

Basic Data

on Gender Equality in Japan

5-1 Current Situation of Japanese Women

I Population

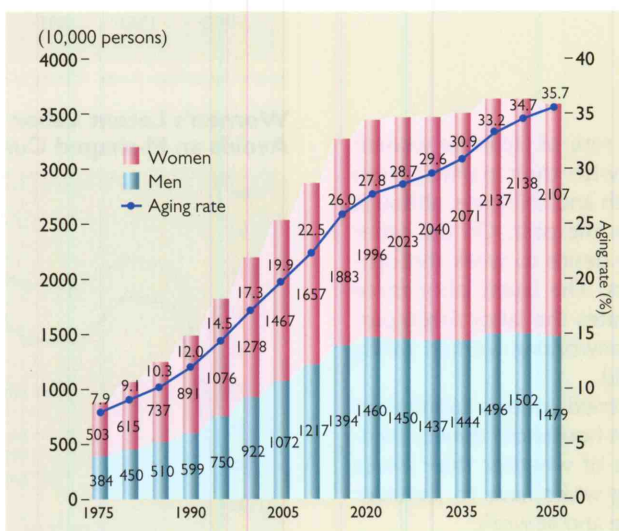
Japan has been gaining lower birthrates and an increase in the population of the elderly. The total fertility rate (a cumulative measure of separate fertility rates for women aged 15 to 49 in a given year; in other words, the number of births per woman in her lifetime based on the age specific birthrate) fell below 2.00 in 1975 for the first time and has been declining further since then. This is partly because the number of unmarried people and/or late marriages has been increasing in Japan.

The average age at the first marriage has been rising and in 2004, it was 29.6 years old for men and 27.8 years old for women. Women in their late 20s used to have the

highest fertility rate in the past, but now approximately half of the women in this age group still remain unmarried. The percentage of lifelong unmarried people (the percentage of people who are still single at age 50) has increased gradually since 1960. Particularly, the lifelong single rate for men has been drastically rising in recent years.

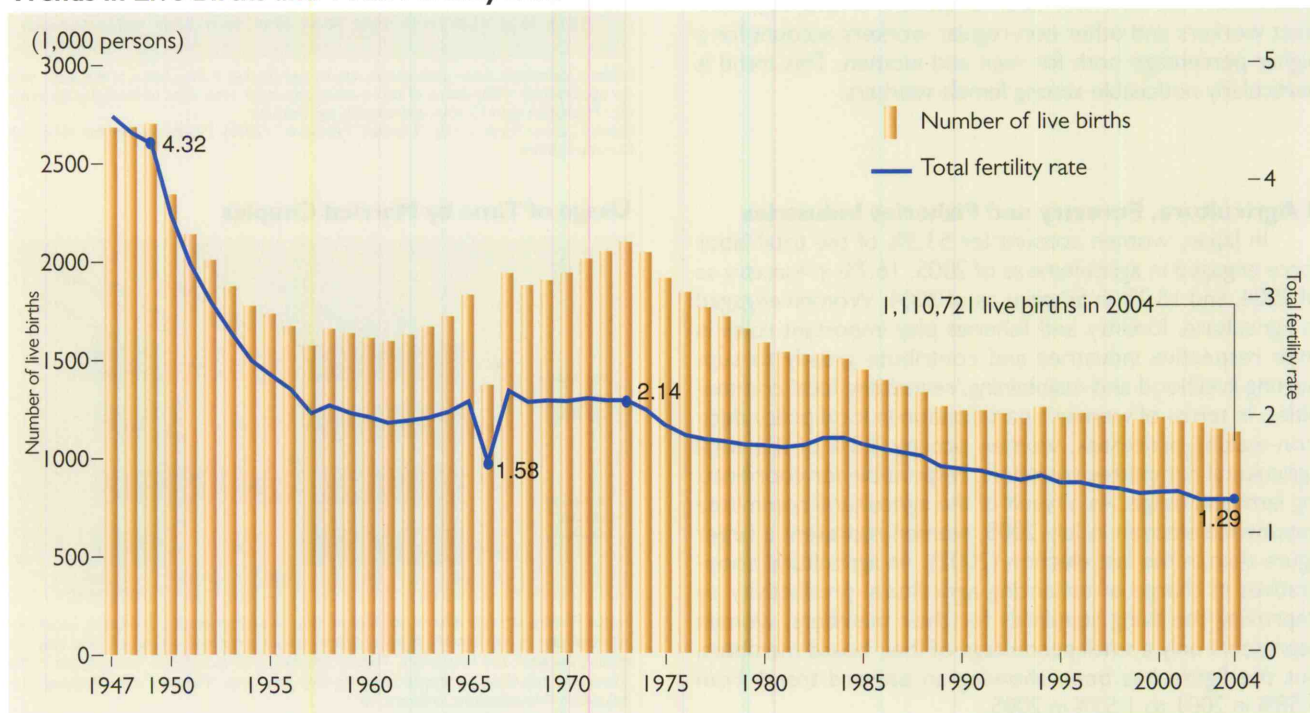
The aging rate (the proportion of population aged 65 years and over to total population) has also been rising rapidly. Japan's population is aging mainly due to lower birthrates and longer life expectancies. The life expectancy at the birth for women was 85.33 years and 78.36 years for men in 2003.

Aging Rate and Population of Elderly People aged 65 and over



Source: Population data leading up to the year 2000 are collected from the "National Census," Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Those for 2005 and onward represent the projected population as of October 1 of each year (median projection), which comes from "Population Projections for Japan: 2001-2050 (as of January 2002)," National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

Trends in Live Births and Total Fertility Rate



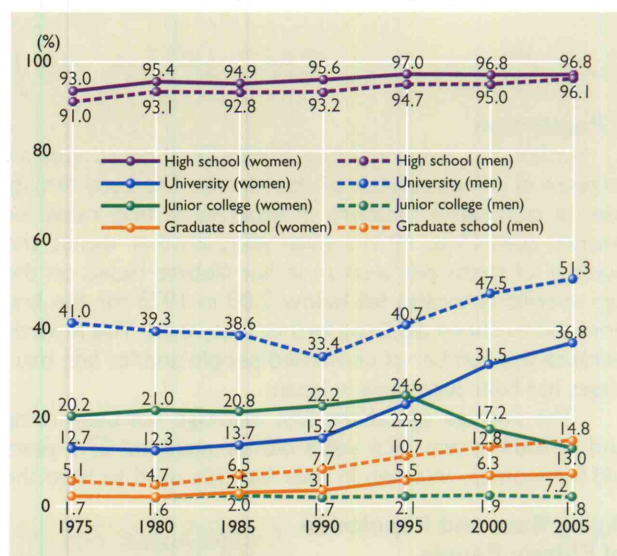
Source: "Vital Statistics of Japan," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

2 Education

The percentage of students advancing to high school in Japan is extremely high, with the percentage of female high school students exceeding that of male students.

In terms of higher education level, most male students choose universities (undergraduate-level). On the other hand, some female students go to universities (undergraduate-level), while other female students enter junior colleges. Recently, more female students have been enrolling in four-year universities, while the percentage of female junior college students has been falling. Female students have recently come to major in more diversified areas.

Enrollment Rate by School Category



Source: "School Basic Survey," Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

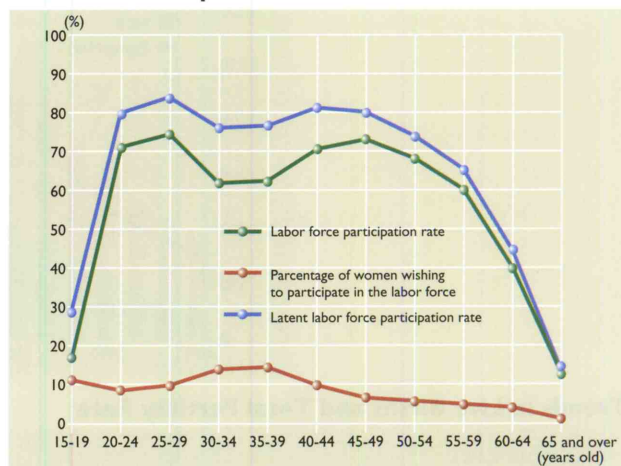
3 Employment

The labor force participation rate of Japanese women still shows an M-shaped curve with their participation declining due to marriage, childbirth and childcare, although the curve is not as significant as in the past. On the other hand, many women have a strong desire to work throughout their childbirth/childcare years. The latent labor force participation rate, which incorporates the labor force participation rate with the ratio of nonworking women willing to work, approximates an trapezoid.

In terms of how Japanese married couples spend their time, husbands spend little time on household duties, childcare and nursing care, regardless of whether their wives work or not. As a result, working wives have to shoulder heavy responsibilities both at home and at work.

Recently, employment patterns have been particularly diversified. Part-time workers, temporary employees, contract workers and other non-regular workers account for a higher percentage both for men and women. This trend is particularly noticeable among female workers.

Women's Latent Labor Force Participation Rate Avoids an M-shaped Curve



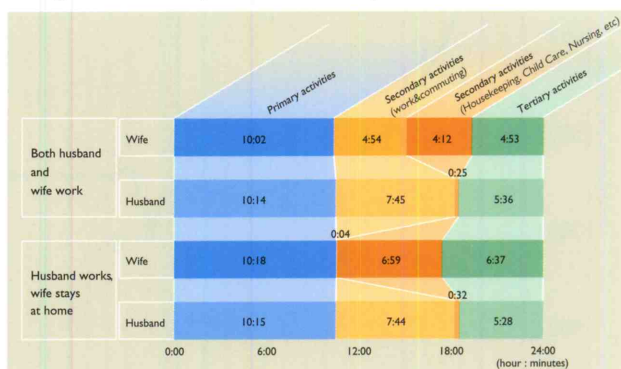
Notes: Latent labor force participation rate by age bracket = Population of the labor force (by age bracket) + Population of non-working population who want to work (by age bracket) / Population aged 15 years and over (by age bracket)

Source: Labour Force Survey "Detailed Tabulation" (2003), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

4 Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Industries

In Japan, women account for 53.3% of the total labor force engaged in agriculture as of 2005, 16.7% in forestry as of 2004, and 16.2% in fisheries as of 2004. Women engaged in agriculture, forestry and fisheries play important roles in their respective industries and contribute greatly to supporting livelihood and maintaining/revitalizing local communities. In terms of women's participation in local policy decision-making processes, women occupy 4.3% of the total agricultural committee members, responsible for coordinating farmland usage. As a result of the agricultural committee nationwide election in July 2005, women represent a larger figure than in the last election (2002). At agricultural cooperatives in charge of enhancing agricultural productivity or improving the living standards for their members, women represents only a small percentage of their board members, but the figure has been showing an upward trend from 0.58% in 2001 to 1.53% in 2005.

Usage of Time by Married Couples



Notes: Primary activities refer to activities to daily life such as sleeping and eating. Secondary activities refer to activities of a highly obligatory nature undertaken as part of social lives and encompass work and housework. Tertiary activities refer to activities not included in the above that individuals participate in during their free time. "Nursing" and "Shopping" are included in "Housekeeping, childcare, etc."

Source: "Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities" 2001, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

5-2 Women's Participation in Various Fields

1 Administration

The percentage of female national public officers in high-ranked managerial positions stood at 1.5% as of FY2003 and has shown a gradual increase over the long term.

According to the survey of September 30, 2005, the proportion of female members of national advisory councils and committees stands at 30.9%, achieving the 30% target that was initially supposed to be accomplished by the end of FY2005. Moreover, 103 out of 104 advisory councils and committees had female members; and 76 of them, 73.1% of the total number, had no less than 30% female representation.

2 International Fields

Twelve women have been appointed ambassador extraordinary or plenipotentiary since the Japanese government appointed its first female ambassador in 1980. Two of them currently serve as ambassadors to Italy and Norway, and women account for approximately 1.5% of all Japanese ambassadorships (as of December 22, 2005).

At the end of June 2005, women accounted for 59.6% of all Japanese staff in the Secretariat of the United Nations. The number of Japanese female professional staff at major international organizations including the United Nations has increased from 180 in 1994 to 437 in 2005. As of January 2005, Japanese women in senior positions include the Deputy Director General of UNIDO, and the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention.

3 Politics

Except for a short period after the Second World War, the percentage of female members of the House of Representatives had wavered between 1% and less than 2% until the thirty-eighth general elections in 1986, and, since then, this percentage has started to rise reaching 9.0% as of September 2005. Female membership of the House of Councillors has risen gradually from 4.0% in the first ordinary elections in 1947 to 13.6% as of July 2004. Female representation in local assemblies is comparatively high, standing at 21.5% (as of the end of December 2004) in special ward assemblies (Tokyo), and 16.3% (as of the end of December 2004) in government-designated cities.

4 Judiciary

The percentage of female judges, public prosecutors, and lawyers has been increasing over the long run.

5 Managerial, Professional and Technical Fields

Women employed in managerial posts, female researchers in natural science fields and female medical doctors still occupy low percentages, but they have been increasing in number.

Women's participation in administration and international fields



(Sources) National public officers, National Personnel Authority; National advisory councils and committees: Cabinet Office/Professional staff at the United Nations Secretariat: UN Secretariat's materials

Women's participation in Politics



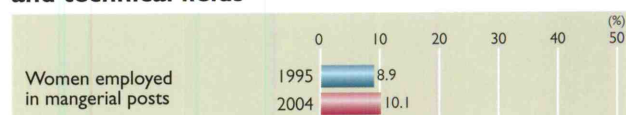
(Source) House of Representatives, house of Councillors and local assemblies: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Women's participation in the Judiciary

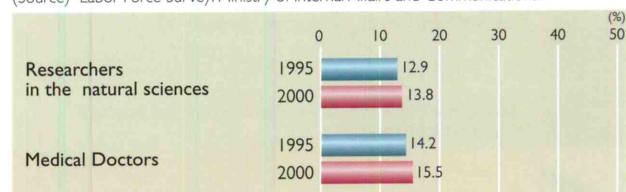


(Sources) Judges, Supreme Court, Public prosecutors: Ministry of Justice/Lawyers: Secretariat of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations

Women's participation in managerial, professional and technical fields



(Source) Labor Force Survey: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.



(Source) Population Census of Japan, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications