

"FY2003 Annual Report on the State of
Formation of a Gender-Equal Society"
and
"Policies to be Implemented in FY2004
to Promote the Formation of
a Gender-Equal Society"

Outline

The Cabinet Office
June 2004

The Cabinet Office has prepared this paper to outline the "White Paper on Gender Equality." Please see the White Paper for more detailed information.

"FY2003 Annual Report on the State of Formation of a Gender-Equal Society" and "Policies to be Implemented in FY2004 to Promote the Formation of a Gender-Equal Society"

Outline

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"FY2003 Annual Report on the State of Formation of a Gender-Equal Society"

Part 1: The State of Formation of a Gender-Equal Society

Preface. Progress and current conditions on gender equality

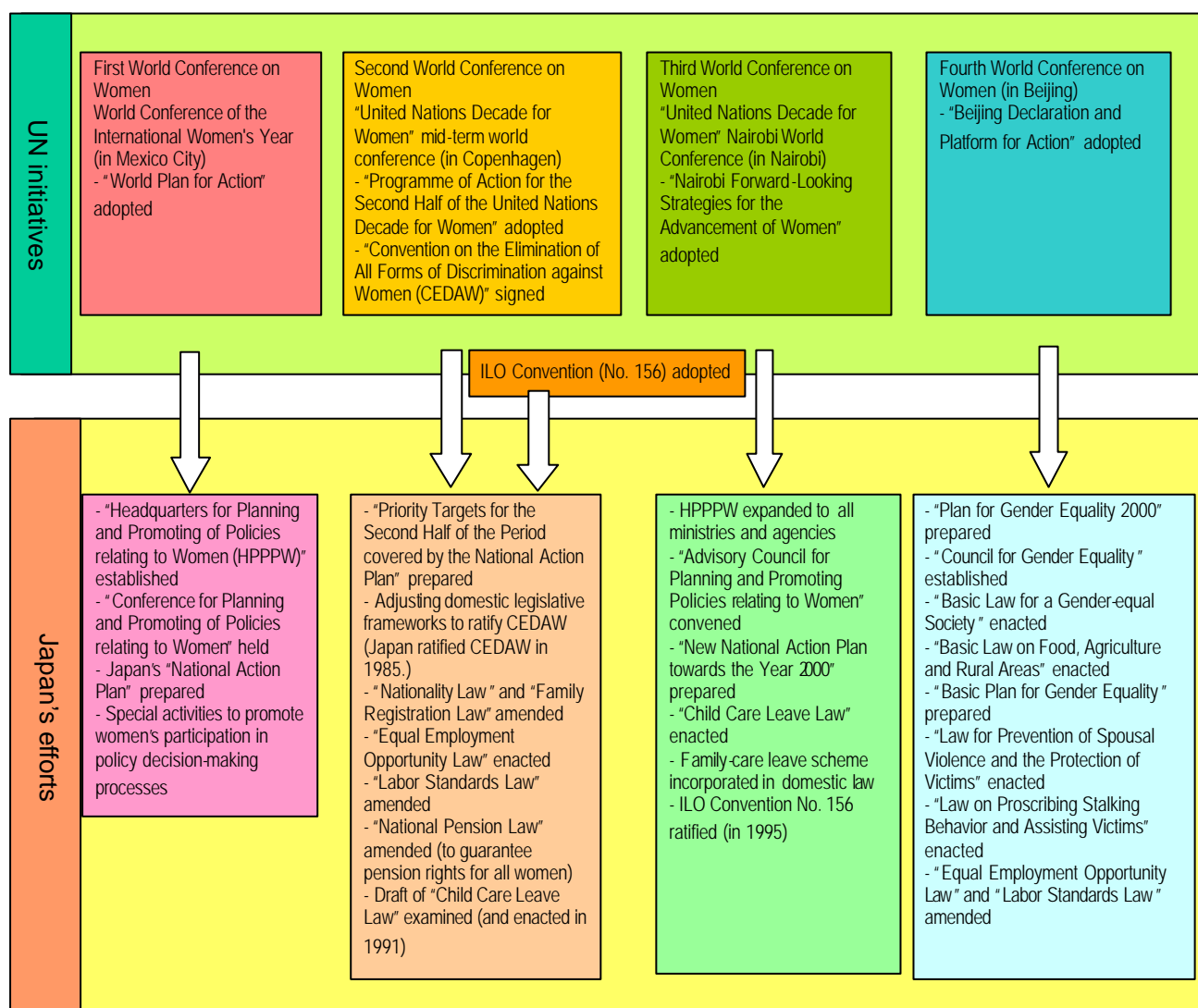
Section1. Enhancing legislative and institutional frameworks and encouraging gender equality

1. Efforts for gender equality at home and abroad

Since its first meeting in 1975, the United Nations has held the World Conference on Women (WCW) four times. WCW has been working on various efforts, including declarations and following-up its adopted resolutions and decisions.

Japan has been actively participating in these international initiatives. Paying due attention to WCW's discussions and decisions, Japan has been enhancing the organizational structure of its gender equality national machinery and also improving its legislative and institutional frameworks for gender equality (Chart 1).

Figure 1. Japan's efforts to address WCW decisions



The following sections briefly explain international initiatives, mainly focusing on WCW, as well as Japan's efforts to achieve gender equality (Chart 2)

Chart 2. Gender equality efforts by the United Nations and Japan

	UN initiatives	Japan's efforts	
		Initiatives relating HPGE (Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality)	Major legislations
1975	International Women's Year (Goals: equality, development and peace) World Conference of International Women's Year (Mexico City) "World Plan for Action" adopted	"Headquarters for Planning and Promoting of Policies relating to Women (HPPPW)" established "Conference for Planning and Promoting of Policies relating to Women" held	41 women's organizations set up "Liaison Meeting to Implement the Decisions adopted by International Women's Year Japan Conference." "Childcare Leave Law for Female Teachers, Nurses, Childminders, etc." promulgated (effective in 1976)
1976		HPPPW set out the policy to actively hire female officials at the government ministry/agency level, which was also approved by the equity minister's meeting	Removing the qualification restriction on female applicants for the Level III Recruitment Examination (Administration B type)
1977		Japan's "National Action Plan" formulated "Special activities to promote women's participation in policy decision-making processes" formulated	
1979	General Assembly adopted "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) -"		Ratifying "International Human Rights Covenant A," which guarantees gender equality in economic, social and cultural rights
1979	"United Nations Decade for Women" mid-term world conference (Copenhagen) "Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women" adopted Signing ceremony for CEDAW (57 nations including Japan signed CEDAW)		Amending "Civil Code" and "Law for Adjustment of Domestic Relations," to increase spouse's legal legacy portion and introduce contributory shares of estate (effective in 1981)
1981	International Labor Conference adopted ILO Convention No. 156 (concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers who assume responsibilities for their families)	Formulating "Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period covered by the National Action Plan" to adapt domestic legislations to CEDAW	Removing the qualification restriction on female applicants for the Level III Recruitment Examination (Taxation) as well as recruitment examination for immigration guards and jail officers
1984	ESCAP held its intergovernmental preparatory conference for the "World Conference to Review and Appraise Achievements of UN's Decade for Women (Tokyo)		"Review Session on Homemaking Course" submitted its report that calls for providing homemaking courses to male high school students as well. Amending "Nationality Law" and "Family Registration Law" (effective in 1985) to expand the Japanese nationality qualification to a child whose mother is a Japanese citizen, and to give equal treatment to a Japanese citizen's husband or wife in acquiring Japanese nationality
1985	International Labor Conference adopted "Resolution concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers" "United Nations Decade for Women" Nairobi World Conference (Nairobi) "Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women" adopted		"National Pension Law" amended (to guarantee pension rights for all women) (effective in 1986) "Equal Employment Opportunity Law" enacted (effective in 1986) "Labor Standards Law" amended (effective in 1986) Ratifying CEDAW Fully eliminating the gender discrepancies in livelihood assistance criteria
1986		HPPPW expanded its organization structure and mandate to cover all ministries and agencies "Advisory Council for Planning and Promoting Policies relating to Women" convened	Removing restrictions on female workers late-night work including work shifts Removing restrictions on overtime work of female workers engaged in professional duties Re-examining the blanket work restrictions on female workers engaged in dangerous/hazardous work Expanding the safe motherhood program (including expansion of postpartum leave)
1987		"New National Action Plan towards the Year 2000" Formulated Reaffirming a mandate of HPPPW senior consultant	"Special spouse income deduction for married workers" established Curriculum Council recommended mandatory and equal homemaking curriculum for male and female high school students
1988	Review session for Japan's Report on its implementation of CEDAW (First Periodic Report)		
1989			Education Ministry announced its new curriculum guidelines, which require equal homemaking curriculum for male and female students
1990	UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held its expanded conference UN Economic and Social Council adopted its recommendation and conclusions on its first reexamination of "Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women"		Removing the qualification restriction on female applicants for the Level III Recruitment Examination (Postal Affairs B type) Examination qualification status became totally equal for male and female candidates in all national public employee recruitment exams
1991		"New National Action Plan towards the Year 2000" formulated	The Diet passed the "Childcare Leave Law" (effective in 1992) to grant the childcare leave qualification both to male and female workers
1992		Prime Minister appointed the minister for women's affairs for the first time	"Childcare Leave Law for National public employees" enacted (effective in 1992) to grant the childcare leave qualification both to male and female government officials
1993	World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna) "Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action" adopted, which emphasizes the protection of women's human rights	HPPPW submitted its paper titled "Forging Ahead with Achieving Gender Equality"	Defense Academy accepted female students for the first time Maritime Self-Defense Forces and Air Self-Defense Force started to accept female students in the aviation division
1994	UN held International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, adopting the action plan clearly stating the concepts of reproductive health rights. Review session for Japan's Reports on its implementation of CEDAW (Second and Third Periodic Reports)	Setting up "Office for Gender Equality," "Council for Gender Equality" Setting up "Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality" (upgrading its membership from vice minister level to minister level)	Enacting "Law on Working Hours and Days Off for General Public Employees" and starting the nursing care leave scheme (effective in 1994)
1995	Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing) "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" adopted		"Childcare Leave Law" enacted (to incorporate family-care leave scheme in domestic law) (fully effective in 1999) ILO Convention No. 156 ratified (concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers who assume responsibilities for their families)
1996		Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network) established "Plan for Gender Equality 2000" formulated	
1997		Council for Gender Equality established by Law	"Equal Employment Opportunity Law" revised to prohibit discriminative recruitment practices (fully effective in 1999) "Labor Standards Law" revised to lift the ban on female worker's overtime work and dayoff working (fully effective in 1999) "Childcare Leave Law" revised to guarantee worker's right to reduce their night work if they are involved in childcare or nursing care (fully effective in 1999) "Nursing Care Insurance Law" enacted (effective in 2000, except for some articles)
1998			"Labor Standards Law" amended to restrict overtime work of male and female workers (effective in 1999)
1999			Expanding childcare leave program to male government officials. Eliminating restrictions on female official's midnight shift and overtime work (effective in 1999) Placing restrictions on late-night work for officials who are involved in childcare or nursing care (fully effective in 1999)
2000	UN General Assembly "Women 2000" (New York)	"Basic Law for Gender Equal Society" enacted "Basic Plan for Gender Equality" formulated	"Basic Law on Equal Agriculture and Rural Areas" enacted to encourage women's participation (effective in 1999) "Law on Proscribing Stalking Behavior and Assisting Victims" enacted (effective in 2000)
2001		"Council for Gender Equality" and "Gender Equality Bureau" established in the process of central government reorganization HPGE set up the policies, "Actively Recruiting Female Public Employees at the National Government Level," "Eliminating Violence against Women" The Cabinet approved "Support Measures for Balancing Work and Child Raising," which is currently being examined by CGE's specialist committee	"Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims" enacted (fully effective in 2002) "Childcare Leave Law" revised to raise the applicable dependent children's age limit (fully effective in 2002)
2002		The report "Examination on Lifestyle Selection and Taxation, Social Security and Employment Systems" submitted by the Specialist Committee on Inward Assessment and Evaluation	"Guidelines for Recruiting/Promoting Female National Public Employees" formulated Revising "Childcare Leave Law," etc. for national government public employees in order to raise the applicable dependent children's age limit, expand nursing leave duration and grant new day-off scheme for officials who provide nursing care to their children (effective in 2002)
2003	Review session for Japan's Report on its implementation of CEDAW (Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports)	Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality approved "Supportive Measures for Women's Challenges"	Amending "Income Tax Law" to partly abolish the special spouse income deduction for married workers (effective in 2004)

(After the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City)

In 1975, the United Nations held the “World Conference of the International Women's Year” in Mexico City. The conference adopted its declaration on women’s contribution to equality, development and peace (Declaration of Mexico) as well as the “World Plan for Action,” which describes guidelines for implementing the declaration. After the world conference in Mexico, the UN General Assembly at its 30th session designated the period 1976-1985 as the “United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.”

Immediately after the “World Conference of the International Women's Year,” the Japanese government decided to establish its national machinery, “Headquarters for Planning and Promoting of Policies relating to Women,” which had the Prime Minister as its head. In 1977, the headquarters prepared the “National Action Plan,” which is Japan’s first comprehensive plan for improving women’s status.

(After the Second World Conference on Women in Copenhagen)

In 1980, the United Nations held “The United Nations Decade for Women” Mid-term World Conference in Copenhagen. The conference adopted “Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women,” which laid down the specific actions that each government and international organization should carry out mainly in “employment, health and education” priority fields during the second half of the decade. The conference also held the signing ceremony for the “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).” Japan also signed the convention.

In line with this “Programme of Action,” Japan’s national machinery set out its “Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period covered by the National Action Plan.” As the priority targets called for necessary domestic legislative improvements for ratifying CEDAW, the Japanese government started working on necessary frameworks for ratifying the convention. (Japan ratified CEDAW in 1985.)

Japan amended its Nationality Law and Family Registration Law in 1984 and put these amendments into effect in 1985. In particular, these amendments (i) expanded the Japanese nationality qualification to a child who has Japanese citizen as mother, and (ii) gave equal treatment to Japanese citizen’s husband and wife in acquiring Japanese nationality.

In 1985, Japan enacted the “Equal Employment Opportunity Law” and amended the “Labor Standards Law,” which relaxed limitations on women’s day-off working and night work while reinforcing safe motherhood programs. (These laws became effective in 1986.)

The traditional Japanese high school education curriculum required only female students to take a homemaking course. In 1984, the “Review Session on Homemaking Course” submitted a report that called for providing a homemaking course to male high school students as well.

(After the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi)

In 1985, the UN held the “United Nations Decade for Women” Nairobi World Conference. In addition to reviewing and evaluating achievements during the “United Nations Decade for Women,” this conference adopted “Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.” Aiming at achieving gender equality, the forward-looking strategies list specific actions, such as strengthening legislative frameworks for gender equality, achieving gender equality in education and employment, creating proper domestic mechanisms and enhancing research and statistics on women’s status.

Based on these forward-looking strategies, Japan prepared its “New National Action Plan towards the Year 2000” in 1986.

In 1990, the UN Economic and Social Council first reexamined “Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies.” In line with recommendations by the UN Economic and Social Council, Japan reexamined its new national action plan and revised it in 1991. Recognizing that men and women should equally participate in every aspect in a more cooperative manner in the 21st Century, the revised national action plan set out the new target “gender equality” instead of the former target “men and women’s joint social participation.”

At the same time, the Japanese government made efforts to improve other legislative and institutional frameworks. Japan promulgated the “Child Care Leave Law” in 1991 and put it into effect in 1992.

(After the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing)

In 1995, the UN held the “Fourth World Conference on Women” in Beijing. The conference again reexamined the “Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies” and adopted the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,” which sets out women’s empowerment tasks in twelve core fields toward the year 2000.

Paying due attention to consensus in other UN conferences, the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action” puts emphasis on the following matters, such as eliminating all forms of violence against women/girls, promoting women’s reproductive health, encouraging women’s capacity building for sustainable development, achieving gender equality in policy decision-making processes as well as supporting developing nations to improve women’s status.

In 1996, Japan prepared the “Plan for Gender Equality 2000” based on the decisions agreed at the Beijing Conference. After enacting the “Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society” in 1999, Japan developed the “Basic Plan for Gender Equality” in 2000 in accordance with this new law.

The “Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society” has had significant impact on central and local governments’ policies.

In agricultural fields, “Agricultural Basic Law” was succeeded by the “Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas” in 1999. This law has a provision which aims at properly evaluating women’s roles in agricultural businesses and encouraging women’s active participations in agricultural business.

In addition to enacting the “Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society,” Japan amended the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and Labor Standards Law in 1997 and put these amendments into effect in 1999 to reinforce equal treatment for male and female workers in their workplace. The amended Labor Standards Law eliminated restrictions on women’s day-off working and overtime work but reinforced its safe motherhood programs. (Labor Standards Law’s maternity protection section became effective in 1998.)

(Enhancing national machinery organizational structure)

Based on the declaration by the “International Women's Year World Conference” in 1975, Japan established its national machinery (HPPPW) and appointed the Prime Minister as its president. The Japanese government also established the “Women’s Affairs Office” as HPPPW secretariat and convened the Council for Planning and Promoting of Policies relating to Women (CPPPW). The government has been making continuous efforts to enhance Japan’s national machinery since then.

In line with the decision adopted by the 1985 Nairobi Conference, the Japanese government expanded HPPPW in 1986 to cover all ministries and reorganized CPPPW as the “Advisory Council for Planning and Promoting of Policies relating to Women.”

In 1994, the Prime Minister’s Office established the Council for Gender Equality as well as the Office for Gender Equality. The government abolished HPPPW at the Prime Minister’s Office and, instead, set up the “Headquarters for Promoting Gender Equality” in the Cabinet by upgrading the headquarter membership from vice minister level to minister level. In addition, the government appointed gender equality officials in all ministries, who are in charge of assisting the headquarter members and coordinating ministerial gender equality activities. These organizational enhancements have yielded the current institutional framework that promotes gender equality efforts in close cooperation between the Headquarters and the Council, guarantees close coordination between the Office for Gender Equality and all ministries and effectively supports overall gender equality activities in the government.

In 1997, the Japanese government upgraded the “Council for Gender Equality” from being a temporary-based council to a permanent-based council. The Council also took over missions of the former Prostitution Countermeasures Council.

In line with central government reorganization in 2001, the Cabinet Office established the new “Council for Gender Equality” and the “Gender Equality Bureau” to reinforce the organizational structure. In addition, the Minister for Gender Equality officially became the Minister of State in accordance with the Cabinet Office Establishment Law.

As one of the core councils in the Cabinet Office, the Council for Gender Equality examines and discusses basic policies and other important matters on gender equality, monitors progresses in achieving gender equality and surveys government policy impacts on gender equality processes.

The Council has subordinate committees, such as the “Specialist Committee on Basic Affairs,” “Specialist Committee on Violence against Women,” “Specialist Committee for Grievance and Monitoring,” “Specialist Committee on Impact Survey” and “Specialist Committee on Balancing Work and Childcare.” (“Specialist Committee on Balancing Work and Childcare” was abolished after submitting its final report.) These specialist committees are examining and discussing their own areas of responsibility.

2. Enhancing government's Legislative/Institutional Frameworks and Efforts in Various Sectors

Sensitively responding to new legislative and institutional frameworks provided by the government, Japan's private sector has been making efforts to promote gender equality in various fields.

(1) Efforts in employment

Due to expansion in its service sector, the Japanese economy had seen an increased number of female workers from 1970 to 1985. At that time, Japanese corporations had stronger needs for part-timers. In particular, more and more women joined the labor market as part-timers.

During that period, most Japanese corporations adopted the business practice of engaging male workers in core tasks and assigning female workers to secondary duties. While hiring female part-timers as a relatively inexpensive labor force, many Japanese companies used to have gender discriminative labor management practices for their female full-time workers to encourage their early retirement from work. For example, many Japanese firms used to apply a lower age-limit for female workers' retirement, while many Japanese women left their jobs due to marriage or childbirth.

As the Labor Standards Law at that time assumed that women deserve special physical protection and bear homemaking responsibilities, the law set out maternity protection programs and restricted female worker's overtime work, night work and day-off duties until its amendments in 1986 and 1999. Consequently, Japanese companies needed to make special consideration when hiring female workers.

After the Diet passed the Equal Employment Opportunity Law to provide equal employment conditions for men and women, Japanese firms started to abandon their traditional gender-role-sharing-based employment management practices. Some companies started dividing female workers into two career categories (i.e., the main career track responsible for core duties on the one hand, and the general office employee in charge of secondary tasks, on the other hand) and applying different labor management policies for these two career courses. This shift from gender-based employment management practices to a career-category-based approach actually expanded opportunities for female workers to participate in core duties. However, female workers still accounted for a significant percentage of lower rank jobs. Even if female workers were hired as main career track employees, Japanese firms usually demanded longer working hours and job transfers. Due to these factors, female employees faced difficulties in striking a balance between their work and housekeeping/child-raising duties after marriage.

As mentioned above, it was very important to provide more favorable conditions for creating a proper balance between work and housekeeping/child-raising duties. As the Childcare Leave Law in 1992 required private corporations to introduce maternity leave, Japan's private enterprises gradually launched their new labor management programs, paying more attention to balancing work and family life.

While this shift in labor management practices actually contributed to increased number of and longer service years for Japan's female workers, there were still many problems remaining such as job discrimination between male and female workers, relatively small percentage of female managers, and persistent sexual harassment against female workers.

To address these problems, the Diet revised the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1997. The revised law prohibits any discriminatory labor management practices against female workers and also requires corporations to make efforts to prevent sexual harassments as well as taking positive action. In line with this, more and more companies are launching preventive measures against sexual harassment and starting to work on their positive action programs.

In addition, some companies are making efforts to capitalize on their female workers' vitality as their corporate strategy and are voluntarily improving career opportunities and working conditions for their female workers.

Chart 3. Private sector's labor management practice to leverage women's vitality

<p>Company A (information service provider)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established CEO's advisory organ in charge of recommending specific plans to further leverage female worker's vitality. Set up specific numerical targets for increasing female workers and female managerial officials toward the year 2003. Even after achieving these numerical targets, the company has been continuing in efforts by setting up a new target toward the year 2008. - Has been providing managerial staff training sessions for female rank and filers, and holding forums and mentoring sessions for female staff, aiming at increasing the number of female managerial officials. - Provides advice and collects information on childcare, nursing care and home-helpers. Introduced a new system to seek home-helpers on the web. - Introduced short working hour program in 2004. Employees may apply for shorter working hours, in principle, for any reason. If an employee applies for this program due to his/her childcare duties at home, the shorter working hours will be applicable until his/her child enters junior high school.
<p>Company B (food manufacturer)</p>	<p>As a part of corporate reform, the firm has dramatically revised its personnel system as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When introducing the self-nomination program in appointing managerial staff, the firm set up a special quota for female applicants who have service years of 8 years or more. This special quota was a stopgap measure effective for three years. The company aims to increase the percentage of female managerial staff to 5% in April 2003 (1.2% as of April 2000). - The firm conducts questionnaire surveys on newly appointed female managerial staff and checks out their satisfaction level in order to identify potential problems and appoint the right person for the right position. - The firm regards highly professional female staff as managerial staff, even if they don't have any subordinates. - The company provides capacity building training sessions for female staff while conducting awareness reform sessions for male workers. <p>With the above-mentioned initiatives, female staff occupy 4.6% of managerial posts and about 40% of new hires as of April 2003.</p>
<p>Company C (electronics)</p>	<p>To provide equal treatment for male and female staff, the firm plans to gradually abolish its spouse benefit package for three years from 2004. If an employee has a newborn baby, the company pays a lump-sum benefit of ¥550,000 per baby. If the employee takes out an insurance policy for child education, the company additionally pays ¥50,000. The firm also pays ¥5,000 a month to employees who have children or a disabled person in their family.</p>

(2) Efforts in the public sector

With supportive measures to balance women's work and family life, Japan's central government has been making efforts to enlarge the recruitment and promotion of female public employees.

In February 1976, HPPPW set out the policy for actively hiring female officials at the government ministry/agency level. Japan's "National Action Plan" also puts emphasis on opening positions to female public employees at the central government level. In 1977, HPPPW drew up the paper, "Special activities to promote women's participation in policy decision-making processes."

In 1975, 12 civil employee examinations (for regular service category) had qualification restrictions on female test-takers, but the government gradually lifted these restrictions. The government eliminated such restrictions in 1989, when the test qualification restriction was abolished for Level III Recruitment Test (postal service B) female applicants. As for special service category, the National Defense Academy lifted its restriction on female test-takers in 1991. The Maritime Self-Defense Force and Air Self-Defense Force also abolished their restrictions on female applicants for their aviation divisions. In addition, the central government has been making efforts to further leverage women's vitality by lifting restrictions on female employee's graveyard shift and overtime work in 1999.

Women's active entry to the workforce has resulted in the necessity of a policy initiative that enables an appropriate balance between work and family life. To this end, the government expanded supportive measures for female public employees. The Childcare Leave Law became effective in 1992 and entitled male and female workers to childcare leave or partial-day absence if they have a child aged under 1. In September 1994, the nursing care leave program (3 months long) was legally established. In April 2002, lawmakers revised the Childcare Leave Law ,etc.to raise the applicable child's age limit to 3 years old,

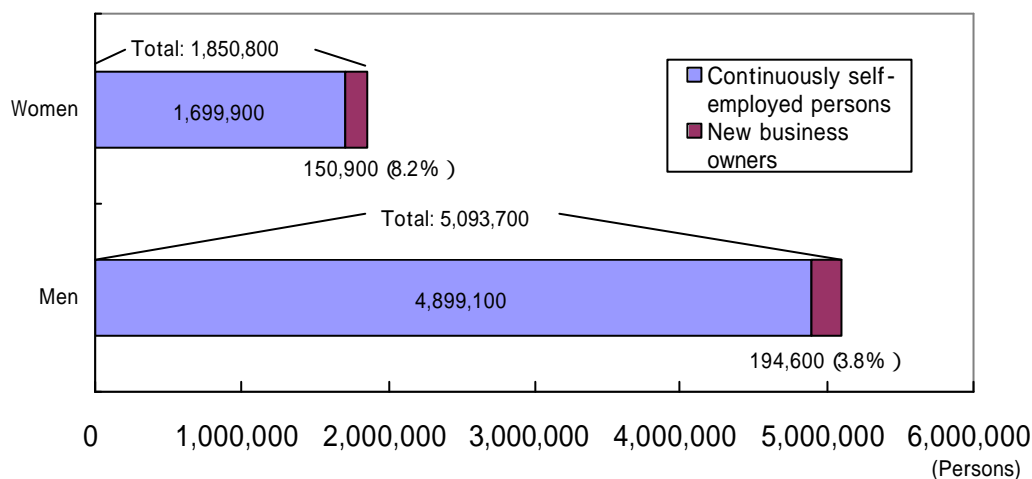
extend the nursing care leave period from 3 months to 6 months, and newly set up day-off program for providing nursing cares to worker's children. These amendments have effectively improved supportive measures for balancing work, childcare, and nursing care. In the past, only female public employees were able to reduce their late-night/overtime work. However, aiming at providing a more family-friendly working environment, the government now entitles male public employees to such work-hour reductions as well.

Although the supportive framework for women has been expanding as mentioned above, Japan's female public employees still account for a lower percentage of the total government workforce than in other major nations. Keeping this in mind, the government is taking active measures to increase the number of female government officials in general and the number of those in managerial positions. In May 2001, the National Personnel Authority prepared "Guidelines concerning the Enlargement of the Recruitment and Promotion of Female National Public Employees." In accordance with the NPA guidelines, central government ministries are making efforts to recruit and promote female officers on their own initiatives.

(3) Efforts in business and research fields (Starting Business)

Japanese women are becoming more interested in starting their own business. According to the "Employment Status Survey" (2002 edition) released from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, women account for 8.2% of all new business owners who have started or changed their business in the one-year period before the survey, while men make up only 3.8% of the new business owners (Chart 4). According to the "Survey on Women's Entrepreneurship" released from CAWW (the Center for the Advancement of Working Women) in January 2003, women tend to be interested in starting their own business in their 40s (29.3%) or 30s (28.4%), which suggests Japanese women wish to start their business after fulfilling their childcare duties. Under such circumstance, both the private and public sectors have recently launched various programs to support potential female entrepreneurs, such as low-interest loans programs, information services, and entrepreneurial seminars.

Chart 4. Number of male and female new business owners and their percentage of the total self-employed persons



(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Employment Status Survey" (2002 edition).

2. "New business owners" mean self-employed persons who changed or started their businesses during the one-year period before the survey.

(Research)

Under the strong leadership of university presidents, Japan's universities have been voluntarily launching their framework and action plans to achieve gender equality. The Japan Association of National Universities released its report, calling for raising the percentage of female professors (except assistant professors and part-time instructors) to 20% by the year 2010.

Aiming at gender equality in the science and technology field, 14 academic communities including the physics and chemistry communities jointly formed the "Gender Equality Academic Community Liaison Conference" in October 2002 to increase the number of female researchers at universities and research

institutions voluntarily.

Section 2. Gender equality in local communities

Japan's local communities have also seen steady progress toward gender equality. The achievements include various gender equality initiatives at local government level and the more active involvement of women in the policy decision-making process. In addition, women have been actively participating in NGO activities in recent years. Women's active participation significantly contributes to revitalizing local communities.

(Improvements in gender equality at local government level)

Like the central government that established the national machinery in 1975 and formulated "National Action" in 1977, local governments have also been providing women-related public services by creating a relevant division or advisory organ in charge of women's affairs. Since the Diet passed the "Basic Law for a Gender Equal Society" in 1999, local governments have been taking positive measures to achieve gender equality.

(Women's participation in policy decision-making process at the local level)

Women are also becoming active in the policy decision-making processes at the local level. From 1975 to 1984, female lawmakers accounted for some 1% at the prefectural assembly level, about 2% at city council level, and less than 1% at town/village assembly level. Since then, the number of female local lawmakers has been increasing gradually, accounting for 6.9% at the prefectural level, 11.9% at city level and 5.6% at town/village level as of the end of 2003. While Tokyo's 23 special ward assemblies already had a relatively higher percentage of female councilors (6% to 7%) during the 1975-1984 period, this percentage has been increasing further and reached 21.5% as of the end of 2003.

In addition, local governments are making efforts to increase the number of female members on their advisory councils and taking active measures to increase the number of female public employees in general and the number of those in managerial positions.

(Women's vitality at local communities)

The recent diversification of values among Japanese citizens has brought about various needs that might not be addressed with government policies or corporate activities. This has led to resident activities becoming more active. In particular, NPOs and other civil groups are becoming involved in various activities, including welfare services (such as food service for elderly people and escorting service for disabled people), town development projects, public security activities, and other community activities. Some civil groups aim at encouraging gender-equality awareness among residents. In 1998, the Diet passed the "Nonprofit Activities Promotion Law" (NPO Law), which granted judicial personality to nonprofit organizations in order to provide them with stronger credibility and wider opportunities for their activities.

Women are becoming more active in NPOs. According to the "Basic Survey on Civil Organizations" released from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts, and Telecommunications in April 2001, more than 60% of civil organizations consists of unpaid volunteers only. Female staff account for a high percentage in more than 50% of civil organizations. In fact, 48.5% of civil groups replied that nonworking housewives play the most important role in their activities, while 31.4% of civil organizations said pensioners and retired persons play active roles.

Women are also becoming active in volunteer activities. The "National Survey on Volunteer Activists" (2001) of the Japan Council of Social Welfare suggests that "nonworking housewives" occupy the largest percentage (38.1%) in volunteer members.

Women's involvements in non-profit or community activities have been triggering their starting new businesses. Many model cases suggest that women's active participation in welfare, childcare and local community service has been making significant contributions.

To facilitate women's active involvements in community services, the Council for Gender Equality (CGE) and the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (HPGE) set out "Supportive Measures for Women's Challenges" in April 2003. Paying due attention to local characteristics, the government provides one-stop information service and delivers best practice information beneficial to building up role models.

Section 3. Gender consciousness and life stages

The preceding sections have explained how the Japanese government has made efforts toward gender equality since 1975 (International Women's Year). This section describes actual gender-equal achievements, using indicators. (See Chart 5.)

Chart 5. Major gender equality indicators

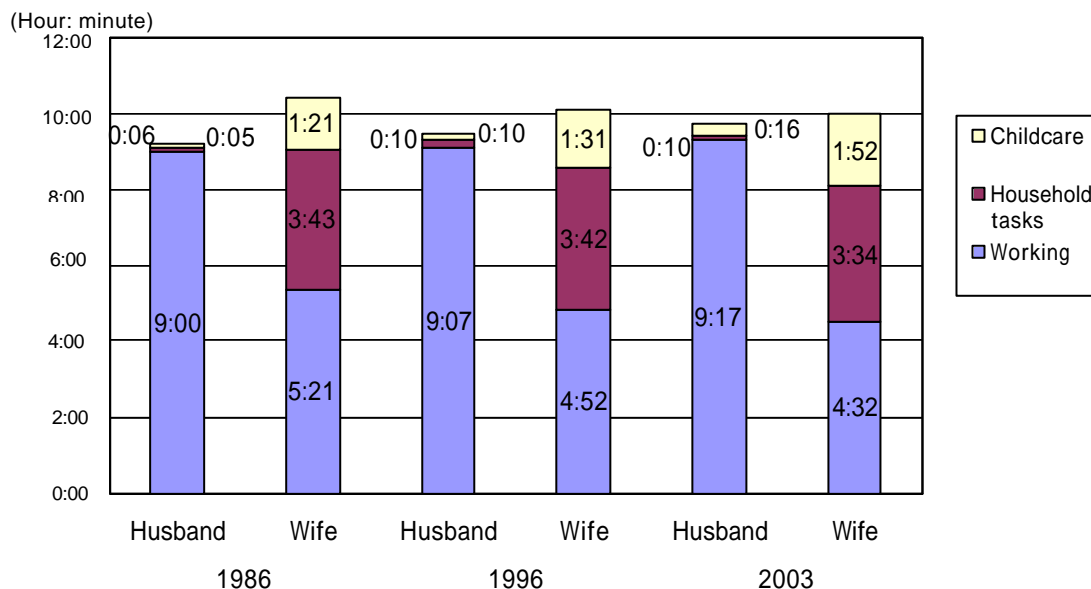
	1975	1985	1995	2003 (%)
Percentage of female Diet members				
House of Representatives	1.2 (in 1976)	1.4 (in 1986)	4.6 (in 1996)	7.1
House of Councillors	7.1 (in 1974)	8.7 (in 1986)	13.5 (in 1995)	14.6
Percentage of female national government employees with managerial positions	0.3	0.5	1.0	1.3 (in 2002)
Percentage of female workers	37.4	39.7	40.5	41.1
Percentage of female managerial staff	5.3	6.6	8.9	9.7
Percentage of female staff engaged in highly professional/technical tasks	42.9	45.5	43.3	45.8
Female worker's wage level as a percentage of male worker's wage level	58.8 (in 1976)	59.6	62.5	66.8

(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Labor Force Survey"; the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Basic Survey on Wage Structure"; and National Personnel Authority documents.

2. "Percentage of female Diet members" represents the percentage of female lawmakers immediately after their election. (The year 2003 data are as of November 2003.)

The percentage of female parliamentary members has slightly increased, while there is still a significantly low percentage of females in public sector managerial positions. On the other hand, a relatively high percentage of female workers are involved in highly professional/technical tasks. While women have been gradually occupying a larger percentage of the total workforce, they are still facing a low percentage in managerial positions. During the child-raising period (with a child younger than 6 years old), working husbands tend to spend longer hours in their workplace, while their household and childcare hours almost remain flat (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Time spent on working, household tasks and childcare of working husband and wife during their child-raising period



(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities."

2. The figure represents time allocation on weekdays. "Household task hours" mean time spent on household tasks, nursing care and shopping.

3. "child-raising period" means a period that the husband or the wife has a child younger than 6 years old.

Despite government efforts for gender-equality, in Japan, the process towards female participations in the political arena is slow, and increased participation in government staff and employment fields has stigmatized along with gender equality in the home.

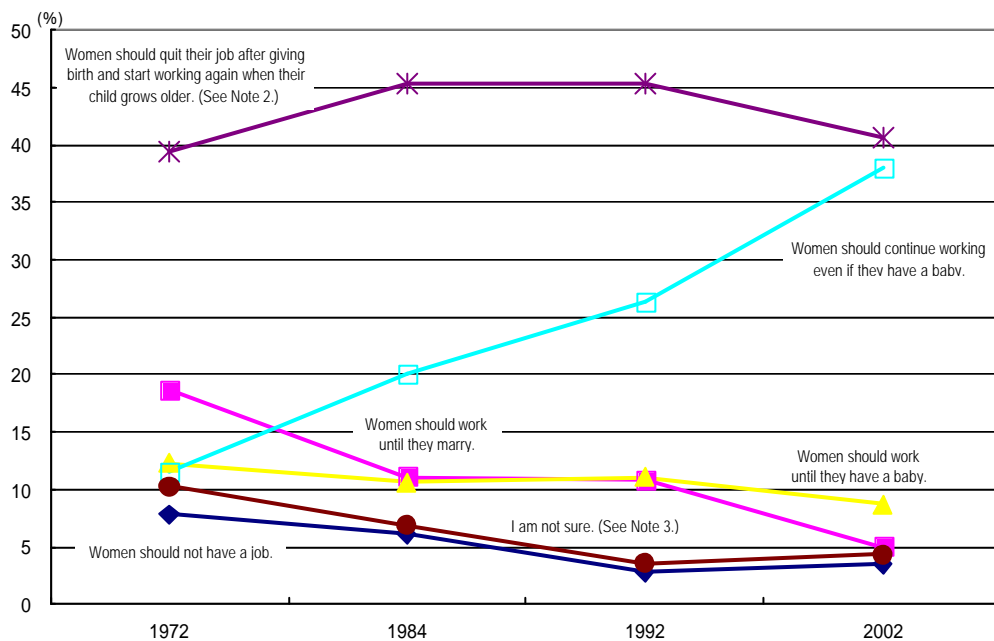
This actual process towards gender equality in Japan is much slower than policymakers expected. As this slow process represents Japanese citizens' awareness of gender role sharing, the following section examines changes in general attitudes to female workers.

1. Transition in general attitude to workingwomen

(Japanese men and women are changing their attitudes toward working women but have a awareness gap towards women's working style)

Over the last 30 years, more and more women have chosen to work after marriage. In particular, the last 10 years represent a rapid increase in the number of women who agree with "uninterrupted working," such as "Women should continue working even if they have a baby." In 2002, the number of women supporting "uninterrupted working" more than tripled those in 1972. On the other hand, many respondents still support "temporarily suspended working," such as "women should start working again when their child grows older." In 2002, this respondent category accounted for the largest percentage. An age bracket comparison reveals that respondents in their 30s and 50s tend to support "uninterrupted working," while many female respondents in other age brackets support "temporarily suspended working" as an appropriate female worker's working pattern (Chart 7).

Chart 7. Transition in women's attitudes to working women



(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Cabinet Office's "Attitude Survey on Women's Affairs" (1972), "Opinion Survey on Women's Affairs" (1984), "Opinion Survey on Sexual Equality" (1992) and "Opinion Survey on Gender Equality" (2002).

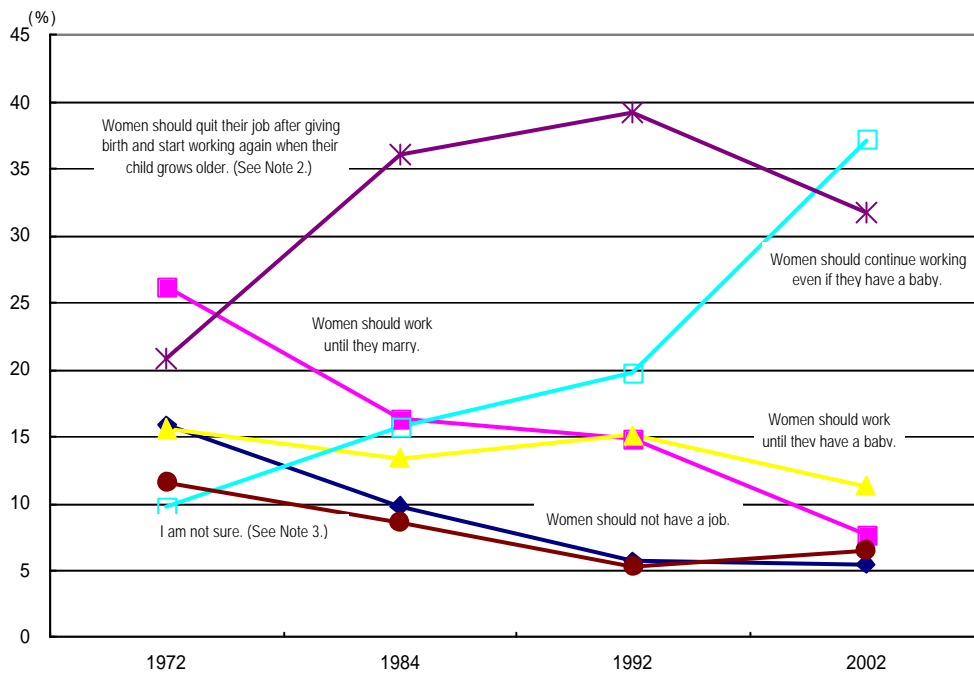
2. The 1984 survey had the corresponding answer option: "Women should have a job, but they should quit their job on marriage/childbirth and start working again after fulfilling their child-raising duties."

3. The 1992 and 2002 surveys had the corresponding answer options: "I have different views" and "I am not sure."

More and more male respondents accept the concept of workingwomen positively. About 30 years ago, 40% of male respondents thought women should not work throughout their life or should be the full-time homemakers after their marriage. However, this respondent category made up a much lower percentage (about 10%) in 2002. An increasing number of male respondents agree with women's working even after marriage. In particular, in the ten years since 1992, the number of male respondents who agree with "uninterrupted working" has been increasing rapidly, accounting for the largest percentage in all age brackets in 2002. Now, 70% of male respondents agree with "uninterrupted working" or "temporarily suspended working," which shows that women's working has become more acceptable in society (Chart 8).

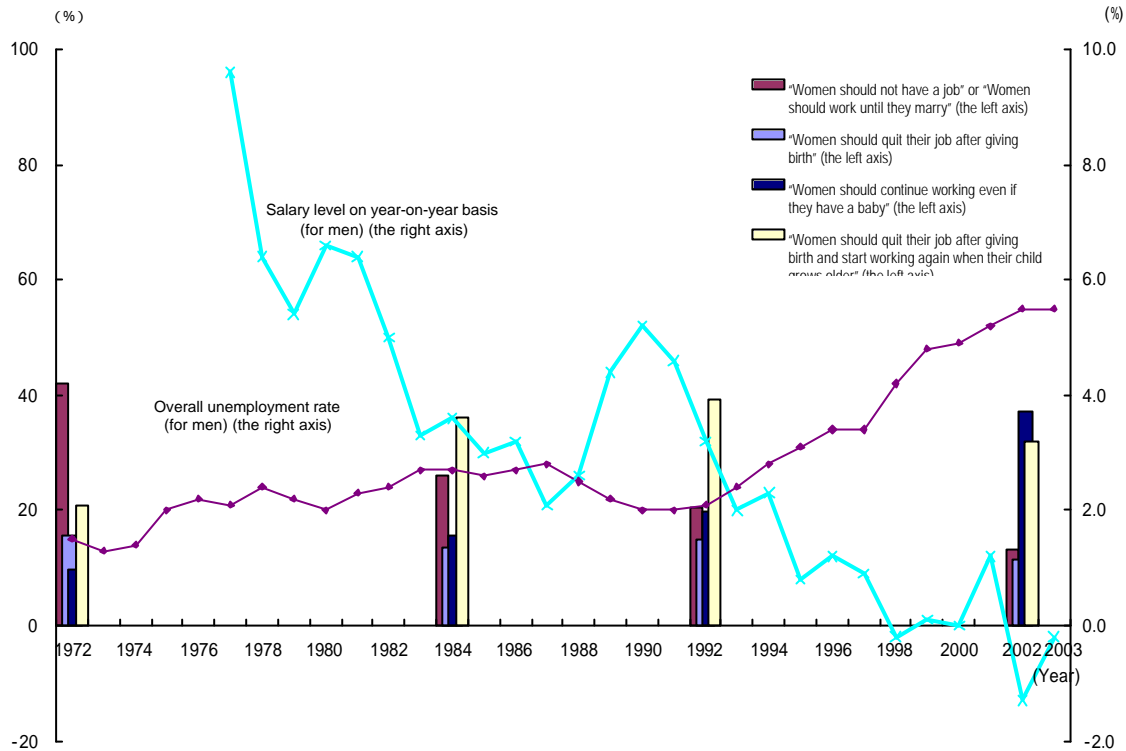
This rapid change in male respondent's awareness mainly results from significant socioeconomic changes, such as stagnant wage hikes and increased corporate downsizing (Chart 9). Unlike the high economic growth era that guaranteed constant salary hikes, present households in Japan are facing increased risks for insufficient income level if a husband is the only wage earner. Japanese men tend to agree with the concept of working women mainly because they feel insecure in earning a sufficient income.

Chart 8. Transition in men's attitudes to working women



- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the same sources as Chart 7.
 2. The 1984 survey had the corresponding answer option: "Women should have a job, but they should quit their job on marriage or childbirth and start working again after completing their child-raising duties."
 3. The 1992 and 2002 surveys had the corresponding answer options: "I have different views" and "I am not sure."

Chart 9. Economic conditions and men's attitudes to working women



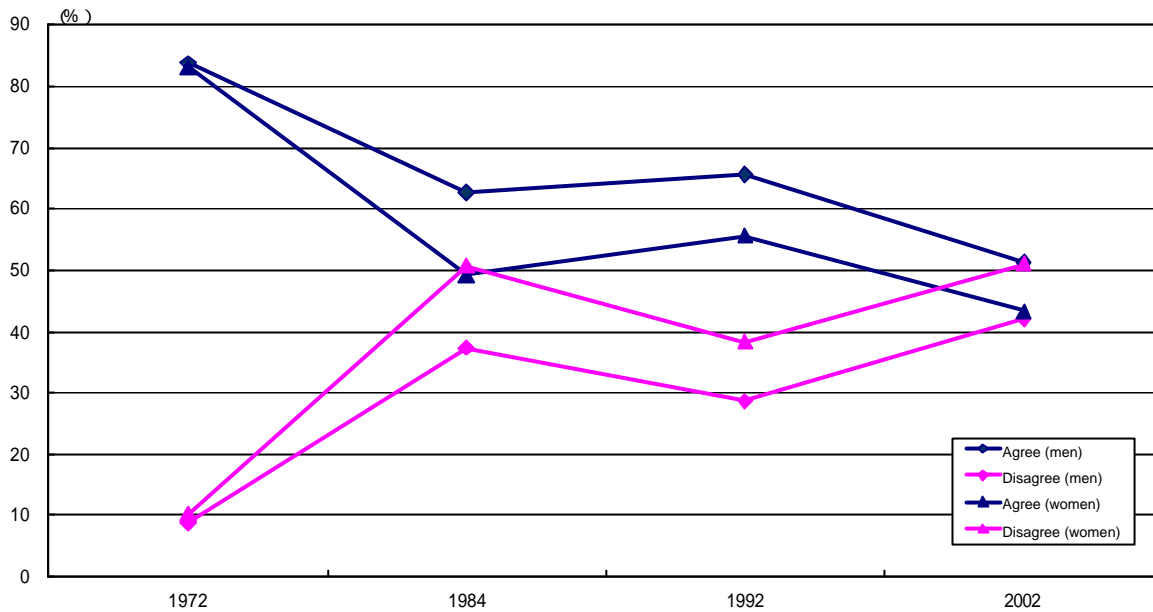
(Note) The data were collected from source materials including the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Labor Force Survey"; the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Basic Survey on Wage Structure"; and the Cabinet Office's "Opinion Survey on Gender Equality."

Both male and female respondents came to have more positive thinking about workingwomen, but there is still a persistent gender gap in their opinions about women's working pattern. This opinion gap comes from women's strong recognition that they must be in charge of household duties even after they start working like their husband. In more than 70% of households, a working or nonworking wife is mainly responsible for cleaning, laundry, cooking, and other household chores. About 40% of Japanese wives and husbands feel gender equality in their households, but wives are mainly in charge of household duties even in these gender-equality families. This gender gap partly results in a slower gender equality process than the policymakers had expected.

(People have a different viewpoint from the traditional gender role "A husband should work outside, while a wife should stay home")

In 1972, more than 80% of male and female respondents agreed with the traditional gender concept, "A husband should work outside, while a wife should stay home." (See Chart 10.) The number of male and female supporters exceeded that of opponents in every age bracket. While opponents in their 20s registered the highest percentage in all age brackets, supporters still accounted for 78% even in this age bracket. In 2002, about thirty years later, 42.1% of male respondents and 51.1% of female respondents disagree with such traditional gender roles, accounting for a much larger percentage in 2002 than in 1972. On the other hand, as 51.3% of men and 43.3% of women still agree with this idea, the supporters make up almost the same percentage as the opponents.

Chart 10. Men and women's awareness of traditional gender roles
("A husband should work outside, while a wife should be a full-time homemaker")

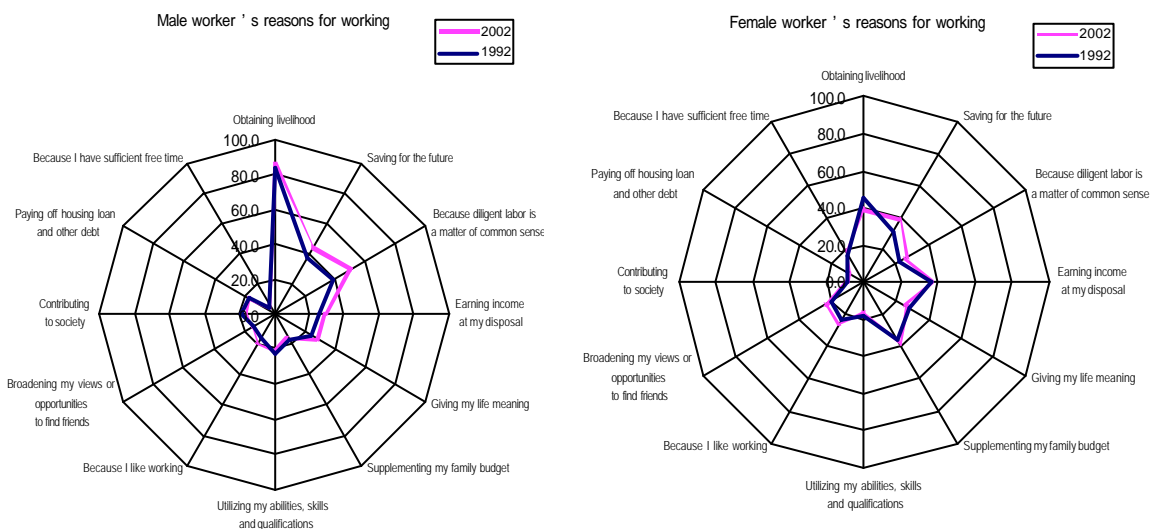


(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Cabinet Office's "Attitude Survey on Women's Affairs" (1972), "Opinion Survey on Women's Affairs" (1984), "Opinion Survey on Sexual Equality" (1992) and "Opinion Survey on Gender Equality" (2002).
2. The 1984 survey had two answer options only: "Agree" and "Disagree." The total doesn't equal 100% because the surveys in 1972, 1992 and 2002 had the answer option: "I am not sure."

(Reasons for working are different between male and female workers)

The answer option "Obtaining livelihood" hits the highest percentage for male workers. Since this answer option hits a lower rate for female workers, women are more likely to work for their economic/mental satisfaction. Even regular female workers are less likely to choose "obtaining livelihood" than male workers. For the 1992-2002 period, there is a slight increase in the number of female workers who select the answer option "obtaining livelihood" due to deteriorated economic conditions. However, many female workers are still choosing the other answer options as well. Male workers are becoming less likely to choose other answer options except for "obtaining livelihood." In particular, the answer option "Because diligent labor is a matter of common sense" has significantly dropped for male workers (Chart 11).

Chart 11. Reasons for working



Due to severe economic conditions, male workers strongly feel their obligation to feed their family members. In this sense, they cannot afford to see other reasons for working.

2. Life stages and milestones in life

As mentioned earlier, more and more respondents have a positive attitude about working women. However, there is a persistent gap between their awareness and actual behavior in sharing childcare and household chores. This suggests that Japanese men and women are still sticking to the traditional gender role-sharing concept. This section examines the current gender-equality conditions from the viewpoint of lifestyle selection.

(1) Changes in family structure

(Lower Birthrate and Smaller Household Size)

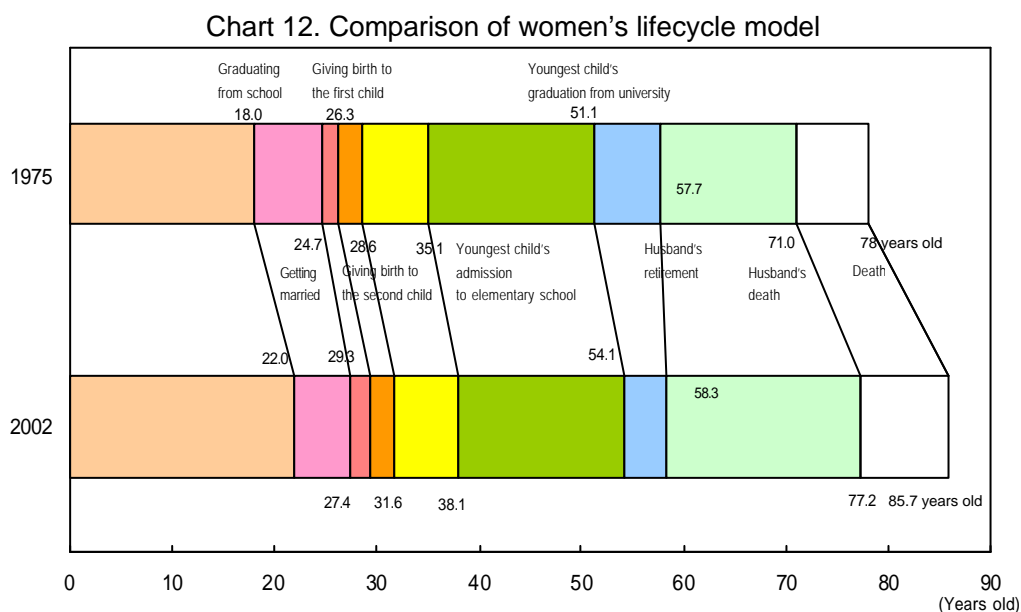
The total fertility rate (TFR) has been declining since 1975 and stands at 1.32 in 2002. In addition, lower birthrate and fewer 3-generation households have pushed down the household size and have converted the family structure. While “households only consisting of husband, wife and unmarried child” have decreased from some 40% in 1975 to 30% in 2002, “households only consisting of husband and wife” and “single-person households” have been increasing in their numbers.

(Roles of family)

Women are actively participating in the labor force, while the smaller family size has led to fewer housekeepers per household. Due to these reasons, Japan’s households are starting to outsource their household chores, which creates strong demand for catering and homemaking services. With the households outsourcing their housekeeping tasks to outside service providers, Japanese people have started putting more emphasis on emotional aspects of the family. As for the question, “What does your family mean to you?” the answer option “a place for enjoying chitchat” accounts for the highest percentage, followed by answer options: “a place for rest/comfort” and “a place for tightening family ties.” Over the last three years, there has been a constantly increasing number of respondents choosing “a place for tightening family ties” and “a place for affection between husband and wife.”

(2) Changing lifecycle

Lifecycle comparison between the 1975 and 2002 data has revealed how much fewer family members and ever-changing family function affects the women’s life cycle. Our lifecycle model assumes that life duration represents the average life expectancy for the twenty-year-old women (Chart 12).



(Notes) 1. The data were cited from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s “Vital Statistics” and “Life Tables”; and the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research’s “Basic Survey on Birth Trends.”

2. The life duration represents the average life expectancy for a twenty-year-old woman.

While this lifecycle model suggests longer life spans both for men and women, women enjoy larger prolongation of their life (7.7 years longer) than men (5.6 years longer). In addition, Japanese people are recently tending to marry later due to an increase in higher education enrollments and their ever-changing viewpoint about marriage. The 2002 data shows that major milestones in a women's life generally come later than the 1975 data.

Due to these lifecycle changes and wider lifestyle choices, it is increasingly important for women to design their life on their own. Major milestones in a women's life are as follows.

(3) Education

The level of education before starting to work has a significant impact on carrier choice and other lifestyle choices. About 535,000 male students and 532,000 female students moved on to higher education in 2003, which represents almost the same number between men and women. The number of newly enrolled female university students is smaller than men by 110,000, but the number of female new enrollments to community college or higher vocational schools exceeds that of male students by 86,000 and 28,000, respectively. In addition, female students tend to major in human science, but much fewer female students are majoring in engineering or science than male students. Female students majoring in social science account for some 30% of all female students, which represents a slightly lower percentage than male students (more than 40%).

(4) Employment (Starting career)

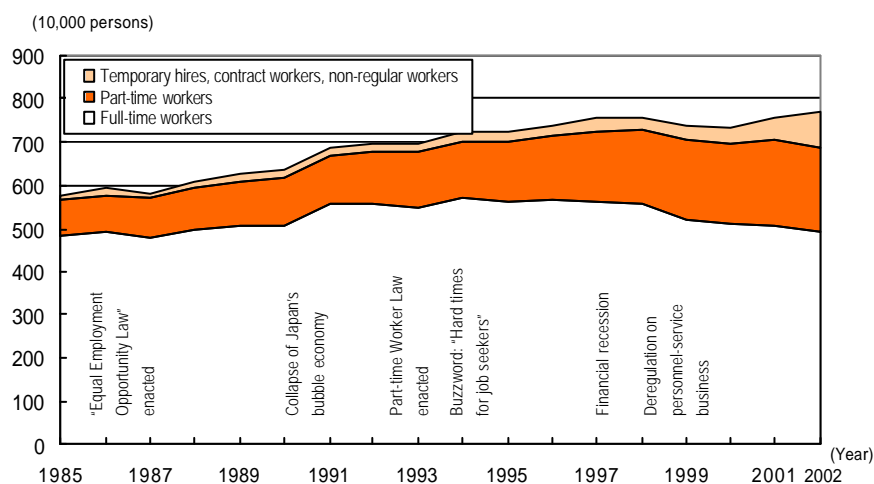
New graduates usually start their career after their graduation from schools, but younger generations suffer from difficult job-hunting conditions because companies are recently hiring only a limited number of new graduates. The unemployment rate has been rising since 1975.

As female university graduates and female high school graduates are facing fewer job offers than male graduates, female students still face a worse job-hunting environment.

More female graduates start working as part-timers than male new graduates. Although part-time workers account for a higher percentage both of male and female new graduates, female new graduates are more likely to be part-timers than male students.

The number of female regular workers had been increasing until 1991 but has since leveled off because of the stagnant economy and ever-changing corporate employment management practices. The number of female regular workers has been decreasing since 1997. On the other hand, female workers are increasingly taking part-time positions that provide less favorable working conditions than full-time positions. In 2002, the number of non-regular female workers stood at 2.8 times those of 1985 (Chart 13).

Chart 13. Number of young female workers by employment status



(Notes) 1. The data from 1985 to 2001 were cited from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Special Survey of the Labor Force Survey" (every February), while the 2002 data were collected from the "Labor Force Survey Annual Report (Detailed Results)."

2. The chart shows the number of female workers aged 15 to 34 (except for agricultural and forestry industries). However, it excludes student workers aged 15 to 24.

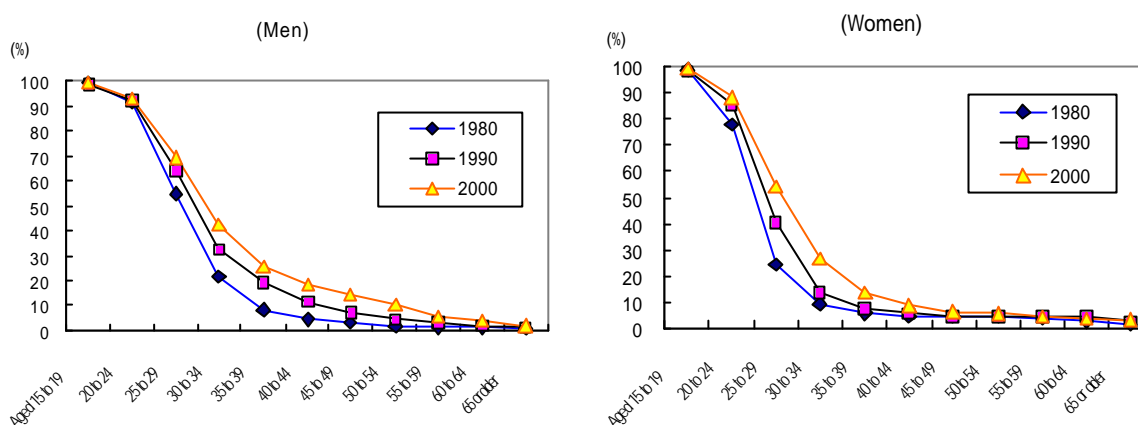
(5) Marriage

(More people remain unmarried or get married later)

As a recent tendency, Japanese people are more likely to remain unmarried or get married later than in the past. For comparison between age brackets, women in their late 20s and men in their early 30s especially show significant increase in the percentage of unmarried persons. Compared with women, men tend to have a higher unmarried percentage in every age bracket. In particular, there is a significant gap in unmarried persons between men and women in the age brackets aged 30 or older (Chart 14). The percentage of unmarried persons aged 50 or older has also been rising. The percentage of unmarried men is especially increasing and stands at 12.3% (5.6% for unmarried women).

The average first-marriage age has been also rising and stands at 29.1 years old for men and 27.4 years old for women as of 2002.

Chart 14. Percentage of unmarried persons by age bracket



(Note) The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Population Census."

(Divorce)

Some people get divorced at a certain life stage. The number of divorces and divorce rate temporarily decreased around 1985, but they have been increasing since 1990 and reached a record high in 2002. When full-time housewives start working when they are divorced, they will usually face unfavorable working condition due to lack of working skills. In this sense, many ex-housewives will have difficulties in obtaining favorable employment opportunities. In particular, working single mothers have to assume dual roles (i.e., raising her child and making income), but many of them face difficulties in enjoying child-care services or finding a new job. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "2002 Basic Survey on National Livelihood Survey," the average household income per fatherless family stood at ¥2,435,000 a year, which is only 40% of the average income for all households (¥6,020,000 per household). In this sense, fatherless families usually face severe economic conditions.

(6) Childbirth and childcare

(The choice: Continuing to work or temporarily stop working?)

While the first marriage age has been rising, the average married couple will have their first baby 1.9 years after their marriage, which does not represent significant changes from the 1975 data (1.55 years). After marriage or childbirth, women usually face a difficult choice: Continuing to working or quitting their job? According to the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, "The 12th Basic Survey on Birth Trends (for married couple)" (2002), working mothers account for less than 20% of all wives who have married for less than 5 years, while regular female workers make up some 10%. Among Japanese mothers having married for less than 5 years, full-time homemakers occupy a significantly high percentage. This means Japanese women tend to stop working when they have a child. More women actually support that "working women should continue working even if they have a baby," but many working mothers face difficulties in balancing their work and childcare duties. On the other hand, the number of working mother exceeds that of full-time housewives in the marriage duration of 10 to 14 years long. This suggests many women start working again after fulfilling their childcare duties (Chart 15).

Chart 15. Wife's employment status, marriage duration and children
(in cases where wives already had a job before marriage)

Marriage duration and survey year		Wife's employment status					
		Working women				Full-time homemakers	
		Without child		With child		Full-time employees (cited again)	
		Without child	With child	Without child	With child	Without child	With child
Zero to 4 years	1992	23.3	14.8	15.5	9.3	15.7	45.6
	2002	26.6	18.1	17.5	10.7	13.0	41.3
5 to 9 years duration	1992	5.6	35.3	3.4	17.2	2.8	55.7
	2002	6.8	34.1	2.9	13.9	3.8	54.3
10 to 14 years duration	1992	3.2	51.7	1.7	20.6	1.3	43.1
	2002	3.6	55.5	1.5	15.5	1.6	38.2

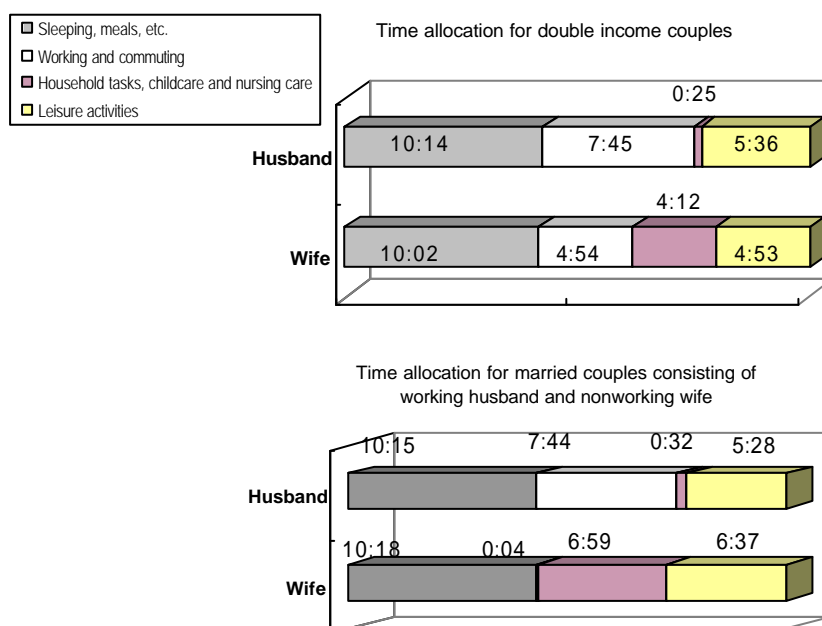
- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research's "The 12th Basic Survey on Birth Trends (for married couples)" (2002).
 2. The survey covers husbands and wives who married for the first time, while the wives already had a job before marriage. However, the survey excludes married couples that have an unknown number of children.
 3. The wife's employment status has the following definitions: "Working women" mean wives who have been working since their premarital days; "Full-time employees" refer to wives who have been working as full-timers (including temporary and non-regular staff); and "Full-time homemakers" mean wives who had a job before their marriage but quit once they got married. The figures include wives with unknown employment status.

(Household duties and childcare impose a heavy burden on wives)

Many women stop working at childbirth mainly because working mothers still have to bear the burdens of household duties and childcare even in double-income households. Whether their wife is working or not, the average Japanese husband spends much shorter hours on household duties or childcare than their wife. While working men's life patterns are not that different between single-income and double-income households, many working wives have to assume their household duties and have almost no leisure time (Chart 16).

Many wives have to bear much heavier burdens of household duties and childcare than husbands for the following two reasons: Many Japanese people still stick to the traditional concept of gender role-sharing; and Japanese men are busy with their work and have almost no time for household duties or childcare. Working hour comparison by age bracket suggests that young male workers tend to work longer, even though many of them are assumed to have a small child.

Chart 16. Time allocation of married couples



(Note) The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities" (2001).

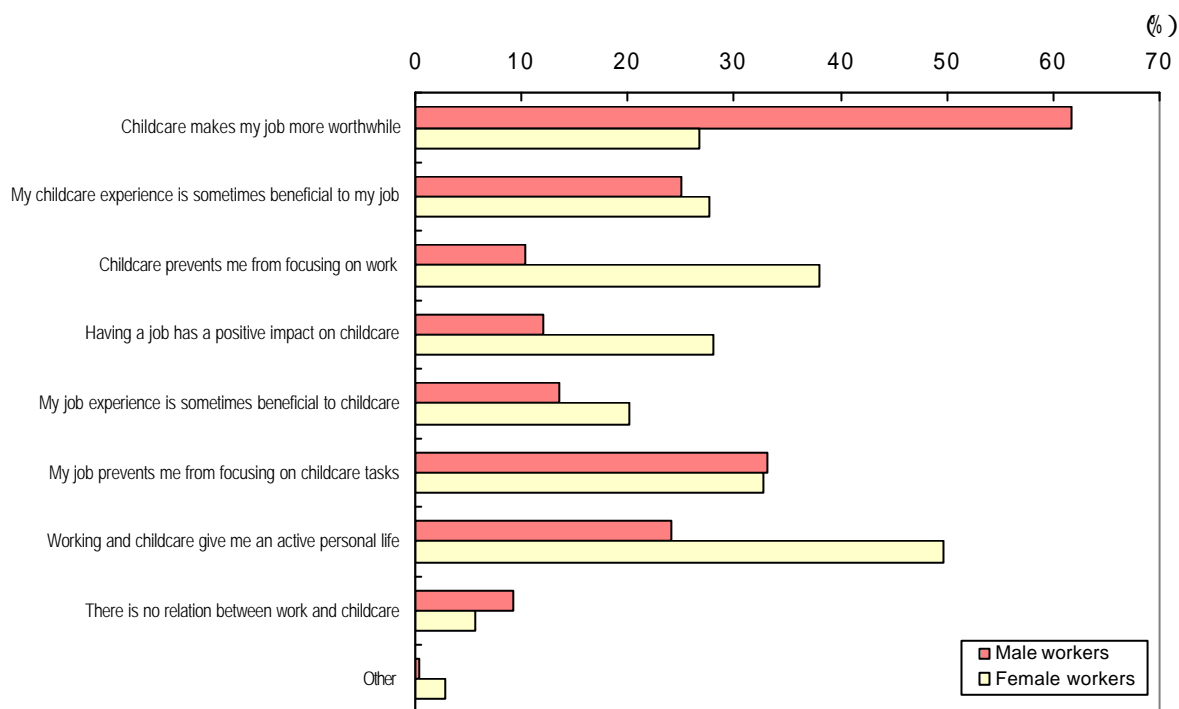
(Childcare leave)

According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, “2002 Basic Survey on Employment Management Practice on Female Workers,” a very limited number of male workers (0.33%) took childcare leave in 2002, while 64.0% of female workers took childcare leave. Japanese male workers tend to avoid taking childcare leave because they “cannot to afford to take childcare leave,” which hits the highest percentage, followed by the “Suspension of the father’s salary will lead to significant economic difficulties” and the “Father didn’t need to take childcare leave.”

(Relationship between working and childcare)

In the opinion survey on the relationship between working and childcare, Japanese men tend to choose the answer option “Childcare makes my job more worthwhile,” hitting the highest percentage. This means Japanese men strongly think that they are supporting childcare from economic aspects. As for Japanese women, the answer option “Working and childcare give me an active personal life” hits the highest percentage, but they also tend to think “Childcare prevents me from focusing on work,” suggesting that the childcare burden excessively falls on working mothers. On the other hand, many women chose the answer options “My childcare experience is sometimes beneficial to my job” or “My job experience is sometimes beneficial to childcare,” suggesting a lot of women see a positive correlation between childcare and working (Chart 17).

Chart 17. Relationship between working and childcare (Mark-all-that-apply type questionnaire)

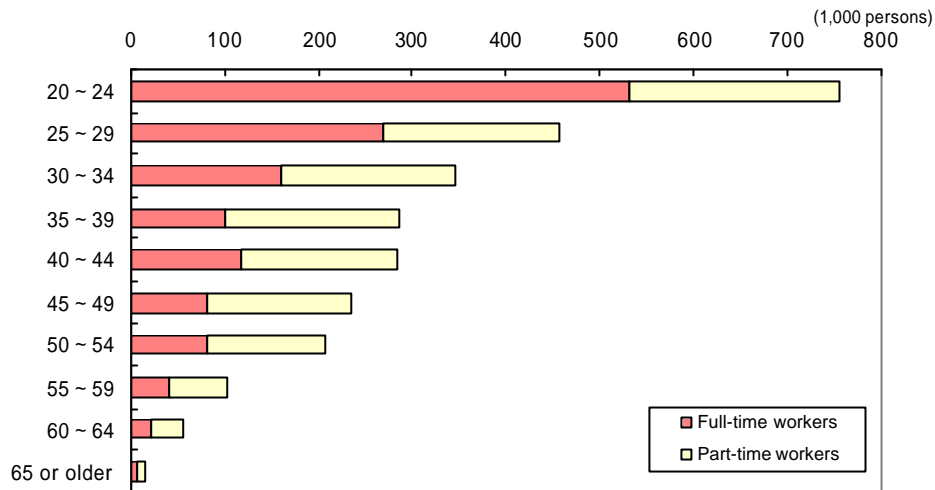


(Note) The data were cited from the Japan Institute of Labor’s “Survey on Balancing between Childcare, Nursing Care and Working” (2003).

(7) Reemployment (Reemployment)

According to employment status comparison by age bracket, part-timers make up some 30% of all female workers in their 20s (this age brackets includes a lot of new graduates), while women aged 35 or older start working as a part-timer in most cases (Chart 18). According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the “Comprehensive Survey on Part-time Workers” in 2001, 18.3% female workers choose a part-time position because “My family circumstances prevents me from working as a full-time worker,” while only 0.1% of male workers chose this answer option. Since part-time workers make less salary than full-time workers, less than 20% of female part-timers are economically self-sufficient. In this sense, many female part-timers economically depend on their spouse and are working as part-timers while doing housework and raising children.

Chart 18. Women's employment status when starting to work (by age bracket)



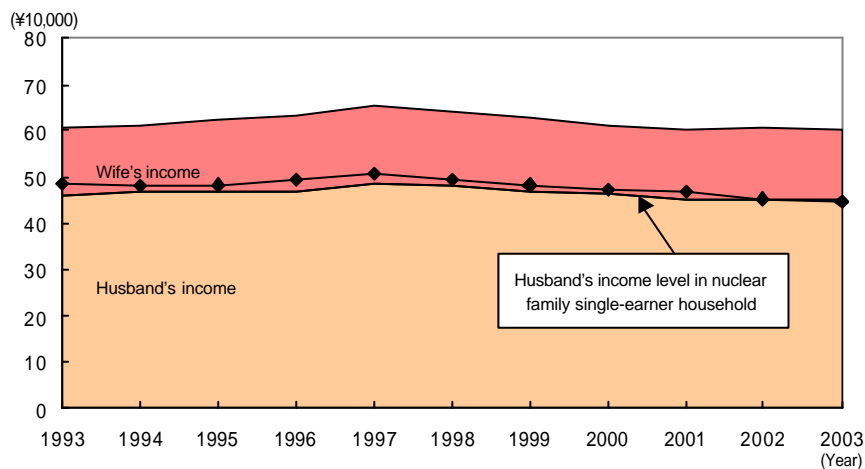
(Notes) 1. The data were cited from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Survey on Employment Trends" (2002).

2. Full-time workers mean regular employees except for "part-time workers."

(Wife's income in the family budget)

As mentioned above, more and more Japanese men and women agree with the uninterrupted working of female workers. The number of double-income households is also increasing. The income level for nuclear family double-income households exceeds that of single-income households. However, over the last 10 years, the wife's income has remained almost flat at about 30% of the husband's income (Chart 19).

Chart 19. Income level in nuclear family two-earner household



(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Family Income and Expenditure Survey" (two-or-more-person households except for agriculture, forestry and fishery households).

2. The surveyed households have two income earners (i.e., husband and wife) and don't have any other income earner. In these households, the husband is the household head.

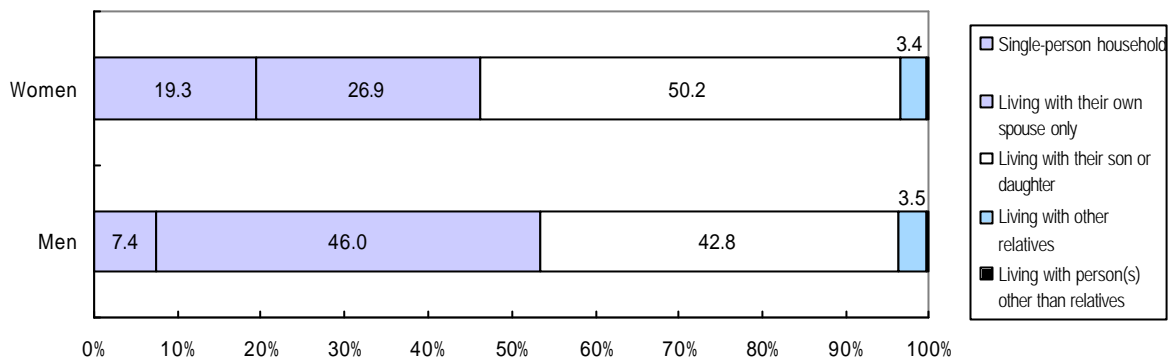
(8) Retirement

(Married couples after retirement)

As the average life expectancy gets longer, a retired husband and wife spend a longer time together than in the past. According to the Cabinet Office, the "Opinion Survey on the Health of the Aged" (2002), male elderly respondents who ask their spouses for advice or nursing care make up the highest percentage, while female elderly respondents tend to choose the answer option "children." After retirement, men are more likely to depend on their spouses than women.

Since women have a longer life span than men, female elderly persons are more likely to live in solitude after their husband's death. In fact, 19.3% of elderly women live in single-member households, which is more than twice as many as male elderly persons living in solitude (7.4%). (See Chart 20.)

Chart 20. Household structure for male and female elderly people aged 65 or older

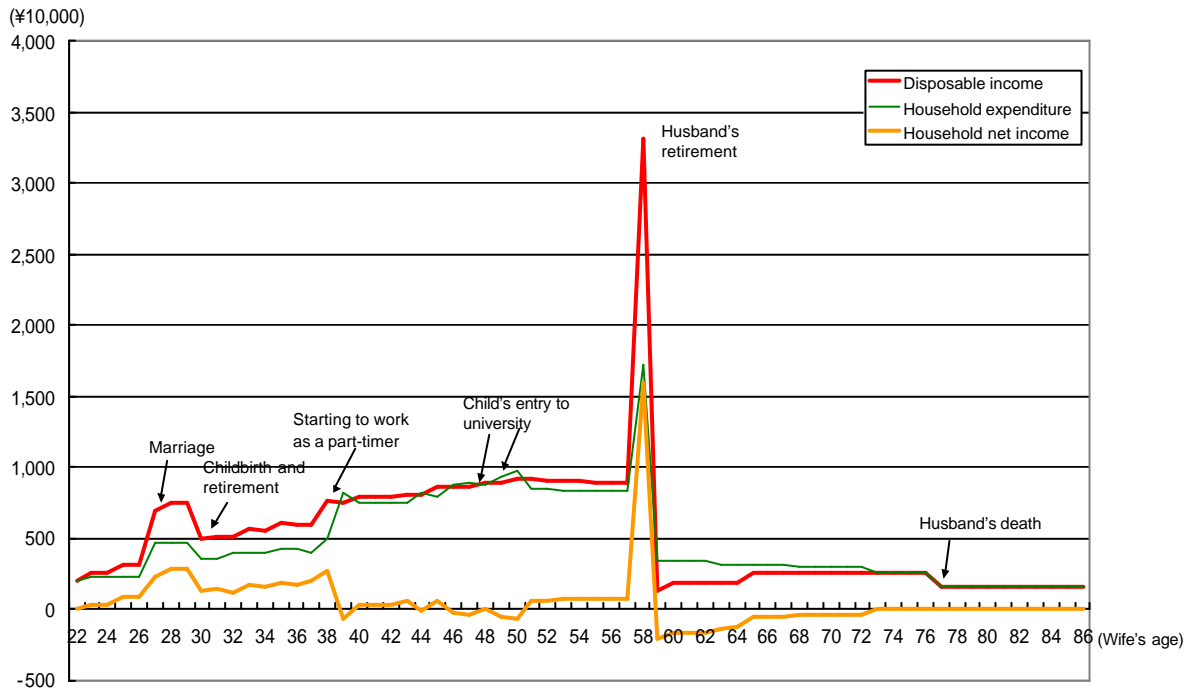


(Note) The data were collected from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Basic Survey on the National Livelihood" (2002 edition).

(9) Life designing

Women's average lifespan is longer than 85 years, and men's average lifespan is approaching 80 years long. In this sense, life designing is becoming more important than in the past. Based on major milestones as mentioned above, our lifecycle model assumes that the wife has two children, quits her job at childbirth and starts working again when her second child enters elementary school. Based on these assumptions, the following chart shows the relationship between lifetime income, expenditures and major milestones in the average household (Chart 21). Of course, this model represents a possible household pattern based on the present wage/expenditure structure and existing social welfare programs. The model might not be applicable to every household, but it provides a valuable input for proper life designing.

Chart 21. Lifetime income and expenditure for the model households



(Notes) The data were cited from source materials including the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "National Survey of Family Income and Expenditure" (1999); and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Basic Survey on Wage Structure" (2002); and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's "Survey on Education Expenses for Children" (2002).

(Disposable income in the lifespan)

Our lifecycle model incorporates recent average value and mode values for disposable income level in the lifespan. The model assumes that the average woman starts working at the age of 22 after graduating from university, leaves her job at her first childbirth at the age of 29, gives birth to her second child at the age of 31, starts working again as a part-timer at the age of 38 at her second child's entry to primary school, and makes an annual income of ¥1 million to enjoy income tax exemption and spouse tax credit. According to this model, the husband's disposable income is calculated as their education/sonority-based salary level less social insurance premiums less income tax less resident tax. The wife leaves her part-time job at the age of 58 when her husband retires from his job at the age of 60. After the husband's retirement, the married couple lives on the husband's welfare pension benefits. The husband dies when the wife is 76 years old. The wife receives survivorship annuity and dies at the age of 87. According to our calculation, household disposable income stands at ¥333 million, of which the wife's lifelong income accounts for about 69 million.

(Lifelong expenditures)

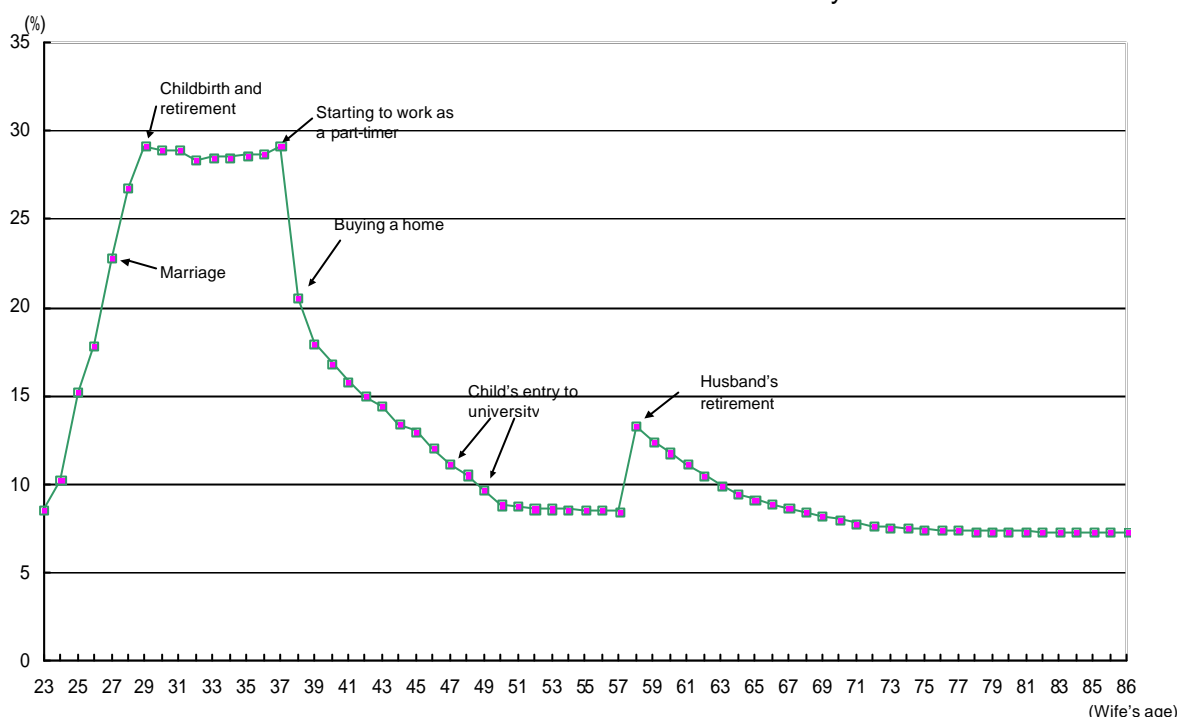
Lifelong expenditures do not represent time-series expenditure fluctuations but correspond to the sum of household expenditure on an accumulated basis. Major variable expenditure for a household includes educational expenses for children and the cost for residential house acquisition. A married couple has to pay educational expenses until their children graduate from university. The household's educational expenses usually increase in proportion to the number of their children. If their children have only a narrow age gap, educational expenses intensively emerge during their early years and impose a heavy burden on the household budget. This model assumes the two children would go to private kindergarten for two years and then enter public elementary school, public junior high school, private high school, and private university. The above-mentioned educational expense per child is a reference value for calculating educational expenses for private schools. This model presupposes the husband would buy a house at the age of 40. Repayment of the housing loan is also included in the aggregate expenditure. As a result, the aggregate expenditure per household is estimated at about ¥309 million.

(Lifetime income and expenditure)

Lifetime income exceeds lifetime expenditure by some ¥24 million. Of course, this is an approximate estimate based on certain assumptions. If the wife does not work as a part-timer, most of the household surplus will disappear. This would mean that economic conditions surrounding the average household are severe.

The household budget falls into deficit in their late 40s when their children go to high schools and universities at the same time. The family budget hits deficit again from their early 60s when they start receiving pension benefits to their early 70. This analysis is merely yearly-based. In addition, the household usually has some savings. It is necessary to calculate the family budget balance on an accumulated basis. Based on this model, the accumulated household surplus (i.e., the accumulated disposable income less the accumulated expenditures), soaring up immediately after the marriage, accounts for less 30% of the accumulated disposable income to late 30s. This percentage falls sharply when buying a house, keeps falling until their children's graduation from university, remains flat for a while, rises sharply at the husband's retirement, and gradually decreases until their death (Chart 22).

Chart 22. Economic affluence curve in lifecycle



- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the same sources as Fig. 22.
 2. Economic affluence curve = $\{(\text{accumulated disposable income} - \text{accumulated expenditures}) / \text{accumulated disposable income}\}$ multiplied by 100

According to this analysis, the husband's salary makes up a significantly high percentage of the total family income, while the wife's wage account for a very limited percentage. As the lifetime household budget yields some surplus, it surely makes economic sense. On the other hand, since this model assumes a seniority-based wage structure for the husband's income as well as the present social insurance programs, the actual lifetime family budget might differ from this estimated value. In addition, the recent economic recession and socioeconomic changes might yield some risks for lower income due to unemployment, job change, and early retirement. Since female workers are changing their working patterns, the wife's income will make up a higher percentage in the whole household budget in the future.

Conclusion

Japan is making efforts to achieve gender equality by improving its national machinery and basic legislative/systematic frameworks, but actual gender-equal process is much slower than the policymakers have expected. So far, this paper has analyzed this slow process from the viewpoint of people's awareness and life stages.

In terms of people's awareness, the traditional gender role-sharing concept has been getting weaker to some extent, but many Japanese people adhere to this model. In addition, because gender-inequality has not been eliminated at many life stages, the government needs to make further efforts to address this problem. For example, the government needs to improve working conditions so that male and female workers are able to balance their work and family life; in addition, it is necessary to push ahead with supportive measures for female worker's childcare duties and working. The present heavy childcare/nursing care burdens on women have led to a tendency to marry later or remain unmarried. To alleviate this burden, Japanese husbands and wives should share their domestic duties in the household in a more balanced manner.

The population forecast is an important factor for gender equality, but population forecast analysis suggests a severe future for Japan. The total fertility rate should be 2.08 to keep the present population level, but the rate has been significantly falling short of 2.08 since the mid-70s. If this trend remains unchanged, Japan's total population will start decreasing in 2006 and stand at 124.11 million in 2020 (the 2000 total population: 126.93 million). The population of productive age (aged 15 to 64) will also fall by 11.93 million (14%) from 86.38 million in 2000 to 74.45 million in 2020, according to the estimate of the

National Institute of Population and Social Security Research. If Japan fails to leverage women as its labor force, the labor force population will sharply decrease, preventing a vibrant Japan in the future.

To properly address these problems, Japan needs to encourage female student's entry to higher education in various major fields, develop women's potential skills, and evaluate female worker's performance in the workplace or local communities in an appropriate. If the government does not successfully develop policy initiatives to encourage women's active participation by properly evaluating women's performance in local communities or the workplace, Japan's society and economy will not see a bright future.

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

(Percentage of female parliamentary members)

Except immediately after WWII, women accounted for 1% to 2% of all parliament members up to 1986 (the 38th election) in Japan's House of Representatives. After the Japanese Diet introduced a mixture of single-seat constituencies and proportional representation in 1996 (for the 41st election), the percentage of female Diet members significantly increased. They currently occupy 34 seats, or 7.1%, in March 2004.

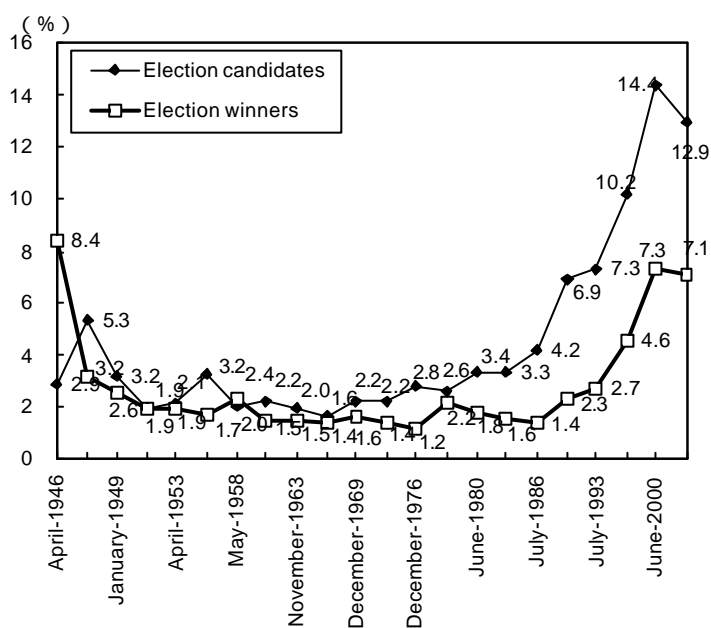
The number of female members has been also increasing in the House of Councillors from 4.0% in 1947 (the 1st election). In 1989 (the 15th election), the number of female members significantly increased from 8.7% to 13.1%. The number has been increasing but suffering stagnant growth in recent years. Female members occupy 36 seats (14.6%) in the House of Councillors as of March 2004.

(Percentage of female candidates and election winners)

At the national election level, the House of Representatives recently showed significant increases in percentages of female election candidates and female election winners, but women accounted for lower percentages both in election candidates and election winners at the November 2003 general election, accounting for 12.9% and 7.1%, respectively (Chart 23).

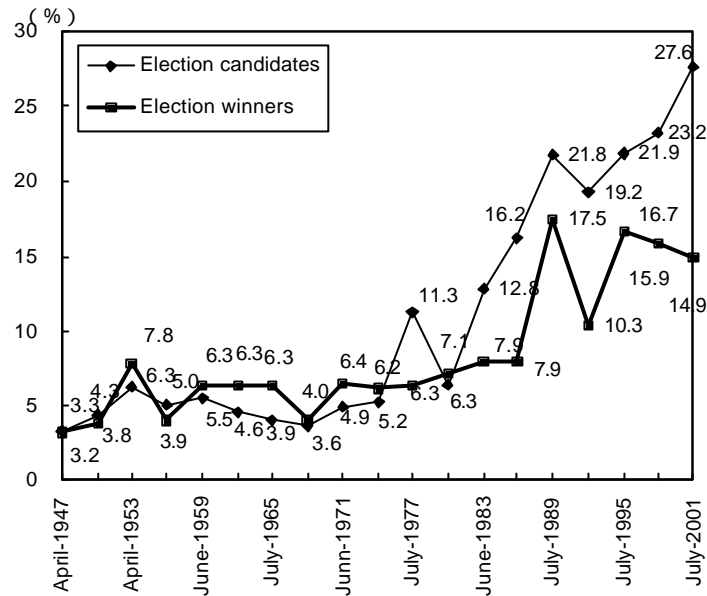
In the House of Councillors, women have been accounting for a steadily larger percentage of election candidates. In the July 2001 election, women accounted for 27.6% of election candidates. On the other hand, female election winners have recently seen sluggish growth, accounting for 14.9% of all election winners in the July 2001 election (Chart 24).

Chart 23. Percentages of female candidates and female election winners in the House of Representatives



(Note) The data were collected from documents of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications.

Chart 24. Percentages of female candidates and female election winners in the House of Councillors

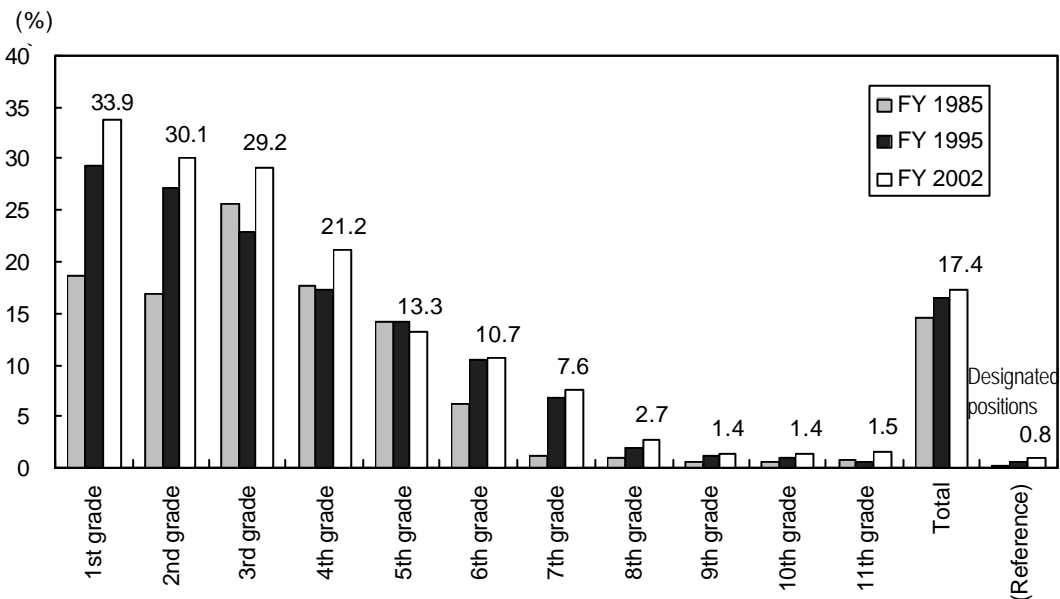


(Note) The data were collected from documents of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications.

(Women occupy a smaller percentage of higher positions at the central government level)

Since 1985, the ratio of women of national government employees covered with the "salary schedule for administrative services (I)" has been increasing. In FY2002, women roughly account for a third (33.9%) of 1st grade public employees who are in charge of routine work, but the female rate grows smaller for higher positions. Female public employees account for only 1% of 9th to 11th grades (director or deputy director in ministry headquarters). Effective policy initiative would be necessary to appoint female public employees to higher positions (Chart 25).

Chart 25. Percentage of female national government public employees by salary grade (Salary schedule for administrative services (I))



(Note) The data were collected from the National Personnel Authority's "Survey Report on Recruitment of National Government General Public Employees."

(Local assemblies in large cities have more female local assembly members)

As of the end of 2003, the rate of female assemblypersons is 21.5% in Tokyo ward councils, which represents the largest percentage. They account for 16.0% in cabinet-order designated city councils, 11.9% in city councils, 6.9% in prefecture assemblies, and 5.6% in town/village councils. Female local assemblypersons tend to account for a higher rate in metropolitan areas.

(Rate of female managerial officials at local government level)

Women have been occupying a larger percentage of managerial officials at local government level, accounting for 4.8% at prefectural level and 6.3% of cabinet-order designated city level.

(Human development indices)

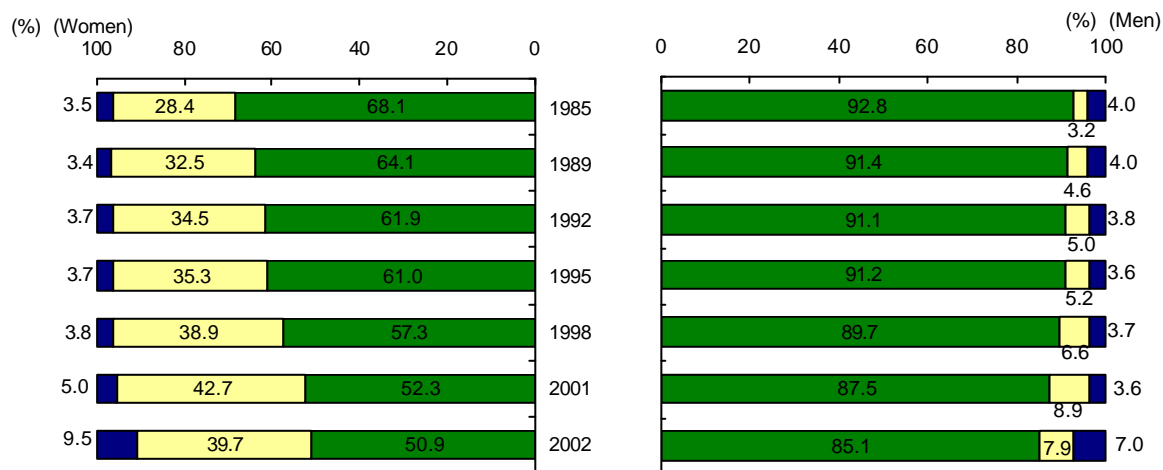
According to the "Human Development Report" published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2003, Japan ranked 9th for HDI (Human Development Index) among 175 nations and 13th for GDI (Gender Development Index) among 144 nations. For GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure), Japan stood at 44th among 70 nations. Japan occupies a much lower rank for GEM than for HDI or GDI. Compared with the 2002 data, Japan has a significantly lower GEM rank from 32nd to 44th.

Chapter 2. Gender equality in the workplace

(Full-time workers account for a smaller percentage, while the number of dispatched workers shows a rapid increase)

The rate of female full-time workers has been dropping from 68.1% in 1985 to 50.9% in 2002. Male full-time workers show a similar trend, falling from 92.8% in 1985 to 85.1% in 2002. On the other hand, part-timers and other non-regular workers have made up a larger percentage. This trend is particularly obvious for female workers, because the rate of female part-timers has increased from 31.9% in 1985 to 49.2% in 2002 (Chart 26).

Chart 26. Transition in employment status for workers (non-corporate-officer) in the industries except for agriculture and forestry



(Note) The data from 1985 to 2001 were cited from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Special Survey of the Labor Force Survey" (every February), while the 2002 data were collected from the "Labor Force Survey Annual Report (Detailed Results)."

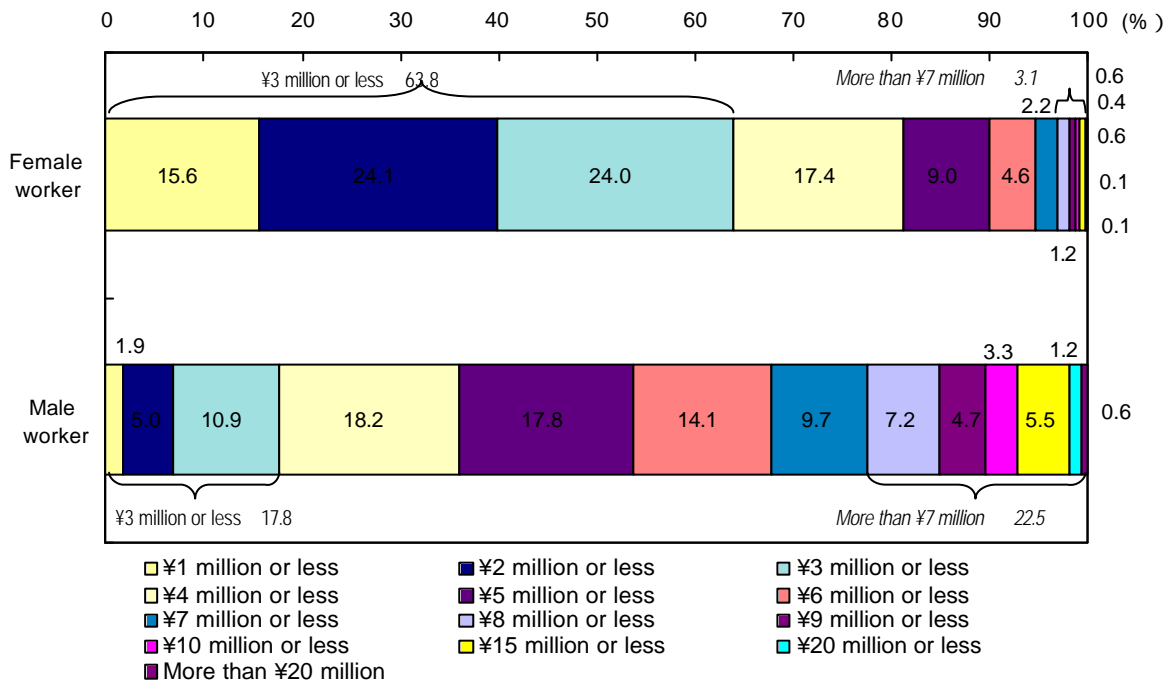
■ Full-time workers
 ■ Part-time workers
 ■ Other status (e.g., temporary employees dispatched by personnel agency, contract employees and non-regular staff)

(More than 60% of female workers earn ¥3 million or less)

There is a significant salary income gap between male and female workers. In terms of annual salary income, 63.8% of female workers earn ¥3 million or less a year, while only 17.8% of male workers belong to the same income bracket. On the contrary, the rate of workers earning ¥700 or more is 3.1% for women and 22.5% for men.

This salary gap might be attributable to the following three reasons: 1) there is a persistent wage gap between male and female full-time workers; 2) many women take part-time position that yield much lower wage than full-time position; and 3) some female part-time workers are adjusting their income level to enjoy tax exemption (Chart 27).

Chart 27. Composition of salaried workers by income bracket

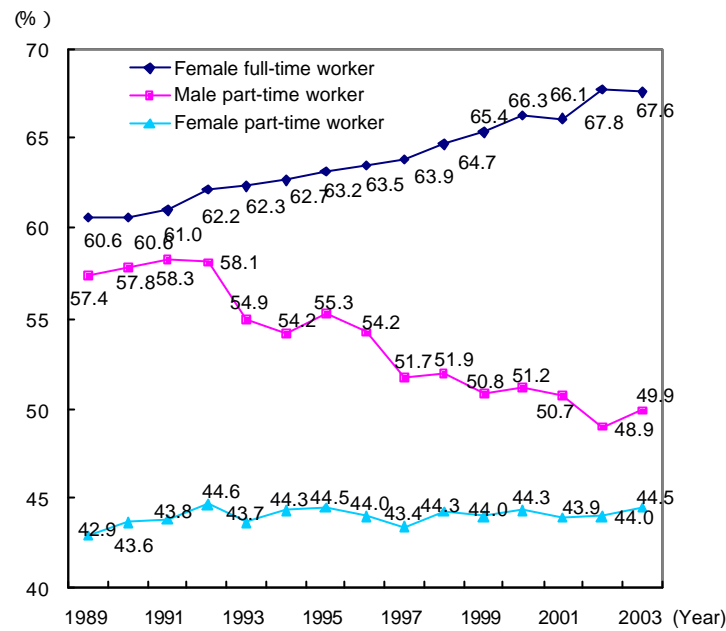


(Note) The data were collected from the National Tax Agency's "Statistic Survey on Salary in the Private Sector" (2002 edition).

(Wage gap is shrinking between male and female regular workers and also scaling down slightly between part-time and full-time workers in 2003)

The hourly wage gap has been gradually shrinking between male and female regular workers. In 2003, the hourly wage for a female full-time worker rose by 0.2% from 67.6% to 67.8% as a percentage of male full-time worker's hourly wage. The hourly wage gap has also been shrinking between part-time workers and male regular workers (Chart 28).

Chart 28. Average hourly wages for workers (male full-time worker = 100)

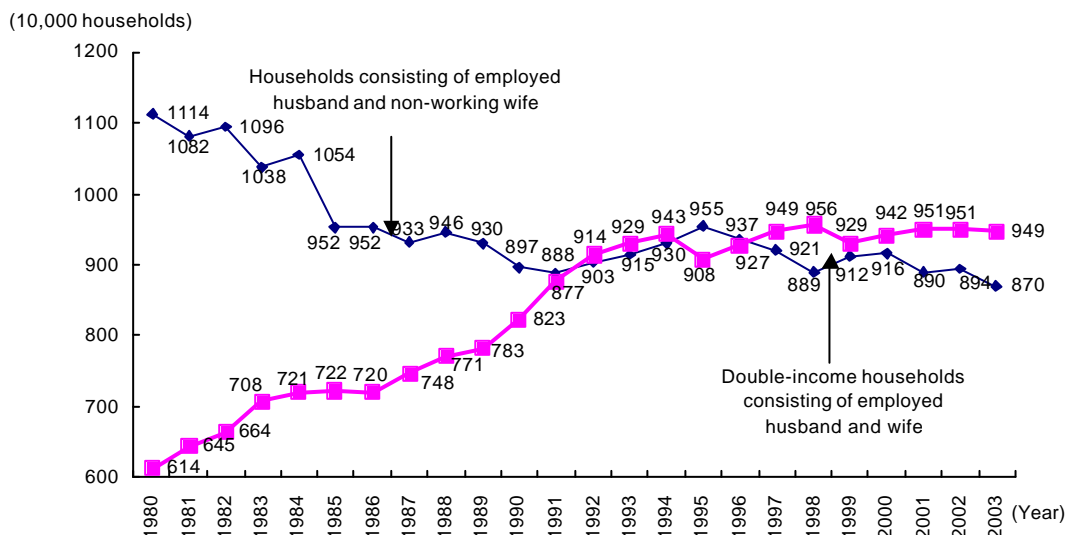


- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Basic Survey on Wage Structure."
 2. Figures represent each category's average hourly salary as a percentage of a male full-time worker's average hourly salary level.

(The number of double-income households is increasing)

The number of double-income households has been increasing since 1980. Since 1997, the number of double-income households has exceeded that of single-income households that consist of an income-earning husband and a nonworking wife. On the other hand, the number of single-income households consisting of a working husband and nonworking wife have been decreasing and stand at 8.70 million in 2003, hitting the lowest record since 1980 (Chart 29).

Chart 29. Number of double-income households

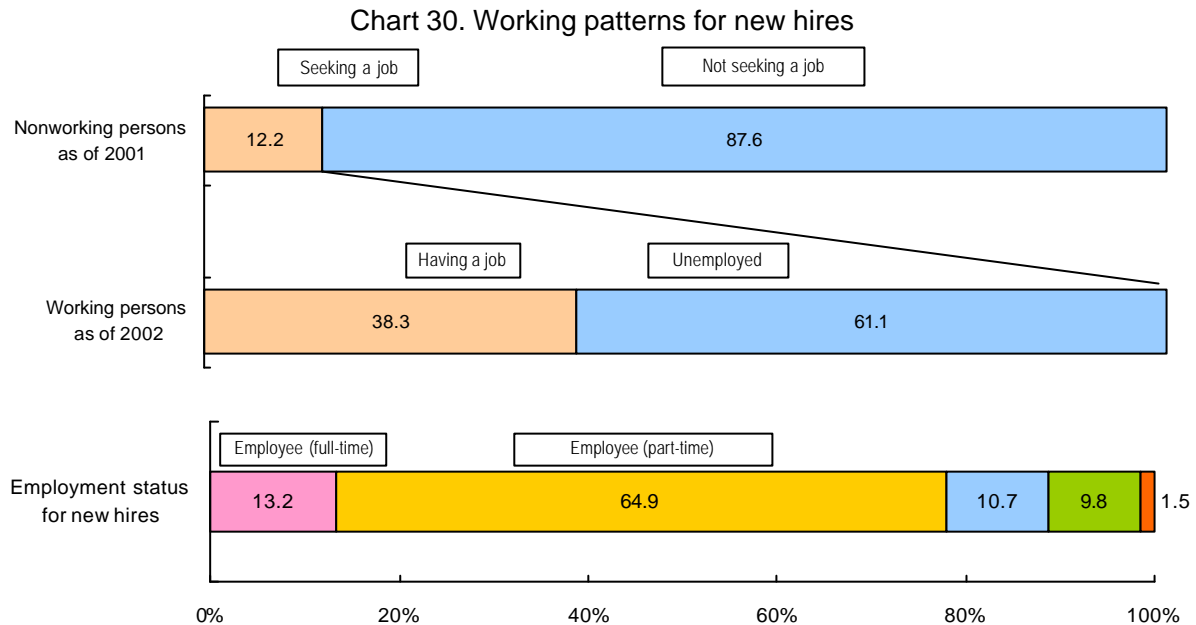


- (Notes) 1. The data from 1985 to 2001 were cited from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Special Survey of the Labor Force Survey" (every February), while the 2002 and 2003 data were collected from the "Labor Force Survey Annual Report (Detailed Results)."
 2. "Household consisting of employed husband and non-working wife" has a working husband and a non-working wife (i.e., a non-working or unemployed wife).
 3. "Double-income household" has a husband and wife who are both employed in industries other than agriculture and forestry.

Chapter 3. Balancing work and childcare

(Childbirth and childcare duties are imposing heavier burdens on female workers)

According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the "First Profile Survey on New-Born Children in the 21st Century," about 70% of workingwomen (i.e., women who had a job one year before their first childbirth) left their jobs at their first childbirth, while 25.0% workingwomen remained working as of 2001. According to the same profile survey in 2002, working mothers make up 31.1%, exceeding the rate for nonworking mothers. In addition, about 40% of female job seekers in 2001 are actually working in 2002. Including these working mothers, 64.9% of new workers take part-time positions as of the second profile survey (Chart 30).



(Notes) The data were collected from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Second Profile Survey on New-Born Children in the 21st Century" (2002 edition)

According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the "2002 Basic Survey on Employment Management Practice on Female Workers," 64.0% of female workers take childcare leave, while only 0.33% of male workers take leave. If a married couple has a new baby, female workers will suffer much more negative impact from leaving their job or taking childcare leave.

(Childcare burdens tend to fall on mothers)

The same survey (2002 edition) revealed that 99.6% of nonworking mothers and 86.2% of working mothers usually take care of their child on their own. Husbands usually take care of their children for 49.7% of nonworking mothers and 48.9% of working mothers. In this sense, a father's involvement in childcare is not so different between working and nonworking mothers. The answer options "Grandfather" and "Childminder at childcare center" represent gaps between working and nonworking mothers, standing at 18.2%, 43.2% and at 2.3%, 53.6%, respectively (Chart 31).

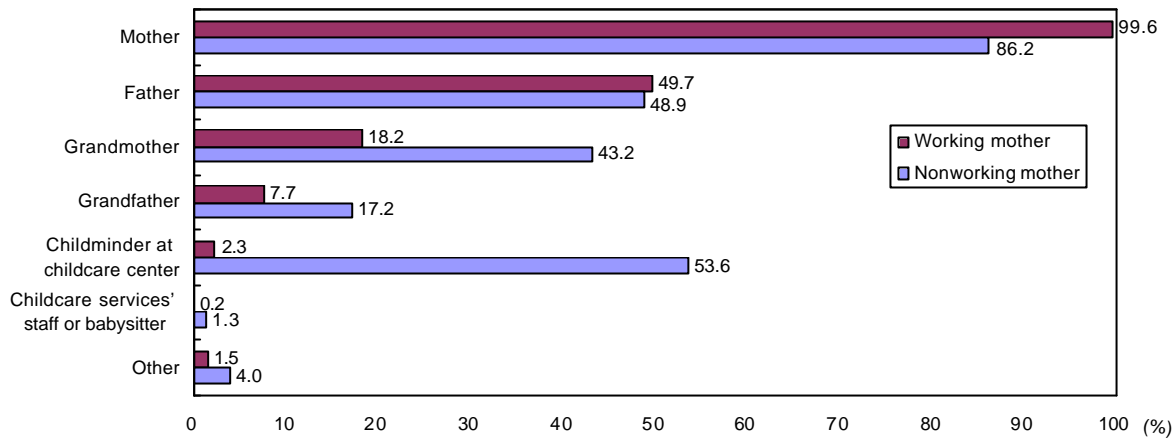
In case of a working wife, a slightly larger number of husbands do household chores and take care of their child, but there is almost no gap between working and nonworking mothers.

(Workingwomen also have to do household chores)

According to the Japan Institute of Workers' Evolution, "The Situation of Working Women" (2001), 63.9% of women are working because "nonworking will lead to economic hardship," accounting for the highest percentage.

For this reason, an increasing number of women have started working to make a living. However, a husband's lack of involvement in household chores or childcare has required their wives to assume household duties.

Chart 31. Person who usually takes care of children for working/nonworking mother (Mark-all-that-apply type questionnaire)



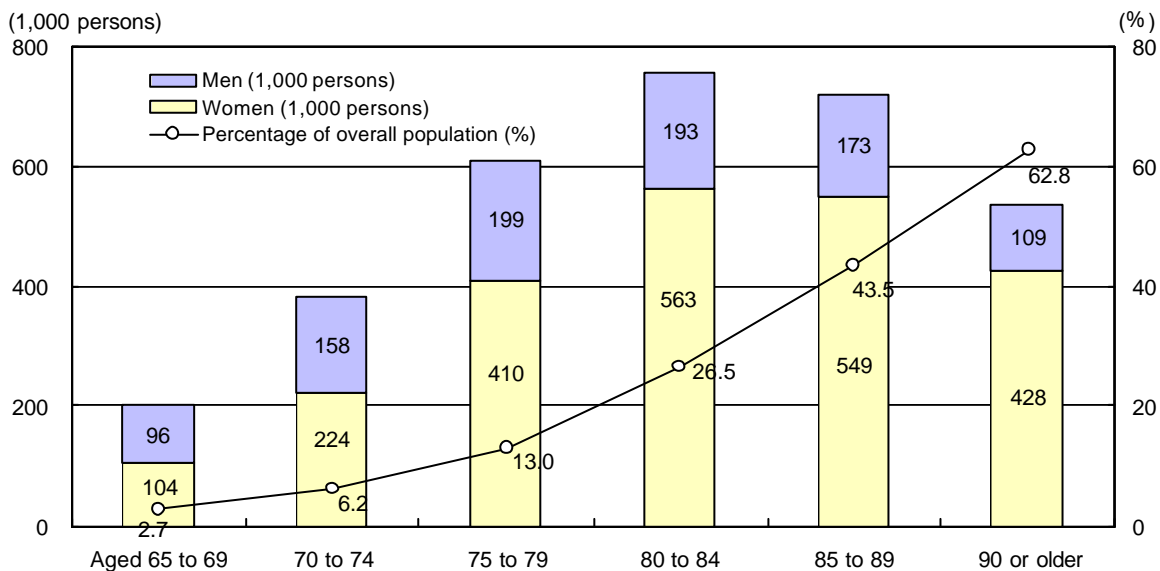
(Notes) The data were collected from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's "Second Profile Survey on New-Born Children in the 21st Century" (2002 edition).

Chapter 4. Living of senior citizens

(Nursing-care burdens)

Nursing-care duties are closely related with the aging society. The number of elderly people (aged 65 or older) requiring nursing care stands at some 3.21 million, accounting for 14% of all elderly people aged 65 or older. Early stage elderly people (aged 65 to 74) make up less than 5%, but this percentage gets higher as they become older, standing at 26.5% for those aged 80 to 84, and 62.8% for those aged 90 or older. In addition, women account for 70% of all elderly people requiring nursing care (Chart 32). Women also make up 76% of all nursing-care providers at home. This shows that women occupy a high percentage both in nursing-care providers and nursing-care recipients.

Chart 32. Number of elderly people requiring nursing care by age bracket



(Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications' "Population Estimates" (as of October 1, 2002) as well as documents of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry.

2. The figures represent the number of elderly people who require nursing care and are listed on the beneficiary roster.

Chapter 5. Violence against women

(One out of five women have experienced domestic violence)

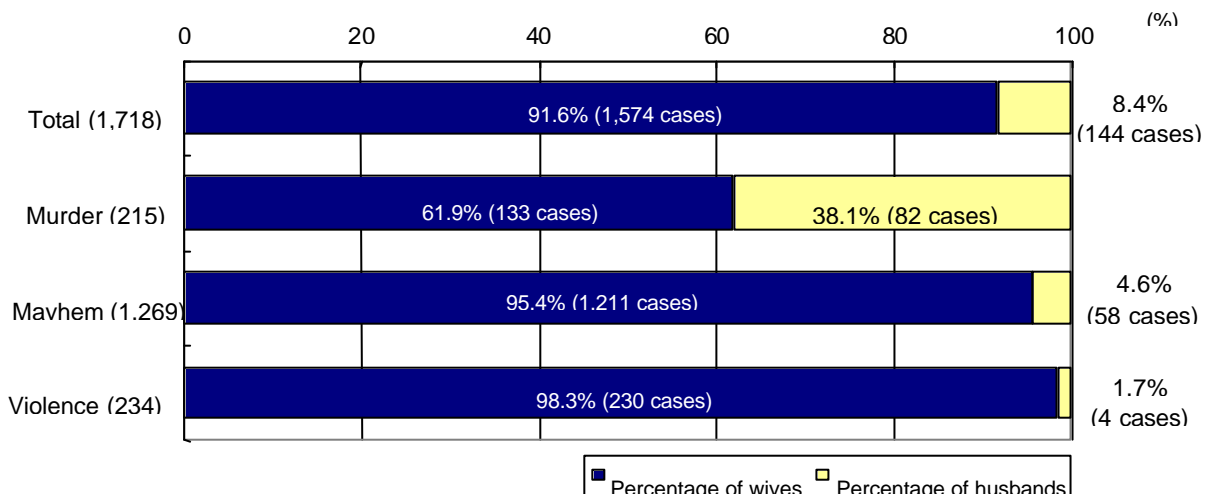
According to the Cabinet Office, "Survey on Domestic Violence" (2002), 19.1% of women, and 9.3% of men have suffered physical assault, frightening threats and/or sexual coercion from their spouse or partner. This means almost one out of five women has experienced physical assault, frightening threats and/or sexual coercion.

While 0.7% of men have felt danger to their life because of domestic violence, 4.4% of women feel a threat to their lives. One out of twenty women feel critical danger from domestic violence. In addition, 2.0% of women have been injured due to domestic violence and have received medical treatment from a doctor.

(Women are much more vulnerable to domestic violence than men)

According to National Police Agency statistics, women are victims in 1,574 cases (91.7%) out of the total 1,718 murder, mayhem and violence cases between spouses (including common-law marriages). (See Chart 33.)

Chart 33. Victims of criminal offenses (murder, abuse and violence) between spouses (including common-law marriages) (percentage of arrested cases) (2003)



(Note) The data were collected from National Police Agency documents.

(An increasing number of husbands are being arrested due to violence against their wives)

An increasing number of women have been recognized as being vulnerable to their husband's violence and mayhem since 2000. The number of recorded cases of violence increased by 19 (9.0%) to 230 in 2003. The number of recorded cases of mayhem rose by 14 (1.2%) to 1,211 in 2003.

(Application for protective orders)

The "Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence" allows the judicial court to impose protective orders (i.e., access prohibition order and expulsion order) on the assailant, if the victim applies to the court. If the assailant does not obey the protective order, the court may impose a criminal penalty.

From October 2001 to December 2003, 3,422 applicants applied for a protective order to the court, of which the number of cases closed stood at 3,373. The court issued a total 2,719 protective orders (80.6%), issuing access prohibition order for 1,947 cases (71.6%) and expulsion order for 8 cases (0.3%). The court also issued both access prohibition and expulsion orders for 764 cases (28.1%).

From October 2001 to December 2003, 84 assailants were arrested on account of ignoring the protective orders.

(Sex-related crimes)

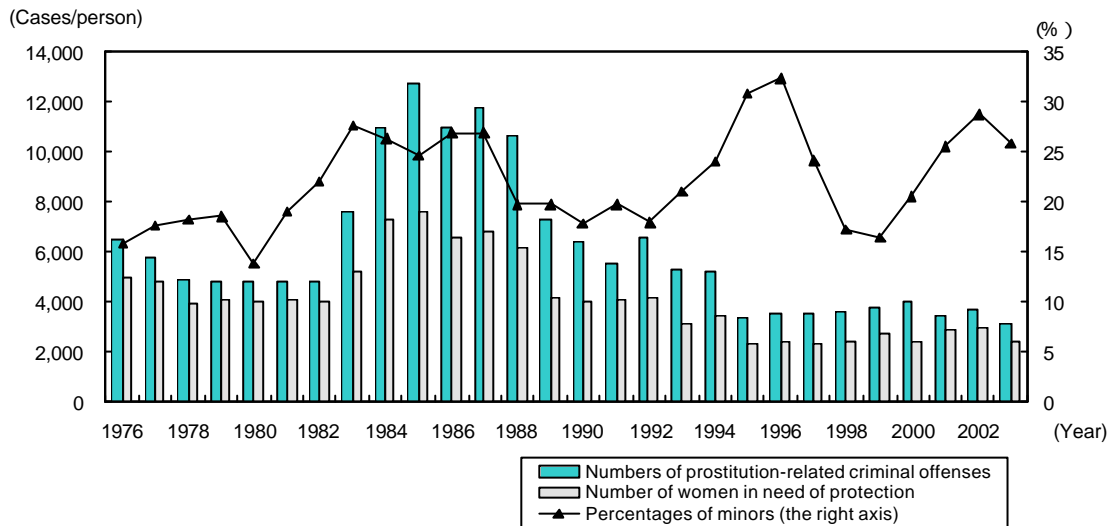
According to the National Police Agency statistics, the number of recorded rape cases increased by 115 to 2,472 in 2003, exceeding 2,000 cases for four consecutive years. The number of recorded indecent

assaults has been increasing sharply since 1999 and stood at 10,029 in 2003, rising by 553 since 2002.

(Prostitution)

The number of prostitution-related criminal offenses stands at 3,068 in 2003. Out of the total 2,440 women in need of protection, minors accounted for 25.8%, decreasing 2.8% from 2002 (Chart 41). In 2003, the police arrested 1,713 criminals on account of child prostitution (aged 15 or younger), decreasing 171 cases on a year-on-year basis. The number of child prostitutes via Website dating services stood at 791, accounting for the largest percentage (45.7%).

Chart 34. Numbers of prostitution-related criminal offenses, women in need of protection and the percentages of minors



(Note) The data were collected from National Police Agency documents.

(Sexual harassments)

In 2002, gender-equality offices at the prefectural labor bureau level received 7,682 counseling cases for sexual harassment. The number of counseling cases increased by 49 (0.6%) from the last year. Out of the total 7,682 cases, 5,924 female workers asked for advice on sexual harassments at their workplace, almost remaining flat from 2002.

(Anti-stalking control law)

According to the “Anti-Stalking Control Law” enacted in 2003, the police gave 1,169 warnings, an increase of 204 (21.1%) from 2002. The police also imposed 24 prohibitive orders on stalkers who disobeyed the police’s warning.

The police arrested 185 criminals on account of stalking behavior, an increase of 15 (8.8%) on a year-on-year basis. 7 criminals were arrested for disobeying prohibitive orders.

In accordance with Article 7 of the Anti-stalking Control Law, 856 stalking victims asked the police for some assistance in 2003, an increase of 179 (26.4%) from 2002. A total of 743 people asked the police to provide information on self-defense (up 333 from 2002), accounting for the largest percentage, followed by 510 requests (up 95 from 2002) for lending damage limitation devices such as anticrime buzzers.

Of the total 11,923 stalking offenses reported to the police department, women account for 90.8% of all victims, while men made up 91.1% of all assailants.

Chapter 6. Health support for women throughout their lives

(Indexes for maternal and child health remain flat for these years)

Major indexes for maternal and child health have been generally falling from 1975 to 2002. The maternal death rate remained almost flat over these years but slightly increased in 2002.

(The number of abortions is decreasing generally but is increasing in the younger generation)

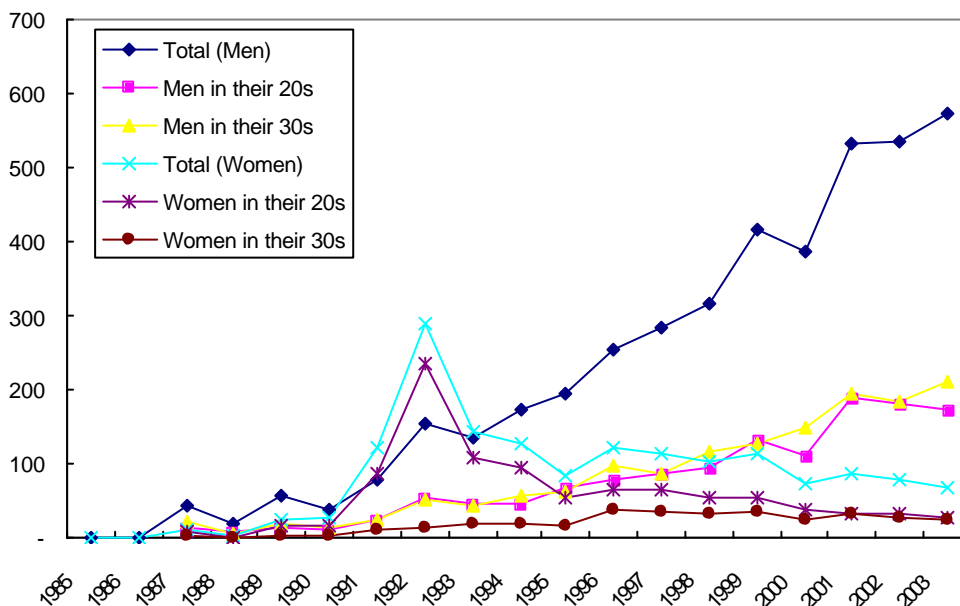
In general, the number and rate of induced abortions (the proportion of induced abortions to 1,000 women aged 15 to 50) had decreased from 1975 to 2002 but have remaining flat over these few years. However, the number of abortions has increased over the last ten years among women younger than 20 years old. Younger generations account for a larger percentage of the total number of abortions.

(HIV carriers are increasing in younger generation)

Except for infections due to coagulation factor products, there were 5,780 HIV carriers and 2,892 AIDS patients on an accumulated basis by the end of 2003.

In 2003, there were 640 new HIV carriers and 336 new AIDS patients, hitting new high records (Chart 35). A total of 78.0% of HIV carriers were infected within Japan. From the point of ages first reported, 39.8% of HIV carriers were infected with HIV in their 20s, which represents a high infection rate among young people. However, 26.2% of HIV carriers were infected in their 40s or older. For these few years, about 30% of new HIV carriers belong to an age bracket aged 40 or older.

Chart 35. Number of HIV infected men and women by age bracket



- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry's documents.
2. Figures represent newly reported HIV infected persons for the year.

(Women's typical illnesses)

Typical diseases for women include uterine cancer and breast cancer. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Patient Survey" (2002 edition), there are 54,000 uterine cancer patients and 158,000 breast cancer patients.

(Smoking prevalence is increasing among women aged 20 to 29)

The prevalence of male smokers has been decreasing by nearly 30% since 1975, but that of female smokers has almost remained constant since 1975. While the male smoking prevalence has fallen from 81.5% in 1975 to 54.1% in 2003 for the age group 20 to 29, the female smoking prevalence in their 20s has been increasing from 12.7% in 1975 to 20.3% in 2003, highlighting the increased female smoking prevalence.

Chapter 7. Women's rights in the media

(Access time to mass media)

An average male worker watches TV, listens to the radio and reads magazines/newspapers for 2 hours 14 minutes, while an average female worker has access to these media for 1 hour and 57 minutes. Male and

female Japanese citizens in their 20s and 30s access these mass media for fewer hours due to longer working hours and heavier childcare duties. In general, older generations tend to access mass media for longer hours. Men have longer access time to mass media than women in all age brackets.

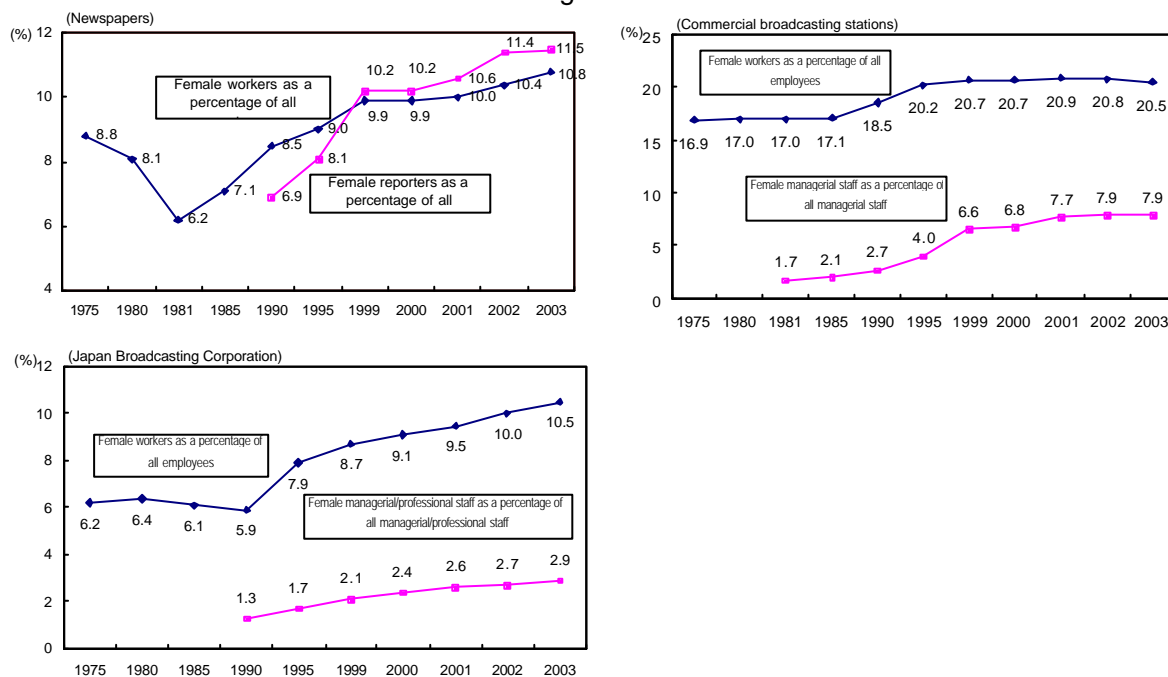
(Efforts in the media)

Japan’s mass media has prepared their own guidelines on news reports and public relations. Broadcasting media firms established an independent agency that would contribute to correct broadcasting and broadcasting ethics and would quickly and properly address complaints, human rights’ matters and juvenile affairs. These guidelines include the Press Ethic Code (The Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association), NHK Program Standard (for domestic programs), NAB Broadcasting Criteria (applicable to radio and TV programs). For improving ethics and program quality, Japan Broadcasting Corporation and National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan jointly established “Broadcasting Ethics & Program Improvement Organization (BPO).”

(Women’s steady participation in the media)

Women’s active participation in the media will play an important role in preventing biased broadcasting programs, regulating sexual/violent expressions and paying due attention to women’s human rights. Women have been gradually accounting for higher percentages to all employees, all reporters and all managerial officials at newspaper firms, private TV/radio stations and the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (Chart 36).

Chart 36. Percentage of female staff in media



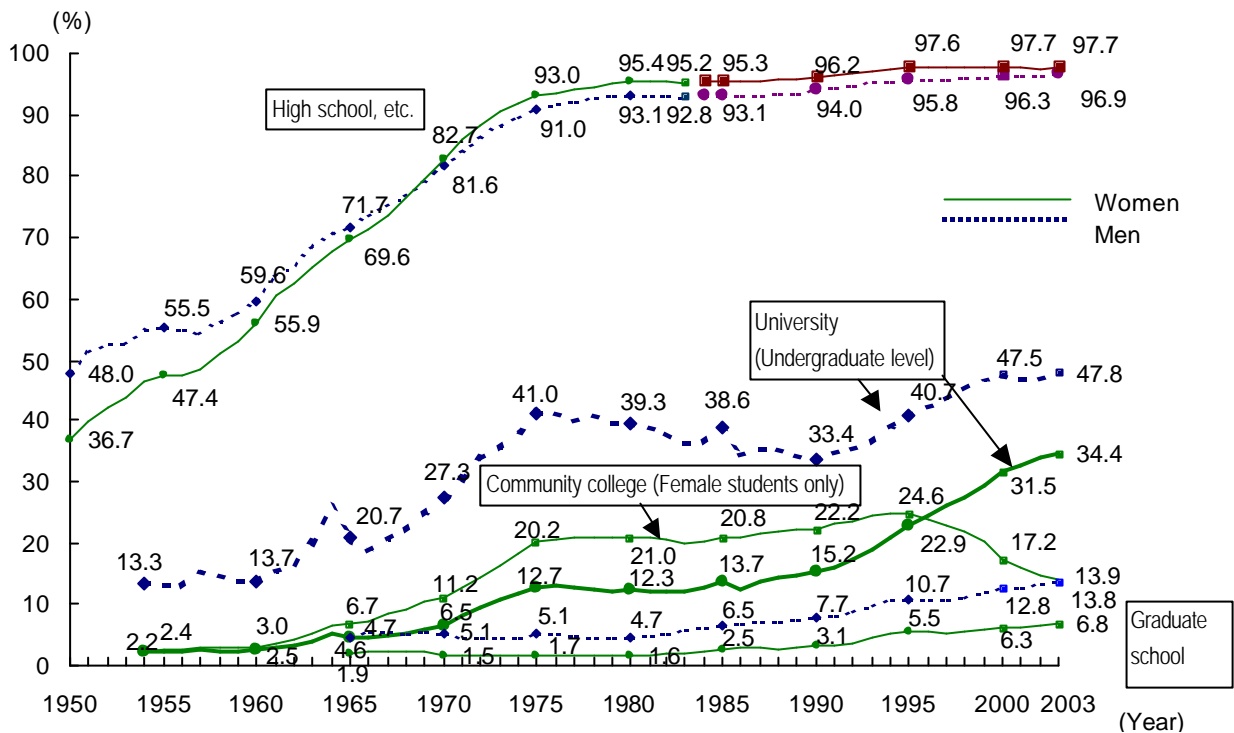
(Note) The data were collected from documents available from the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association, the National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan and the Japan Broadcasting Corporation.

Chapter 8. Gender equality in education

(More Japanese women are entering university and college)

In FY2003, the high school enrollment rate was 96.6% for women and 95.7% for men, which suggests more female students enter high school than male students. The university (undergraduate level) enrollment rate stands at 47.8% for men and 34.4% for women in FY2003. Since 13.9% of female students enter community colleges, the women's total enrollment rate for higher education is 48.3%. While the women's university enrollment rate has been rising recently, the enrollment rate for community college has sharply fallen over these few years. The graduate school enrollment rate is rising for both genders (male: 13.8%; and female: 6.8% in FY 2003). (See Chart 37.)

Chart 37. Enrollment rate for each school category



- (Notes) 1. The data were collected from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's "School Basic Survey."
 2. "High school, etc." represents the percentage of junior high school graduates who enter high school or technical college (except for high school level correspondence courses).
 3. "University (undergraduate level)" and "community college" represent the total university or community college enrollments (including students who had failed the entrance exam but were accepted at a university of their choice in the following year) divided by junior high school graduates of three years before. The figure excludes students on correspondence courses.
 4. "Graduate school" represents the students who enter graduate school immediately after completing their undergraduate course as a percentage of all students completing undergraduate courses. (It also includes new Ph.D. course enrollments in the case of medical and dental schools.) The figure excludes graduate-level correspondence courses.

(The gap in student's major fields has been shrinking)

Female students majoring in human science made up the largest percentage from 1975 to 2002, while those majoring in social science accounted for the largest percentage these days. On the other hand, male students majoring in social science decreased from the 1975 level. In 2003, women made up some 30% of all students majoring in social science. The percentage of female students majoring in engineering stood at less than 1% in 1975 but increased to 10.6% in 2003. In this sense, the gap in student's major fields is shrinking between male and female students.

At the graduate school level, the number of female students majoring in social science make up the largest percentage for master's courses, followed by human science, education and engineering. The number of female students is significantly increasing in major fields such as social science, engineering, natural science, and health care. Women also occupy some 40% of all students entering from the workforce. In doctoral course, many students are majoring in health care and social science.

Part 2: Policies Implemented in FY 2003 to Promote the Formation of a Gender-Equal Society

Chapter 1. Comprehensive promotion of policies towards a gender-equal society

In April 2003, the Council for Gender Equality (CGE) prepared the “Opinion paper on supportive measures for women’s challenges.” Based on this opinion paper, the government decided supportive measures for women’s challenges so that “Women will account for at least 30% of all leading positions by the year 2020.” In July 2003, the CGE prepared the ‘Opinion paper on the government’s gender-equal policies and possible future efforts’ and submitted the paper to the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers.

Aiming at fully leveraging the abilities of men and women, the Specialist Committee on Basic Matters examined various supportive measures that would make use of women’s innovative ideas and abilities. The specialist committee submitted its final report to the CGE in April 2003.

The Specialist Committee on Violence against Women also examined possible amendment to the “Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence.” In June 2003, the specialist committee prepared “On implementation of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence” and submitted it to the CGE. After examining actual cases of violence against women, the specialist committee also compiled “Challenges and Countermeasures on Violence against Women” in March 2004.

Under the title “Challenge Campaign,” the central government, local governments and universities jointly held seminars and symposiums. The Cabinet Office established the website called “Challenge Site” to provide information on women’s efforts.

Chapter 2. Expanding women's participation in policy decision-making processes

Each Office and Ministry is making efforts to increase the number of female officers in accordance with their plans for recruiting and promoting more female officials.

In March 2003, the "Conference to Support Diversification of Careers for Women" of MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) prepared its first report, “Diversification of careers changes society” (Support of female researchers). Based on this report’s recommendations, MEXT encourages universities and research institutions to set out relevant frameworks and action plans for gender equality and specify targets for hiring/appointing female researchers to higher positions. MEXT is also trying to grasp the actual efforts being made at universities and research institutions.

Chapter 3. Reexamining social systems and practices and reforming awareness from a gender-equal perspective

Based on the 2004 tax reform, the government will start gradually abolishing tax exemption applicable to wives in terms of individual inhabitant tax’s per capita levy in 2005. This aims at providing fairness in the tax burden. With this tax reform, the per capita levy will be also imposed on women who make an income above a certain level. The Specialist Committee on Impact Survey examined possible problems in this context in December 2003 and submitted its report to the CGE in January 2004.

Chapter 4. Providing equal employment opportunities and working conditions

Based on its “Report of the study Group on the Issue of Wage Disparity Between Men and Women” published in November 2002, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare prepared “The Guideline on the improvement measures of Wage And Employment Management for Eliminating Wage Disparity Between Men and Women” in April 2003 and provides relevant information. The ministry also prepared a gender wage gap report in order to follow up the current gender wage gap conditions and propose actual

countermeasures.

In August 2003, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare revised “Guidelines for Improving ,etc. Employment Management of Part-Time Workers.” The revised guidelines clearly explain approaches on balanced treatment with regular workers and add some measures that owners should take such as preparation of conditions for the transfer to regular workers.

Chapter 5. Achieving gender equality in agricultural, forestry and fishing villages

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries enhances public facilities (Women's Agri-support Centers) that comprehensively support female farmers in both childcare and participation in agricultural management.

Chapter 6. Supporting women's and men's efforts to balance work, family life and community activities

Aiming at establishing the necessary frameworks for supporting future generations in 2003 and 2004, the government decided to submit a series of legislation bills. In 2003, the Diet passed the “Law for Supporting Future Generations” and also amended the “Child Welfare Law,” which encourages intensive, systematic efforts at local governments and private corporations etc. The Diet also passed the “Basic Law for Addressing Fewer Children,” which states the basic philosophy on countermeasures, clearly describes responsibilities for the central and local governments and stipulates basic frameworks for countermeasures. To further encourage workers to take childcare leave, the government submitted to the 159th Diet Session an amendment bill for Childcare and Family-care Leave Laws that expands applicable workers, extends the childcare leave period and launches new nursing-care leave program for children.

In FY2003, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare granted subsidies to nursery schools that utilized vacant classrooms at schools. The ministry also launched special childcare programs and expanded female childcare provider programs. These policy initiatives aim at expanding childcare center capacity for an additional about 50,000 children to eliminate the number of children on waiting lists.

Based on the “the Law on Special Measures for the Support of Single Mother To Work” enacted in July 2003 and effective in August 2003, the government is pushing ahead with supportive measures for working mothers in fatherless families.

Chapter 7. Providing better living conditions for elderly people

After discussing the 2004 pension reform plan, the Pension Subcommittee of Social Security Council prepared the ‘Opinions concerning Pension System Reform ’ in September 2003. According to these opinions , the future pension program “should be neutral to people’s lifestyle selections.” Based on these opinions , the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare submitted its pension reform plan in November 2003.

Based on discussions thereafter, the “Amendment to the National Pension Law,etc” calls for a proper pension program that addresses various lifestyles and working patterns. This amendment bill also prescribes to support to foster the next generations. Separate employees` pensions at time of divorce and in the term that enroll in public pension as category-3 insured person.

Also with a view to supplementing the public pension system programs, corporate pension system program that secure income in old age was discussed along with Public Pension System reform. The said amendment bill also includes coverage expansion for the measure to sum up the period covered by defined-benefit-type corporate pension system,etc .

Chapter 8. Eliminating all forms of violence against women

To properly address spousal violence, the government enhanced various measures and strictly implemented legal frameworks for preventing spousal violence and protecting victims.

The Ministerial Council on Crime-Fighting Measure prepared the "Action Plan for Achieving Crime-Resistant Society," which confirms examinations on proper legal frameworks against trafficking in persons in order for Japan to ratify the "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime." In May 2003, the Diet approved Japan's ratification of the "U.N. Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime."

Chapter 9. Supporting lifelong health for women

In July 2003, the Headquarters for Preventing Drug Abuse prepared the "New 5-Year Program for Preventing Drug Abuse" to eliminate drug abuses as soon as possible. Relevant government departments are making efforts to detect drug-abusing girls at an early stage, provide sufficient information on drug's risks/harms and also prevent their abusing drugs again.

Chapter 10. Respecting women's rights in the media

In accordance with the "Law for Restricting Child Seducement via Dating Service Web Sites" enacted in June 2003, the National Police Agency protects children from child prostitution and other crimes making use of online dating websites.

Chapter 11. Expanding education/learning opportunities to encourage gender equality and diverse lifestyle choices

MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) improves research environments so that female researchers are able to more actively participate in research and educational fields. In FY2003, MEXT started granting subsidies to female researchers who had conducted research activities covered by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research, even if they stopped the research activities for one year due to taking childcare leave. In July 2003, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) also started to allow recruiting suspension or extension for female scientists on account of childbirth or child-raising if the researcher applies for JSPS. This measure aims at enabling female researchers to continue their research programs.

Chapter 12. Contributing to "equality, development and peace" in the global community

The government revised the ODA Charter in August 2003. With regard to WID (Women in Development) , the perspective of gender equality is included in the basic policies of the Charter, as an important matter which should be taken into consideration of every phase of Japanese ODA, from policy formulation to implementation phases.

Policies to be Implemented in FY 2004 to Promote the Formation of a Gender-Equal Society

Chapter 1. Comprehensive promotion of policies towards a gender-equal society

By making use of subordinate specialist committees, the Council for Gender Equality will comprehensively coordinate gender-equality policy initiatives as much as possible.

Chapter 2. Expanding women's participation in policy decision-making processes

The government will make more efforts for women's active participation in policy decision-making processes. These efforts include each ministry's plan for increasing the number of female officials in general and the number of those in managerial positions.

Chapter 3. Reexamining social systems and practices and reforming awareness from a gender-equal perspective

The government will examine policy initiative's possible impacts on gender equality. The government will also reexamine the existing social frameworks/practices so that these frameworks will be neutral to individual lifestyle selections.

Chapter 4. Providing equal employment opportunities and working conditions

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare will continue its efforts to secure of equal opportunity and treatment between men and women in employment. In order for society to widely accept balanced treatment for full-time workers and part-timers as stated in the revised "part-time worker guidelines," the ministry will provide assistance to companies adopting an innovative approach and will also encourage such innovative approaches to spread among industries and regions.

The ministry will support teleworkers by providing an e-learning program that identifies and overcomes the teleworker's weak points based on self-diagnosis. Based on a report available from the 'Review Session on Balancing Work and Life' in June 2004, the ministry plans to take necessary measures.

Chapter 5. Achieving gender equality in agricultural, forestry and fishing villages

To encourage entrepreneurs including female business owners, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries will provide support for equipment and facilities necessary for starting new agri-business, which covers agriculture as a core as well as food processing and distribution businesses.

Chapter 6. Supporting women's and men's efforts to balance work, family life and community activities

In FY2004, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare will expand special childcare programs and grant subsidies to nursery schools. These policy initiatives are aimed at expanding childcare center capacity for an additional 50,000 children to eliminate the number of children on waiting lists. According to the revised Child Welfare Law, the ministry will prepare childcare plans in FY2004 to eliminate the number of children on the waiting list. These childcare plans will target local governments that have 50 or more children on the day-care center waiting list. Based on the New Angel Plan, the ministry will provide childcare services that address various needs. By reexamining the Child Welfare Law, the ministry will extend the benefit period until the child enters the fourth grade of elementary school. (Under the current framework, parents receive the child benefit until the child enters elementary school.)

The government will provide sufficient information on the ‘Business Owner Action Plan,’ which describes working environments necessary for balancing work and childcare in accordance with the ‘Law for Supporting Future Generations.’ The government will also encourage private corporations’ voluntary initiatives.

In accordance with the ‘Program for Encouraging Early Childhood Education,’ the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will start a research on combined facilities of kindergartens and day-care centers and on efforts for building the support system of parenting in kindergartens. As home education is the starting point for all educational processes, the ministry will hold a forum on home education.

Chapter 7. Providing better living conditions for elderly people

The government will make full efforts to soon enact the ‘Amendment to Law for Amending Part of the National Pension Law, etc.’ which will enhance prescribe to support to foster the next for future generations, separate employees’ pension at time of divorce and in the term which enroll public pension as category-3 insured person and review survivors’ pensions.

As for the corporate pension system program, the government will also make efforts to soon enact the said bill that stabilize and strengthen the current corporate pension programs.

Chapter 8. Eliminating all forms of violence against women

As the number of spousal violence victims with a small child has been increasing, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare will assign instructors in charge of taking care of small children so that violence victims will be able to make efforts to become economically self-sufficient.

Chapter 9. Supporting lifelong health for women

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare will take proper measures for combating and preventing drug abuse cases. In FY2004, the ministry will start providing sufficient information by preparing/distributing PR booklets targeted at working/nonworking male.

Chapter 10. Respecting women's rights in the media

In order to protect children from sexual/violent expressions, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications will start providing a harmful content filtering feature for mobile phones and PHS terminals (This feature is currently available for PC only). The ministry will also examine a proper ‘safe content mark (tentative name),’ which will enable Internet viewers to easily select safe content.

Chapter 11. Expanding education/learning opportunities to encourage gender equality and diverse lifestyle choices

Women usually are influenced by childcare and child-raising on their daily life and don’t have sufficient learning opportunities for building their own career. Mainly focusing on women, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology will train counselors in charge of providing advice on the learning process, provide comprehensive and systematic information on learning and other activities, and conduct practical surveys on an evaluation approach to provide feedback on the achievement of learning. These policy initiatives are aimed at expanding women’s career choices and encouraging women to participate in community services based on their achievements in the learning process. The ministry will provide sufficient information on these policy initiatives.

Chapter 12. Contributing to "equality, development and peace" in the global community

Based on the ODA Charter, and in line with the “Japan’s Initiative on WID(Women in Development)”, the government will pay due attention to the improvement of women’s status and gender equality, when implementing the development assistance. Based on the ODA Charter and the result of the evaluation of Initiative on WID, the government will make efforts to put emphasis on gender equality perspectives in every phase of ODA.