

# Social Stratification in an Aging Society with Low Fertility

**The Case of Japan**

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## **Details**

This edited book empirically discusses stratification in contemporary Japanese society. It is unique for its examination of social inequality in relation to declining fertility and an aging population. Japan is the most aged society in the world: according to the Statistics Bureau of Japan, people who are aged 65 and above comprised 29.1% of the country's total population in 2021. Meanwhile, the fertility rate has continuously declined since the mid-1970s.

Japan experienced a dramatic change in its demographic structure in a short period of time. Such fast change could be a major factor that generated social stratification. In her industrialization, Japan was thought to share a pattern of social stratification similar to that of developed European and North American countries but with a low degree of socio-economic inequality and a high degree of homogeneity. There is no clear support for this description of Japan, although the country does share a pattern and degree of social stratification similar to that observed in Europe and North America.

The social stratification theory has been developed in close relationship to the labor market; however, it is necessary to further examine the social stratification of very aged societies in which a substantial number of the population—namely, retired persons—no longer have any ties to the labor market. In this book, the contributors explore the pattern of social stratification at three life stages: young, middle-aged, and elderly. Included are discussions of various aspects of stratification such as education, work, wealth, marriage, family, gender, generation, and social attitudes.

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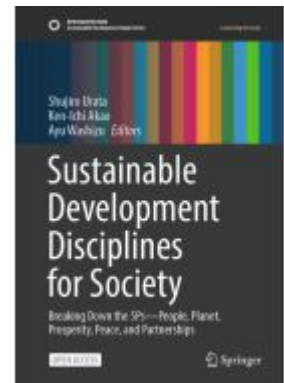
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