

Variations in Demographic Characteristics of Foreign “Muslim” Population in Japan: A Preliminary Estimation

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Abstract

This study presents a preliminary estimation of variations in demographic characteristics of the foreign “Muslim” population in Japan over the last two decades, particularly size and composition, as well as a preliminary analysis of intermarriages between foreign “Muslims” and Japanese. The major data derive from the *Statistics of Foreigners Registered in Japan*, which is supplemented by the population census data. Drawing on these data, this study examines the factors for the increase in intermarriages of foreign “Muslim” men with Japanese women. The policy implications of the increase are also discussed.

Key Words: estimation, Muslim, sex ratio, children, intermarriage

Introduction

There is an increase in the Muslim population in the world, including developed countries. Japan is no exception partly because it has historical ties with Indonesia, which is inhabited by the largest Muslim population in the world, and partly because it used to have mutual visa waiver agreements with predominantly Muslim countries in Asia with a large population such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran. However, we do not know how many foreign Muslims are living in Japan and how they are living due to the lack of data. Some “guestimations” of the number of Muslims in Japan, ranging up to 300,000, seem to be overestimates.

This study presents a preliminary estimation of variations in demographic characteristics of the foreign “Muslim”

population in Japan over the last two decades, particularly size and composition, as well as a preliminary analysis of intermarriages between foreign “Muslims” and Japanese. The major data used for the estimation of the foreign “Muslim” population by nationality derive from the *Statistics of Foreigners Registered in Japan*, annually published by the Japan Ministry of Justice (MOJ) (before 1990 biannually). It is supplemented by population censuses, conducted by the Bureau of Statistics, the Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) every five years, for an analysis of intermarriages.

According to the former, there were 1,556,113 registered foreigners as of the end of 1999 and 1,686,444 registered foreigners as of the end of 2000, from which it is estimated that 1,653,861 foreigners were registered as of

October 1, 2000. On the other hand, the latter counted 1,310,545 foreigners as of October 1, 2000, which amounted to a little more than 1% of the total population. Thus, the figure from the registration is larger than the figure from the census by 26%. Censuses are likely to undercount foreigners while there are also elements of overestimation of foreign residents in the registration system.

Censuses tend to undercount foreigners for the following reasons: 1) the enumerator's difficulties to locate foreigners or persuade them to be enumerated, some of which are also true of Japanese residents but accentuated among foreign residents due to their sex, age, household structure, housing type, work hours, mobility, and some of which are peculiar to foreigners such as language problems; 2) the tendency to avoid being enumerated among some potential respondents, particularly those with irregular residence status; and 3) the misreporting of nationality or partial reporting of multiple nationalities (Kojima 2002).

On the other hand, foreigner registration statistics also have problems. While they include a portion of overstay migrants registered as having "no residence status" (about 20,000 in 2003), they tend to be overestimates because some of those registered foreigners may have left Japan (for overseas or the Heavens) either temporarily or permanently. Some foreigners with permanent or semi-permanent residence status may be staying in their home country or elsewhere for an extended period for various reasons. The

death of foreigners may not be reported to the Japanese authorities as quickly as that of Japanese because there are fewer incentives or fewer related persons to report.

1. Assumptions

The estimation of population by religion is difficult in a majority of countries which do not include a question on religion in their population census. A few countries such as Canada have been asking about religion in their census, and the U.K. joined the group with their 2001 census, but they are the minority among developed countries. Even in the U.S. where a lot of surveys have been conducted, the estimates of the proportion of Muslims are not necessarily based on survey results. For example, American survey statistician Smith (2001) estimates 1% or less as the percentage of Muslims in the U.S. based on the results of several national surveys including the General Social Surveys headed by himself at the NORC at the University of Chicago, while many popular estimates run around 2%. American demographer Haaga (2002) also confirms the maximum 1% estimate based on the results of surveys including Religious Congregation and Membership Survey: 2000.

In Japan, however, censuses and surveys do not generally include a question on religion. The Japanese General Social Surveys, conducted by Osaka University of Commerce and the University of Tokyo, include questions on religion, but the percentage of Muslims is too low to be captured by a survey with a sample size of less

than 5,000. In addition, Japanese national surveys generally do not include foreign respondents. Even if they do, foreigners represent only about 1% of the total population. Thus, we have to estimate the number of foreign “Muslims” based on the population of foreigners in Japan by country of nationality and the estimated proportion of Muslims in each country. Earlier scientific estimates include 70,000 by Komai (1999), 62,000 by Sugimoto (2002), 75,000 (excluding overstay migrants of about 30,000) in 2002 by Kojima (2003, 2004) and 64,000 (including overstay migrants of 22,000) in 2000 by Sakurai (2003). This is a modified extension of Kojima (2003, 2004), which estimated a virtual maximum number of foreign “Muslims” in Japan.

The estimates for the proportion of Muslims in the total population in each country of nationality (home country) derive from Tanada (2001, 2003), supplemented by Weekes (1984), Clévenot (1987), Malherbe (1992) and *CIA World Factbook*. The number of registered foreigners in Japan from each country of nationality has been multiplied by the estimated proportion of Muslims in the home country to derive the estimate of “Muslim” population in Japan from each country of nationality. For the proportion of Muslims among foreigners whose nationality is registered as “no nationality,” the estimate has been based on the proportion of “Muslims” among all the registered foreigners but them in Japan, which was calculated from the estimates of “Muslim” population from some 200 countries of known nationality. In addition,

the proportion of “Muslims” in Japan has been reduced to one-third in cases where the proportion of Muslims in the country of nationality is below 67%, following the estimation for Malaysians in Japan by Ishii (1999) and Sakurai (2003). These countries include China, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Nigeria. The proportion has been separately reduced to one-third in cases where the percentage of females among foreigners from one country is above 67% (e.g., the Philippines, Thailand, Russia). Thus, the percentage of “Muslims” among Filipinos in Japan has been reduced to one-ninth of the percentage of Muslims in the Philippines (from 4.6% to 0.5%).

2. Estimates of Foreign “Muslim” Population in Japan

Table 1 shows an estimate of the registered foreign “Muslim” population in Japan between 1984 and 2004, for each world region and selected country of nationality (with more than 300 Muslims at least in one year), as well as the share of each country and region, based on the proportion of Muslims in each country of nationality in the world (some 200 countries and areas) as of the end of each year between 1984 and 2004. Even though the estimates go up to the first digits, they should be taken as approximate figures.

The total foreign “Muslim” population as of the end of each year is estimated to be about 5,300 in 1984, 12,300 in 1990, 30,000 in 1995, 47,600 in 2000, 50,800 in 2001, 53,600 in 2002, 56,300 in 2003 and

Table 1 Estimates of Foreign "Muslim" Population in Japan by Region and Country of Nationality at Year End: 1984-2004

Nationality (Origin)	% Muslim	%M in Japan	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total Foreigners	-	-	840885	867237	941005	1075317	1281644	1354011	1362371	1415136	1482707	1512116	1556113	1686444	1778462	1851758	1915030	1973747
% Muslim	-	-	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.6	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0
Total Muslims	-	-	5341	7276	10019	12270	20871	27619	29974	33140	37100	40515	42590	47547	50760	53568	56256	58587
Asia	-	-	4481	6350	9016	11021	19011	25296	27568	30537	34192	37351	39150	43736	46674	49116	51581	53772
Afghanistan	99.0	99.0	105	119	118	141	132	154	156	172	215	250	304	426	301	336	372	470
Bangladesh	88.3	88.3	402	1045	1881	1862	2565	3492	4358	5171	5382	5671	5805	6336	6932	7685	8571	9469
China	1.4	0.5	317	394	603	702	912	1020	1041	1093	1177	1270	1373	1566	1779	1980	2158	2275
India	12.0	4.0	97	104	109	124	161	207	220	254	299	346	363	403	469	534	569	619
Indonesia	87.2	87.2	1433	1604	2074	3159	4535	5478	6066	7623	10408	13047	14316	16870	18165	18897	19936	20832
Iran	99.0	99.0	538	843	909	1225	4471	8125	8559	8334	7867	7145	6587	6105	5862	5711	5565	5349
Malaysia	52.9	17.6	291	385	625	826	1013	944	944	978	1054	1164	1246	1479	1613	1673	1588	1482
Pakistan	87.2	87.2	627	1182	1960	1964	3918	4282	4515	4856	5313	5705	6223	7123	7508	7814	7965	8180
Philippines	4.6	0.5	49	97	165	251	318	439	380	432	477	538	591	740	801	866	947	1019
Saudi Arabia	96.6	96.6	139	71	58	86	88	107	117	158	179	188	205	199	246	300	258	193
Turkey	99.8	99.8	178	168	167	250	345	424	563	728	996	1135	1192	1421	1807	2050	2304	2402
Europe	-	-	174	193	208	249	298	364	381	401	458	509	571	711	770	870	960	1030
Uzbekistan	88.0	88.0	0	0	0	0	0	18	19	26	41	70	91	162	177	231	300	331
Africa	-	-	481	507	544	679	1164	1540	1592	1740	1969	2179	2392	2594	2791	3038	3167	3226
Morocco	99.8	99.8	27	33	47	71	103	143	149	162	187	214	240	271	284	312	312	325
Nigeria	43.0	14.3	6	14	15	28	188	185	179	182	188	209	224	250	285	324	337	345
Egypt	90.0	90.0	251	259	271	331	421	586	572	635	717	806	908	993	1108	1146	1145	1164
North America	-	-	184	203	219	259	288	297	297	306	305	300	300	316	328	342	341	348
USA	1.9	0.6	177	194	208	243	269	274	280	277	271	271	271	284	293	304	303	309
South America	-	-	3	3	5	32	67	69	75	85	97	91	91	103	107	110	113	117
Oceania	-	-	6	7	9	13	19	21	20	22	24	26	27	31	35	38	39	40
No Nationality	-	-	14	13	18	17	24	33	40	49	55	59	58	57	55	54	54	54
Total Muslims	-	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Asia	-	-	83.9	87.3	90.0	89.8	91.1	91.6	92.0	92.1	92.2	92.2	91.9	92.0	91.9	91.7	91.7	91.8
Afghanistan	-	-	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8
Bangladesh	-	-	7.5	14.4	18.8	15.2	12.3	12.6	14.5	15.6	14.5	14.0	13.6	13.3	13.7	14.3	15.2	16.2
China	-	-	5.9	5.4	6.0	5.7	4.4	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.9
India	-	-	1.8	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1
Indonesia	-	-	26.8	22.0	20.7	25.7	21.7	19.8	20.2	23.0	28.1	32.2	33.6	35.5	35.8	35.3	35.4	35.6
Iran	-	-	10.1	11.6	9.1	10.0	21.4	29.4	28.6	25.1	21.2	17.6	15.5	12.8	11.5	10.7	9.9	9.1
Malaysia	-	-	5.4	5.3	6.2	6.7	4.9	3.4	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.8	2.5
Pakistan	-	-	11.7	16.2	19.6	16.0	18.8	15.5	15.1	14.7	14.3	14.1	14.6	15.0	14.8	14.6	14.2	14.0
Philippines	-	-	0.9	1.3	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7
Saudi Arabia	-	-	2.6	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3
Turkey	-	-	3.3	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.9	2.2	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.1
Europe	-	-	3.2	2.7	2.1	2.0	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8
Uzbekistan	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6
Africa	-	-	9.0	7.0	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.7	5.6	5.5
Morocco	-	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Nigeria	-	-	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Egypt	-	-	4.7	3.6	2.7	2.7	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.0
North America	-	-	3.4	2.8	2.2	2.1	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
USA	-	-	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.0	1.3	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
South America	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Oceania	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
No Nationality	-	-	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

(Source) Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan, 1985-2005*.

58,600 in 2004. The share of “Muslims” among the foreign population is estimated to be 0.6% in 1984, but attained the 2% mark in 1994 and the 3% mark in 2004. This means that the foreign “Muslim” population has grown much faster than the foreign population as a whole in Japan during the two decades.

The figures for selected countries of nationality and world regions are also presented in the upper panel, but they can still be considered overestimates for some countries, even after the modification of the proportion of “Muslims” in Japan, because non-Muslims are generally more likely to migrate to Japan from both Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Even though Muslims represent more than half of the total population of Malaysia, non-Muslims (ethnic Chinese) are the largest majority among Malaysians staying in Japan (Ishii 1999). This should be also true of foreigners from non-Muslim countries such as China, India, the Philippines, Thailand and the U.S. On the other hand, there may be underestimates for a few non-Muslim countries including Myanmar, where the Muslim minority is discriminated against and its members are more likely to emigrate than members of the majority.

It should be noted that the percentage of “Muslims” among overstay migrants has been much higher than among the registered foreign population. According to my previous estimate (Kojima 2003), it was at its highest at 30% (84,000 overstay “Muslims”) in 1992, but it has gone down to the level of 13% (30,000) in recent years. This may suggest that the

total number of the foreign “Muslim” population in Japan, including overstay “Muslims,” exceeded the 100,000 mark around 1992 even though it should have declined to below 100,000 in recent years.

The lower panel of Table 1 shows the distribution of the registered foreign “Muslim” population in Japan by country of nationality and world region. Among foreign “Muslims,” Asians dominate (84-92%) and Africans and Europeans follow with much smaller percentages. Among all foreign “Muslim” populations, Indonesians had the largest share from 1984 to 1992 and since 1997, but they were surpassed by Iranians and closely followed by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, between 1992 and 1996. This is partly due to the mutual visa waiver agreements between Japan and Bangladesh, Pakistan (both suspended in January 1989) and Iran (suspended in April 2002), partly due to Japan’s bubble economies and the revaluation of the Japanese yen, partly due to uncertain economic and political situations in home countries and partly due to the religious constraints and demographic pressure faced by youths in home countries. On the other hand, the renowned increase in Indonesians since the mid-1990s is also due to the systematic introduction of “trainees” to small and medium-sized enterprises suffering from a labor shortage in Japan.

While the share of Indonesians among registered foreign “Muslims” has increased from 19.8% in 1994 to more than 35% in recent years, that of Iranians has

declined rapidly from 29.4% in 1994 to 9.1% in 2004, ranking them fourth after Indonesians (35.6%), Bangladeshis (16.2%) and Pakistanis (14.0%). The percentage of Turks is on the increase and it was 4.1% in 2004, followed by Chinese, Malaysians, Filipinos, Indians, Afghans and Saudi Arabians within Asia. The share of Europeans continued to decline up to the mid-1990s, but it has been slightly increasing since then to attain 1.8% in 2004 possibly because of an increase in “Muslims” from countries in the former Soviet Union including Uzbekistan. The share of African “Muslims” has remained at the level of 5.5% since the late 1980s, but their composition has been changing over time to include more West Africans rather than North Africans. While Egyptians still account for the largest percentage—2.0% among African “Muslims” in Japan in 2004, Nigerians ranked second among Africans, surpassing Moroccans. The number of Tunisians, Guineans and Senegalese are also on the increase among foreign “Muslims” in Japan and they are about to attain the 300 mark. The share of foreign “Muslims” from the Americas and Oceania are relatively small in their percentages.

3. Demographic Characteristics of Foreign “Muslim” Population

Table 2 presents the indicators of sex and age composition of the registered foreign “Muslim” population in Japan as of the end of each year between 1984 and 2004: the sex ratio (100 x males / females) of population and the proportion of children aged below 15 for each

country of nationality and region. As the upper panel of Table 2 shows, the sex ratio of registered foreign population as a whole has been balanced around 100 while it has fluctuated between 170 and 410 in the registered foreign “Muslim” population as a whole, which is computed from registered foreign population by sex for some 200 countries of nationality. The sex ratio of foreign “Muslim” population was much higher around 400 in the mid-1990s while it has gone down to 268.4 in 2004. When we look at figures for each country of nationality, the situation differs by country. Among foreigners from predominantly Muslim countries, the sex ratio tends to be very high. The Bangladeshi population attained the highest mark of 1526.0 in 1988 and the Pakistani population had the highest mark of 1438.8 in 1992, while the Iranian population had the highest sex ratios of about 1341 between 1995 and 1997. While their sex ratios have been declining these days possibly due to their family formation as we will see below, the sex ratio of Nigerian population is on the increase with very high sex ratios of over 1,000 in recent years. On the other hand, the populations from non-Muslim countries such as the Philippines tend to have very low sex ratios.

The lower panel of Table 2 presents the proportion of child population aged below 15. In the registered foreign population as a whole, there is a decreasing trend in the proportion of children. It was 23.4% in 1984 and has gradually gone down to 9.4% in 2004.

Table 2 Sex Ratio and Proportion of Child Population (%) among "Muslim" Population by Region and Country of Nationality at Year End: 1984-2004

Nationality (Origin)	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
(Sex Ratio)																
Total Foreigners	103.1	100.2	100.0	100.4	103.4	98.3	99.7	98.6	97.3	94.9	92.7	89.6	88.2	87.1	85.7	84.9
Total Muslims	169.6	216.3	265.9	239.8	345.5	387.0	396.7	405.7	402.3	391.3	354.8	325.5	305.2	291.8	276.7	268.4
Asia	171.4	229.2	282.3	249.5	360.1	410.7	420.6	428.5	424.0	412.0	370.8	336.7	315.1	299.9	283.0	274.6
Afghanistan	158.5	179.1	190.2	167.9	171.4	164.4	182.1	216.4	280.7	272.1	303.9	458.4	280.0	276.7	265.0	283.1
Bangladesh	454.9	1200.0	1526.0	1058.8	716.0	571.5	604.0	559.5	502.3	484.3	442.0	414.8	416.4	400.5	405.0	395.6
China	99.4	92.2	114.9	111.3	111.2	99.8	95.3	92.0	88.4	85.1	81.0	78.3	76.1	74.9	73.5	71.2
India	158.4	157.3	172.7	187.7	210.4	256.0	257.9	276.0	287.1	300.3	280.8	271.2	267.9	263.8	262.0	257.7
Indonesia	119.1	126.5	148.3	160.6	193.3	213.6	207.1	259.8	310.7	327.6	292.1	264.7	248.2	239.8	216.5	209.6
Iran	163.6	198.9	211.2	273.7	803.2	1249.8	1340.8	1341.4	1342.1	1251.5	1127.7	995.4	869.1	750.9	711.1	668.6
Malaysia	184.3	162.3	156.9	169.3	161.8	144.1	142.2	147.9	142.7	144.6	138.8	143.2	144.7	141.8	135.9	128.1
Pakistan	364.8	814.7	1113.5	787.1	1438.8	1214.0	1174.3	1105.7	1087.5	1194.2	1053.2	977.3	900.4	834.7	831.6	784.0
Philippines	25.1	15.9	13.8	13.5	15.5	14.9	17.8	17.6	17.3	17.5	17.9	17.6	18.6	19.6	20.4	21.6
Saudi Arabia	700.0	563.6	900.0	368.4	378.9	344.0	317.2	272.7	242.6	387.5	360.9	347.8	231.2	193.4	178.1	222.6
Turkey	140.5	154.5	187.9	195.3	232.7	338.1	386.2	492.7	535.7	549.7	578.4	637.8	639.2	582.4	546.8	550.5
Europe	120.1	121.6	124.2	135.8	140.0	142.0	143.4	149.1	157.1	162.9	150.3	151.8	140.8	136.4	131.4	126.4
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	185.7	214.3	190.0	261.5	370.6	194.3	217.2	164.5	136.0	130.4	116.1
Africa	209.1	179.4	209.4	215.8	344.0	291.9	294.8	311.7	306.8	288.6	283.1	287.1	271.5	277.8	280.0	269.2
Morocco	350.0	230.0	235.7	144.8	232.3	210.9	210.4	230.6	289.6	296.3	336.4	312.1	295.8	272.6	277.1	283.5
Nigeria	780.0	280.0	881.8	819.0	1129.0	1072.7	1027.9	1096.2	965.9	955.1	969.9	1008.9	1040.8	1042.9	1082.9	1120.8
Egypt	151.4	144.1	157.3	172.6	198.1	163.6	176.5	193.8	184.6	166.4	158.7	160.8	146.7	152.6	147.5	144.4
North America	117.9	122.2	129.0	137.0	145.1	148.6	150.6	152.7	158.4	163.2	165.3	167.4	170.8	171.1	174.5	180.0
USA	118.2	122.6	129.6	137.8	145.9	149.6	151.4	153.5	159.8	164.5	166.7	168.8	172.4	172.9	175.0	180.6
South America	77.7	77.3	105.9	159.2	143.2	133.7	133.7	130.9	127.6	121.7	121.4	121.1	119.6	119.9	121.0	159.5
Oceania	102.0	94.3	94.7	100.8	107.9	112.3	112.3	117.2	118.6	121.6	130.2	135.1	137.2	140.3	146.8	95.5
No Nationality	101.7	111.2	111.2	110.6	110.1	107.6	107.0	108.4	109.0	104.9	105.2	102.5	104.7	102.3	99.4	268.4
(% Children 0-14)																
Total Foreigners	23.4	20.4	16.8	14.3	12.6	11.9	11.9	11.8	11.7	11.4	11.1	10.6	10.3	9.9	9.5	9.4
Total Muslims	19.4	13.3	9.4	9.9	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.9	7.3	7.3	7.6	8.0	8.0	8.3
Asia	18.8	12.3	8.8	9.4	7.0	6.7	6.6	6.4	6.3	6.2	6.6	6.7	6.9	7.3	7.4	7.7
Afghanistan	32.1	30.0	26.1	24.6	20.3	22.4	19.6	17.8	16.6	20.6	20.5	14.9	21.7	23.6	21.0	18.5
Bangladesh	11.9	4.9	3.0	5.0	6.3	7.8	7.7	7.7	8.5	9.1	10.1	10.6	10.8	11.0	11.0	11.7
China	16.9	13.5	9.1	8.9	8.8	10.0	10.9	11.3	11.2	10.7	10.2	9.3	8.6	7.9	7.2	6.9
India	24.4	21.2	17.7	16.1	11.2	12.1	11.9	11.0	10.8	10.2	10.8	11.1	11.1	11.4	11.6	11.9
Indonesia	17.2	13.3	11.1	8.6	8.0	8.0	7.1	5.8	5.1	5.0	5.4	5.1	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.0
Iran	24.7	20.2	19.7	18.6	7.2	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.3	6.5	6.8
Malaysia	10.6	9.1	4.9	5.0	4.9	5.1	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.3	4.3	5.2	5.4	6.0	6.1	7.0
Pakistan	22.0	8.4	6.1	8.9	4.8	5.5	5.8	6.4	6.5	5.9	6.4	6.7	7.5	8.3	8.6	9.2
Philippines	6.5	3.8	3.2	3.7	4.3	4.7	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.2	6.4	5.8	6.2	6.5	6.6	6.9
Saudi Arabia	13.9	16.4	10.0	19.1	19.8	24.3	26.4	28.7	28.1	19.0	25.0	20.9	26.7	30.9	29.2	27.5
Turkey	22.5	10.1	3.0	6.8	5.2	4.5	6.4	4.8	4.4	5.0	5.1	4.7	4.6	5.0	5.2	5.7
Europe	21.2	17.3	13.6	13.2	11.7	13.5	12.5	12.0	10.9	10.4	10.9	9.9	9.7	9.5	9.7	8.8
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	35.0	22.7	24.1	8.5	10.0	11.7	8.7	8.5	9.9	10.9	8.0
Africa	24.1	23.0	16.2	16.0	11.6	13.9	13.6	14.2	14.2	15.6	15.1	15.2	16.6	16.5	16.4	17.6
Morocco	25.9	6.1	2.1	1.4	1.0	2.1	2.0	1.2	1.1	2.3	1.7	1.5	1.8	2.9	2.9	4.3
Nigeria	4.5	21.1	4.6	3.6	1.4	2.5	3.8	4.3	4.9	5.5	5.8	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.6	6.1
Egypt	29.0	26.7	21.3	23.6	23.7	27.6	26.3	26.7	27.7	30.3	29.1	29.6	32.8	32.8	32.8	34.7
North America	19.8	16.5	12.8	12.3	11.5	10.8	10.9	10.8	11.0	10.9	10.8	10.8	10.2	9.9	9.7	9.3
USA	20.0	16.6	13.0	12.6	11.9	11.3	11.4	11.4	11.5	11.5	11.4	11.4	10.9	10.5	10.4	9.9
South America	22.1	11.7	6.6	7.5	9.8	10.1	10.5	11.4	12.8	14.3	14.8	15.0	15.2	15.0	14.7	14.7
Oceania	14.2	14.0	8.9	7.2	6.1	6.9	7.1	7.6	8.0	8.4	7.3	6.7	7.0	7.3	7.3	7.4
No Nationality	16.0	11.1	9.1	9.0	14.5	22.4	30.6	40.5	49.7	52.3	53.4	53.2	52.1	52.3	51.3	50.3

(Source) Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan, 1985-2005*.

In the registered foreign “Muslim” population as a whole, the proportion of children has been lower than in the total foreign population by 3-7% during the two decades and the percentage has virtually remained the same at around 7% in the 1990s. However, it is on the increase in recent years possibly due to their family formation. Among Asian “Muslims” it is even lower except for Afghans, Bangladeshis, Indians and Saudi Arabians.

The proportion of child population has continued to be the highest among Egyptians, recording 34.7% in 2004. The proportion also used to be high among Afghans, Indians, Iranians, Pakistanis, Turks and Moroccans, but it decreased drastically during the latter half of the 1980s among Pakistanis, Turks and Moroccans. Even though the proportion also decreased drastically among Bangladeshis in the latter half of the 1980s, it has gone up recently possibly because a relatively high proportion is married in recent years as we will see below. Pakistanis also exhibit a less pronounced rising trend in recent years probably because of the same reason. Among foreigners from predominantly Muslim countries, Indonesians and Turks in Japan have a very low proportion of children probably because the proportion married is relatively low.

4. Intermarriages between Foreign “Muslims” and Japanese

1) Trends in Foreign “Muslim” Population with Spouse/Child Residence Status

Table 3 shows the proportion of

registered foreigners with a spouse/child residence status (visa) as of the end of each year between 1984 and 2004. The percentage of foreigners with a spouse/child visa increased rapidly through the early 1990s and was the highest at 18.5% in 1997 before declining to 13.0% in 2004. The percentage among foreigners from Asia peaked at 11.8% in 1999 before declining to 9.5% in 2004.

Foreigners from certain countries are more likely to stay in Japan with a spouse/child visa than others. While the proportion has been very high among foreigners from predominantly non-Muslim countries such as Filipinos and Thais (particularly women), it has also been relatively high among foreigners from predominantly Muslim countries including Iranians, Pakistanis and Turks (particularly men). But the proportion has been relatively low among Bangladeshis and Indonesians. Actually, the percentage with a spouse/child visa peaked at 9.3% in 2000 before declining to 5.6% in 2004 among Bangladeshis, and it was the highest at 16.2% in 1986 before declining to 10.8% among Indonesians. On the other hand, the percentage was the highest at 26.2% in 2001 before declining to 19.4% in 2004 among Iranians, and it peaked at 22.3% in 1999 before declining to 16.9% among Pakistanis.

Among Africans, however, the percentage with a spouse/child visa was even higher than among Asians. It peaked at 24.9% in 2000, but it has declined to 18.6% in 2004 among Africans in Japan. Among Moroccans the percentage was extremely high at 74.6% in

Table 3 Proportion of Foreigners with Spouse/Child Residence Status at Year End (%): 1984-2004

Nationality (Origin)	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total	4.0	4.8	6.1	12.1	16.3	17.1	17.9	18.3	18.5	17.5	17.4	16.6	15.8	14.7	13.7	13.0
Asia	2.8	3.6	5.0	7.4	8.7	9.9	10.7	11.1	11.5	11.6	11.8	11.3	11.1	10.5	9.9	9.5
Afghanistan	8.5	10.0	4.2	7.0	9.8	9.0	8.9	9.2	7.8	6.3	5.2	3.0	4.3	2.9	3.7	3.6
Bangladesh	5.5	3.7	4.2	8.4	8.2	7.3	6.6	6.4	6.9	7.2	9.2	9.3	8.8	7.7	6.5	5.6
China	15.5	15.5	13.0	15.3	14.9	16.0	16.7	17.1	17.3	16.9	16.6	15.1	14.0	12.5	11.2	10.6
India	7.9	7.0	6.7	7.1	6.6	5.3	5.0	4.5	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.7	3.2	3.1	2.9
Indonesia	14.4	16.2	13.8	12.1	13.7	14.1	13.9	12.3	10.5	9.8	10.3	9.7	10.2	10.8	11.0	10.8
Iran	23.2	14.4	15.6	15.4	5.2	3.5	4.5	6.3	9.5	13.6	20.4	24.9	26.2	23.6	21.4	19.4
Malaysia	11.5	11.6	9.0	9.5	10.1	13.8	14.6	14.7	14.5	13.8	13.3	11.2	10.5	9.9	9.6	9.7
Pakistan	17.0	10.7	11.4	18.1	13.0	14.8	16.0	16.9	18.5	19.8	22.3	21.7	21.0	18.9	16.9	15.7
Philippines	30.8	28.0	35.1	41.8	45.6	42.4	53.7	50.3	47.8	43.3	39.9	31.9	29.5	26.9	24.0	22.0
Saudi Arabia	2.1	5.5	5.0	3.4	5.5	3.6	2.5	1.8	2.7	2.1	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.5	2.5
Turkey	24.2	20.8	19.8	13.5	20.2	19.5	16.8	17.0	15.1	16.1	18.4	19.2	17.3	16.9	16.1	17.6
Europe	18.3	16.5	14.9	14.2	14.2	14.8	15.3	15.2	15.2	15.2	15.5	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.9	15.3
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	5.0	4.5	3.4	4.3	2.5	2.9	4.3	5.0	5.3	5.3	7.2
Africa	15.5	14.9	17.0	18.9	12.7	14.4	15.5	16.5	18.1	20.1	24.7	24.9	23.9	20.8	18.9	18.6
Morocco	48.1	66.7	74.5	74.6	64.1	55.2	55.0	52.5	50.3	49.1	48.3	43.8	44.6	45.0	38.3	32.8
Nigeria	0.0	2.1	2.8	6.7	2.2	5.7	8.0	11.8	18.5	24.2	36.0	36.5	33.4	27.6	26.1	29.4
Egypt	14.3	13.5	14.0	15.8	13.5	10.4	10.7	9.5	8.7	8.4	8.3	7.7	6.6	6.1	5.3	4.9
North America	20.8	20.3	18.4	18.0	19.7	21.4	21.8	21.7	22.2	22.1	22.2	20.6	19.3	18.3	18.3	17.5
USA	20.7	20.3	18.5	18.3	20.1	22.1	22.3	22.3	23.0	22.9	22.9	21.2	20.0	18.8	18.7	17.9
South America	40.5	38.1	44.4	68.2	56.9	53.8	51.8	49.1	45.3	41.3	40.1	37.0	33.7	31.0	28.4	26.1
Oceania	13.7	11.2	10.5	9.7	10.9	13.0	14.5	15.6	16.1	16.0	16.0	14.8	13.5	13.2	13.8	13.9
No Nationality	12.7	8.6	10.9	10.8	10.6	8.5	7.7	7.0	6.4	5.5	5.9	5.8	6.3	6.1	6.1	5.9

(Source) Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on the Foreigners Registered in Japan, 1985-2005*.

1990 and still high at 32.8% in 2004. The proportion has drastically increased to the peak of 45.0% in 2002 among Nigerians before declining to 29.4% in 2004, while it has gradually gone down from the peak of 15.8% in 1990 to 4.9% in 2004 among Egyptians.

2) Sex Ratio and Intermarriages among “Muslims”

The left-hand panels of Table 4 present the sex ratio (of adult and married population) and the proportion married and intermarried among foreign “Muslim” population aged 15 and above in Japan in 1995 and 2000. The first column shows that the sex ratios among foreigners and Asians as a whole are balanced at slightly less than 100, but that they are quite high among Bangladeshis, Iranians and Pakistanis and lower (but still higher than average) among Indonesians and Malaysians in both 1995 and 2000. For example, Pakistanis had a sex ratio of 1,704 in 1995 and 1,156 in 2000. The first column also shows that the sex ratios of married “Muslims” are generally lower than those of adult “Muslims” and that they are similar for 1995 and 2000 except among Iranians. The sex ratio of married Iranians more than doubled from 314 to 802 during the period, due to a significant increase in intermarried couples of Iranian men and Japanese women and a significant decrease in intermarried couples of Japanese men and Iranian women as well as Iranian-Iranian couples.

The second column of the upper left-hand panel reveals that the proportion

married among the foreign male population as a whole has not changed much between 1995 and 2000, but that the proportion married has gone up by 15-30% for Bangladeshi, Iranian and Pakistani men in Japan in the same period. The fourth column shows that the proportion intermarried with Japanese women has remained at around the same level among the foreign male population, but that the proportion has gone up significantly among men from the three predominantly Muslim countries, particularly Iranian men. However, the third column reveals that about a half of Bangladeshi, Indonesian and Malaysian men are still married to women from the same country.

The high proportion of intermarriages of “Muslim” men with Japanese women may be partly explained by the high sex ratio among them. Actually, among Bangladeshis, Iranians and Pakistanis with a high sex ratio, men have a high proportion intermarried with Japanese women as indicated by the fourth column. Among married men, about 50% of Bangladeshis are intermarried with Japanese women in 1995 and 2000 while about 80% of Pakistanis are intermarried with Japanese women. As for Iranian men, the percentage intermarried with Japanese women in 1995 was at about the same level as Bangladeshi men, but it rose to the same level as Pakistani men in 2000. The first column reveals that the sex ratio of married “Muslims” in Japan is less unbalanced than the sex ratio of adult “Muslims,” but that it is still high, suggesting a larger number of intermarriages of “Muslim” men with non-compatriots than those of

Table 4 Sex Ratio and Proportion Intermarried among Foreign "Muslims" Aged 15+ (%): 1995 and 2000

Sex Nationality	Sex Ratio	% Married	Nationality Dist. of Spouses			Population Aged 15+	Married Population Aged 15+			
			Same	Japanese	Others		Subtotal	Same	Japanese	Others
1995						Ratio(2000/1995)				
Male						Male				
	(Pop 15+)									
Foreigner	98	46.0	-	26.1	-	110.4	114.0	-	122.9	-
Asian	88	47.9	-	25.1	-	105.5	104.3	-	116.5	-
Bangladeshi	807	20.1	50.7	43.1	6.2	101.3	171.3	154.5	205.2	73.1
Indonesian	217	17.4	60.7	36.7	2.6	256.2	204.4	183.1	244.2	138.9
Iranian	1456	15.4	25.4	56.3	18.2	55.6	176.2	64.2	254.9	89.5
Malaysian	187	13.2	59.2	29.2	11.6	77.1	127.7	105.9	180.4	106.3
Pakistani	1704	26.6	14.0	77.4	8.6	90.4	172.7	149.4	186.1	91.0
Female						Female				
	(Married)									
Foreigner	82	55.4	-	39.8	-	122.4	122.2	-	139.4	-
Asian	76	55.5	-	43.2	-	120.5	117.8	-	140.4	-
Bangladeshi	188	86.1	95.5	4.0	0.4	151.0	152.0	154.5	94.4	150.0
Indonesian	73	51.9	44.2	53.0	2.8	188.1	189.6	183.1	195.7	177.8
Iranian	314	71.2	79.8	17.8	2.4	70.8	69.0	64.2	86.4	100.0
Malaysian	53	46.8	31.2	61.9	6.9	106.6	127.2	105.9	139.7	111.3
Pakistani	623	72.7	87.1	9.1	3.8	133.2	139.2	149.4	52.9	114.3
2000										
Male										
	(Pop 15+)									
Foreigner	88	47.6	-	28.1	-					
Asian	77	47.4	-	28.0	-					
Bangladeshi	541	34.0	45.7	51.6	2.6					
Indonesian	295	13.9	54.4	43.8	1.7					
Iranian	1143	48.7	9.3	81.5	9.3					
Malaysian	135	21.8	49.1	41.2	9.7					
Pakistani	1156	50.8	12.1	83.4	4.5					
Female										
	(Married)									
Foreigner	76	55.3	-	45.3	-					
Asian	67	54.3	-	51.5	-					
Bangladeshi	212	86.7	97.1	2.5	0.4					
Indonesian	79	52.3	42.7	54.6	2.6					
Iranian	802	69.4	74.2	22.3	3.5					
Malaysian	53	55.8	26.0	68.0	6.0					
Pakistani	773	76.0	93.4	3.5	3.1					

(Source) Bureau of Statistics, 1995/2000 Population Census of Japan, Vol.8.

“Muslim” women with non-compatriots.

On the other hand, as indicated by the second column in the lower left-hand panel of Table 4, the proportion married is much higher among women from each predominantly Muslim country than men from the same country. The third and fourth columns show that, among married Bangladeshi, Iranian and Pakistani women in Japan, most are married to a man from the same country and that few are married to a Japanese man. This may be due to religious constraints imposed on Muslim women on their spouse's religion, but it may also be due to religious constraints imposed on Muslim women regarding unaccompanied migration. The fourth column also reveals that the majority of married Indonesian and Malaysian women are intermarried with Japanese men, possibly because many of them are ethnic Chinese. As indicated by the fifth column of the left-hand panel, the proportion intermarried with a spouse of all other nationalities has remained at a similar level among women from predominantly Muslim countries, but it has decreased from 1995 to 2000 among men from these countries, resulting in similar levels between men and women from each country of nationality.

3) Factors of Changes between 1995 and 2000

The upper right-hand panel of Table 4 presents the ratio of original population figures (absolute numbers not presented here) between 1995 and 2000 (100×2000 figures / 1995 figures) to show the changes during the 5 years. The first column reveals that the population

aged 15 and above increased significantly among Indonesian men and women partly due to the trainee scheme, and that the increase tends to be larger among women than among men in each country. A decrease in both men and women was observed only among Iranians, but a decrease in men was also observed among Malaysians and Pakistanis. As indicated by the second column, the ratio of married foreigners between 1995 and 2000 exhibits a similar tendency except that the number of married Iranian, Malaysian and Pakistani men has increased while the population aged 15 and above decreased. This suggests that those men who had not married Japanese women left for home during the 5-year period. The third column shows that, among both men and women married to a compatriot, only the number of Iranians has decreased. This means that only the number of Iranian-Iranian couples has decreased while other couples of compatriots have increased. The fourth column reveals that the couples of a “Muslim” man and a Japanese woman doubled, but that the couples of a Japanese man and a Bangladeshi, Iranian or Pakistani woman decreased. This may suggest the difficulty of adaptation by “Muslim” women to Japanese men or the Japanese society.

4) International Migration and Marriage between 1995 and 2000

Table 5 shows the proportion intermarried by place of usual residence 5 years ago (migration status) among married foreign “Muslim” men in Japan in 2000 based on the

author's tabulation of the 2000 Census microdata (through the courtesy of the Bureau of Statistics). The top panel presents the proportion for the total, which is basically a duplicate of the lower left-hand panel of Table 4 based on the 2000 Census report. The microdata, however, allow the tabulation of foreign men married to a compatriot among all the foreigners and Asians, which are respectively 70.1% and 71.2%. In addition,

there are slight differences in the number of men intermarried with "others" among Asians and Bangladeshis. Anyway, the proportion of homogamy in terms of nationality turns out to be high among non-Muslim foreign men in Japan, which is in contrast to the proportion among foreign "Muslim" men, particularly Iranian and Pakistani men.

The middle panel of Table 5 presents the proportion intermarried among married

Table 5 Proportion Intermarried by Migrant Status among Foreign "Muslim" Men (%): 2000

Nationality	Married Male Pop	Nationality Dist. of Spouses		
		Same	Japanese	Others
Total				
Foreigner	258287	70.1	28.1	1.8
Asian	179680	71.2	27.9	0.9
Bangladeshi	1455	45.2	51.1	3.7
Indonesian	1437	54.4	43.8	1.7
Iranian	1836	9.3	81.5	9.3
Malaysian	692	49.1	41.2	9.7
Pakistani	2002	12.1	83.4	4.5
Migrants				
Foreigner	57527	76.1	21.4	2.5
Asian	25376	77.6	21.5	1.0
Bangladeshi	451	75.2	23.1	1.8
Indonesian	896	57.8	41.3	0.9
Iranian	300	25.3	65.0	9.7
Malaysian	313	68.1	27.2	4.8
Pakistani	478	25.3	70.5	4.2
Non-Migrants				
Foreigner	200753	68.3	30.0	1.6
Asian	154299	70.1	29.0	0.9
Bangladeshi	1004	31.8	63.6	4.6
Indonesian	541	48.8	48.1	3.1
Iranian	1535	6.1	84.7	9.2
Malaysian	379	33.5	52.8	13.7
Pakistani	1524	7.9	87.4	4.7

(Source) The author's tabulation of the 2000 Population Census Microdata.

foreign men who used to live abroad in 1995 ("international migrants") and the bottom panel shows the proportion intermarried among those who used to live in Japan in 1995

("non-migrants"). The proportion of homogamy among "international migrants" is much higher than that of "non-migrants," particularly among "Muslims." On the other

hand, the proportion of intermarriage with Japanese women is much higher among “non-migrants” particularly among “Muslims.” While the latter difference between migrant statuses is about 9 percentage points among foreign and Asian men in general, it amounts to 41 points among Bangladeshis, 7 points among Indonesians, 20 points among Iranians, 26 points among Malaysians and 17 points among Pakistanis. The larger difference among Bangladeshi men is due to the fact that the proportion intermarried with Japanese women is closer to the average among “migrant” men while it is close to other “Muslim” men among “non-migrants.” The apparent high propensity of Iranian and Pakistani men to marry with Japanese women within 5 years of their stay in Japan and that of Bangladesh and other “Muslim” men to marry with Japanese women beyond (but probably close to) 5 years of their stay may suggest that “Muslim” men who did not marry with Japanese women are more likely to leave Japan.

The high sex ratio of the “Muslim” population in Japan cannot always explain the high incidence of intermarriages between “Muslim” men and Japanese women. This is because the number of such couples increased between 1995 and 2000 even though the sex ratio among “Muslims” in Japan generally declined except among Indonesians in the same period. The increase in intermarriages is also related to the aging of “Muslim” men in Japan, most of whom came to Japan in the late 1980s or early 1990s as young men and reached the prime age of marriage in the mid to late 1990s.

It is also due to the religious constraints imposed on Muslim women in terms of unaccompanied migration and selection of a Muslim spouse. It should be related to the Japanese government’s regulation regarding residence status and work of foreigners as mentioned below. Thus, the intermarriage of foreign “Muslims” with Japanese, particularly that of “Muslim” men with Japanese women may be a result of a compromise between migration strategy and marriage strategy under changing demographic, religious and legal constraints faced by them.

5. Conclusion

Even though it is not desirable for governments to interfere directly with marriages including intermarriages, they should give necessary support if intermarriages exhibit difficulties in mutual adaptation as in the case of Muslim-Japanese marriages (Takeshita 2004). Jasso and Rosenzweig (1990) found that the labor market and marriage market for international migrants are closely linked. They argue that, if a country restricts the issuance of working visas for the unskilled, but not spouse visas, this may virtually encourage the increase in marriages of convenience of foreigners with citizens of the receiving country for the former to stay and work in the country. If the Japanese government continues to restrict the inflow of unskilled foreign workers, the intermarriages of convenience (which are NOT “disguised marriages”) will continue to increase in the future (Kojima 1992).

The Japanese government should

give necessary support to intermarried couples and their children like the Taiwanese (Chinese Taipei) government, particularly to Muslim-Japanese couples and their children for adaptation to the Japanese society and its Muslim communities. It should also consider giving support to intermarried Japanese spouses and their children living in predominantly Muslim countries in Asia if they increase significantly and exhibit difficulties in adapting themselves to Muslim societies. In the long run, it would be necessary for Asian countries to have an intergovernmental arrangement to support intermarried couples and their children living in Asia with a particular reference to religions and their role in adaptation.

In parallel with an increase in the “Muslim” population in Japan, the followers of newer Islamic movements such as *Jama’at Tabligh* seem to be on the increase in Japan as indicated by an increase in the number of mosques and prayer spaces under their influence. This may also be related to the Japanese government’s restriction on the entry of unskilled workers, resulting in inferior working and living conditions. The Japanese government has to make more efforts to better integrate unorganized Muslim migrants and their family (including Japanese spouses) into the Japanese society as well as the more traditional Muslim communities in Japan.

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