

2017-11-14 German Cultural Center (Tokyo)

Symposium

The Impact of the Humanities and Social Sciences: Discussing Germany & Japan

# Locating Family in the Gender Equality Politics

A focus on economic situation after divorce in Japan

**TANAKA Sigeto** (Tohoku University)

<http://tsigeto.info/17y>

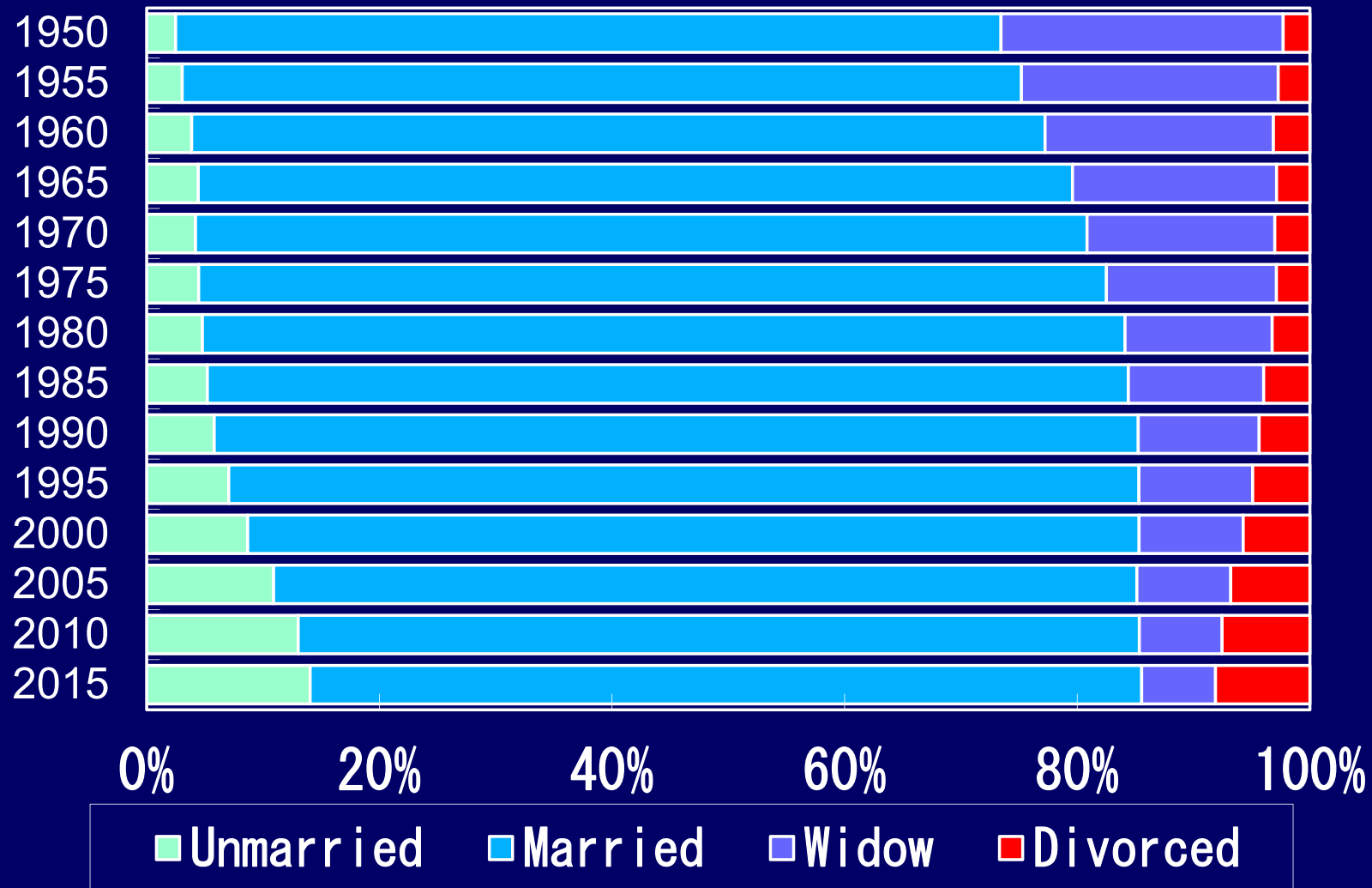
# Ideology & social sciences

Ideology = system of beliefs on

- **Fact** : How the society is
- **Value**: How the society should be
- **Norm**: What should we do

# Trend in marital status in Japan

Population Census 1950-2015,  
Women aged 30-74



# National Family Research of Japan (NFRJ)



- ★ Detailed information on kinship and life events
- ★ National representative samples:  
**1998, 2003, 2008**  
**(NFRJ98, NFRJ03, NFRJ08)**
- ★ Huge number: **473, 494, 463** divorced

<http://nfrj.org>

# Annual Household Income

## NFRJ98: on page 5/25

問15 去年1年間のお宅の収入（生計をともにしている家族全員の収入の合計）は、税込みでは次の中のどれに近いでしょうか。[Income during the previous year of your household, including tax (choose the nearest)]

- |   |            |    |              |
|---|------------|----|--------------|
| 1 | 収入はなかった    | 6  | 600～799万円台   |
| 2 | 100万円未満    | 7  | 800～999万円台   |
| 3 | 100～199万円台 | 8  | 1000～1199万円台 |
| 4 | 200～399万円台 | 9  | 1200万円以上     |
| 5 | 400～599万円台 | 10 | わからない        |

## NFRJ03: on page 5/18

問8 去年1年間のお宅（生計をともにしている家族）の収入は、税込みでは次の中のどれに近いでしょうか。他の家族の方の収入も含めてお答えください。（○は1つだけ） [Income during the previous year of your household, including tax (choose the nearest)]

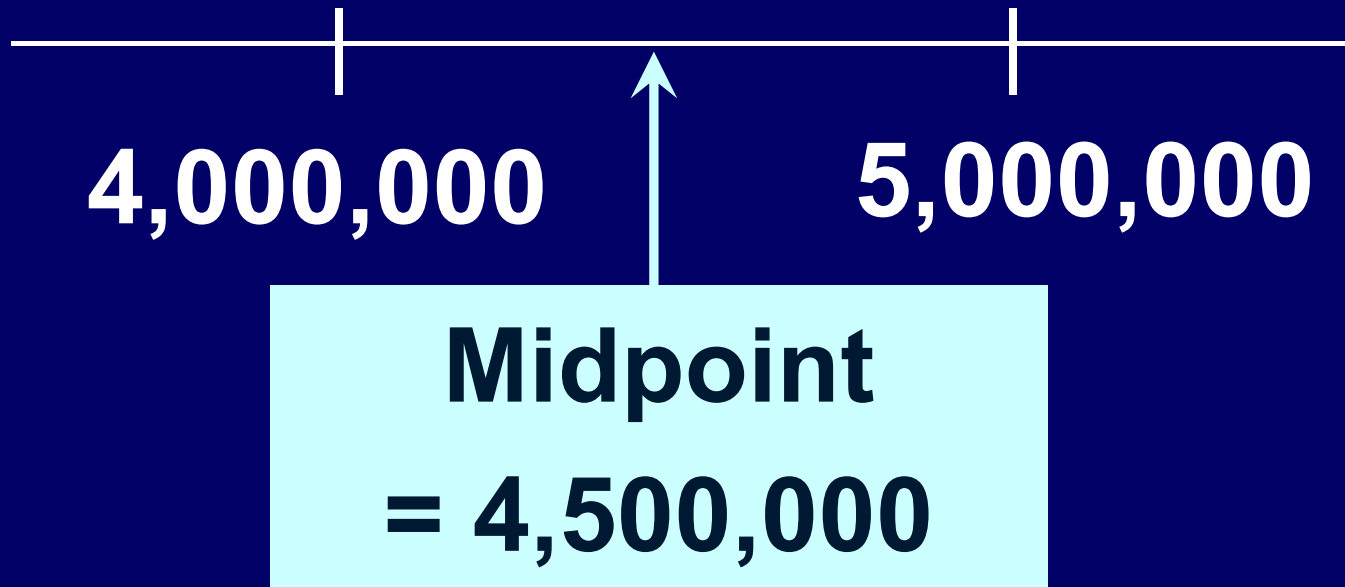
- |               |                  |                  |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 収入はなかった     | 7 500～599 万円台    | 13 1100～1199 万円台 |
| 2 100 万円未満    | 8 600～699 万円台    | 14 1200～1299 万円台 |
| 3 100～199 万円台 | 9 700～799 万円台    | 15 1300～1399 万円台 |
| 4 200～299 万円台 | 10 800～899 万円台   | 16 1400～1499 万円台 |
| 5 300～399 万円台 | 11 900～999 万円台   | 17 1500～1599 万円台 |
| 6 400～499 万円台 | 12 1000～1099 万円台 | 18 1600 万円以上     |

## NFRJ08: on page 23/24

問18 去年1年間のお宅（生計をともにしている家族）の収入は、税込みでは次の中のどれに近いでしょうか。他の家族の方の収入も含めてお答えください。（○は1つだけ） [Income during the previous year of your household, including tax (choose the nearest)]

- |               |                  |                  |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 収入はなかった     | 8 500～599 万円台    | 15 1200～1299 万円台 |
| 2 100 万円未満    | 9 600～699 万円台    | 16 1300～1399 万円台 |
| 3 100～129 万円台 | 10 700～799 万円台   | 17 1400～1499 万円台 |
| 4 130～199 万円台 | 11 800～899 万円台   | 18 1500～1599 万円台 |
| 5 200～299 万円台 | 12 900～999 万円台   | 19 1600 万円以上     |
| 6 300～399 万円台 | 13 1000～1099 万円台 |                  |
| 7 400～499 万円台 | 14 1100～1199 万円台 |                  |

# Income of the previous year

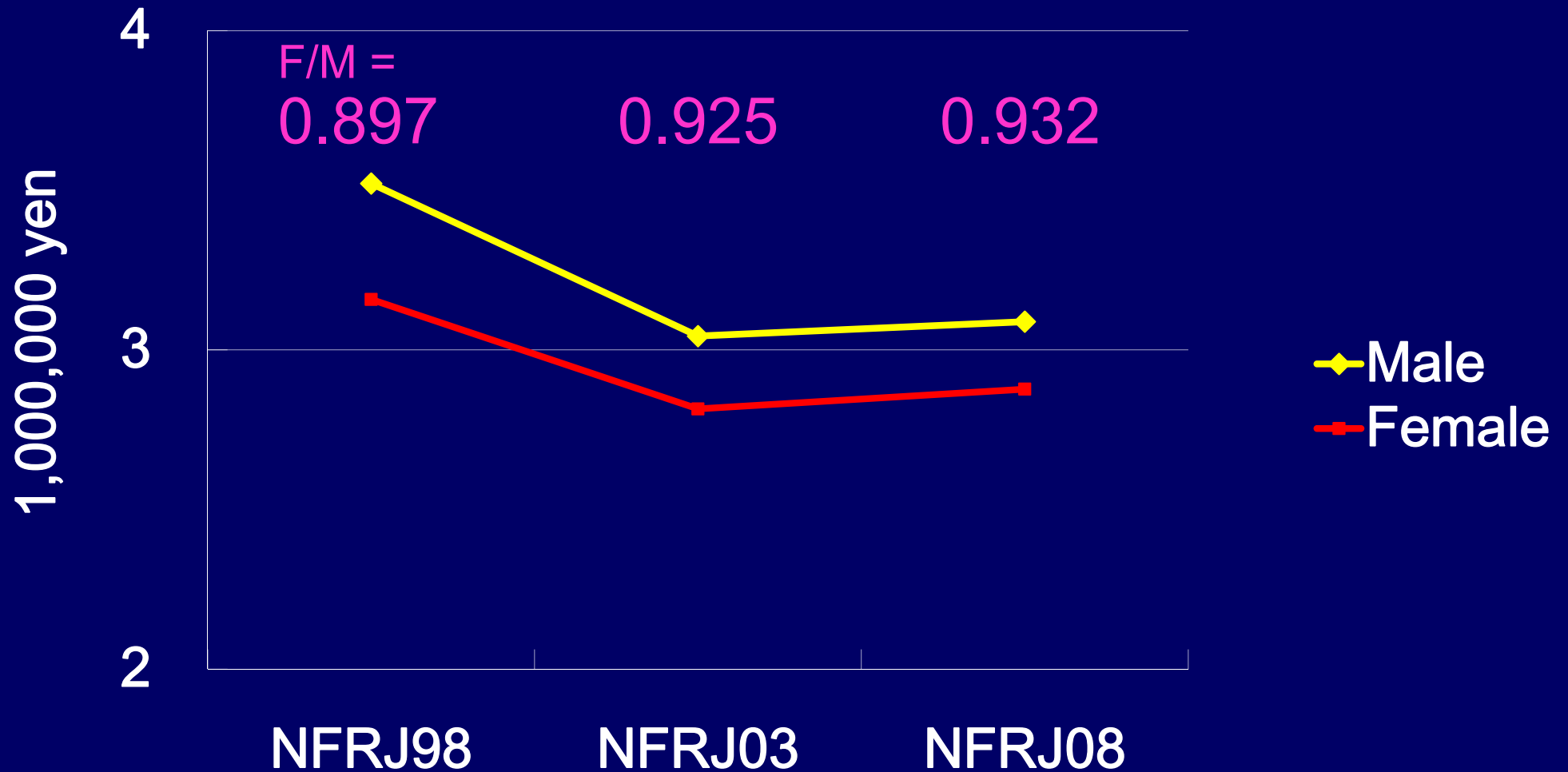




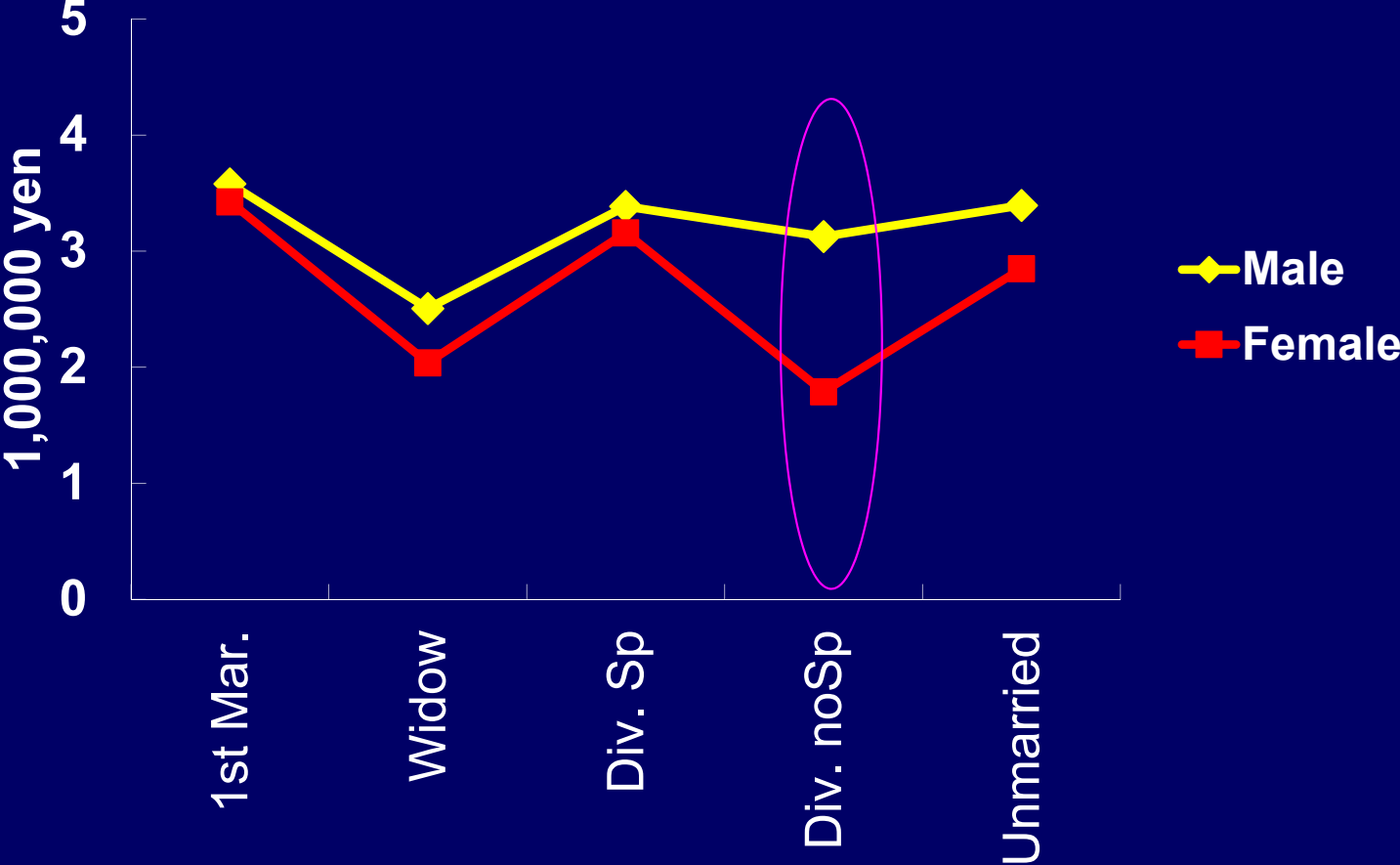
# Equivalent Income (EI)

$$EI = \frac{\text{Annual household income}}{\sqrt{N \text{ of household member}}}$$

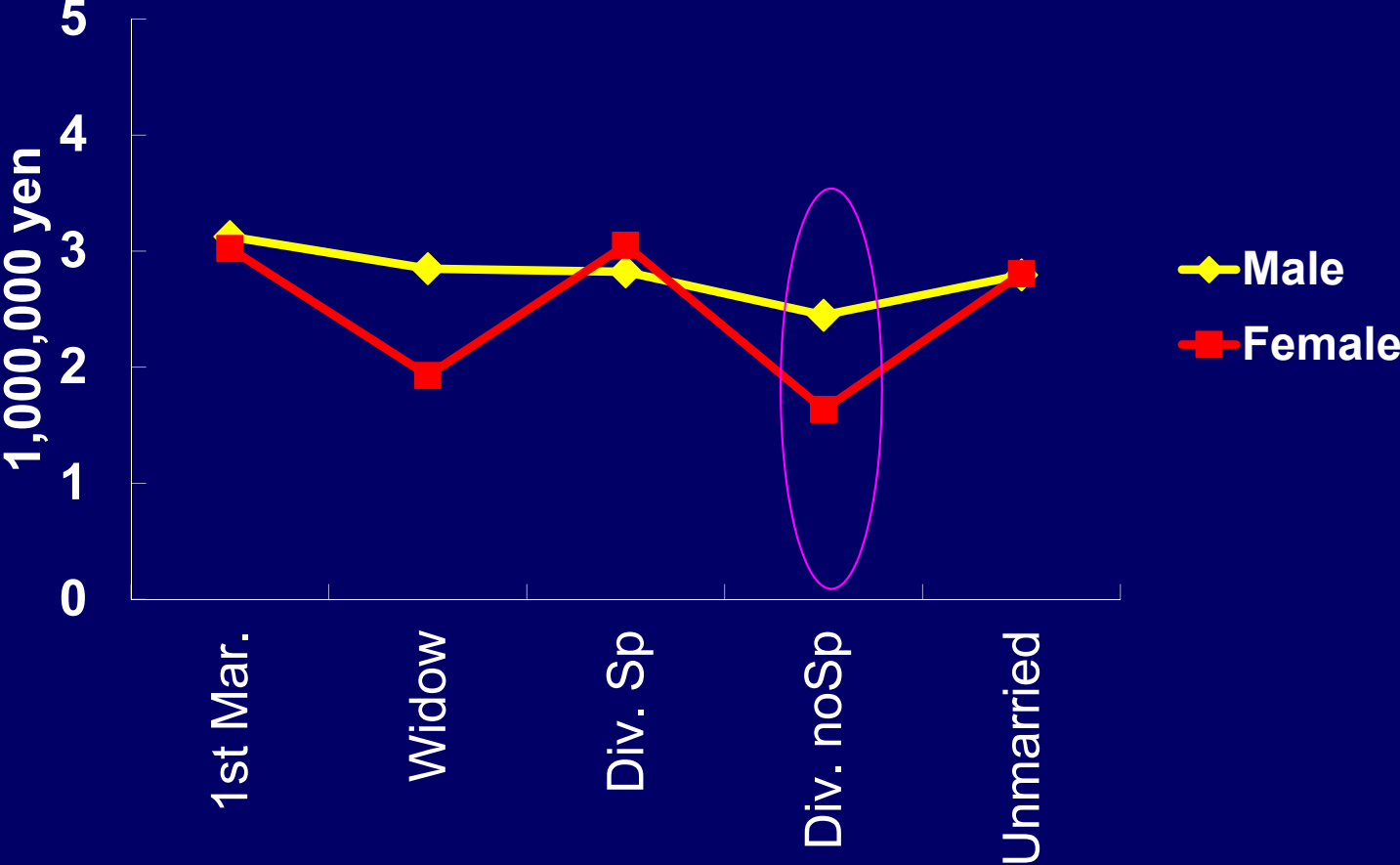
# Gender Gap in EI



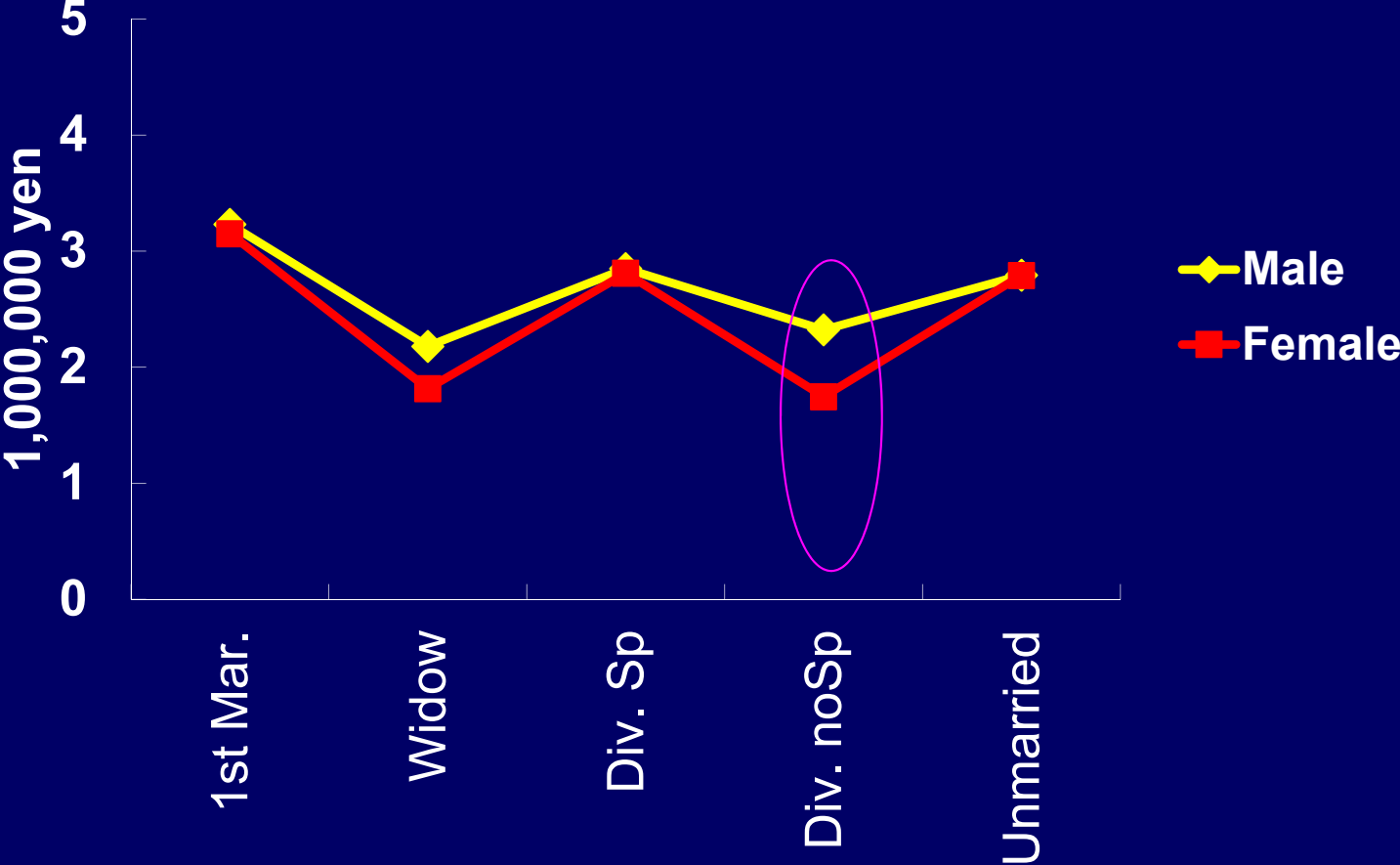
# Marital history and EI: NFRJ98



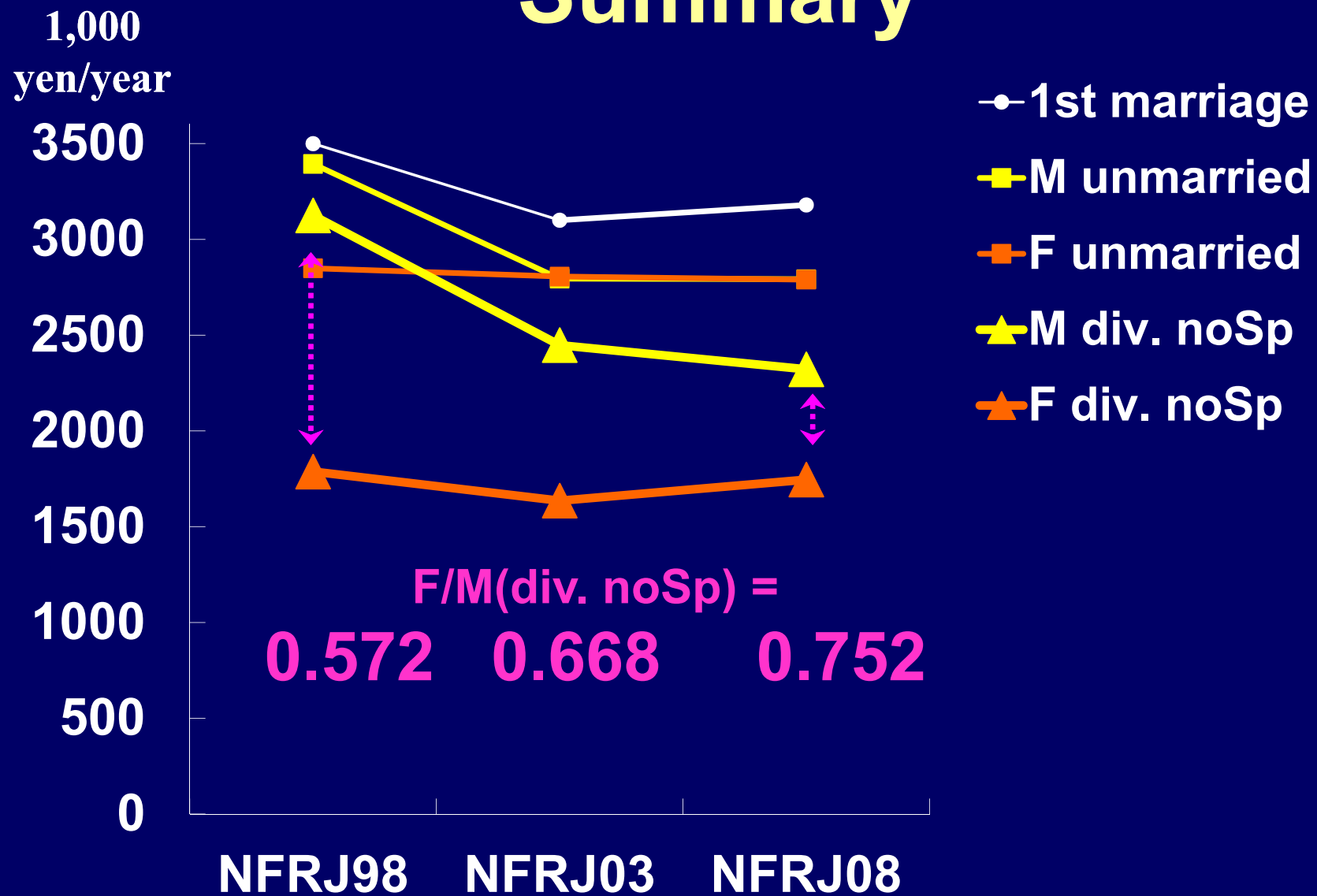
# Marital history and EI: NFRJ03



# Marital history and EI: NFRJ08



# Summary



# Marital History and Gender Gap

- Unmarried / Married  
..... No gap
- Divorced / Widowed  
..... **Great gap**

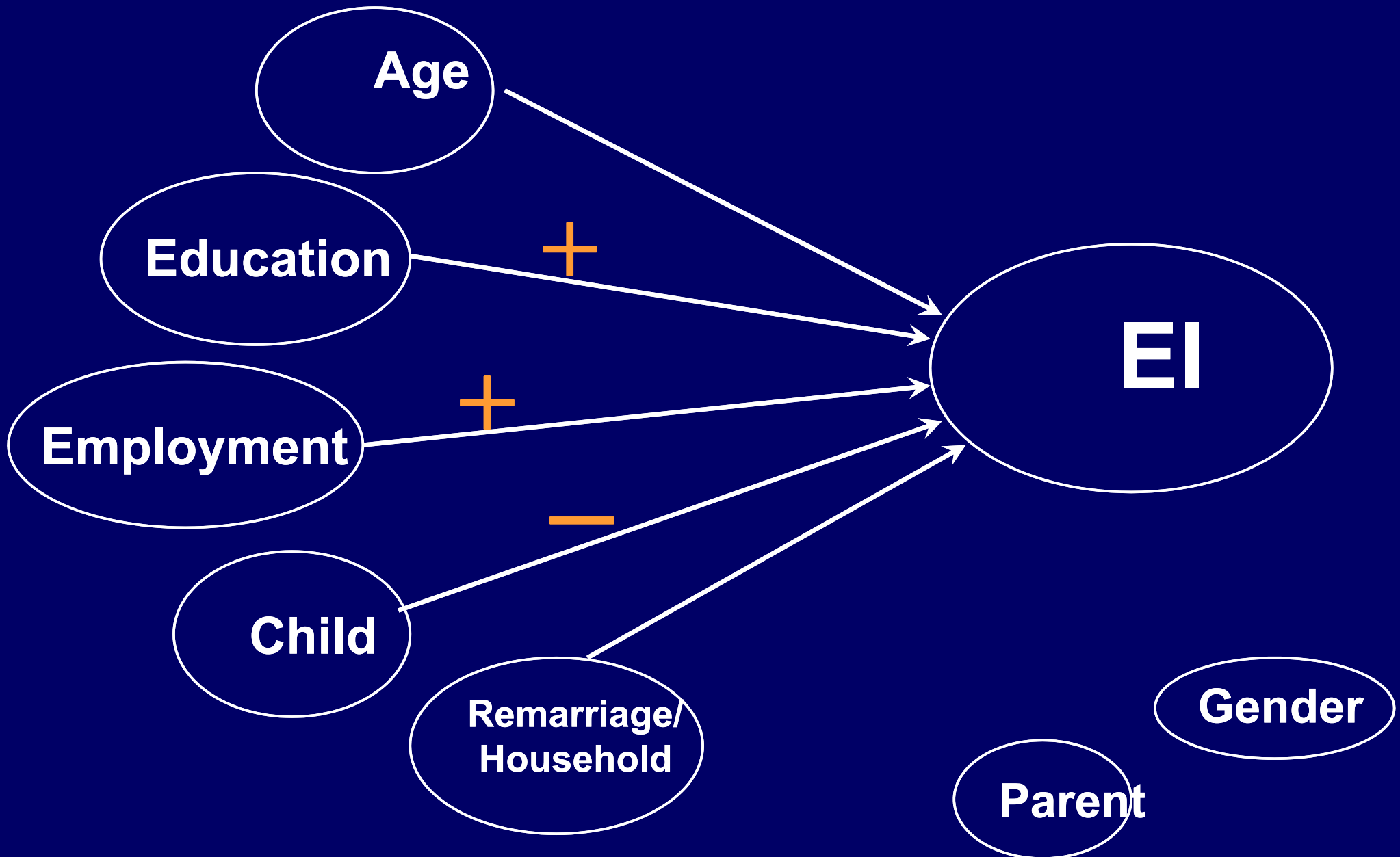
# Regression (divorced)

## Independent variables :

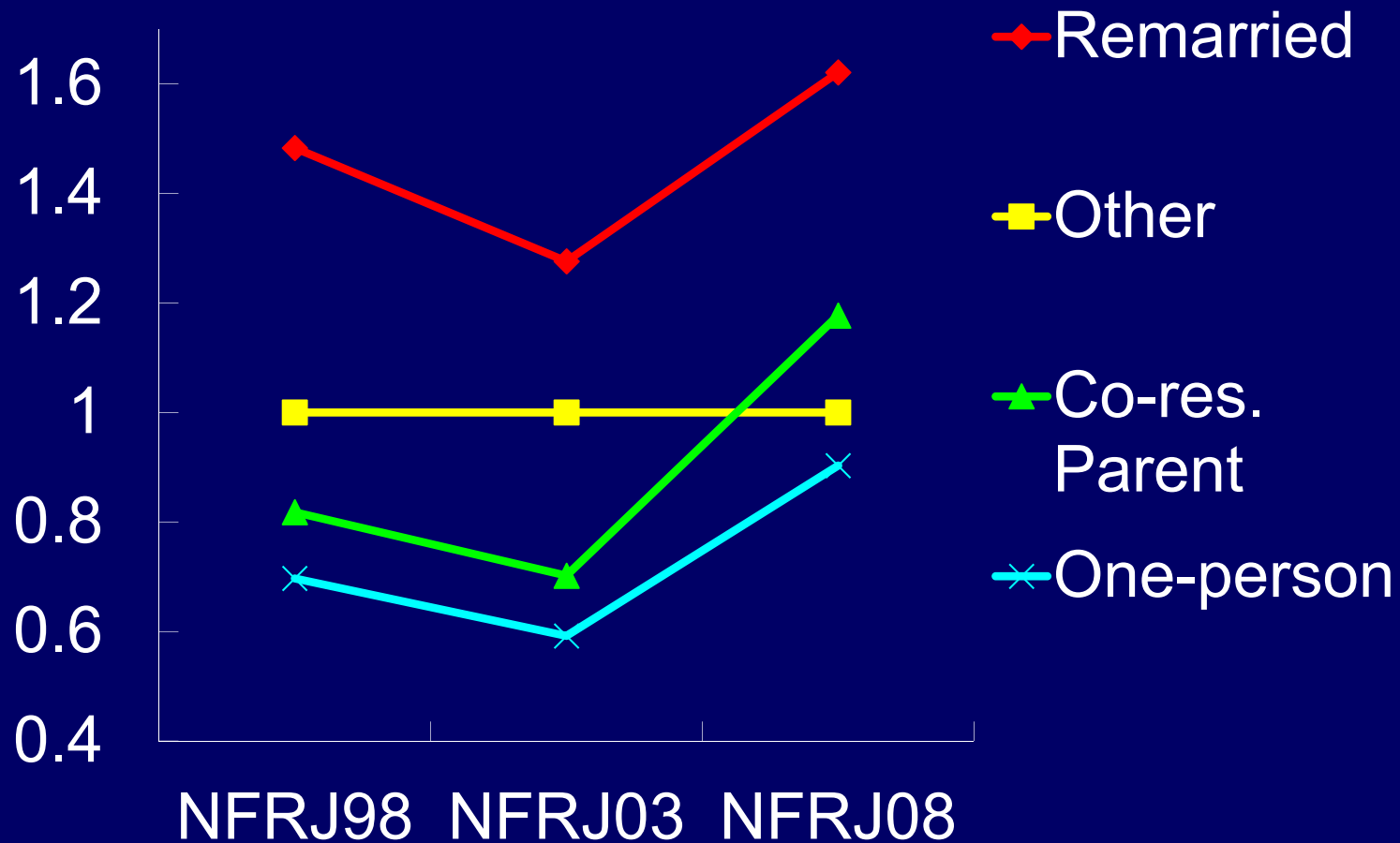
- Age
- Education
- Spouse
- One-person household
- Co-residing parent
- Co-residing child under 13
- Continuous regular employment



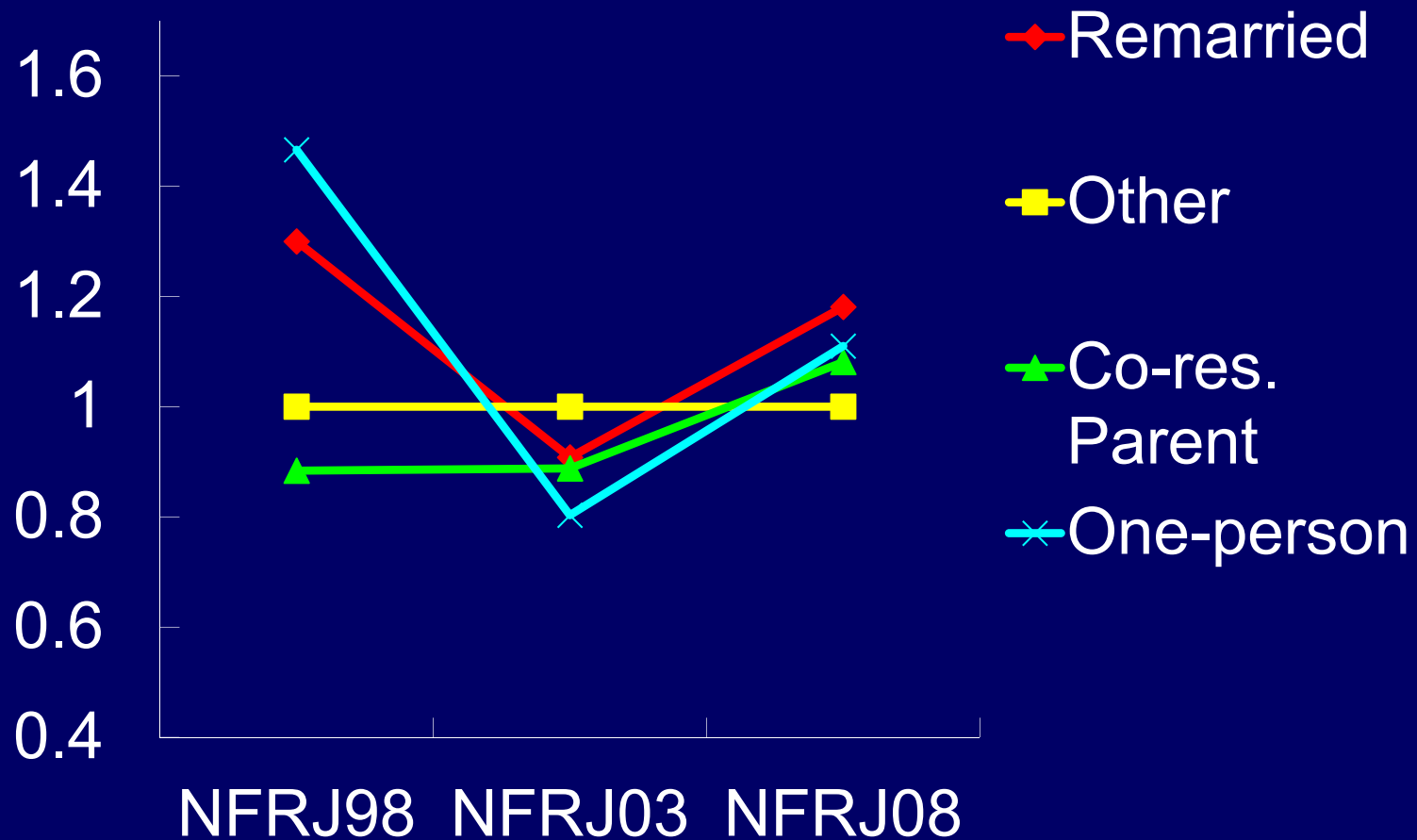
# Result



# Effect of remarriage (female)



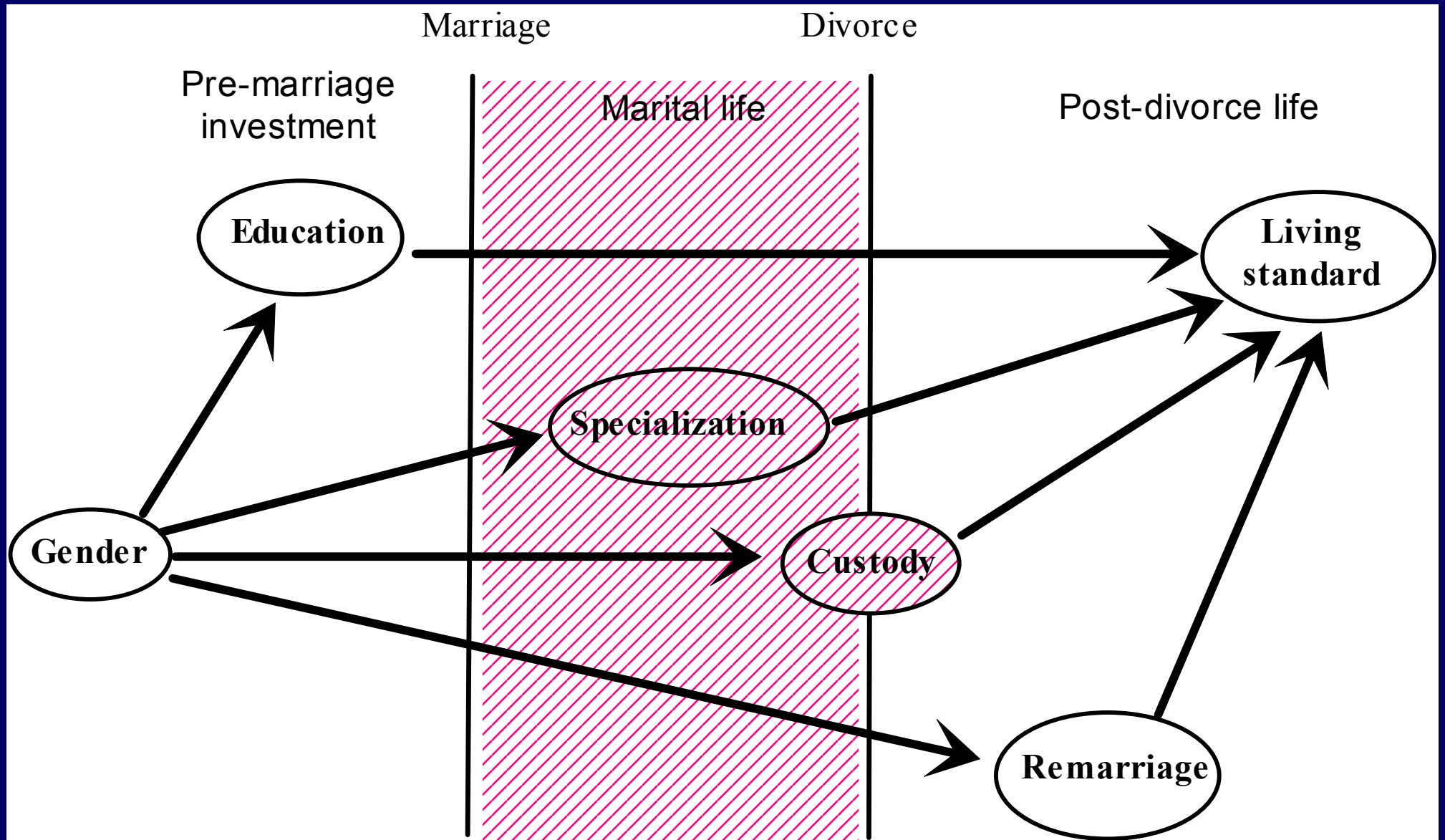
# Effect of remarriage (male)



# Findings

- ✓ Female EI is 10% lower than male
- ✓ Mainly caused by widowed/divorced
- ✓ **4 factors** of gender gap after divorce

# Factors of post-divorce gap



# Gender equality and family

- **Fact : Gender gap after divorce caused by marital life**
- **Value: Gender equality**
- **Norm: What reform in family law?**

# Gender-equal policy

**1985: Ratification of CEDAW**

**1996: *Vision of gender equality***

**1999: Basic Law for Gender-Equal  
Society**

**2000: *Basic plan for gender equality*  
(Revision in every 5 years)**

# *Vision of gender equality (1996)*

**1 – (1) .....without being restricted by  
“gender”, a social and cultural  
constraint.....**

**1 – (2) – c. ....Greater and deeper  
awareness of gender-sensitive  
perspective**

[http://www.gender.go.jp/english\\_contents/about\\_danjo/lbp/basic/toshin-e/part1.html#P1](http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/about_danjo/lbp/basic/toshin-e/part1.html#P1)



## 2<sup>nd</sup> *Basic plan for gender equality (2005)*

**2 – 2.** .....it is not desired to deny **traditional culture** using the term “gender free”

[translation is mine]

[http://www.gender.go.jp/about\\_danjo/basic\\_plans/2nd/pdf/all.pdf](http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/basic_plans/2nd/pdf/all.pdf)

## 4<sup>th</sup> *Basic plan for gender equality (2015)*

**2 – II – 6.** .....gender equality based on understandings of **biological differences** between sexes

[translation is mine]

**Prejudice on sex differences** is mentioned only for fixed gender roles, as a legacy of the high economic growth in 1960s

# **Minimum presence of family issues**

**No chapter for family issues in these governmental documents**

**Problems of one-parent family, impoverished divorced women, and forced surname changes are mentioned, but not systematically**

# Debate on family in 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Traditional:** Stem family (*ie*) system  
as a company

vs.

**Modern:** Nuclear family  
as a unit of altruism

中川 善之助 (1928) “親族的扶養義務の本質 (1)”. 法学新報. 38(6)  
(Nakagawa Zen'nosuke 1928)

# Anti-liberal reforms in Japanese divorce system

**Traditional:** Unilateral no-ground



**Modern:** Bilateral no-ground  
+ Unilateral ground-based

# Consensual divorce

Currently:

90% ..... by mutual consent

(no legal intervention)

9% ..... mediated by court

1% ..... judgement by court

→ **anti-liberal, equity-oriented** debates

# Typical arguments

本沢 巳代子 (1998) 離婚給付の研究. 一粒社 (Motozawa Miyoko 1998)

- **Earning capacity due to specialization**
- **Burden to bring up legitimate child**
- **Disease caused/worsened by marital life**

→ **Slow implementation**

# Conclusion

**Family law reform is necessary for gender equality.**

**However, no systematic examination of the family system to achieve distributive justice in family.**

**Both traditional / modern ideology suppress discourses for equality.**