

“FY 2000 Annual Report on the State of Formation
of a Gender-equal Society”
and
“Policies to be Implemented in FY 2001 to Promote
the Formation of a Gender-equal Society”

Outline

This document has been compiled by the Cabinet Office
as a summary of the White Paper on Gender Equality.
For quotations, etc., please refer directly to the White Paper.

Cabinet Office

June 2001

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Outline

FY2000 Annual Report on the State of Formation of a Gender-equal Society

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Preface: Towards Realization of a Gender-equal Society ~ Creating an Enriching and Dynamic 21st Century ~

I Introduction

“Not only do women belong to this planet, but the future of this planet depends on women.” These are the words of Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, at the opening of the Women 2000 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York in 2000.

Gender-equality is a matter of utmost importance in Japan too if we are to create an enriching and dynamic 21st Century, and a gender-equality perspective is indispensable when viewing the future.

The phrase “gender equality” itself is new, first appearing in law when the Office for Gender Equality was established by a revision to the ordinance on organization of the Prime Minister’s Office in 1994. Japan however, boasts a long history of women's participation in political, economic, social and cultural affairs.

At the beginning of the last millennium, Murasaki Shikibu authored what is said to be the world’s oldest novel, *Tales of the Genji*, whilst in the service of Empress Shoshi (the wife of Emperor Ichijou). One of her contemporaries, the talented poet Izumi Shikibu, cleverly condensed her passionate emotions into brilliant poems. Seishou Nagon, Akazome Emon and numerous other women used *hiragana* to write essays, history books and critiques. The cultural activities of these women has been passed down successively from generation to generation since the era of the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters), the *Nihonshoki* (Chronicles of Japan) and the *Manyoshu* (Book of Ancient Poems). Since then they have inspired great works through the vicissitudes and changes of the times, through the Showa and Heisei periods and up to the present.

Economically, women have always supported and shouldered responsibilities for agriculture, handicraft and commerce. And for many years daughters inherited the parental homes and raised their children there. It is said to be relatively recent that the custom of a bride marrying into the groom's family and a patriarchal family system became widespread among citizens outside the samurai class.

Numerous queens and empresses have played active roles in history, from the empresses Himiko and Toyo through Suiko and Jitou, and more than a few women have exerted political influence from their position as mother or with the power of families from which they came. With the growth of power of the samurai class from the Middle Ages, and this, coupled with the effects of Confucianism, male domination over women became a pervasive value that continued into the Meiji Period.

Suffrage for women was realized in 1946 when the Constitution of Japan declared men and women equal under the law, and legal equality in terms of families and education was specified. Rapid economic growth that followed resulted in Japan becoming the world’s second economic power, and as production efficiency improved, the number of citizens able to enjoy affluent, materialistic and convenient lifestyles increased by leaps and bounds. Average life expectancy has increased to 83.99 years for women and 77.10 years for men. Approximately half of all Japanese boys and girls today receive higher education.

During this time the number of employed people rapidly increased, prompting population migration to major cities and resulting in separation of the home and the workplace. As a consequence, the concept of gender role-sharing expanded, with “men going to work and women staying at home”. This increased the number of full-time housewives throughout the country. The so-called Japanese-style employment system, based on lifetime employment and seniority, removed anxiousness of loss of employment (dismissal) among male employees and contributed to raising their abilities and a sense of belonging. The employment practice of placing importance on training and experience within a company tended to see women as second class labor making it difficult for them to secure responsible jobs and positions. Moreover, with the scarcity of family and community support for child raising and nursing, women tended to be isolated and lacked in opportunities to prove their abilities.

After the bubble economy burst at the end of the 20th Century and amidst ongoing epoch-making changes in the environment caused by internationalization and the information revolution, it is becoming difficult to open up new horizons with homogeneous groups of patient and cooperative employees who simply go about their assigned tasks without making mistakes. On the other hand, Japan will be unable to maintain employment and living standards without new companies challenging the risks associated with new fields.

In building an enriching and dynamic Japan, it is essential that women become active as new human resources so lacking in homogenous Japanese companies and demonstrate, free of conventional wisdom, individuality and creativity in society as well.

It is not simply that women's labor must be used to supplement the fall in the labor force due to the declining birthrate and advances in the aging of society. Women's personalities, creativity and values differ from those of men and Japan's economy and society are expected to gain broader perspectives, and new and varied knowledge through women's participation.

With women advancing into new fields, diversifying employment and work patterns and creating new lifestyles, men will also have greater opportunities for diversity of choice in harmonizing their work life with family and community life and hobbies.

However, reality is a far cry from gender equality in many aspects of Japanese society today. For example, in terms of the HDI (Human Development Index), a composite economic index used by the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) to measure human development, calculated using factors such as average life expectancy, education standards and income per capita, Japan placed 9th out of 174 countries in 2000. It placed 41st among 70 countries on the GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) that measures women participation in economic and political decision-making processes, calculated by using factors such as the percentage of women Diet members and women in managerial and administrative positions and disparities in wages paid to men and women. This indicates that while women are developing their abilities, they are not being given sufficient opportunity to display them.

While Japan enacted the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society and is making numerous other efforts to realize a gender-equal society, since International Women's Year in 1975, women's advancement in society and legislation promoting women's empowerment has been established at a faster pace in other countries leaving Japan behind internationally.

Fifteen years after enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, female students still encounter difficulties finding employment. The number of women working as part-time employees is increasing. Approximately two-thirds of women working in private companies earn ¥3 million or less annually and women's advance into managerial and administrative positions is slow. Approximately 56% of town and village assemblies have no female members, and elimination of violence against women including domestic violence and sexual harassment in the workplace, all of which involve respect for the individual, remains just as remote.

These circumstances are thought to be responsible for the results of a public opinion poll in which 81.4% of women and 70.9% of men responded men were given favorable treatment.

Given that women are not yet able to participate as equal partners in all fields of society, Japan must strongly promote efforts to create a gender-equal society.

II Formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality and Strengthening of the National Machinery

Formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality

On December 12, 2000, the Government approved by Cabinet decision the Basic Plan for Gender Equality, in accordance with Article 13 of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society. This plan is of great significance in that ① it is the first legal plan pertaining to gender equality based on the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, ② it comprises the new national plan of action, replacing the national plan of action "Plan for Gender Equality 2000" formulated by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality in December 1996, and ③ it assumes a priori a the new organization established by central government reform in January 2001.

Strengthening the National Machinery

In conjunction with central government reforms implemented on January 6, 2001, a Cabinet Office with the Prime Minister as its president was newly established as a means of strengthening the functions of the

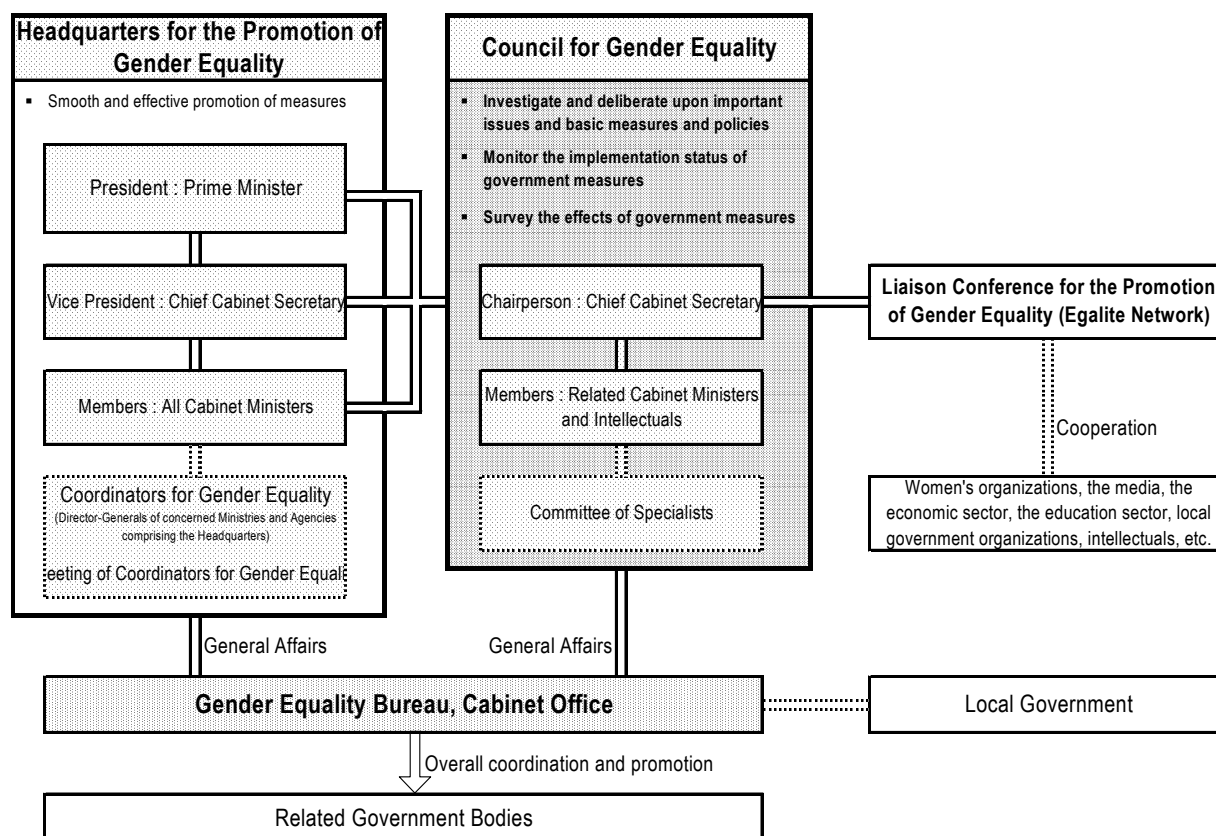
Cabinet. The Cabinet Office is mandated to assist with Cabinet duties pertaining to important Cabinet policies and to facilitate smooth implementation of administrative issues to be overseen by the Prime Minister. From its position above the Ministries, its main duties comprise formulation and overall coordination of plans to unify measures taken by all administrative departments. It is also responsible for responding to important state affairs.

Given the utmost importance to Japanese society in the 21st century of realizing a gender-equal society, it was necessary to maintain and strengthen the national machinery in order to coordinate, on behalf of the government, functions extending across all ministries and agencies towards promotion of this policy.

The Council for Gender Equality was newly established for this purpose. The Council is mandated to ① deal with the Basic Plan for Gender Equality, ② investigate and deliberate upon important issues and basic policies as well as measures pertaining to promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society, ③ investigate and deliberate on ① and ② and express its opinions to the Prime Minister and concerned cabinet ministers as and when considered necessary, and ④ monitor the implementation status of government measures related to promoting the formation of a gender-equal society and survey the effects of government policies on promoting the formation of a gender-equal society (hereinafter referred to as “monitor the implementation status of government measures and survey the effects), and express its opinions to the Prime Minister and ministers concerned as necessary.

Furthermore, a Bureau for Gender Equality was established within the Cabinet Office as a means of strengthening the functions of the Office for Gender Equality formerly established within the Prime Minister’s Office. The Bureau for Gender Equality is mandated with the formulation and overall coordination of plans pertaining to formation of a gender-equal society necessary to unify measures of all administrative departments, and promotion of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality. It will also function as the secretariat for the Council for Gender Equality.

NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY



※The Chief Cabinet Secretary serves concurrently as Minister for Gender Equality.

Part 1 The State of Formation of a Gender-equal Society

Chapter 1 Women's participation in policy decision-making processes

Strong feeling that men are treated favorably in the field of politics

According to the Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society conducted by the Cabinet Office in 2000, as many as 70% of persons asked whether they thought men and women enjoyed equal status in the political arena responded “men are treated much more favorably” or “men are treated somewhat more favorably”. This indicated that citizens feel strongly that men are treated more favorably.

Increases in the percentage of women candidates and women being elected

Analysis of women standing for national general elections and those successfully elected shows that the percentage of women candidates for the House of Representative has exceeded that of those successfully elected since the 1960 elections (the 29th). The trend is for both the number of women candidates and the number of women elected to increase. In particular, women accounted for 14.4% of all candidates and 7.3% of those elected in the June 2000 elections, a significant increase over the 10.2% of candidates and 4.6% of those elected in the October 1996 election (Figure 1).

Furthermore, the percentage of women candidates for the House of Councilors has increased greatly since 1983 (the 13th election). Women accounted for 23.2% of all candidates and 15.9% of those elected in the July 1998 elections (Figure 2).

Figure 1 Changes in the percentage of women candidates and those successfully elected to the House of Representatives

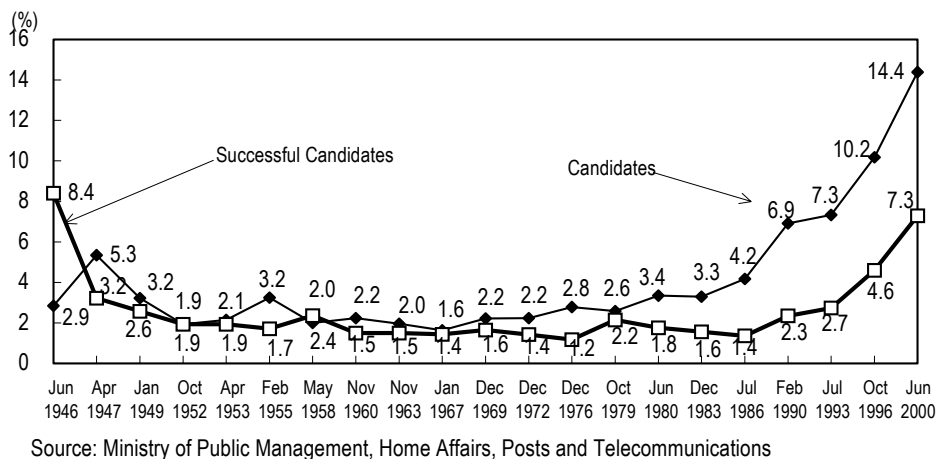
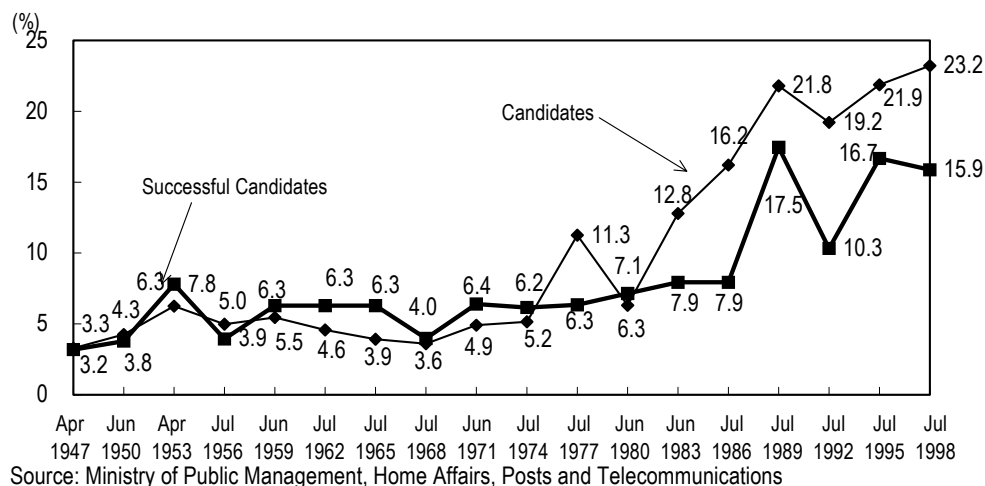


Figure 2 Changes in the percentage of women candidates and those successfully elected to the House of Councilors



Increases in the percentage of women employed as national public servants

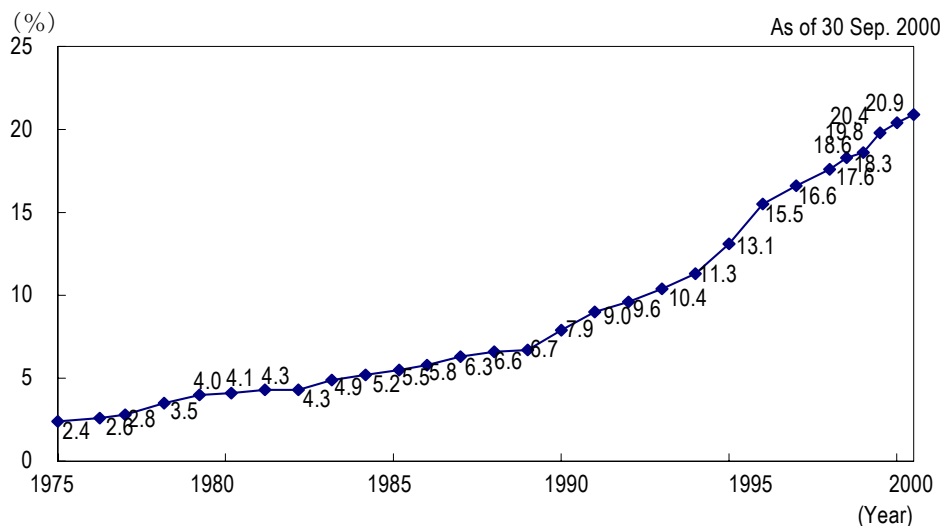
The percentage of women recruited on the basis of Level I , Level II and Level III of the National Public Service Recruitment Examination is highest for Level III and lowest for Level I over the long term, and the trend is for the percentage to increase in all categories. Comparing 1976 figures with the latest figures (estimated recruitment in FY2001) shows that the percentage of women recruited through Level I examination has increased from 2.2% to 15.4%, Level II from 10.7% to 24.3% and Level III from 25.8% to 34.9%.

Steadily increasing percentage of female members of national advisory councils and committees

In promoting the appointment of women to national advisory councils and committees, the Government has been working towards the goal “achievement of a 20% participation rate as early as possible before the end of FY2000” adopted by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality in May 1996. With the achievement of this goal a year earlier than the deadline, the Headquarters set out in August 2000 a new goal of “achievement of a 30% participation rate as early as possible before the end of FY2005”.

The percentage of female members of national advisory councils and committees stood at 20.9% as of September 30, 2000 (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Changes in the percentage of female members of national advisory councils and committees



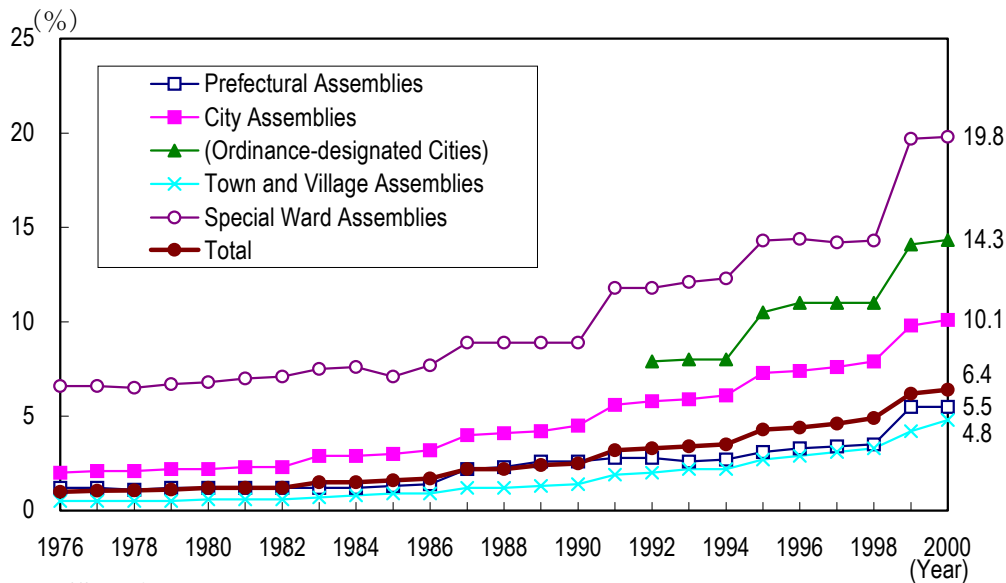
Source: Cabinet Office Survey

Wide variation in female participation in local assemblies

The percentage of female representatives in prefectural, municipal and special ward assemblies at the end of 2000 stood at 19.7% in the highest ward assembly and 14.3% in the highest ordinance-designated city. Women’s participation in city assemblies in general stood at 9.8% while that of town and village assemblies at 4.2%. The trend is for women’s participation to be highest in major cities and lowest in rural areas. Three prefectural assemblies (6.4%), 73 city and ward assemblies (10.5%) and 1,436 town and village assemblies (56.1%) had no woman representatives (as of June 1999).

The trend since 1976 is for the percentage of female representatives to increase. Their number has increased greatly since the beginning of the Heisei Period. The increase in the number of female representatives at the end of 1999 was especially remarkable, and reflects women’s rapid advance in the nationwide local elections of April 1999 (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Changes in the percentage of female representatives in local assemblies



Notes: (1) As of December each year

(2) Ordinance-designated cities: Sapporo, Sendai, Yokohama, Kawasaki, Chiba, Nagoya, Osaka
Kyoto, Kobe, Hiroshima, Kitakyushu and Fukuoka

Sources: Figures for prefectural assemblies, city assemblies, town and village assemblies and for ordinance-special ward assemblies: Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunication:
Figures for ordinance-designated cities: Japan Association of City Assembly Chairpersons Survey

Japan's low GEM value compared to its HDI and GDI values

Comparison of Japan with the average of the top 20 HDI countries showed that although Japan's HDI and GDI values are slightly higher than the average, its GEM value (0.490) fell far below the average, 0.668. Japan placed 9th out of 171 countries on the HDI (Human Development Index), 9th among 143 countries on the GDI (Gender-related Development Index) and 41st of 70 countries on the GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) in 2000.

Of factors taken into consideration in calculating GEM, "the percentage of female Diet members", "the percentage of women in managerial and administrative positions" and "the percentage of women in professional and technical positions" are of particular importance. The 70 countries for which GEM values can be measured in terms of each of these factors were divided into groups of ten. Japan, which placed 41st, was compared with the average of each of these groups. It had a lower "percentage of female Diet members" and "women in managerial and administrative positions" than countries with top GEM values and a remarkably lower "percentage of women in managerial and administrative positions" than countries with similar GEM values.

(Note)

HDI (Human Development Index)

The HDI is a composite index that measures how far basic human capabilities have been developed by measuring the level of achievement of three basic factors "the capability to lead a long and healthy life", "knowledge" and "a decent standard of living". In concrete terms, it is calculated using average life expectancy, the standard of education (adult literacy rate and school enrolment ratio) and adjusted income per capita.

GDI (Gender-Related Development Index)

Like the HDI, the GDI measures the level of achievement of basic human capabilities, but in doing so, it also considers inequality in the levels of achievement of women and men.

Like the HDI, it is also calculated using average life expectancy, the standard of education and income per capita, but penalties corresponding to gender differences are deducted and it can be thought of as an "HDI adjusted for gender inequality".

Gender can be defined as sexual differences created by social and cultural factors. It is distinguishable from sex, which refers to biological sexual differences.

GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure)

This is a measure of whether women participating actively in economic and political life are able to participate in decision-making. Whereas the HDI focuses on the expansion of human capabilities, the GEM focuses on whether people are able to use these capabilities to take advantage of various opportunities in life.

In concrete terms, it is calculated using women’s income, the percentage of women holding professional and technical positions, the percentage of women holding administrative or managerial positions and the percentage of women Diet members.

Chapter 2 Gender equality in the field of employment

Consecutive annual decrease in male and female labor forces – women account for 40% of the labor force

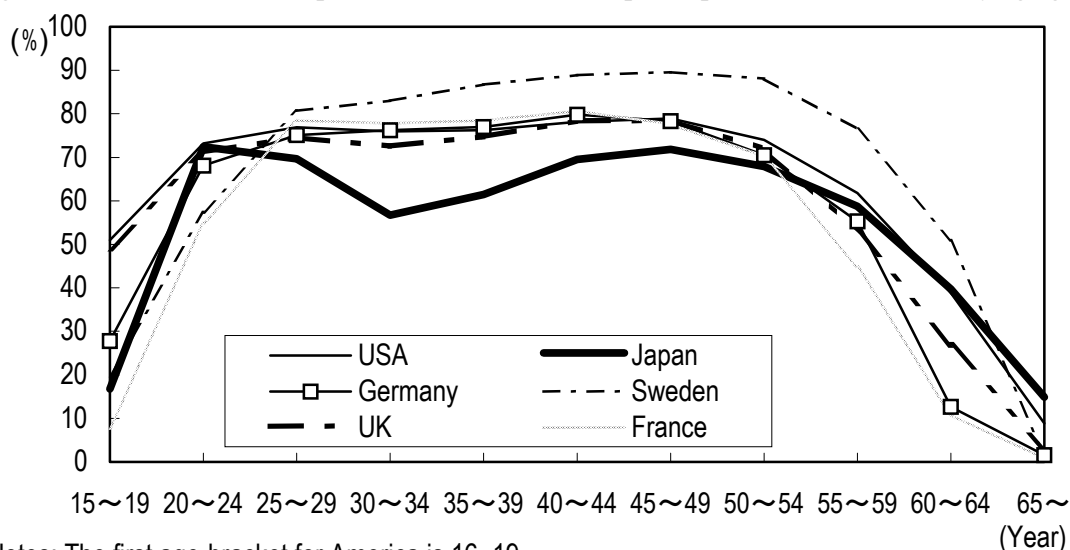
According to a Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications “Labour Force Survey” the female labor force stood at 27.53 million in 2000. This represents a decline of 20,000 over the previous year, and although the trend since 1975 has been for women’s participation to rise, it has now fallen for two consecutive years. 26.29 million of this labor force were employed, a decline of 30,000 people, and full-unemployment stood at 1.23 million. On the other hand, the male labor force stood at 40.14 million, a decline of 100,000 over the previous year, again this has been in decline since 1998. Women have accounted for 40% of the labor force since 1988.

The labor force participation rate (labor force/population aged 15 and over) revealed that the labor force participation rate of women fell 0.3 points from the previous year to 49.3% and that of men fell 0.5 points to 76.4%. Both male and female labor force participation rates have fallen for three consecutive years.

Upward shift of the M-shaped labor force participation rate by age

The curve of the labor force participation rate by age-group for women in Japan differs from the upside down U-shape of western countries in that it is M-shaped (Figure 5). This M-shaped curve has been observed as a characteristic of Japan’s female labor force participation rate since 1965, when housewives advanced in the workplace. This curve illustrates the work pattern of many Japanese women in which they stop working to give birth to and raise children and then return to work after completing the first stage of child raising.

Figure 5 International comparison of the labor force participation rate of women by age-group



Notes: The first age-bracket for America is 16~19

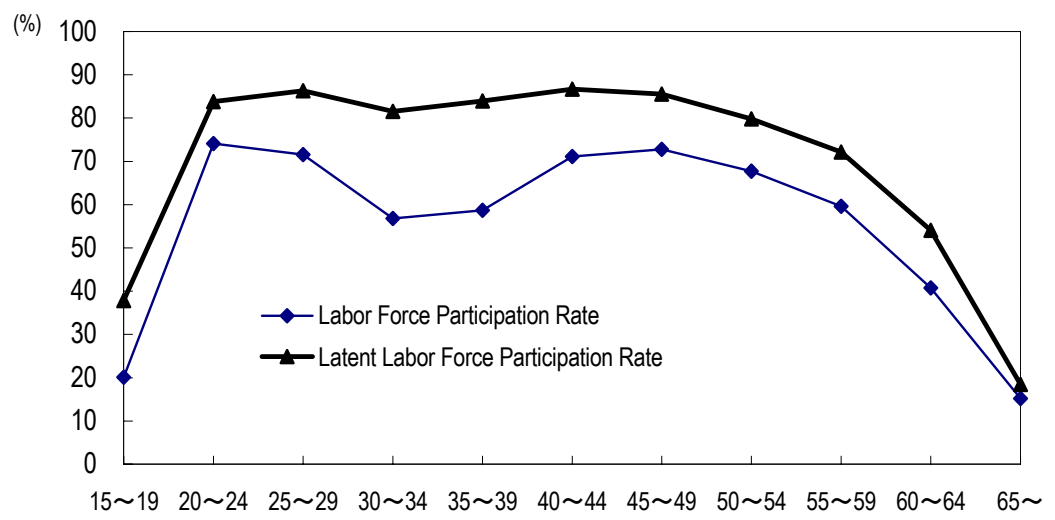
Sources: America, Japan and Germany: Yearbook of Labour Statistics 2000, ILO.

Sweden, UK and France: Labour Force Survey Results 1997, EU: Eurostat

Trapezoidal shape of the latent labor force participation rate by age-group – unrealized work ambitions

Many Japanese women wish to work during the childbirth/child raising stage of their lives. The latent labor force participation rate, which comprises both the female labor force and women who do not work but wish to do so, describes an upside down U-shape similar to that of other developed nations (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Latent labor force participation rate of women by age-group



Notes: Latent labor force participation rate by age-bracket = (Population of the labor force (by age-bracket)+ Population of the non-working population that want to work (by age-bracket) / Population aged 15 years and over (by age-bracket)
 Source: Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey (August 2000), Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications

Further advances in the educational level of female employees – reversion of the percentages of new female employees accounted for by university and high school graduates

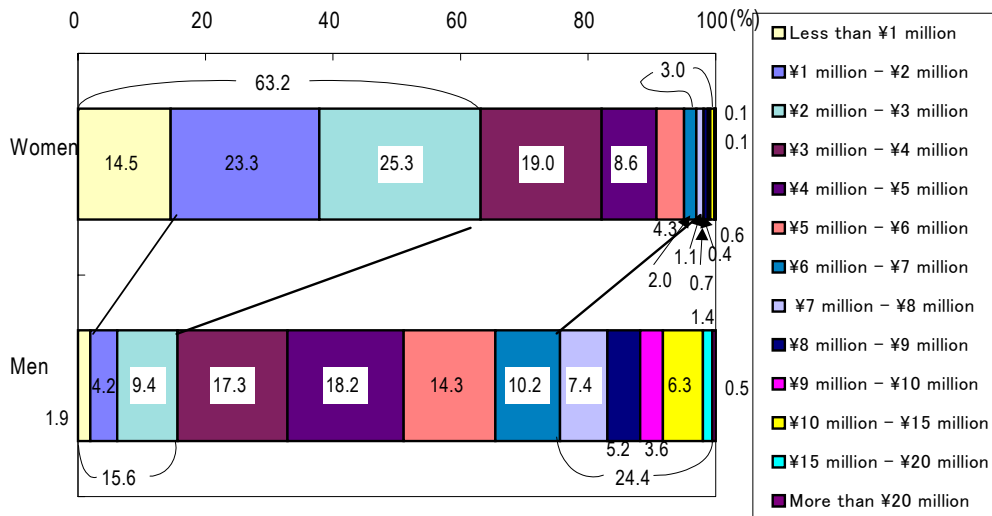
A breakdown of the education levels of female employees reveals that compared to 1985 the trend has been for the percentage of university, technical college and junior college graduates to increase, and that of high school and junior high school graduates to decrease. In 1999, employed female university graduates accounted for 11.0%, a rise of 1.1 points over the previous year. Technical and junior college female graduates accounted for 27.5% (an increase of 0.8% over the previous year); high school graduates for 52.3% (decline of 1.0 points over the previous year); and junior high school graduates for 9.2% (decline of 0.9 points over the previous year). This illustrates the advances being made in improving the educational level of female employees.

The improving educational level of newly employed female graduates is strikingly apparent from this breakdown. Compared to the figures for 1985, whereas the percentage of university graduates has increased constantly, figures for junior college graduates increased until 1996 and then fell. Figures for high school and junior high school graduates have been declining. In 2000, the percentage of new female employees accounted for by university graduates was the highest ever at 36.1%, followed by high school graduates 34.0%. The percentages of new female employees accounted for by university graduates and high school graduates reversed order in 2000.

Wage difference between regular full-time workers and part-time workers is 66.9 point

According to a “Survey of the Overall Situation in terms of Diversifying Work Patterns” conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in 1999, the average monthly wage earned by a part-time worker working for short hours (in September 1999) was ¥89,700. And 70.6% of the people surveyed responded they earned “less than ¥100,000”. Analysis of an income bracket-based distribution of salaried workers working continuously over a one-year period, derived from the “Statistical Survey of Private Sector Incomes” conducted by the National Tax Agency in 1999, revealed that whereas 24.4% of men earned more than ¥7 million, less than 3.0% of women did so. Moreover, 63.2% of women earned ¥3 million or less (15.6% men), 37.9% earned ¥2 million or less (6.2% men) and 14.5% earned ¥1million or less (1.9% men) (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Breakdown of salaried workers by income-bracket



Source: Statistical Survey of Salaries in the Private Sector (1999), National Tax Agency

According to the “Basic Survey on Wage Structure” conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in 2000, with the prescribed salary of a regular, full-time female worker as 100, the wage earned by a female part-time worker was 66.9.

On the other hand, according to a “Survey of the Diverse Types of Workers Employed in the Workplace” conducted by the Japan Institute of Labour in 1999, 75.2% of workers working for short hours thought their “hourly wages to be lower” compared to regular full-time workers with whom they considered themselves to be of the same work level. Of these, 29.6% expressed dissatisfaction with the difference. Furthermore, when asked for the reason behind their dissatisfaction, 51.8% responded “work content and responsibilities are the same”, making it the most frequently given reason. “The difference does not correspond to differences in work content and responsibilities” was the answer given by 29.4%.

Companies that offer the greatest variety of work patterns possible, which both men and women to choose independently among them and guarantee fair evaluation should be secured irrespective of gender and the choice made., what kind of choice they do. Surely what is wished for is an increase in the number of companies that truly make the most of people’s aspirations and ability to work.

Approximately 80% of women participate in agricultural management

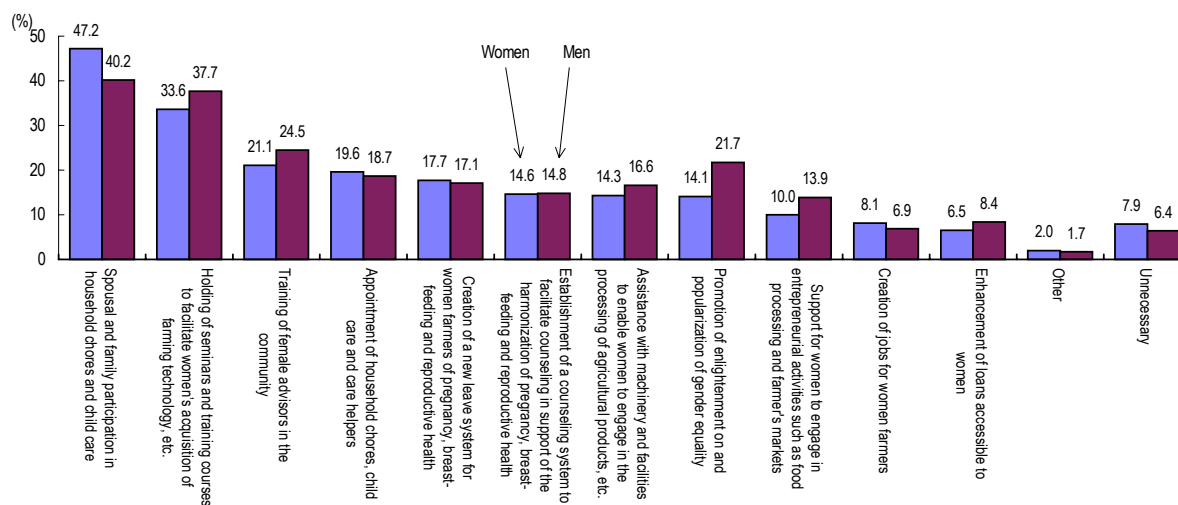
Women’s participation in private agricultural management is gradually increasing. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries conducted a “Survey of Views on Gender Equality in Rural Areas” in 2000 targeting women under 65 years of age working on privately-managed farms for 150 or more days annually, and their es who also work on privately-managed farms. When asked about women’s participation in farm management, the most frequently given answer (57.8%) was “I participate in overall farm management together with my husband, parents, etc.” This was followed by “I only engage in farm duties I am instructed to do” (23.7%), and “I am completely in charge of overall farm management” (9.9%). Apart from those responding “I only engage in farm duties I am instructed to do” 76.2% of women participate in farm management in one form or another.

Need for spousal and family the role sharing with household chores and child care towards forming a gender-equal society in rural area

According to the same survey, an increasing number of women and men cite “spousal and family help with household chores and child care” as a necessary measure and support for women farmers towards forming a gender-equal society (women 47.2%, men 40.2%) (Figure 8).

For women to participate in farm management and related activities as equal partners with men, a thorough change of peoples’ attitudes is necessary for them to regard household chores, child care and nursing as the responsibility not only of women but of all the family. Communities are also required to adopt measures to support the harmonization of child care and nursing.

Figure 8 Measures and support for women farmers necessary in forming a gender-equal society



Source: Survey of Views on Gender Equality in Rural Areas(2000),The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Chapter 3 Harmonization of women and men's work and their family and community life

Changing family circumstances

In 1999, Japan's birthrate fell by 25,000 people, from 1.203 million in 1998 to a record low of 1.178 million.

Moreover, the total fertility rate (the total number of children a woman is expected to give birth to during her lifetime), which hovered around the 2.1 mark from 1965~1975, fell below 2.0 in 1975. In 1999, it fell to a record low of 1.34, below the previous year's value of 1.38.

The percentage of persons unmarried at the age of 50 for both women and men has increased sharply since 1960, growing from less than 2% to 5.12% for women and 9.13% for men in 1995. The percentage of persons unmarried at the age of 50 for men in particular is increasing rapidly.

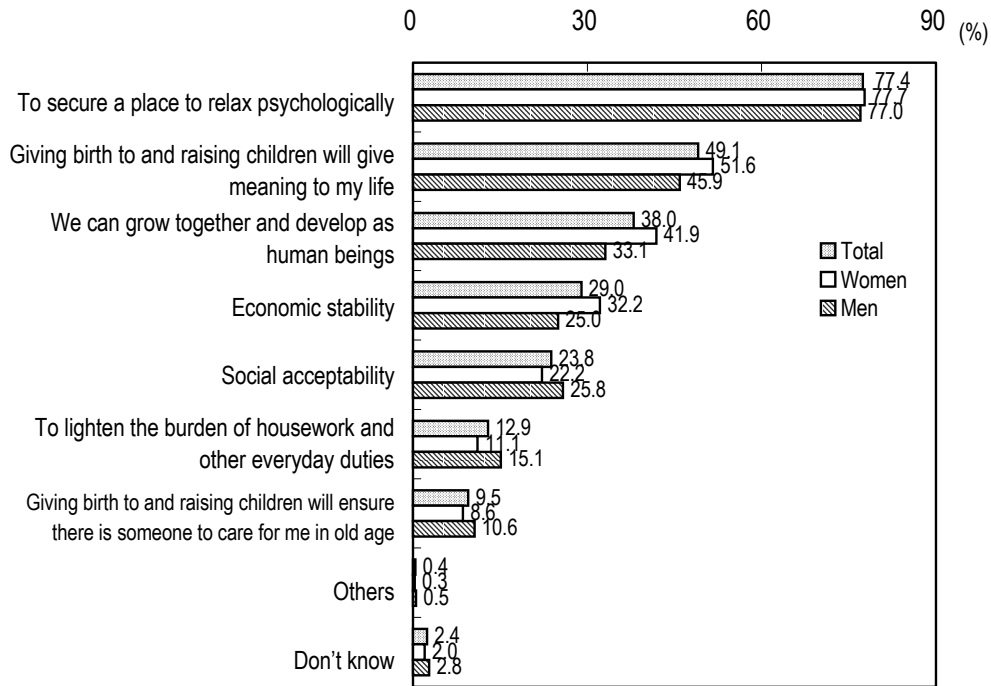
Moreover, the number of divorces has increased annually since 1964, exceeding 100,000 cases for the first time in 1971. The number of divorces continued to rise and then decline after peaking in 1983 but it has been on the rise again since 1991. In 1991, there were 250,529 cases of divorce and the divorce rate stood at 2.00%. Both of these values are the highest in statistical history. Changes in the composition of households indicate that the number of one-person households increased from 18.2% in 1975 to 23.6% in 1999 and the number of two-person households increased from 15.4% to 25.7% over the same period. The number of households with two or fewer members accounts for approximately half.

Analysis was made of changes in the number of households by work circumstances of husband (non-agricultural employee) and wife in households in which the wife is under 65 years of age. Households in which "both husband and wife are non-agricultural employees" has risen by 8.5 points, from 29.2% in 1985 to 37.7% in 2000.

Families expected to play a role in spiritual aspects of life

According to a "Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society" conducted by the Cabinet Office in 2000, whereas 20% to 30% of respondents asked about the role of family replied "economic stability" and "social acceptability", 80% or so expected it "to be a place of psychological relaxation". A comparatively high proportion said "child birth and child raising gives meaning to life" and "facilitates growing together and developing as human beings". From this we can assume that the expected role of the family is spiritual rather than economic and social, predicated on dependence on one's spouse. (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Roles of the family



Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (2000), the Cabinet Office

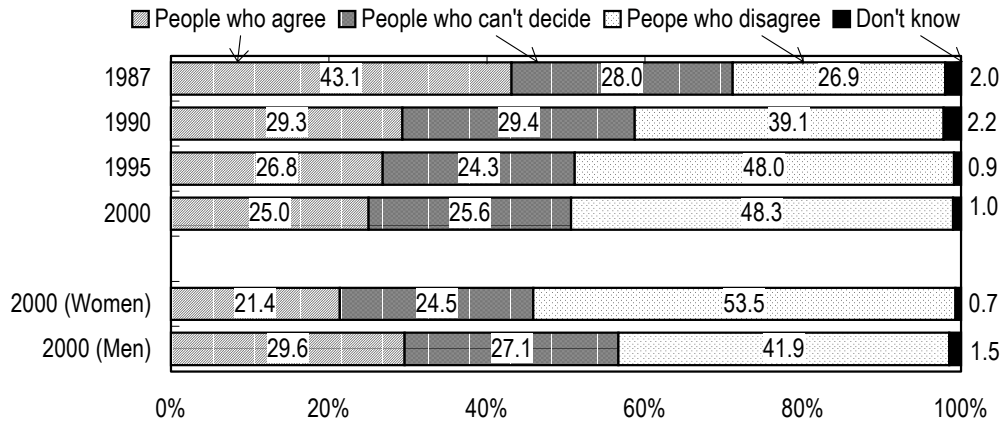
Awareness of deep-rooted perceptions of fixed roles

When asked whether they agree or disagree with the idea “men work, women stay home”, the percentage of people who “tended to disagree” rose from 26.9% in 1987 to 48.3% in 2000. However, very little change was observed between 1995 (48.0%) and 2000 (48.3%). Perceptions of fixed gender roles, while moving towards eradication in the long-term, remain as firmly rooted as ever (Figure 10).

A breakdown by sex of those who “tend to disagree” showed that 53.5% were women and 41.9% were men, indicating that more women disagreed than men. Analysis by age revealed that not only do more than 60% of women in their 30s and 40s oppose the idea but also almost 60% of women in the 20s and 50s do too. Many men in their 20s and 30s also opposed the idea and more than 50% “tend to disagree”.

On the other hand, a greater number of women aged 70 and over and men aged 60 and over “agreed” with the idea.

Figure 10 Views on the idea “men work, women stay home”



Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (2000), the Cabinet Office

Women in their 30s and 40s support the “continuing to work pattern”

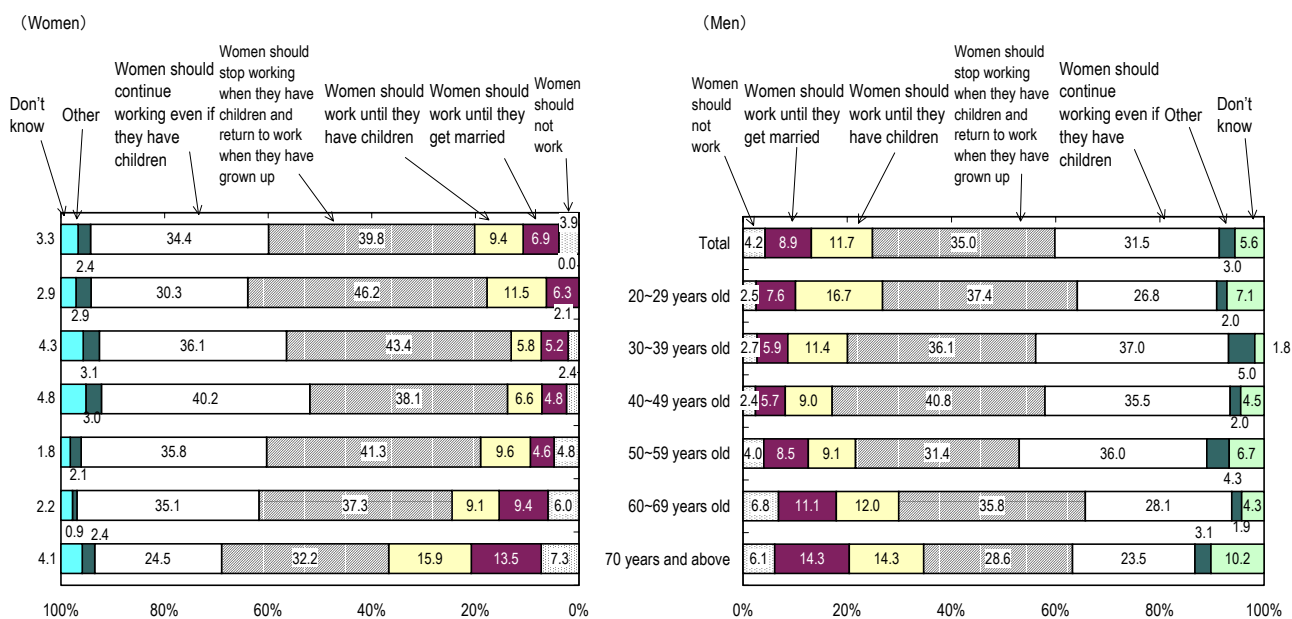
When asked what they thought about women working, the greatest percentage of people in 2000 (37.6%) responded “it is better to stop working if you have children and seek reemployment after they grow up” (the “reemployment pattern”). This surpassed the 33.1% who said “it is better to continue working even if you have children” (the “continuing to work pattern”).

Analyzing this by sex reveals that 39.8% of women and 35.0% of men supported the “reemployment pattern” and 34.4% of women and 31.5% of men supported the “continuing to work pattern”. In both instances, the percentage of women is higher.

Analyzing this by age-group reveals that the trend is for the number of women in their 20s and 30s to support less the “reemployment pattern” and for the number of those who support the “continuing to work pattern” to increase. The percentage of women in their 40s who support the “continuing to work pattern” (40.2%) exceeds that of women who support the “reemployment pattern” (38.1%). For women aged 50 or above, support for the “reemployment pattern” increases and support the “continuing to work pattern” decreases. The trend for women in their 30s and 40s to support the “continuing to work pattern” is thought to be attributable to their experience of having stopped working to raise their children or struggling with the burden of child care having opted to continue working, reflecting the difficulties of reemployment and the advantage of continuing to work.

Men in their 30s and 50s who support the “continuing to work pattern” outnumber those who support the “reemployment pattern” (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Views on women working (by sex and age-group)



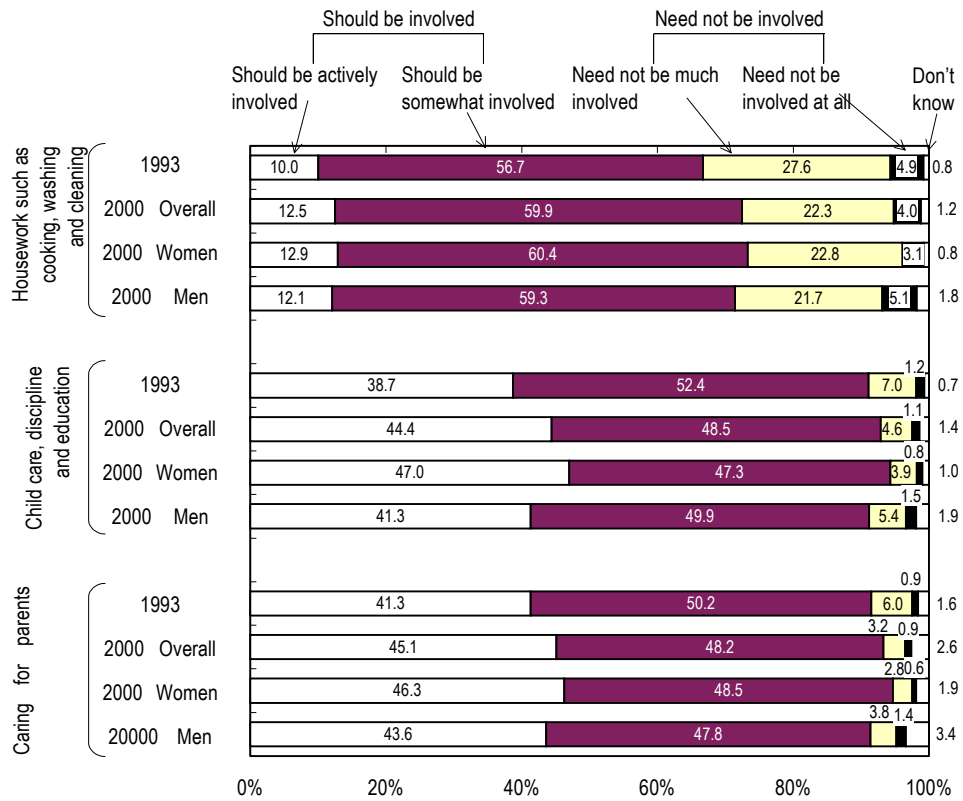
Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (2000), the Cabinet Office

High expectations for men’s participation in caring for parents

When asked about the extent to which men should participate in “household chores”, “child care and education”, “care for parents” and other duties at home, the percentage of respondents saying “men should participate” in all three of the categories was higher in 2000 compared to the survey conducted in 1993, albeit slightly.

Analysis by category reveals that the percentage of people who think men should participate in “household chores” is low. On the other hand, the majority of respondents, 93.2%, indicated that men should participate in “caring for parents” and 45.1% responded that men should participate “actively”. Conventionally, it was generally accepted that women of the family should be responsible for caring for family members. With the declining birthrate, the aging of society and the trend towards nuclear families, however, there is a limit to the extent to which women can be solely responsible for caring and expectation for men to participate is greater than ever (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Men's involvement in the home



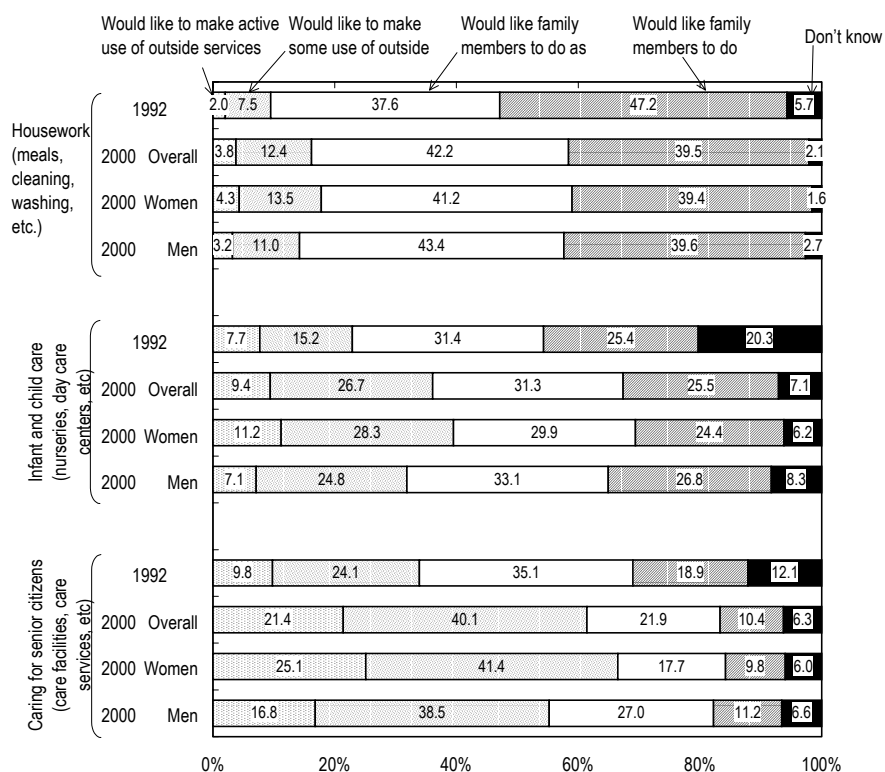
Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society – Focus on Men's Lifestyles - (2000), the Cabinet Office

Strong wish to use outside services for caring for senior citizens

When asked in family life whether they would like to use outside services or manage within the family, 61.5% responded in favor of “using outside services” for “caring for senior citizens”, 36.0% for “infant and child care” and 16.2% for “household chores”. The percentage of people responding in favor of “using outside services” in each category increased since the survey of 1992.

In particular, the percentage of people expressing an intention to use outside services for “caring for senior citizens” has nearly doubled, increasing from 33.9% in 1992 to 61.5% in 2000. Analysis by sex reveals that in all categories of "household chores", “infant and child care” and “caring for senior citizens” the percentage of women who wished to “use outside services” was higher than that of men.

Against the background of the increase in female labor force participation rate in all age-groups, the demand for general services related to family life is increasing. With regard to caring in particular, which has been borne in the past mainly by women of the family, it appears that since the introduction of the long-term care insurance system the number of persons wishing to make use of outside services has been increasing (Figure 13).



Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society – Focus on Men's Lifestyles - (2000), the Cabinet Office

Figure 13 Use of services related to family life

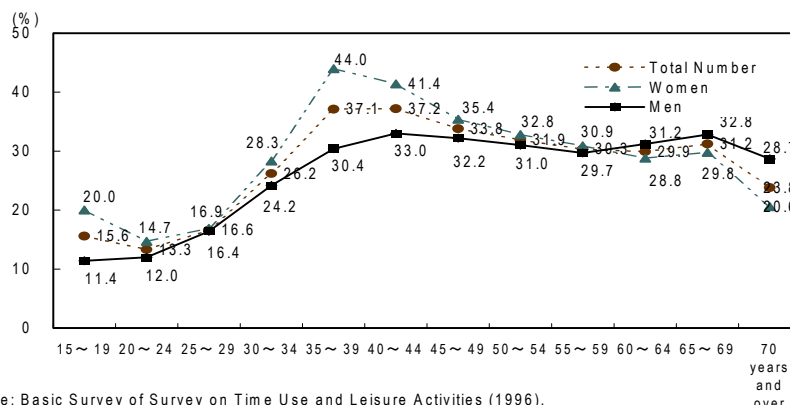
Given the rapidly declining birthrate and aging of society, a social system that assumes women's participation in all fields of society will be essential to Japan in the 21st Century. Establishment and implementation of measures by the government to reduce the burden of harmonizing work and child raising is an urgent and important issue.

Disparities in the age of men and women participating in society

Volunteering and other social activities are important in terms of supporting society, and interest in these activities has grown in recent years. It is important however, to create an environment that enables both men and women to participate in activities corresponding to their interests. The percentage of women and men aged 15 and over who had participated in these types of social activities during the past year was 28.1% and 25.7% respectively; slightly more women than men. Analyzing this in terms of employed and unemployed persons, we see that 30.3% of women were employed and 25.6% not employed whereas 27.7% of men were employed and 18.1% not employed.

Analysis of the social activity participation rate by age reveals a difference in the core age-groups. Whereas most female participants were in their late 30s and 40s, participation was highest for men in their 60s (Figure 14).

Figure 14 Social activity participation rates



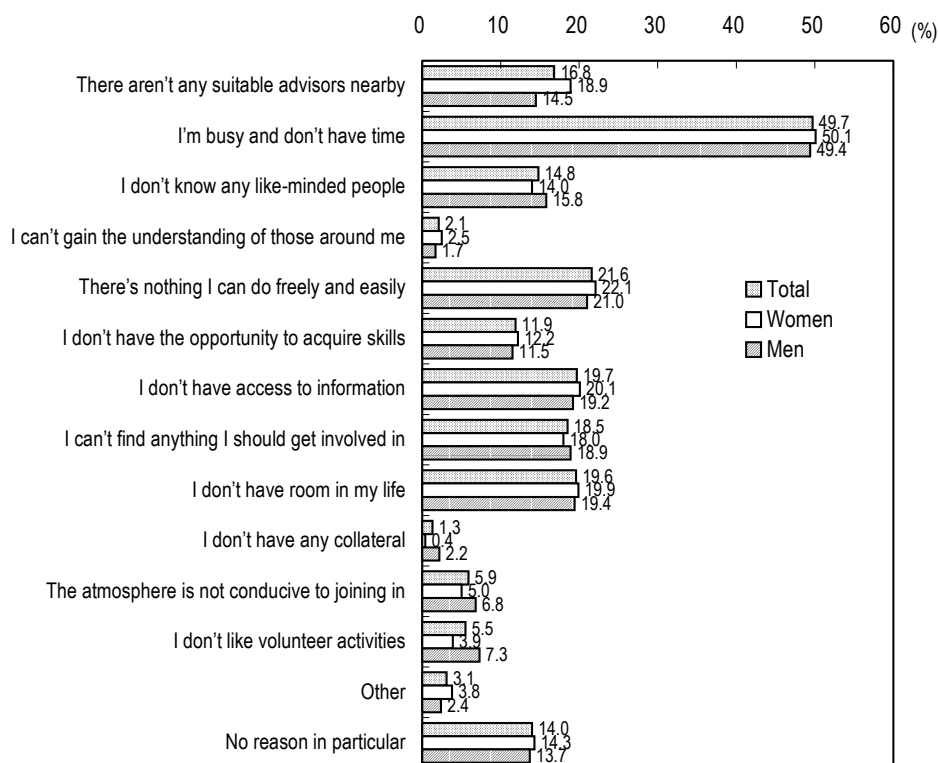
Source: Basic Survey of Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities (1996), Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications

Issues involved in promoting volunteer activities

People who have participated in volunteer activities account for approximately half of those wishing to participate, for both women and men. The reason most frequently given by both women and men for not participating in volunteer activities is “I am busy and do not have time”. Many others responded “there are no activities that are easy and comfortable to participate in” and “I don’t have access to information” (Figure 15).

Analysis of what respondents expected of national and local government entities with regard to volunteer activities revealed that an increasing ratio of people cited the need for "increased information on activities", “greater emphasis on volunteer activities in school” and “popularization of leave and leave of absence systems for such activities”.

Figure 15 Reasons for not participating in volunteer activities



Source: Survey Report on Views of Families and Society (1996), the Cabinet Office

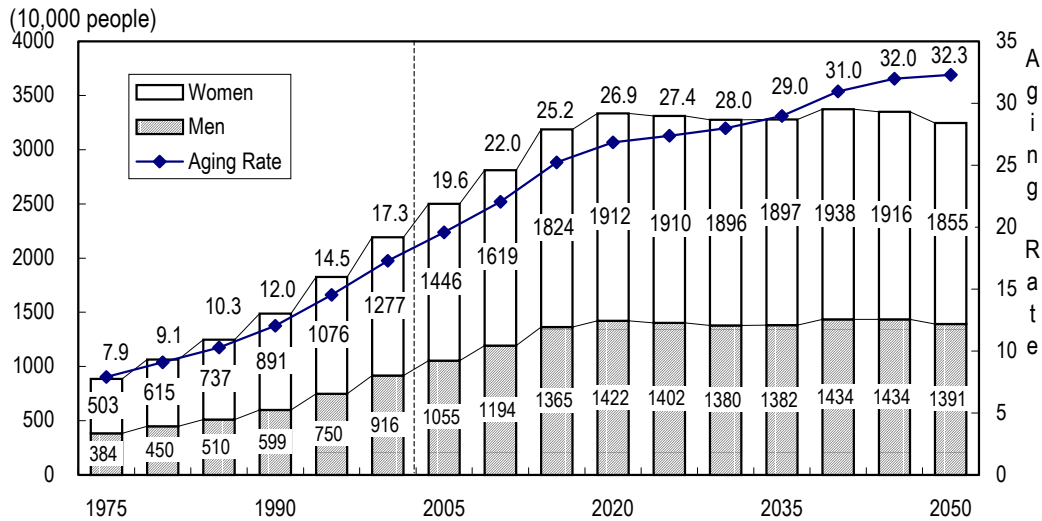
Chapter 4 Living as senior citizens

Advances in the aging of society

Japan’s aging rate (the percentage of the total population aged 65 and over) was 4.9% in 1950, advancing since then at a speed unprecedented in other countries, further increases are expected in the future (Figure 16).

Aging of the population is largely attributable to the declining birthrate and increases in average life expectancy. The declining birthrate is referred to in Chapter 3. The average life expectancy stood at 83.99 years for women and 77.10 years for men in 1999. The gender discrepancy is growing slowly and stood at 6.89 years in 1999. As a result, the percentage of female senior citizens is high, with women accounting for approximately 60% of the population aged 65 years and over and approximately 70% of those aged 85 years and over.

Figure 16 Changes in the aging rate and the population aged 65 years and over



Sources: Until 1995: Polucation Census, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications; 2000: Monthly Report on Current Population Estimates, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications; 2005 onwards: Population estimates for 1 October of each year (middle estimate) taken from Future Population Estimates for Japan (Jan. 1997 Estimates), Japan Institute of Social Insurance and Population Issues

Social support for caring

The issue of caring cannot be separated from the aging of society.

At the end of January 2001, approximately 2.51 million people had been recognized as requiring assistance or caring under the long-term care insurance system, accounting for some 11% of the population aged 65 years and over. (Persons recognized as requiring assistance or caring includes persons aged 40~65 who require caring for aging-related conditions).

According to the “Basic Survey of Citizens’ Lifestyles” conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in 1998, women accounted for 83.2% of the main care-givers for persons aged 65 years and over living at home and requiring caring.

With regard to views held on social support for caring, 43.7% recognized the “need for society to provide certain amount of support” and 39.0% the “need for society to actively provide support”. The percentage of women who thought active support was necessary was higher than that of men.

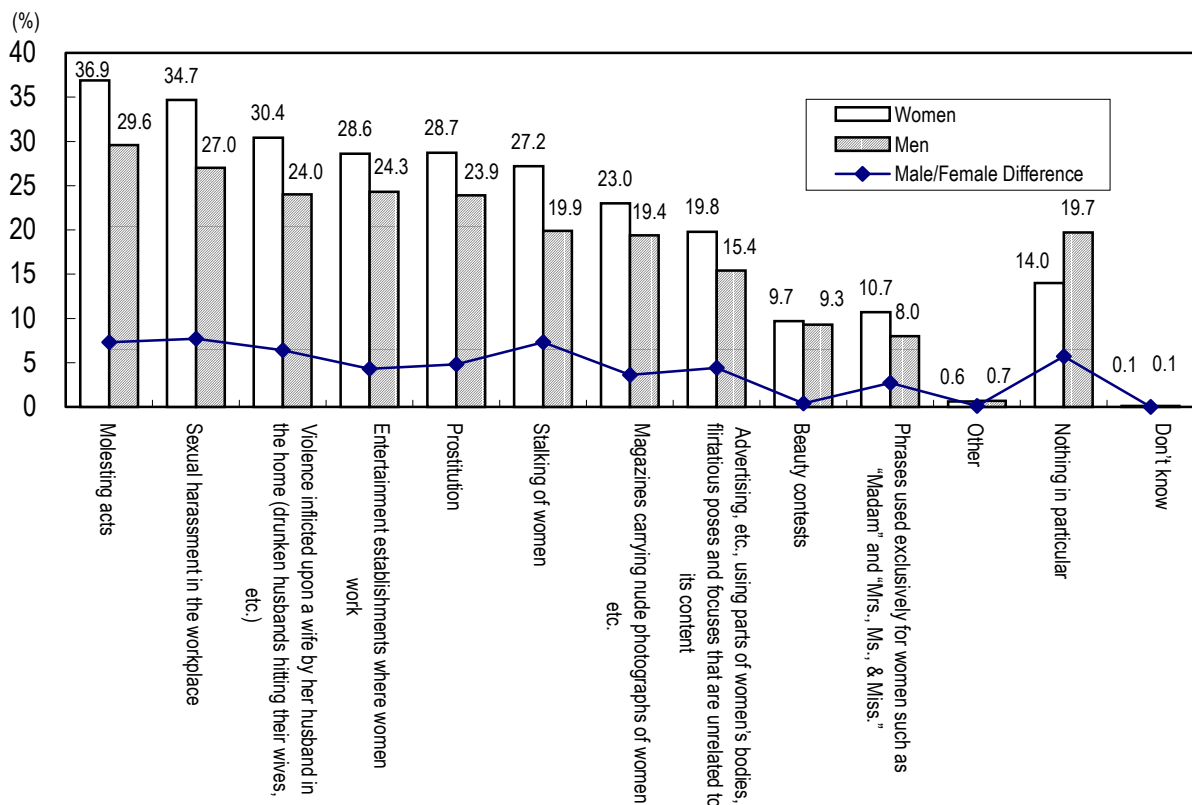
The above suggests the importance of society as a whole supporting the burden of caring rather than families in general and women in particular.

Chapter 5 Violence against women

Awareness of women’s human rights

When asked “in what ways do you think women’s human rights are not being respected” in a Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society conducted by the Cabinet Office in 2000, the most frequently given answer by both women and men was “molestation” (women 36.9%; men 29.6%). This was followed by “sexual harassment in the workplace” (women 34.7%; men 27.0%) and “ violence inflicted by husbands upon their wives at home (drunken husbands hitting their wives, etc.)” (women 30.4%; men 24.0%). Violence against women was the most frequently cited infringement of women’s rights. The category with the largest difference in perception between women and men was “sexual harassment in the workplace” (7.7 point difference), followed by “molestation” (7.3 point difference) and “stalking of women (stalking behavior)” (women 27.2%; men 19.9%; 7.3 point difference). Of the respondents, 19.7% of men and 14.0% of women responded “nothing in particular” (Figure 17).

Figure 17 Issues in which women’s human rights are not being respected



Note: Multiple answers selected from the 10 categories

Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (2000), the Cabinet Office

Analyzing this by sex and age-group reveals that nearly half of people in their 20s feel women’s human rights are not being respected in cases of “molestation” and “sexual harassment in the workplace”, but that this percentage falls rapidly in higher age-groups. “violence inflicted by husbands upon their wives at home (drunken husbands hitting their wives, etc.)” and “stalking of women (stalking behavior)” are considered by a high percentage of younger age-groups to constitute disrespect for women’s human rights, and this ratio does not decline much in older age-groups. Furthermore, whereas the percentage of people who consider “unsavory (the meaning of unsavory is much stronger and far reaching than the Japanese suggests, and is subjective rather than objective) businesses in which women work”, “prostitution” and “magazines carrying photographs of nude women, etc.” disrespectful of women's human rights is highest for women in their 40s, this percentage tends to be high in order age-groups of men.

Most victims of criminal offences between couples are women

According to National Police Agency statistics, of the 1,476 cases in which spouses (including common-law marriages) were arrested in 2000, women were the victims in 1,305 cases.

Although women accounted for 68.0% of the victims of murder, which is slightly lower than that of criminal offences in general, women were the victims in 124 of 127 cases of violence (97.6%) and 838 of 888 cases of bodily injury (94.4%). Most victims of criminal offences between couples (including common-law marriages) are women.

Latent injuries

According to “A Survey on Violence between Men and Women” conducted by the Cabinet Office in 1999, less than 1% of women who had sustained physical violence from their husbands, including violence that was “life threatening”, “severe enough to warrant medical treatment” and “not severe enough to warrant medical treatment”, had consulted public organizations such as the police, a civil liberties commissioner or a women’s counseling center about their injury. Concerned institutions are not fully aware of the extent of injuries and it is clear that these injuries are remaining latent.

As for why victims did not seek counseling about violence sustained from a spouse, the most frequently cited reasons were “I thought if I persevered, I could get through it” and “I thought that some of the blame rested with me”, 41.2% respectively, followed by “I didn’t consider it significant enough to seek counseling”, 32.8%.

Increased sexual crimes reported in recent years

According to National Police Agency statistics, there were 2,260 cases of acknowledged rape in year 2000, exceeding 2000 for the first time in 18 years since 1982. There were also 7,412 cases of acknowledged forced obscenity. These results comprise an increase of 393 cases of rape (21.7%) and 2,066 cases of forced obscenity (38.6%) over the previous year

Differences in women and men’s attitudes towards prostitution

Attitudes towards prostitution among adults were compared between the Cabinet Office “Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society” conducted in 1997 and 2000. The result revealed that an increasing percentage of women and men replied, “It is unacceptable even if there is agreement between the parties involved”. The percentage who selected responses showing tolerance to prostitution: “it is not desirable but it cannot be helped if there is agreement between the parties involved” or “there is nothing wrong if there is agreement between the parties involved” decreased among both women and men. However, differences of attitudes between women and men continue to be large with 66.7% of women responding “it’s unacceptable even if there is agreement between the parties involved”, 17.4 points higher than that of men. While 19.4% of women replied “it is not desirable but it cannot be helped if there is agreement between the parties involved”, representing 15.2 points less than that of men (Figure 18).



Figure 18 Attitudes towards prostitution

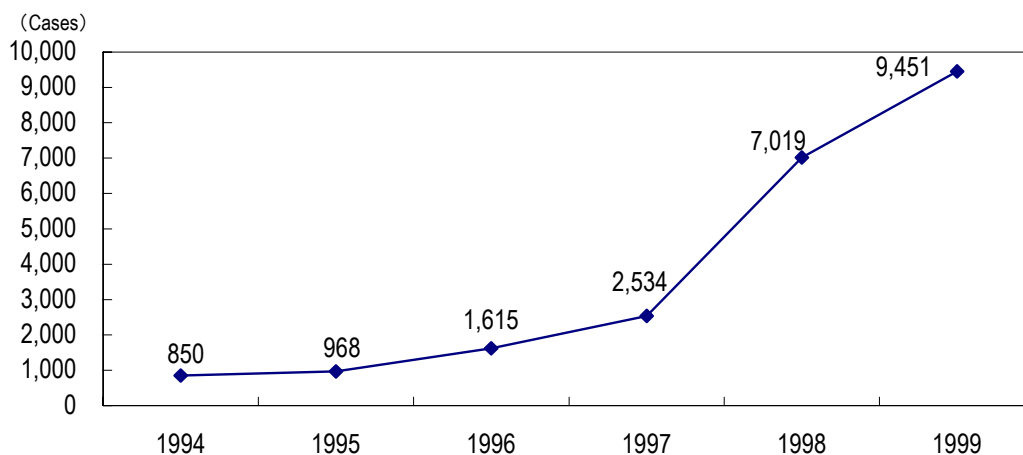
Actual conditions of sexual harassment in the workplace and measures undertaken

Sexual harassment in the workplace is defined as sexual speech or behavior (speech of sexual content and sexual behavior) in the workplace that makes woman feel uncomfortable. This can result in her dismissal, a reduction of pay or other disadvantageous work conditions if she refuses the advance, known as quid pro quo harassment, or as a consequence, the workplace environment may become unpleasant to the extent that the female worker suffers seriously adverse effects on her work performance, known as environmental harassment.

In 1999, employment equality offices in prefectural labor bureaus handled 9,451 consultation cases pertaining to sexual harassment, an increase of 2,432 cases (34.6%) over the previous year. Analysis of a breakdown of these cases reveals that female workers sought counseling in 4,882 cases (51.7%) and employers in 4,569 cases (48.3%), requesting counseling on preventative measures, how to handle complaints and counseling, etc. The number of counseling cases is growing rapidly each year but this is thought to be attributable to heightened awareness of sexual harassment on the part of both workers and employers as a consequence of revisions to the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and the introduction of

various measures (Figure 19).

Figure 19 Number of sexual harassment counseling cases in the workplace handled by employment equality offices in prefectural labor bureaus



Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare Survey

Companies were asked the following questions: “Have you a clear policy condemning sexual harassment and have you made it widely known?” “Have you established a body for receiving complaints and providing consultation?” and “Do you have a post sexual harassment process for dealing with it?”. Of the 5,218 companies that responded, approximately half (49.0%) said they had a clear and widely known policy condemning sexual harassment, approximately one-third had established a body for receiving complaints and providing consultation, and 36.8% had a method of dealing with cases of sexual harassment after its occurrence.

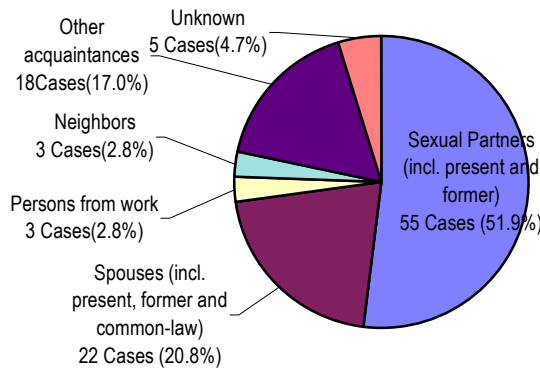
Analysis of companies by size reveals that the larger the company the greater the adoption of each of the measures and the higher the proportion of companies having put in place all three categories of measures.

Status of application of the Law on Proscribing Stalking Behavior and Assisting Victims

The Law on Proscribing Stalking Behavior and Assisting Victims (“Stalking Regulations Act”) was enacted in November 2000. Analysis of the status of application of the law three months following enactment (November 24, 2000 to February 28, 2001) reveals that 241 warnings not to repeat a particular offence had been issued by chief police superintendents. Cease-and-desist orders had been issued by Prefectural Public Safety Commissions in six cases in which warnings were not heeded. In 149 cases chief police superintendents have assisted victims to prevent their injury from stalking behavior. Arrests had been made in 36 cases and there had been one case of arrest for violation of a cease-and-desist order. In cases of emergency chief police superintendents may issue a provisional cease-and-desist order, but this facility had been applied.

Analysis of the 108 cases in which warnings and arrests were made in the one-month period following enactment of the law (November 24 to December 23, 2000) was made. It was revealed that the relationship between the 106 “specific persons” referred to in Article 2 Clause 1 of the law and the stalkers was “sexual partner (including former partners)” in 55 cases (51.9%) and “spouse (including former and common-law spouses)” in 22 cases (20.8%). The stalker was unacquainted with its victim in 5 cases (4.7%) (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Relationships between stalkers and their victims



Notes: (1) This is an analysis of the relationship between the stalker and the 106 "specific persons", referred to in Article 2, Clause 1 of the Stalking Regulations Law, involved in the 108 cases for which warning and arrest measures were taken during the one month period 24 November through 23 December, 2000.
 (2) "Other acquaintances" refers to email friends, classmates, etc.

Source: National Police Agency Survey

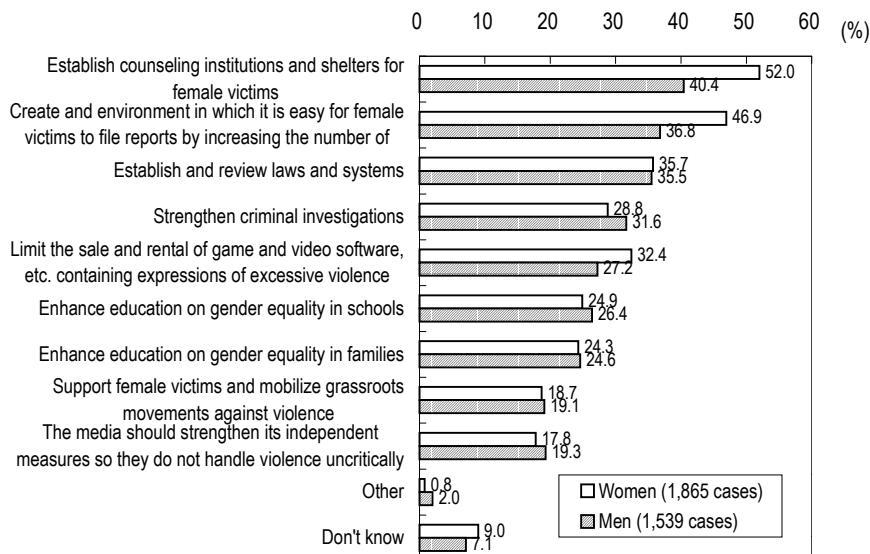
With respect to the 108 cases in which warnings and arrests were made, analysis by sex of the 109 victims (one arrest case involved two victims) involved showed an overwhelming number, 103 (94.5%) were women,.

Need for establishment of counseling institutions and shelters for female victims

When asked what they thought was necessary to eliminate violence against women, 52.0% of women and 40.4% of men responded "establishment of counseling institutions and shelters for female victims", making it the most frequently cited response. This was followed by "creation of an environment in which it is easy for female victims to report by increasing the number of women officers in investigations and trials, etc.", which was cited by 46.9% of women and 36.8% of men (Figure 21).

These results point to the importance of preventing the latency of injuries by establishing an environment in which women can report their injuries to a third party. There is also a strong demand for public organizations to respond to this issue.

Figure 21 Measures to eliminate violence against women

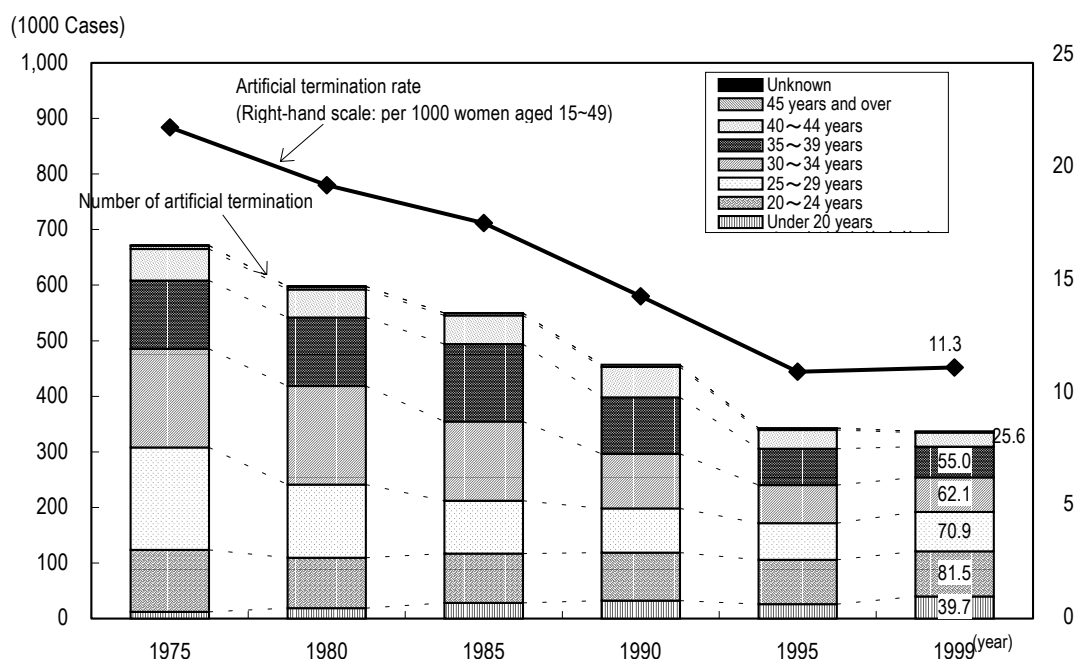


Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society – Focus on Men's Lifestyles – (2000), the Cabinet Office

Chapter 6 Lifelong health for women

Increased artificial terminations among the young despite the overall trend to decline

Analyzing the number of artificial terminations of pregnancy and the rate of artificial termination (per 1000 women between 15 to 49 years of age) from 1975 through 1998 revealed that the trend is for both values to fall. However, looking at this by age-group reveals that whereas the general trend for both these values to decline among women aged 25 years and over they are rising among women under 20 years of age. Overall, percentages among the young are increasing. Insufficient knowledge about the psychological and physical effects of artificial termination of pregnancy and safe methods of contraception are thought to be contributing factors (Figure 22).



Source: Maternal Public Health Statistics, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Figure 22 Changes in the number of artificial termination by age-group

High smoking rate among women in their 20s

The rate of smoking is the highest among women and men in their 20s and the higher the age-group the lower this falls. Analysis of the trend reveals that the smoking rate among men of all ages, including those in their 20s, has tended to fall. Whereas the overall rates for women remain approximately constant, the smoking rate among women in their 20s has increased dramatically from 12.7% in 1975 to 21.9% in 2000.

In order for women to maintain health throughout their lives, it is important that they obtain correct information about their health, including information on sexuality and reproduction, make their own decisions and live in a way that will enable them to enjoy good health.

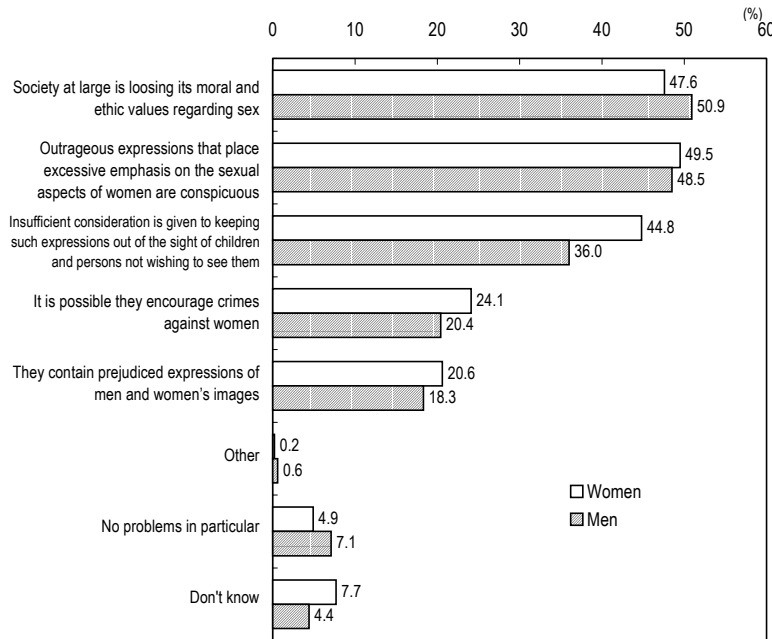
Chapter 7 Women's Human rights in the media

Attitudes towards expressions of sex and violence in the media

In some sections of the media, it is not uncommon in the current situation to find information that deals with violence against women uncritically and emphasizes only the sexual aspects of women.

Attitudes towards expressions of sex and violence in the media are reflected in the following responses: "society at large is losing its moral and ethic values" and "outrageous expressions that place excessive emphasis on the sexual aspects of women stand out" were high, both recording 49.1%. Many others were of the opinion, "insufficient consideration is given to keeping such expressions out of sight from children and persons not wishing to see them" (Figure 23).

Figure 23 Attitudes towards expressions of sex and violence in the media



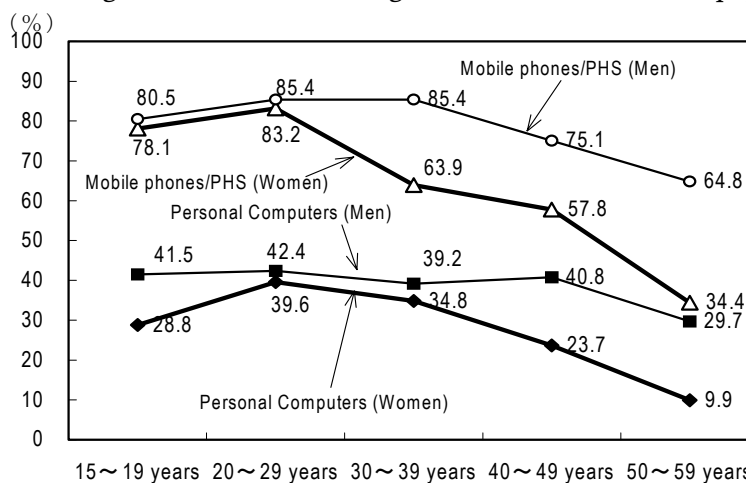
Source: Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society – Focus on Men's Lifestyles – (2000), the Cabinet

Advances in IT at home, gender disparities in its rate of use

According to a “Survey of Trends in the Use of Communications” conducted by the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, almost 40% of households owned personal computers in 1999 and approximately 20% used the Internet. Analysis of what they use the Internet for reveals that the majority of respondents use it to obtain local information, to exchange email with specific people and to obtain business information and documents.

Analysis of the individual usage of information-related equipment by sex and age-group shows that use among men and young age-groups tend to be higher in general. Whereas there is little difference between men and women in their 20s, large gender disparities can be observed among people aged 40 years and over (Figure 24).

Figure 24 Individual usage of information-related equipment



Source: Survey on Users of Information Equipment and Services (Sep. 2000), Nomura Research Institute

The data above suggests that those aged 40 years and over and particularly women are not able to fully enjoy the benefits of advances in information communications, and differences are arising in their ability to utilize information. It is desirable that measures are put in place to correct these differences in ability to enable all to enjoy the benefits of information communication technology.

Chapter 8 Education and learning that promotes gender equality

Trends in the ratio of students who go on to the next stage of education by school type

Analysis of the boys and girls who go on to the next stage of education by school type reveals that in 2000, the rate of girls advancing to senior high schools or the equivalent (excluding those advancing onto correspondence courses) exceeded that of boys, standing at 96.8% and 95.0% respectively.

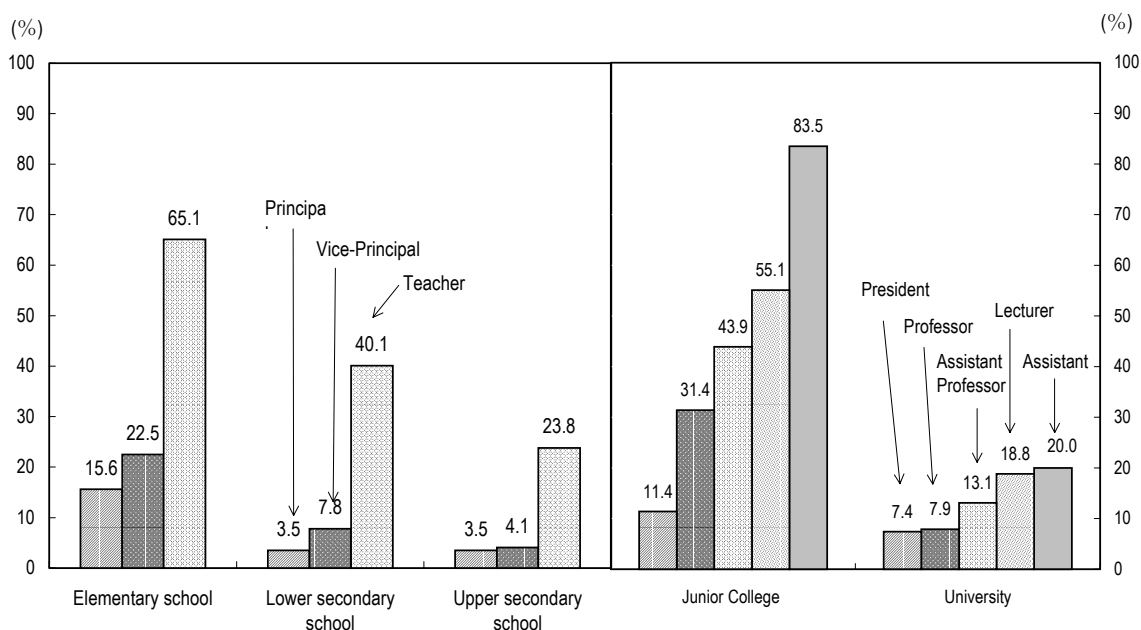
In terms of advancement into institutions of higher education in 2000, the rate of advancement of boys into university (undergraduate) was 47.5%. On the other hand, although the combined advancement of girls into university (undergraduate) and junior college (regular course) was 48.7%, a breakdown of these figures reveals that 31.5% advanced to university (undergraduate) while 17.2% into junior college (regular course). Whereas the advancement of girls into university (undergraduate) has tended to increase in recent years, their advancement into junior colleges has tended to fall.

Low percentage of female teachers in senior positions

Analysis of the percentage of female teachers in elementary and secondary education reveals that although they account for 60% of elementary school teachers, this percentage declines as the level rises through junior and senior high schools. Furthermore, while the percentage of female principals and vice-principals has risen in recent years, in general, it remains low in comparison to the percentage of female teachers.

Also in institutions of higher education, whereas the percentage of female teachers in junior colleges exceeds 40%, they account for less than 20% at universities. The percentages of female professors and university presidents are particularly low (Figure 25).

Figure 25 Percentage of female full-time teachers



Source: Basic Survey of Schools (FY2000), Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Women's active learning activities

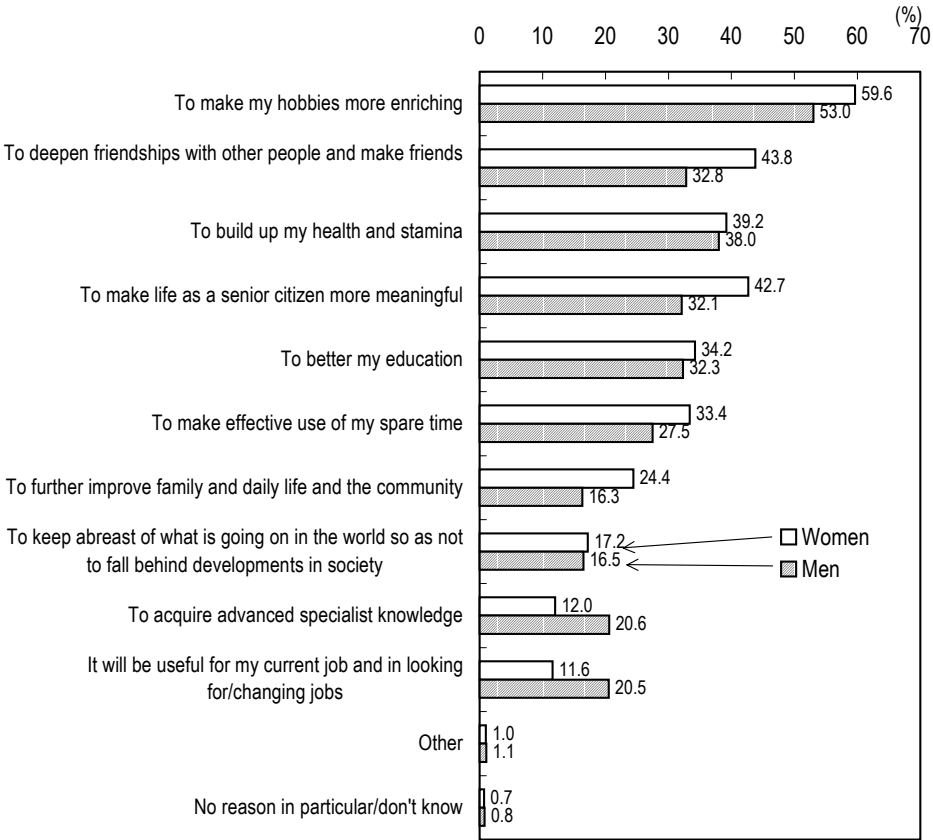
In order to realize a gender-equal society it is important to promote the formation of a lifelong learning society in which a variety of learning opportunities throughout life are secured and results of learning are appropriately evaluated.

According to the "Survey of Social Education" conducted in 1999 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the number of female participants in courses and classes organized by boards of education and social education institutions, (as examples of lifelong learning), was approximately twice that of men. Incidentally, the number of female participants (203,000) in courses and classes held at women's educational centers, which are mainly used by women, was more than 14 times that of men (15,000).

An analysis of the number of students at night graduate schools also reveals that the number of male students (1,222) attending night graduate schools in 2000 exceeded that of women (843). A dramatic increase, however, can be observed in the number of female students, which increased by approximately 14 times between 1990 and 2000.

Gender differences in purposes of lifelong learning

Gender analysis of reasons for taking up lifelong learning reveals that women cite the following reasons more frequently compared to men. “To enrich my hobbies” (6.6 point difference), “to make friends and deepen friendships” (11 point difference), “to make life more meaningful as a senior citizen” (10.6 point difference), “to effectively use my free time” (5.9 point difference) and “to further improve home, daily life and community” (8.1 point difference). Whereas, reasons more frequently cited by men include “to acquire advanced specialized knowledge” (8.6 point difference) and “to benefit current job or for finding a new job/changing jobs” (8.9 point difference). (Figure 26).

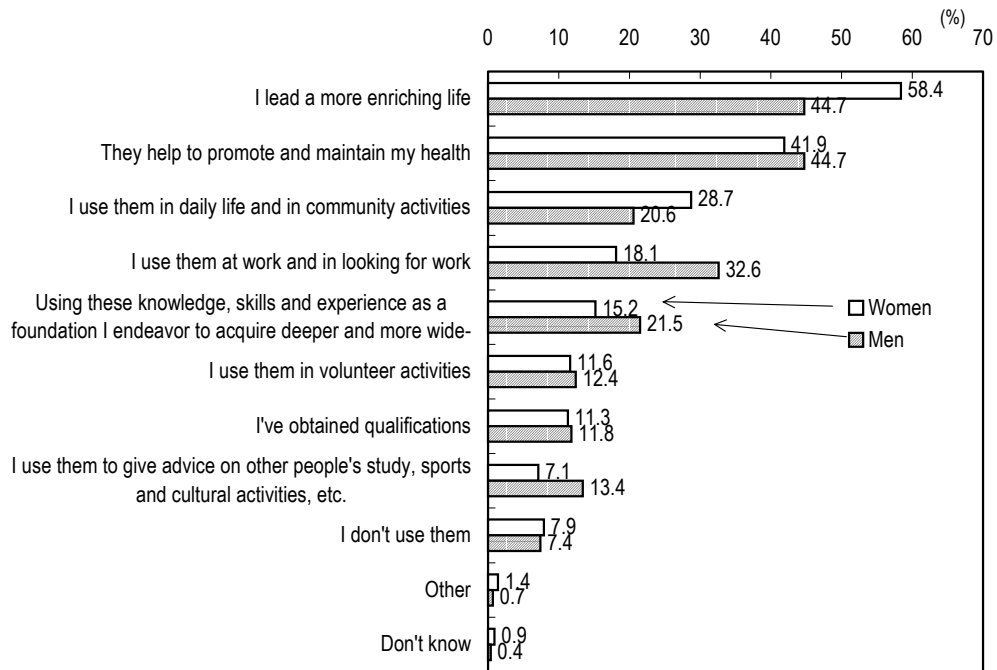


Source: Public Opinion Poll on Lifelong Learning (1999), the Cabinet Office

Figure 26 Reasons for wanting to try lifelong learning

In terms of how knowledge, skills and experience acquired through lifelong learning are utilized, women outnumbered men in the following: “my life has been enriched” (13.7 point difference) and “they are used in daily life and in community activities” (8.1 point difference). On the other hand, men cited the following more frequently: “they are used at work and in looking for work” (14.5 point difference) and “by using acquired knowledge, skills and experience as a foundation I try to gain deeper and a more wide-ranging knowledge, skills and experience” (6.3 point difference). (Figure 27).

Figure 27 Utilization of the results of lifelong learning



Source: Public Opinion Poll on Lifelong Learning (1999), the Cabinet Office

Building a lifelong learning society is closely related to the formation of a gender-equal society in as much as they both refer to a society in which both women and men are freely able to select and take advantage of learning opportunities at any point in their life and to have the results of this learning evaluated appropriately. So far, however, although gender differences are apparent in the reasons why people want to try lifelong learning and how they utilize the results of such learning, this can be partly attributed to perceptions and the prevailing situation regarding fixed gender roles. In the future it is hoped that more women will acquire advanced specialized knowledge through lifelong learning and utilize it at work, and that men will not limit utilization of the results of lifelong learning to work but also to enrich their own lives and in daily life and in the community activities. In this way, it is hoped that the results of lifelong learning will be used in all fields, irrespective of gender, and that gender-equality will be achieved in all areas contributing to the formation of a gender-equal society.

Column

- France's "Parity Law", which stipulates there must be an equal number of male and female candidates in elections, is an example of a recent measure to promote women's participation in politics. There is a penalty system whereby government subsidies for political parties are reduced in cases where the numerical difference between male and female candidates for lower house elections exceeds 2%. As a result of the elections of March 2001, the percentage of municipal assembly members accounted for by women jumped from approximately 22% to approximately 48%.
- The "Holland Model" enabled couples to earn a salary of 1.5 persons through reduced working hours and reallocation of jobs. Not only does this offer relief in the midst of high unemployment and recession in Holland, it has made it possible for men to have time besides work for household chores, child care and nursing.
- According to a survey on what people regarded more important, child raising or wages and position, gender disparities were conspicuous. Although approximately 88% of women agreed with the "importance of child raising", no more than 52% of men did so. Moreover, approximately 4% of women agreed with the "importance of salary and position" whereas as many as 40% of men did.
- Although nine years have passed since the Child Care Leave Law went into force in Japan, more than 40% of women who have given birth did not take child care leave. Why not? Hindrances such as the corporate climate in which the company comes first lurk in the background. Popularization of family-friendly companies that facilitate the harmonization of work and child-care is wished for.
- In 1999, the United Nations declared November 25 "International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women". Internationally, combating domestic violence (DV) is regarded as an important issue. In Japan, the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims was promulgated in April 2001.

Part 2 Policies Implemented in FY2000 to Promote the Formation of a Gender-equal Society

Chapter 1 Expanding women's participation in policy decision-making processes

- In terms of promoting women's appointment to national advisory councils and committees, efforts have been made towards achieving the interim goal determined by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality in May 1996, "to achieve 20% representation at the earliest opportunity before the end of 2000". A survey revealed that the percentage of female members stood at 20.4% as of March 31, 2000. Given the achievement of this goal a year earlier than the deadline (March 2000 rather than August 2000), the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality set a new goal on August 15, 2000, "to endeavor assiduously to achieve as early as possible before the end of FY2005, the international goal of '30%' representation set out in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women".

Chapter 2 Reviewing social systems and practices and reforming awareness from a gender equality perspective

- In terms of issues that have been pointed out with respect to women and pensions, an advisory panel comprising specialists in concerned fields has been convened since July 2000 under the Minister of Health and Welfare. The Advisory Panel on Pensions that Correspond to Changes in Women's Lifestyles carries out wide-ranging studies and deliberates on the relationship between the civil law, tax system and other social security systems as well as trends in various foreign countries and social circumstances.
- A Forum on Gender Equality with the theme "formation of a gender-equal society" has been held since FY2000 under the joint auspices of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality and the Cabinet Office (Prime Minister's Office) with the cooperation of local government entities. Efforts have been made to reach a wide range of targets.

Chapter 3 Securing equal opportunities and treatment in the field of employment, etc.

- Prefectural labor bureaus are striving to secure equal treatment between men and women in practice by systematically visiting companies to learn of the actual condition concerning employment management and provide guidance on correcting violations of Equal Employment Opportunities Law.
- Based on the "Important notice concerning streamed employment management" determined in June 2000, prefectural labor bureaus provide guidance to companies that use streamed employment management.
- Through equal opportunity promotion officers, prefectural labor bureaus promote at all business offices understanding of the importance of positive action and methods used. In addition, they provide information to companies implementing positive action through the holding of seminars for top executives and conferences for employees in each industry.

Chapter 4 Establishing gender equality in agricultural, forestry and fishing villages

- Women's social participation in agricultural, forestry and fishing villages has made steady progress. (The number of female members of agricultural committees has increased from 103 nationwide in FY1992 to 977 in FY1999.) Furthermore, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) formulated a concrete target for female at their national convention in October 2000. As a result, basic policies on women's participation in JA were formulated in 32 prefectural unions.

Chapter 5 Supporting women and men's efforts to harmonize work and their family and community life

- With the objective of responding to the rapidly declining birthrate and aging of society, strengthening support for harmonization of work and family life, assisting the smooth continuation of working life and promoting its use, child care leave benefits and family care leave benefits have been raised from 25% of the wage before leave is taken to 40% of that as of January 2001.
- In view of the importance of establishing an employment environment that makes it easy to give birth to and raise children whilst continuing to work, and reduce the sense of burden associated with harmonizing work and child raising in the midst of the rapidly declining child births, the “Bill concerning partial revision of laws pertaining to child care leave and family care leave and other welfare provisions for workers raising children and caring for family members”, which incorporates ① prohibition of disadvantageous treatment due to the use of child care leave or family care leave, ② restrictions on overtime for workers raising children or caring for family members ③ raising the age of children targeted by measures qualifying for reduced work hours, etc., and ④ establishing an obligation to try to take leave to nurse children, was submitted to the 151st Session of the Diet in February 2001.

Chapter 6 Developing conditions that allow senior citizens to live with peace of mind

- In order to meet the demands of long-term care, which causes the greatest anxiety in old age, the Long-term Care Insurance System was introduced in April 2000 as a system for all citizens to support the long-term care of senior citizens enabling them to live independently even after they require nursing.
- In order to promote the greater convenience and safety of public transportation for senior citizens and the disabled, , the Law for Promoting Transportation Accessibility Improvement (Law No. 68, 2000. Hereinafter “the Barrier-free Transportation Law”) was promulgated on May 17, 2000, and became effective on 15 November of the same year.

Chapter 7 Eliminating all forms of violence against women

- On August 8, 2000, a “Conference of Directors of Ministries and Agencies concerned with Violence against Women” was established within the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality to strengthen mutual cooperation on this issue between related government bodies.
- The Stalking Regulations Act was approved on May 18, 2000 and enacted on 24 November of the same year. The law provides for administrative measures such as the issuance of warning against stalking and cease-and-desist orders, penalties for stalking behavior and support measures for victims.

Chapter 8 Supporting lifelong health for women

- With the aim of promoting health, preventing illness and improving quality of life, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Ministry of Health and Welfare), in cooperation with concerned parties identified fields important to public health and medical care. Concrete targets were set to be achieved by FY2010, an index year for health and medical care levels. The “Healthy Japan 21” plan, which was formulated to systemize various measures to achieve these targets, has been implemented since 2000.

Chapter 9 Respecting women's human rights in the media

- The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications convened a “Study Group on Young People and Media Literacy in the Field of Broadcasting” between November 1999 and June 2000 to study the direction measures to improve media literacy should take. The Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications) has been developing teaching materials for media literacy based on the Study Group's proposals.

Chapter 10 Promoting gender equality to facilitate diversity of choice through enrichment of education and learning

- Model programs involving entire communities have been implemented in cooperation with education researchers and private organizations with the aim of promoting in families and the community education that values individuality, ignores meaningless fixed gender roles and maintains a gender-equal perspective.
- Establishment of graduate school master programs (professional graduate schools) that engage in practical education specializing in the fostering of highly specialized professionals and one year and long-term courses in graduate school master programs has become possible since FY2000. Moreover, criteria for the establishment of universities were revised at the end of FY2000 to enable all of the 124 credits necessary to graduate from a distance learning university and up to 60 of the credits required by a regular university, to be acquired through classes posted on the Internet.

Chapter 11 Contributing to the “equality, development and peace” of the global community

- The Women 2000 meeting held as a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York from June 5-10, 2000 adopted a “Political Declaration” expressing each country’s declared intentions and philosophies as well as “Further Actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”.
- In terms of the process and preparations for the Women 2000 meeting, efforts were made to provide information prior to the meeting. Following the meeting, the Prime Minister’s Office reported and publicized the results and their significance at meetings held by the Council for Gender Equality and other meetings.

Chapter 12 Implementation of the Plan

- On September 26, 2000, the Council for Gender Equality submitted a report, “Basic Philosophy behind Formulation of a Basic Plan for Gender Equality”. Upon receiving this report, the Government pushed ahead with formulation of a basic plan for gender equality, and on December 12, 2000, the Government approved by Cabinet decision the Basic Plan for Gender Equality, the first plan to be based on the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society.
- In the reform of central government implemented on January 6, 2001, in recognition of the importance of having a system to promote the building a gender-equal society, a Council for Gender Equality and a Gender Equality Bureau were established within the Cabinet Office. This has significantly enhanced and strengthened Japan’s system for promoting gender equality.
- At the first meeting of the Council for Gender Equality held on January 23, 2001, instructions were received from the Prime Minister to expeditiously study measures to support the harmonization of work and child raising. A decision was made to establish a “Specialist Committee on Support Measures for the Harmonization of Work and Child Raising”. This specialist committee is vigorously studying the subject.

Policies to be Implemented in FY2001 to Promote the Formation of a Gender-equal Society

Chapter 1 Expanding women's participation in policy decision-making processes

- The National Personnel Authority is pressing ahead with examinations for the formulation of a guideline requiring each cabinet ministry to steadily and systematically promote measures for expanding the appointment and promotion of women through a systematic nurturing of women with wide ranging work experience. Based on the guideline, each ministry and agency will promote initiatives systematically and comprehensively, such as plans to expand women's appointment and promotion.

Chapter 2 Reviewing social systems and practices and reforming awareness from a gender equality perspective

- Gender Equality Week will be held annually between June 23~29 beginning 2001. Public relations and enlightenment activities will be conducted at a variety of events held throughout Japan in cooperation with local government entities, women's organizations and other concerned bodies.
- The Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications will conduct a 2001 Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities in order to identify citizens' main activities and to learn how they use their time. This will provide basic material which will be helpful in assessing the time spent on unpaid work such as household chores, child raising, and care and nursing for family members.

Chapter 3 Securing equal opportunities and treatment in the field of employment, etc.

- Centered on "Part-time Workers Week" (November 1-10), the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will provide guidance based on the Law Concerning the Improvement of Employment Management, Etc. of Part-time Workers (Law No. 76, 1992. Hereinafter, "Part-time Workers Law") and the "Guidelines for Employers on Improving Employment Management, Etc. of Part-time Workers" (Labor Ministry Notice No. 118, 1992). Also, changes to the Basic Policy Plan on Part-time Workers will be studied based on Article 5 of the Part-time Workers Law.

Chapter 4 Establishing gender equality in agricultural, forestry and fishing villages

- New training courses on operational management and seminars on the protection of motherhood will be conducted to enable women farmers of childbearing age to participate in agricultural management in accordance with their life stages.
- Furthermore, to enable women of childbearing age to participate in agricultural management, a scheme for supporting the harmonization of household chores and child care such as registration of babysitters will be established. A counseling manual will also be prepared on the harmonization of child care with agricultural management.

Chapter 5 Supporting women and men's efforts to harmonize their work and their family and community life

- In FY2001, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will start courses on raising children using opportunities provided by school health screening and public health events aimed at mothers and children targeting parents with pre-school children throughout Japan. It will also conduct model courses for parents worried about the problematic behavior of adolescent children.
- Taking advantage of the integration of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Labour, family support center services (special assistance services to support the harmonization of work and

family) will target not only employed workers but also self-employed persons and full-time housewives. Establishment of branch offices in each local community will be promoted as well as strengthening collaboration with day care facilities, with the objective of enhancing community support functions for child raising.

Chapter 6 Developing conditions that allow senior citizens to live with peace of mind

- Based on the “Direction of Public Health and Welfare Measures for Senior Citizens for the Next Five Years (Gold Plan 21)”, a foundation for good quality care services that meet the demands of senior citizens requiring long-term care will be systematically established.
- Training courses for certified care workers, care managers and home helpers will continue to be provided to improve their abilities and efforts will be made to enhance the content of these courses.

Chapter 7 Eliminating all forms of violence against women

- With the designation of November 25 as “International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women” by the 54th Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly held in December 1999, “Campaign for Eliminating Violence against Women”, which was held in May 2000, will be moved, beginning in FY2001, to a two week period ending November 25 (November 12~25). Ministries and agencies advocating this issue shall endeavor to further promote this campaign by.
- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will aim to strengthen the night security system employed at women’s counseling centers, etc., and promote wide-area measures to transfer victims to other prefectures for protection as needed.

Chapter 8 Supporting lifelong health for women

- In the sphere of daily life, efforts will be made to further promote measures enabling women to receive medical services including medical examinations, health guidance, counseling and health support throughout pregnancy, from conception through childbirth.
- Conferences will be held to systematically promote “The 21 Century Sukoyaka Family”, a national campaign in the field of maternal and child health in the 21st century, with the aim of further enhancing public health services for mothers and children.

Chapter 9 Respecting women’s human rights in the media

- With the aim of submitting a report in the mid 2001, the Council for Human Rights Promotion is scheduled to proceed with research and deliberations on “basic matters pertaining to enhancement of relief measures for victims in cases, of human rights violations”, including issues arising from human rights violations by the media.

Chapter 10 Promoting gender equality to facilitate diversity of choice through enrichment of education and learning

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will establish a “gender” category for a limited period (FY2001-2003) in its public offering of Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research provided through the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and continue to assist fundamental research in the relevant fields.

Furthermore, from FY2001 it will implement model programs incorporating approximately seven days of volunteer community work a year for children and those promoting hands-on activities for troubled young people with the aim of nurturing a sense of social responsibility in young people.

Chapter 11 Contributing to the “equality, development and peace” of the global community

- In implementing measures to realize a gender-equal society, endeavors will be made to absorb the principle of the treaties closely related to gender equality, the outcome document of the Women 2000 meeting, deliberations at international conferences as well as international norms and standards for improving the status of women and guidelines for measures.

Chapter 12 Implementation of the Plan

- The Council for Gender Equality will continue with its investigations and deliberations in the Specialist Committee on Support Measures for the Harmonization of Work and Child Raising. In addition, it will establish a Specialist Committee on Basic Issues, a Specialist Committee on Violence against Women, a Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Handling Complaints and a Specialist Committee on Surveying Effects.
- To promote the formation of a gender-equal society from a national perspective and deepen international cooperation, the Cabinet Office will hold a policy dialogue on gender equality. Intellectuals will be invited from foreign countries that share common issues with Japan.