmentioned. The author also repeatedly instructs mothers to emphasize to their children that they should show respect and appreciation for their father's tireless work. This portrayal aligns with Pliassova's reference to a study by Ishii-Kuntz, which demonstrates that, despite the father's limited daily presence at home, mothers often reinforce his 'masculine image' in their children by depicting him as dominant and using his image as a disciplinary tool (Pliassova 2011: 63).

In the third guidebook the father is characterized as an authoritative figure who enforces strict rules within a hierarchical family dynamic, where he is regarded as the unquestioned head of the household. This image is reinforced by labeling the man as the "*kachō*" (家長; head of the

family) and "*daikokubashira*" (大黒柱; central pillar of the household), referencing the stereotypical 'traditional' paternal image akin to natural disasters like earthquakes and thunder, as discussed in various studies (see Ishii-Kuntz 2018: 75; Stoica 2021: 17). This perspective expects fathers to maintain distance from their children, exhibit strictness, and enforce discipline (Stoica 2021: 19). Consequently, the father-son relationship within the book is depicted as detached and superficial, contrasting sharply with the emerging role of the engaged *ikumen* father, who has gained prominence in recent decades.

Despite his authoritative stance, the father is also described as a 'fun dad', less strict than the mother. This aligns with studies like that of Ishii-Kuntz et al. (2004), which show that Japanese fathers are more likely to engage in enjoyable activities with their children, while mothers are more involved in essential caregiving tasks (Ishii-Kuntz et al. 2004: 780). Furthermore, in the third book, the father's authority extends not only over the children but also over the mother, who is expected to accept his judgments and decisions unquestioningly. Thus, despite the mother's primary role in child-rearing, both she and the children are subject to the father's command. This mirrors the relationship model *teishu kanpaku* 亭主関白, as discussed by Taga, where the husband asserts dominance and demands his wife's obedience, positioning himself as both provider and ruler within the household (Taga 2004: 132). Such a portrayal reinforces a hierarchical and patriarchal family structure.

The portrayal of the mother figure in the third guidebook, similar to the depiction in the first, emphasizes a romanticized bond between mothers and sons, drawing a parallel between the maternal love for the son and that for the husband. This suggests an Oedipal dynamic where the son is seen as fulfilling the mother's unmet desires (Freud 2012: 1522). While the book highlights the deep intimacy of the mother-child relationship, it simultaneously advocates for the necessity of detaching from this bond, which challenges the traditionally highly valued emotional connection between mother and child in Japan (see Lebra 2007: 256). For example, Yanagisawa underscores the importance of maintaining distance, advising mothers to step back, which reflects the 'traditional' method of *mimamoru* (見守る, watching from afar) discussed in Holloway's study (2010: 197). Additionally, the third book advises that while the mother should be empathetic towards the pressures her son faces, firm action must be taken, when necessary – ideally by the father. This parenting approach is rooted in the *genpu jibo* belief, which emphasizes a stern father and a kind mother (see Stoica 2021: 19).

Beyond that, the third guidebook also promotes parenting strategies that involve exerting parental control through financial dependency (by e.g. reminding the child that the parents pay for everything, thereby asserting "we decide"). This approach is moreover intended to reinforce respect towards parents – particularly the father whose financial contributions are portrayed as pivotal for the child's education and well-being.

6.4.4. Sexuality and Gender Identity

The first guidebook exclusively addresses heterosexuality, entirely excluding any mention of other sexual orientations. While heterosexuality is not explicitly named, discussions about dating, sex, and marriage invariably involve girls or women. The book asserts that gender identity is biologically determined by DNA, hormones, and physical attributes such as having a penis or the ability to bear children. These physical characteristics dictate "instinctive" or "programmed" behaviors, labeled as "feminine" and "masculine". Consequently, the book fails to recognize sexual and gender diversity. It further describes sexual desire as a natural part of growing up and portrays boys as inherently sexual beings, though not as intensely as in the third guidebook.

In contrast, the second guidebook presents a very inclusive view of gender identity and sexuality, seamlessly incorporating queerness into its narrative. It critically examines how society caters to the male heterosexual gaze through various media such as magazines in convenience stores, sexist depictions in children's series, anime, and advertisements, often presented humorously for the entertainment of heterosexual cis men. The authoress advocates for guardians to raise their children's awareness of their privileged positions within society.

Regarding sexual desire, the second book states that boys should only engage in sexual activities when they can ask for consent, communicate effectively with their partners, understand the responsibilities of sex (including the implications of pregnancy), and recognize that sex is neither a right nor an obligation. Notably, Ōta indirectly suggests that women prefer tender sex, feeling loved and appreciated, implying that sex for women is always associated with feelings of love – a perspective that warrants critical examination.

The third guidebook briefly mentions LGBTQIA+ individuals, acknowledging that children can have sexual orientations other than heterosexual. While it is worth noting that the topic of sexuality is addressed at all – a point where the first guidebook falls short – the overall heteronormative nature of the third book, in its references to dating, sex, and marriage, along with

the fact that the topic of sexuality is only given two pages, highlights the author's lack of serious consideration that the readers' own children might be queer. It regards the desire for boys to become sexually active, be attracted to girls, and have children in the future as a 'natural' progression and perceives sexual desire and reproduction as distinct concepts for men, but not for women. Moreover, it also neglects to discuss gender identity.

6.4.5. Representation and Portrayal of Women

The first guidebook predominantly portrays women through the figure of the mother, often depicted as nagging and strict, failing to understand and constantly criticizing her son. This image is reinforced through suggestive statements like, "Don't you react this way?" or "Don't you say something like this?" as well as generalized descriptions, like "Many mothers do this…" or "Mothers often react like this…". The author criticizes and calls out this behavior, urging for a change. Moreover, a detailed picture of the 'ideal' mother is painted: she should be loving, happy, stable, calm, understanding, empathetic, selfless, and always present for her son. Additionally, the mother is expected to be a good wife and a representative woman who maintains her appearance and the romantic and sexual relationship with her husband.

Girls are mentioned only as a contrast to explain boys' behavior or in the context of romantic or sexual interest. Otherwise, they have no significant role or mention in the first guidebook. There is also a subtle devaluation of femininity, with some positively connoted characteristics (such as playfulness or creativity) being 'naturally' denied in girls.

The second guidebook discusses women mainly in the context of sexual harassment, violence, and sexism they face. The authoress details specific cases such as harassment on trains or sexist portrayals of women in the media and highlights the difficulty of combating sexist and misogynistic socialization of boys. It emphasizes that women should be seen as partners and respectable individuals, not merely as sexual objects for men's desires.

Ōta does not distinguish between behaviors or mindsets based on gender. Instead, it explores gender-based social inequalities and their consequences, the different representation of gendered bodies, and how society caters differently to 'male' and 'female' needs. Overall, women and girls are frequently and seamlessly integrated throughout the entire text, with a dedicated sub-chapter specifically addressing girls.

The third guidebook primarily depicts women as sexual objects or objects of desire for boys,

mainly within the context of sexual intercourse and pregnancy. Similar to the first book, girls serve as a contrast to boys to illustrate 'male' behaviors or thinking, such as different learning patterns, or differences in sex drive, etc.

In addition, the third guidebook discusses the mother figure, though not as extensively as the first guidebook. Here, too, the mother is depicted as someone that does not understand her son, sets very high expectations, and does not listen to him. The 'ideal' mother is therefore conversely expected to be lenient, accommodating, empathetic, and attentive.

6.4.6. Relating the Findings to Salaryman Masculinity

In this final sub-chapter, the results of the qualitative discourse analyses will be examined within the framework of salaryman masculinity, a theme already briefly addressed in the preliminary conclusions of each guidebook analysis. This section will summarize how the contemporary portrayal of masculinity in the guidebooks either align with, diverge from, or evolve the 'traditional' salaryman archetype. Specifically, it will evaluate whether the concept of masculinity associated with the salaryman remains entrenched in its 'traditional' form or is undergoing transformation, as suggested by some studies[160], and will explore the extent and implications of these changes if they are occurring.

The analysis of the first guidebook indicates that salaryman masculinity is indeed partially evolving, but this evolution primarily reflects a model that still closely resembles traditional salaryman masculinity – namely that of transnational business masculinity. The emphasis on qualities such as communication, cooperation, creativity, enthusiasm, and originality, combined with a diminished focus on conformity and adaptability, suggests a shift in work values from salaryman masculinity to those more closely aligned with transnational business masculinity. Although the book illustrates a binary division of labor and offers only minimal discussion of the father figure, it does address the potential for mothers to be employed and acknowledges occasional paternal involvement in childcare and household responsibilities. This may hint at a potential evolution in salaryman masculinity, where wage labor is no longer strictly linked to masculinity and involvement in caregiving tasks could become integrated into hegemonic masculinity, although this assertion remains quite tentative.

[160] See, for example, (Hidaka 2010: 178; McLelland/Dasgupta 2005: 96-97; Pliassova 2011; Stoica 2021; Taga 2004).

Simultaneously, the first book still preserves certain core elements of salaryman masculinity, particularly in areas like education, sexuality and male friendships (and the aforementioned binary division of labor). This persistence is evident in the high value placed on academic and occupational achievements, and the significance attributed to heterosexual marriage. Thus, while salaryman masculinity structures are to a certain extent adapting to newer demands, they remain fundamentally intact.

This observation aligns with the theoretical discussions of Itō Kimio and Taga Futoshi, and reflects recent findings by Pliassova and Stoica, who argue that while salaryman masculinity is evolving, it is experiencing a *gradual evolution* rather than a *complete overhaul* (Gender Summit 2019; McLelland/Dasgupta 2005: 96-97; Pliassova 2011: 86-91; Stoica 2021: 38). These shifting dynamics are driven by factors such as economic changes, gender policy reforms, and evolving social values, as explored by Hidaka and Taga (Hidaka 2010: 178; Taga 2004: 134). However, as scholars like Dasgupta have noted, some core elements of salaryman masculinity continue to remain ideologically dominant (Dasgupta 2013: 8-9).

The second guidebook advocates for a departure from patriarchal forms of masculinity, including salaryman masculinity, with the aim of transcending hegemonic masculinities. It critiques 'traditional' gender roles and addresses harmful masculine behaviors such as structural power harassment within workplace hierarchies and misogynistic dynamics in male peer groups. Instead, the guidebook promotes a form of masculinity free from constraints, oppression, and hierarchical thinking, emphasizing communication, mutual respect, empathy, and consent. It champions a radically feminist, queer-inclusive, and deconstructed masculinity existing outside of hegemonic frameworks. Hegemony, understood as a complex relationship of dominance and subordination that requires constant renewal, defense, and modification (Meuser 2010: 328), is thereby to be dismantled.

The third guidebook presents a partial *blend* of salaryman masculinity values with elements of transnational business masculinity, while also invoking old salaryman masculinity ideals. As Connell and Messerschmidt explain, hegemonic masculinities can not only displace each other by evolving but also transform by incorporating elements of other (hegemonic) masculinities (Connell 2000: 98; Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 833, 847; Messerschmidt et al. 2019: 86-87). Each form of masculinity as a configuration of practices is embedded within relational structures that can develop along different historical trajectories. Consequently, masculinity is subject to internal

contradictions and historical shifts (see Connell 2000: 93-94). This dynamic is evident in the third guidebook, which emphasizes traits such as creativity, imagination, and communication skills – hallmarks of transnational business masculinity – in the context of work, while still portraying the man as a hard-working breadwinner committed to long hours.

Apart from this, the portrayal of family life remains rooted in the 'old' model of salaryman masculinity. The author relies on 'traditional' ideas of upbringing and family hierarchy, presenting the father as the authoritarian head of the household and the decision-maker over the mother and children, thereby reinforcing 'old-fashioned' family and gender roles. This suggests a blending of salaryman masculinity with transnational business masculinity in terms of work qualities, while also promoting outdated aspects of salaryman masculinity related to marital relationships, the father's role, and family structures.

The emphasis on strictly hierarchical family structures in the third book can moreover be seen as a response to a perceived crisis of masculinity, which Connell and Meuser associate with shifts in family structure, employment, intimate relationships, the economy, the state, and global dynamics (Connell 2000: 107; Meuser 2010: 325). With limited individual control over the broader forces, Meuser argues that men often reaffirm their masculinity within family and intimate relationships (Meuser 2010: 325-327). Consequently, the third guidebook's endorsement of hierarchical family and marital roles, positioning the father as the dominant figure, may reflect a fear of change and a perceived "loss of 'male' control" in some areas (see also: Meuser 2010: 330).

7. Summarizing and Concluding Thoughts

To summarize, this paper presents a qualitative discourse analysis of three Japanese parental guidebooks on raising boys, aiming to uncover contemporary understandings of masculinity, including prevailing societal ideals and expectations for boys in Japan. The research questions posed were: "What image of masculinity is constructed in three Japanese parental guidebooks and what arguments, communication methods, and stylistic devices are used to employ this? To what extent do these descriptions coincide with the "salaryman masculinity"?

The analysis of the first guidebook suggests a partial evolution of salaryman masculinity towards a model resembling transnational business masculinity, mirroring broader socio-economic transformations and evolving workplace requirements. However, it largely retains traditional salaryman values, maintaining a strong emphasis on academic and occupational achievement, as

well as the importance of heterosexual marriage.

Conversely, the second guidebook advocates for a departure from salaryman masculinity by embracing egalitarian values and rejecting hierarchical and patriarchal norms. It introduces a redefined masculinity centered on emotional intelligence, relational equality, and empathy.

The third guidebook showcases a partial fusion of salaryman masculinity with transnational business masculinity, while also referencing old-fashioned salaryman masculinity ideals. It depicts men as diligent, long-working breadwinners – a key component of salaryman masculinity – while also incorporating work qualities associated with transnational masculinity. Additionally, it advocates for outdated family, marital, and paternal roles consistent with salaryman masculinity ideals that were prevalent during the interwar period and until the 1970s. This underscores the adaptability of hegemonic masculinity, which integrates both 'historic' and 'contemporary' traits.

Overall, the analysis highlights a nuanced and somewhat predictable pattern in the portrayals of masculinity across the guidebooks. Despite one guidebook's effort to challenge and transcend 'traditional' hegemonic structures, persistent elements such as the subordination of women, gender-based divisions in wage labor and household duties, and heterosexual marriage continue to largely influence masculinity in Japan.

The analysis of the three guidebooks reveals notable differences in their approach to feminist issues, each reflecting distinct perspectives on gender roles while also illustrating the ethical spectrum within contemporary discussions of masculinity. The first guidebook takes a superficial reformist-feminist stance, offering a limited and somewhat shallow approach to gender equality that is unlikely to drive substantial change. In contrast, the second guidebook adopts a more profound radical-feminist perspective, signaling a strong commitment to dismantling patriarchal norms. Meanwhile, the third guidebook bypasses feminist considerations entirely, instead promoting 'traditional' values related to family, relationships, sex, and labor division, raising ethical concerns about the reinforcement of outdated gender roles.

The divergence between the second guidebook's call for egalitarian thinking and the third guidebook's adherence to 'traditional' values – both published in 2020 – may reflect broader societal trends. This contrast is reminiscent of global patterns, where young women are increasingly liberal and young men more conservative, often exhibiting regressive attitudes towards gender roles (Golle 2024; Pallinger 2024). Historically, there have always been differences in attitudes towards gender equality, but this divide has become much more pronounced. Studies

from countries like the USA, UK, Germany, and South Korea reveal that women aged 18 to 30 are now significantly more liberal than their male counterparts, a trend that has intensified rapidly in just a few years, as reported by the Financial Times (Dolleschka 2024). Although similar studies have yet to emerge for Japan, the stark contrast between the 2020 guidebooks suggests similarly developing trends related to labor division, the image of women and particularly mothers, and family hierarchies.

Japan's Gender Gap Index continues to reflect high levels of gender inequality (Brown/Karikomi 2022), and the political climate appears to be moving towards greater conservatism (Seng 2021). Nonetheless, over the past 15 years, there has been a noticeable increase in awareness regarding non-heterosexual sexualities. This shift is particularly evident when comparing the 2009 guidebook, which entirely omits discussions on sexuality, to the two guidebooks from 2020, both of which include dedicated sections on the topic. The Japanese government's acknowledgment of the unconstitutionality of its same-sex marriage ban in March 2024 represents a significant step towards a potential legalization, likely enhancing awareness and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ issues (Amnesty International 2024).

Despite the growing recognition of diverse sexualities, significant gaps remain in adequately addressing and respecting all forms of gender identity. While the increased awareness of queerness and non-heterosexual identities reflects a positive ethical shift toward greater inclusivity and diversity, the complete omission of children's gender identity in the first and third guidebooks, along with the insufficient attention to this issue even in the more progressive second guidebook, reveals an ethical shortcoming that needs to be addressed. Ensuring comprehensive respect for all gender identities requires a more thoughtful and inclusive approach. Although the second and third guidebook offer a glimpse into a future where heterosexuality is no longer bound to male hegemony, they also underscore the persistent prevalence of the gender binary.

While this study provides a nuanced understanding of discursive images and expectations of masculinity within parental guidebooks on the upbringing of boys, there is a clear need for new empirical social science research that further explores evolving conceptions of masculinity in Japan. Additionally, fostering societal interest in change is crucial. Hegemonic masculinity does not perpetuate itself independently. Its preservation necessitates that men actively assert control while marginalizing both women and other men. Sustaining this dominance is an ongoing process that demands significant effort and remains vulnerable to challenge (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005:

844). Given this, both adults and children hold the potential to critique, resist, and reshape these hegemonic patterns, thereby deconstructing rigid gender binaries. This potential signals hope for a shift toward a more egalitarian masculinity – one that is free from patriarchal and hegemonic constraints. To advance this shift, it is essential to examine 'Japanese masculinities' within a broader societal context, avoiding stereotypical and restrictive labels like *sōshokukei danshi*. This requires the development of more educational material like the second guidebook, which advocates for a deconstructive and socially conscious approach to gender that promotes egalitarian masculinity. Equally important are individuals capable of effectively implementing these approaches, ensuring a more equitable and inclusive future.

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9. Register of illustrations

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10. Appendix 1: Table of Guidebooks

Category	Book Title	Author/ess	Publishing Year	Publishing Firm	Website / Bookstore
1	お母さんのための日本一わかりやすい男の子の育て方の本	原坂 一郎	2008	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1	男の子の育て方―男の子の気持ちがわかる　ママの心が楽になる	秦野 悦子	2012	日本文芸社	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 4	お母さんにはわからない思春期の男の子の育て方	淡路 雅夫	2012	Kadowaka	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1	お母さんのための「男の子」の育て方	高濱 正伸	2012	実務教育出版	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 2	お母さん次第でぐんぐん伸びる！男の子の育て方「自立力」をのばすママの子育て	小屋野恵	2014	メイツ出版	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1	お母さんのための「くじけない」男の子の育て方	小崎恭弘	2017	集英社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 2	男の子の自立を決めるお母さんの叱り方	小﨑恭弘	2017	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 4	お母さんのイライラが笑顔に変わる男の子の育て方 0～６歳児を伸ばす、しつけ、言葉かけ、遊び	竹内エリカ / 西野博之 / 小室尚子 / 岩室紳也	2017	洋泉社 MOOK	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 4	ママのイライラ＆不安が笑顔に変わる 男の子の育て方 お母さんのイライラが笑顔に変わる男の子の育て方 0～６歳児を伸ばす、しつけ、言葉かけ、遊び	小崎恭弘 / 加藤俊徳 / 柴田愛子/ 高濱正伸 / 日戸由刈	2019	洋泉社 MOOK	Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 2, 3, 4	母親が知らないとヤバイ「男の子」の育て方	柳沢幸雄	2020	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
1, 4	思春期男子の正しいトリセツ―お母さんに知ってほしい	柳沢幸雄	2020	SB クリエイティブ	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
1, 3	マンガでわかる 男の子を伸ばす母親は、ここが違う！	松永 暢史	2020	扶桑社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
2	アドラー博士の男の子に「自信」をつける育て方	星 一郎	2008	ルックナウ(グラフGP)	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 4	男の子の育て方。「結婚力」「学力」「仕事力」。0～12 歳児の親が最低限としておくべきこと。	諸富祥彦	2009 (2022)	WAVE 出版 / ＰＨＰ研究所	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku (Only the edition from the year 2022 of ＰＨＰ研究所), Rakuten Books
2, 3	男の子が本気でやる気を出す育て方 - 遊んでばかりのうちの子、いつになったらビシッとする	横峯吉文	2011	すばる舎	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books

2	脳科学からみた 男の子の「ちゃんと自立できる脳」の育て方	成田奈緒子	2017	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2	男の子の育て方　子どもの潜在意識にこっそり“成功の種”をまく方法	中野日出美	2017	大和出版	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 5	小学生までの「男の子」の育て方 上手なほめ方、叱り方、学ぶ力の伸ばし方	PHP のびのび子育て	2017	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 3, 4	マンガでなるほど！男の子に「すごい」「えらい」はやめなさい。０～６才の今日からできること。「犯罪者」「引きこもり」にさせないために	竹内 エリカ	2017	主婦の友社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2	男の子の学力の伸ばし方	富永雄輔	2018	ダイヤモンド社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
2	いまどきの男の子」の心を強くする育て方 男の子に必要な、勝ちたい気持ち、くじけない心、人を頼る素直さを身に着けるには?	和田秀樹	2018	大和書房	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 3	「才能がぐんぐん伸びる男の子」の育て方　男児のなぜ？　どうして？　がスッキリ！！	神成美輝	2018	日本実業出版社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku Rakuten Books
2	モンテッソーリの「ちゃんと自分で考えられる」男の子の育て方	神成美輝	2019	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 4	男の子の「自己肯定感」を高める育て方:世界を生き抜く力は思春期に伸びる!	柳沢幸雄	2019	実務教育出版	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
2, 4	10 歳までに知っておきたい! 心の強い男の子の育て方	和田秀樹	2020	学研プラス	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
2, 4	賢く強い子になる男の子の育て方: 思春期こそ“親”が大事	川合正	2022	三笠書房	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
3	言うこと聞かない！落ち着きない！ 男の子のしつけに悩んだら読む本	原坂一郎	2010	すばる舎	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
3	男の子　育てにくい子ほどよく伸びる	おおた　としまさ	2012	主婦の友社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
3, 2	男の子は脳の聞く力を育てなさい	加藤俊徳	2017	青春出版社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4	男の子は 10 歳になったら育て方を変えなさい！　反抗期をうまく乗り切る母のコツ	松永暢史	2011	大和書房	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4	男の子の一生を決める　０歳から６歳までの育て方	竹内エリカ	2015	Kadokawa	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books

4	9歳までの男の子の育て方 将来の伸びしろが決まる！	飯田道郎	2015	世界文化社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4	0〜6歳までの男の子の育て方　ほめて、叱って、遊んで伸ばす！	小崎恭弘	2016	洋泉社 mook	Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4	男の子の一生を決める　6歳から 12 歳までの育て方	竹内エリカ	2017	Kadokawa	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
4, 1	はじめてママ&パパの　0〜6才　男の子の育て方	渡辺とよ子	2018	主婦の友社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4	マンガでわかる 男の子の一生を決める 0歳から6歳までの育て方	竹内エリカ	2018	Kadokawa	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
4, 3	落ち着かない・話を聞けない・マイペースな小学生男子の育て方	松永暢史	2018	すばる舎	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
4	マンガと図解 元開成学園校長が教える 思春期男子の正しい育て方	柳沢幸雄	2022	宝島社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	男の子の上手な育て方	福谷徹	2005	太陽出版	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5, 1	男の子を上手に育てる！-「その子らしさ」を大切にする子育て	汐見稔幸	2008	PHP 研究所	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	カヨ子おばあちゃんの　男の子の育て方	久保田カヨ子	2012	ダイヤモンド社	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	夢をかなえる男の子の育て方	高橋 隆介	2015	東京シューレ出版	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5, 1	男の子のカラダとココロの育て方 男の子は宇宙人!!	汐見稔幸	2015	赤ちゃんとママ社	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5, 1	やらかし男子がみるみる変わる育て方〜小学生でもまだ間に合う！脳科学者が教える	篠原菊紀	2016	小学館	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Rakuten Books
5	「手抜き」でもぐんぐん伸びる「男の子」の育て方 “ずぼらママ”が教える！	藤川万規子	2016	三笠書房	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	マンガでやさしくわかる男の子の叱り方ほめ方	小崎恭弘	2018	日本能率協会マネジメントセンター	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	「男の子の育て方」を真剣に考えてたら夫とのセックスが週３回になりました	田房永子	2019	大和書房	Amazon.jp, Book walker, Kinokuniya online, Rakuten Books
5	これからの男の子たちへ:「男らしさ」から自由になるためのレッスン	太田啓子	2020	大月書店	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books
5, 2	フェミニスト男子の育て方――ジェンダー、同意、共感について伝えよう	ボビー・ウェグナー	2023	明石書店	Amazon.jp, Kinokuniya online, Kinokuniya Shinjuku, Rakuten Books

11. Appendix 2: Overview of Desired and Undesired Traits in the Selected Guidebooks

1) First Guidebook

a) Personal Development and Self-Improvement

Hardworking individual (Morotomi 2009: 20), sense of self-esteem (Morotomi 2009: 20), resilience (Morotomi 2009: 22), independence and sense of responsibility (Morotomi 2009 35), confidence (Morotomi 2009: 20, 36, 53), courage (Morotomi 2009: 40), willingness to overcome hardships (Morotomi 2009: 41), honesty (Morotomi 2009: 43), self-respect and being considerate (Morotomi 2009: 52), intrinsic motivation (Morotomi 2009: 58), fixed self-image (Morotomi 2009: 104), enthusiasm (Morotomi 2009: 106), sport skills (Morotomi 2009: 119), problem-solving abilities in a relationship (Morotomi 2009: 136), imagination (Morotomi 2009: 152), playfulness (Morotomi 2009: 153), curiosity (Morotomi 2009: 154), natural interest and enjoyment in studying or work (Morotomi 2009: 156), creativity (Morotomi 2009: 164).

b) Social Skills, Interpersonal Relationships and Communication

Teamwork (Morotomi 2009: 159-160), societal adaptation techniques (Morotomi 2009: 32), member of society (Morotomi 2009: 35), cooperation (Morotomi 2009: 100), social skills (Morotomi 2009: 101) / social interaction skills (Morotomi 2009: 159) / friendship-building (Morotomi 2009: 150), collegiality (Morotomi 2009: 128), romantic relationship (Morotomi 2009: 134), marital ability (Morotomi 2009: 192), respect towards women (Morotomi 2009: 207), relationships with the 'opposite' sex (Morotomi 2009: 150), active listening (Morotomi 2009: 140), diverse communication skills (Morotomi 2009: 128), conversational skills (Morotomi 2009: 135), popular (Morotomi 2009: 145), humor (; Morotomi 2009: 145), conversationalist (Morotomi 2009: 145), charisma (Morotomi 2009: 160), cooperative spirit (Morotomi 2009: 170).

c) Professional and Academic Ambitions and Skills

Academic and athletic capabilities (Morotomi 2009: 87), concentration abilities (Morotomi 2009: 106), maturity (Morotomi 2009: 18), academic performance (Morotomi 2009: 111), higher education attainment (Morotomi 2009: 129), societal utility (Morotomi 2009: 86), collaborative spirit (Morotomi 2009: 41), job hunting enthusiasm (Morotomi 2009: 85), exam resilience (Morotomi 2009: 84), usefulness (Morotomi 2009: 86), occupational interest (Morotomi 2009: 130), good company (Morotomi 2009: 150), work-study balance (Morotomi 2009: 151).

d) Emotional and Mental Strength

Self-acceptance post-failure (Morotomi 2009: 41), courage to persist and overcome challenges (Morotomi 2009: 135), perseverance in crises (Morotomi 2009: 53), strong determination/competitive spirit (Morotomi 2009: 121).

e) Leadership and Influence

Leadership demonstration (Morotomi 2009: 162), reliability (Morotomi 2009: 162), assistance (Morotomi 2009: 165), encouragement and mutual support (Morotomi 2009: 169), adaptive communication (Morotomi 2009: 170).

f) Adverse Traits (Negative Aspects)

Spoiled behavior (Morotomi 2009: 24), irresponsibility (Morotomi 2009: 33), overconfidence (Morotomi 2009: 66), boasting in front of friends (Morotomi 2009: 66) / boasting about academic achievements or past glories (Morotomi 2009: 66), arrogance (Morotomi 2009: 66), social withdrawal (Morotomi 2009: 86), internet nerd (Morotomi 2009: 87), loneliness (Morotomi 2009: 112), truancy (Morotomi 2009: 114), fragility (Morotomi 2009: 121), apathy (Morotomi 2009: 155), excessive masculinity (Morotomi 2009: 162), assertiveness deficiency (Morotomi 2009: 164), inability to make friends (Morotomi 2009: 164), passivity (Morotomi 2009: 165), relationship severance (Morotomi 2009: 168), limited group play experience (Morotomi 2009: 170), uselessness (Morotomi 2009: 170), incapability (Morotomi 2009: 170), emotional instability and perseverance deficiency (Morotomi 2009: 181).

2) Second Guidebook

a) Emotional Awareness and Sensitivity

Self-acknowledgment of weakness and knowledge that everyone has weaknesses (Ōta 2020: 236), emotional sensitivity and empathy (Ōta 2020: 237), consciousness about the use of sexual services (Ōta 2020: 228), strength through facing weaknesses (Ōta 2020: 218).

b) Respect, Equality in Relationships and Sexual Consent

Bodily respect (Ōta 2020: 29, 167), considerate communication (Ōta 2020: 127, 120), consent valuation (Ōta 2020: 119), respect towards women and valuation of equal relationships (Ōta 2020: 62, 256), openness to learning from women (Ōta 2020: 80), safe and responsible sexual practices (Ōta 2020: 116, 117, 119), understanding that there is no right or obligation to have sex (Ōta 2020: 126), genital respect (Ōta 2020: 221).

c) Social Awareness, Self-Awareness and Responsibility

Recognition of own privileges (Ōta 2020: 236), acknowledgment of gender discrimination and striving to eliminate it (Ōta 2020: 147, 249-250), awareness about the impact of sexual violence and striving to prevent it (Ōta 2020: 167, 181), awareness and avoidance of toxic masculinity (Ōta 2020: 23, 62, 236), critical media consumption (Ōta 2020: 116), critical thinking before engaging in sex (Ōta 2020: 124), anxiety management (Ōta 2020: 152), media literacy (Ōta 2020: 116), critical understanding of potentially harmful and violent behavior/ways of thinking (Ōta 2020: 167).

d) Social Equality, Conduct and Respect

Respect for opinions on sex discrimination (Ōta 2020: 250), assertiveness in harmful group situations (Ōta 2020: 240), awareness about gender equality (Ōta 2020: 133), recognition and participation in the elimination of societal discrimination (Ōta 2020: 249-250), respectful views of

women (Ōta 2020: 62, 88, 210), non-heteronormativity (Ōta 2020: 241), accountability (Ōta 2020: 252), ethical behavior (Ōta 2020: 245), sexual violence intervention (Ōta 2020: 172).

e) Communication and Empathy

Verbalization of feelings (Ōta 2020: 86), serious listening and thoughtful expression (Ōta 2020: 222), empathy (Ōta 2020: 78), polite communication (Ōta 2020: 62), support for the LGBTQ community (Ōta 2020: 152), careful listening to voices calling out sexism and sexual violence (Ōta 2020: 250).

f) Adverse Traits (Negative Aspects)

Emotional inexpressiveness (Ōta 2020: 22, 34), possessive behavior (Ōta 2020: 88), condescension towards women (Ōta 2020: 64), mansplaining (Ōta 2020: 80), objectification of women (Ōta 2020: 210), domestic violence (Ōta 2020: 35), arrogance (Ōta 2020: 22), dishonesty or lack of respect for others (Ōta 2020: 35), misogynistic or homophobic behavior/ways of thinking (Ōta 2020: 42), violent or discriminatory tendencies (Ōta 2020: 161, 181), imitation of sexual acts depicted in adult content without consideration for women's minds and bodies (Ōta 2020: 111), trivialization of sexual violences (Ōta 2020: 29, 33, 172), sexist humor (Ōta 2020: 51), excessive drinking (Ōta 2020: 44), inability to seek help (Ōta 2020: 45), toxic homosocial values (Ōta 2020: 44), refusal to acknowledge own wrongdoing (Ōta 2020: 59), victim blaming (Ōta 2020: 172).

3) Third Guidebook

a) Personal Development and Self-Improvement

Confidence (Yanagisawa 2020: 25), perseverance (Yanagisawa 2020: 58), autonomy (Yanagisawa 2020: 59), financial value (Yanagisawa 2020: 59), foundational skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 59), joy and endurance (Yanagisawa 2020: 60), money management skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 60), self-awareness (Yanagisawa 2020: 63), "human capabilities" (Yanagisawa 2020: 65), growth (Yanagisawa 2020: 75), responsibility of promises (Yanagisawa 2020: 79), eagerness (Yanagisawa 2020: 88), specificity (Yanagisawa 2020: 88), effective overcoming of challenges (Yanagisawa 2020: 89), conscious effort (Yanagisawa 2020: 90), desire to make an effort (Yanagisawa 2020: 92), claiming one's strength (Yanagisawa 2020: 99) / proudly naming one's strength (Yanagisawa 2020: 100), persuasion (Yanagisawa 2020: 100), detail orientation (Yanagisawa 2020: 102), effortful engagement (Yanagisawa 2020: 107), ability to think for oneself (Yanagisawa 2020: 111), critical thinking (Yanagisawa 2020: 112), self-esteem (Yanagisawa 2020: 113), motivation (Yanagisawa 2020: 129, 143), peak performance (at the right moment) (Yanagisawa 2020: 131), self-determination (Yanagisawa 2020: 144), enjoyment of reading books (Yanagisawa 2020: 167), imagination (Yanagisawa 2020: 171), passion (Yanagisawa 2020: 187), life skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 206) , creativity (Yanagisawa 2020: 238), independence (Yanagisawa 2020: 249), having individuality (Yanagisawa 2020: 155), talent (Yanagisawa 268).

b) Social Skills and Interactions

Human relationships (Yanagisawa 2020: 66), intergenerational relationships (Yanagisawa 2020: 186), social skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 189), promise keeping (Yanagisawa 2020: 173), trustworthiness (Yanagisawa 2020: 173).

c) Professional and Academic Ambitions

Club activity participation (Yanagisawa 2020: 22), higher education (university, technical college, university entrance exams; Yanagisawa 2020: 27, 109), employment preparation (Yanagisawa 2020: 110), exam success (Yanagisawa 2020: 151), cram school participation (Yanagisawa 2020: 154), clear knowledge conveyance (Yanagisawa 2020: 156), earnest practice (Yanagisawa 2020: 163), academic ability (Yanagisawa 2020: 75, 185), member of society (Yanagisawa 2020: 186), expertise (Yanagisawa 2020: 264), diligent effort (Yanagisawa 2020: 61), self-management skills in studying (Yanagisawa 2020: 96), societal contribution (Yanagisawa 2020: 157), decision-making skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 160), focused studying (Yanagisawa 2020: 102), allocation of abilities (Yanagisawa 2020: 132), success (Yanagisawa 2020: 133), self-management skills (Yanagisawa 2020: 79).

d) Family Values, Money and Work Ethic

(As a father) breadwinner (Yanagisawa 2020: 51), (as a father) financial support (Yanagisawa 2020: 51), (as a father) daily work and salary provision (Yanagisawa 2020: 51), (as a father) sufficient earning (Yanagisawa 2020: 159), (as a father) paternal engagement in education (Yanagisawa 2020: 217), (as a father) head of the household (Yanagisawa 2020: 229), (as a father) household rule-setting (Yanagisawa 2020: 229), (as a father) paternal strength (Yanagisawa 2020: 195), understanding and appreciation for parental financial contribution (Yanagisawa 2020: 54), household chore participation (Yanagisawa 2020: 58), understanding the difficulty of earning money (Yanagisawa 2020: 58), financial independence (Yanagisawa 2020: 58), saving habits (Yanagisawa 2020: 206), employment capability (Yanagisawa 2020: 159), maturity (Yanagisawa 2020: 159), dating women (Yanagisawa 2020: 28-29), parenthood (Yanagisawa 2020: 39), knowledge about responsibility of pregnancy (Yanagisawa 2020: 194), knowledge of contraception (Yanagisawa 2020: 195), marital abilities (Yanagisawa 2020: 251).

e) Inspirational and Aspirational Traits

New ideas (Yanagisawa 2020: 239), pursuit of passion (Yanagisawa 2020: 210), future determination (Yanagisawa 2020: 121), dream inspiration (Yanagisawa 2020: 167) / having dreams and mastering what one loves (Yanagisawa 2020: 232), life decision-making ability (Yanagisawa 2020: 143), avoidance of negative paths (Yanagisawa 2020: 157), life fulfillment (Yanagisawa 2020: 158), understanding of the harshness of life (Yanagisawa 2020: 265), avoidance of criminal behavior (Yanagisawa 2020: 125).