

Toward Active Participation of Women as the Core of Growth Strategies

From the “White Paper on Gender Equality 2013”

Summary

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

June 2013

The Cabinet annually submits to the Diet a report on the state of formation of a gender equal society and policies implemented by the Government (the White Paper on Gender Equality).

The 2013 White Paper has a special section devoted to providing analysis under the theme of “Toward Active Participation of Women as the Core of Growth Strategies.” This document is a summary of the special section. Please see the White Paper for more detailed information on source cited.

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Section 1 Women's Role in Revitalization of Economy

1. Situations around Japan's Economy

Japan's economy has been experiencing large structural changes including progressive growth of the service sector among industries, as well as a low economic growth and continued deflation after the collapse of its bubble economy. At the industry level, both employers and employees are facing new challenges such as the request for diversity management to correspond to globalization and change in Japan's characteristic employment practices. Further, considering household composition, one-person households and dual-income households are increasing. Focusing on households with two or more family members, the monthly income earned by a male head is decreasing.

2. Expectation toward Women in the Field of Economy

With such enormous changes in Japan's economy, women are drawing attention as a possible driving force of economic growth. New markets are expected to emerge as more women get involved in development of new products and services and their various experiences and values get reflected. In addition, the anticipated decrease of working age population can be moderated by the increase of women's employment.

3. Current Status of Women in the Field of Economy

(1) Current status of working women

(Status in general)

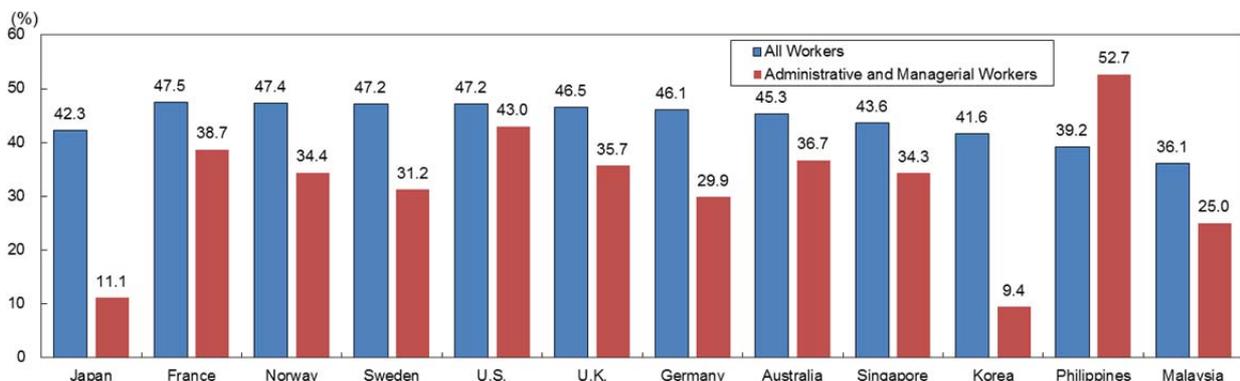
In 2012, women represent 42.3% of all workers. This ratio is not largely different from those in major overseas countries. Though women in managerial positions are gradually increasing recently, they represent a lower ratio than those in Singapore, Philippines and other Asian countries as well as in the U.S. and European countries (Figure 1).

(Status by industry and occupation)

Many male employees are working in the manufacturing industry (20.1%), wholesale and retail trade industry (14.3%) and the construction industry (11.9%), while many female employees are in the medical and welfare industry (20.0%) and the wholesale/retail trade industry (19.7%), followed by those in the manufacturing industry (11.5%).

By occupation, manufacturing processes workers represent the largest ratio (17.8%) among male employees and are followed by professional and engineering workers (15.0%) and sales workers (14.0%). For female employees, clerical workers (27.0%) represent the largest ratio, and are followed by service workers (19.1%) which is increasing recently, and professional and engineering workers (17.6%).

Figure 1 Women among Workers and Administrative/Managerial Workers



(Notes)

1. Based on the "Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)" by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2012) and "Databook of International Labour Statistics 2012" by Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training
2. 2012 data are used for Japan, 2008 data for Australia and 2010 data for other countries.
3. For the purpose of "Labour Force Survey" by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, "Administrative and Managerial Workers" include company officers, company management staff, and management government officials among workers. Definition of administrative and managerial workers varies across countries.
4. "Labour Force Survey" by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications uses the population assumed on the basis of the fixed population according to 2010 census (new reference) as the base of calculation.

(2) Employed workers

More women are employed by smaller companies in comparison with men. Recently, however, more and more women come to work in companies with 100 or more employees. Non-regular employees account for over 50% of female employees, while they represent about 20% of male employees.

(3) Self-employed workers and agricultural, forestry and fishery workers

Male self-employed workers are found mostly in agriculture, forestry and fishery, in the construction industry, and in the wholesale/retail trade industry. On the other hand, female self-employed workers are in the living-related and personal services, services for amusement and hobbies, wholesale/retail trade, and education/learning support services. Since FY 2006, the ratio of women engaged in agriculture has been flat around 50%. Female workers in fishery represent about 15%, and the number is decreasing.

(4) Employment overseas

The number of long stayers in foreign countries for their own employment or education is 498,000 as of October 1, 2011. Women account for 36.2% of them.

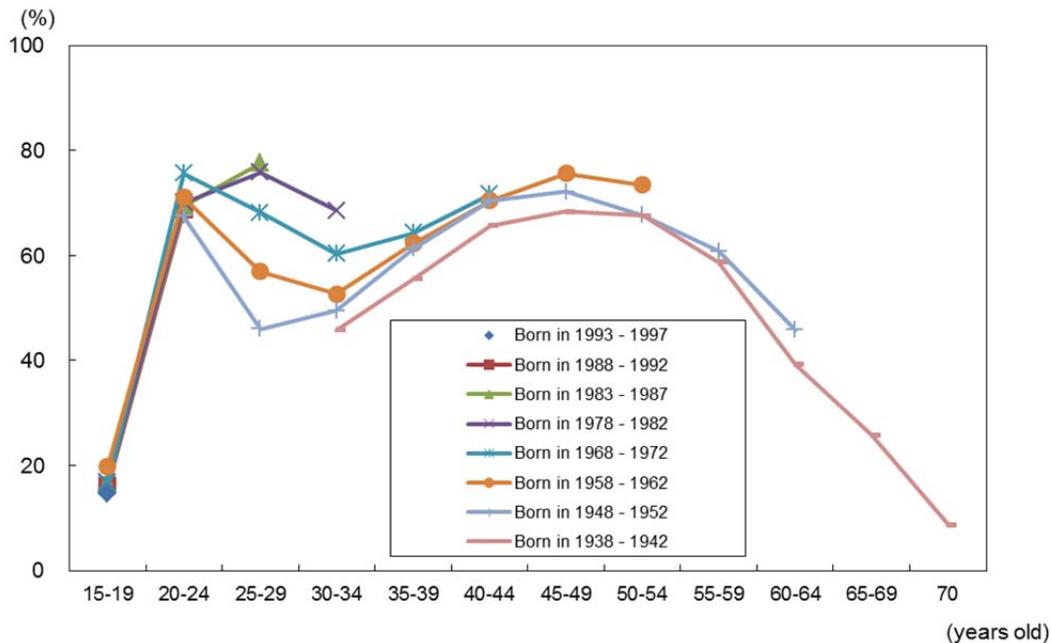
Section 2 Background of Labour Force Participation Rate of Women (M-shaped Curve)

1. Characteristics by Cohort (generation) and Marital Status

(1) Characteristics by cohort (generation)

When examining the labour force participation rate of women by cohort (generation), younger cohorts have higher peaks and a shallower bottom at older ages (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Women's Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group by Cohort



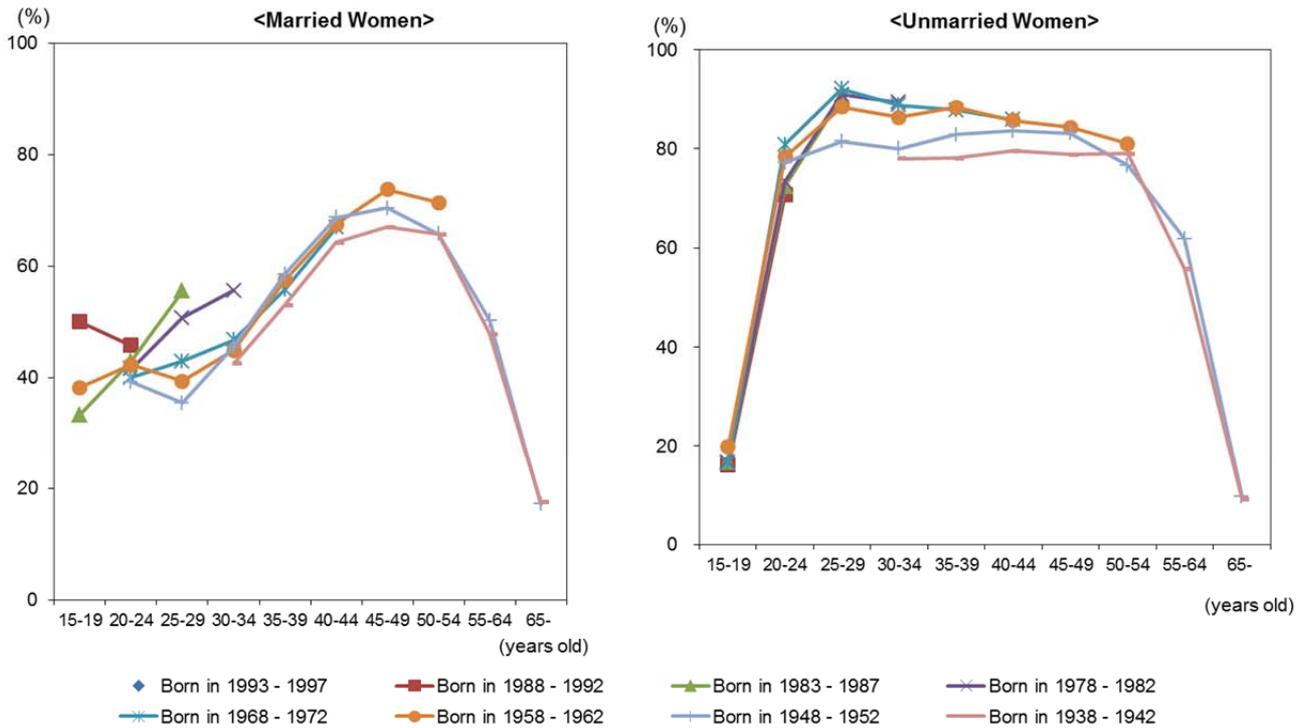
(Notes)

1. Based on "Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)" by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (yearly average)
2. People born in consecutive five years are aggregated to one cohort. For the sake of simplicity, every other cohort is displayed with regard to the cohorts which aggregate people born earlier than in 1978-1982 are displayed. Omitted cohorts have the similar tendency.

(2) Characteristics by marital status

Looking at labour force participation rate by age group and by marital status by cohort, married women generally show a higher rate in younger cohorts. In the case of unmarried women, the labour force participation rate rises toward the age group of 25 to 29, and then becomes flat or gradually decreases in all cohorts. Same as married women, younger cohorts have a higher labour force participation rate (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Women's Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group by Cohort (Married and Unmarried Women)



(Notes)

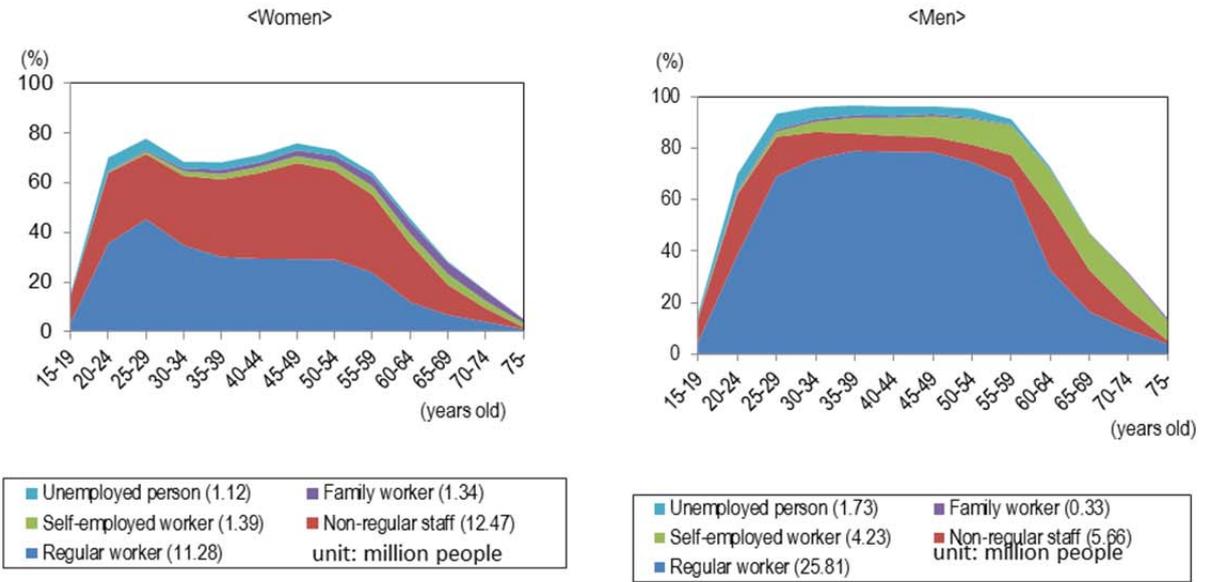
1. Based on "Labor Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)" (Yearly Average) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
2. People born in consecutive five years are aggregated to one cohort. For the sake of simplicity, every other cohort is displayed with regard to the cohorts which aggregate people born earlier than in 1978-1982 are displayed. Omitted cohorts have the similar tendency.
3. The number of samples of married women at the age of 15 to 19 is limited. No data is available on married women born in 1993 - 1997.
4. As those from 55 to 59 years old and those from 60 to 64 years old are treated as one age group in the survey in and before 1997, those two groups are displayed as one group here.

2. Characteristics by Employment Type and Educational Background

(1) Characteristics by employment type

The proportion of non-regular staff in female workers is bigger than in male even in younger age. In addition, at and after the age of 25, where many women get married and give birth to babies, the proportion of regular worker decreases and that of non-regular staff increases (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Employment Type Breakdown of Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group (By Sex in 2012)



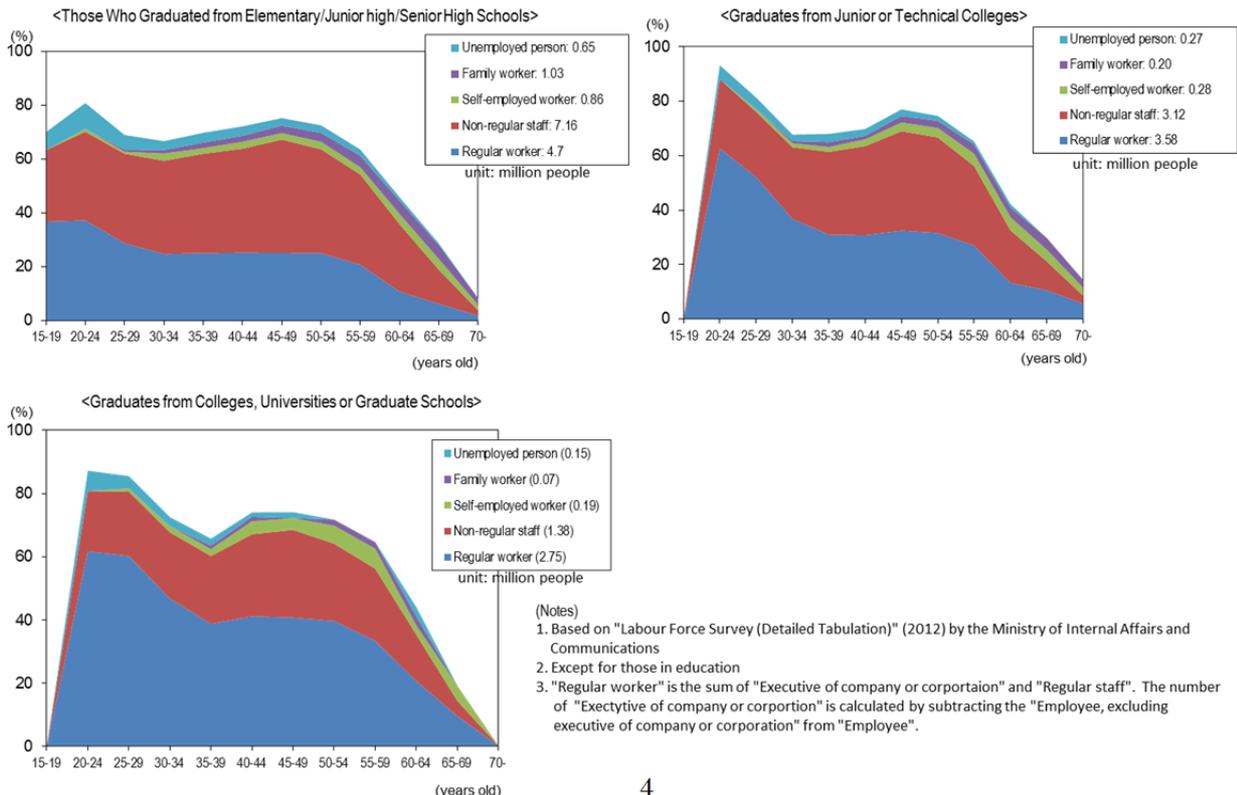
(Notes)

1. Based on "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)" (2012) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
2. "Regular worker" is the sum of "Regular staff" and "Executive of company or corporation".

(2) Characteristics by educational background

According to the employment type breakdown of female workers by educational background, restarting job as a non-regular staff is a common practice among those who graduated from elementary school or junior/senior high schools after they discontinue their work during marriage or childbirth. In case of graduates from junior college, technical college, college, university or graduate school, relatively small number of women starts working again after they quit their job during marriage or childbirth (Figure 5).

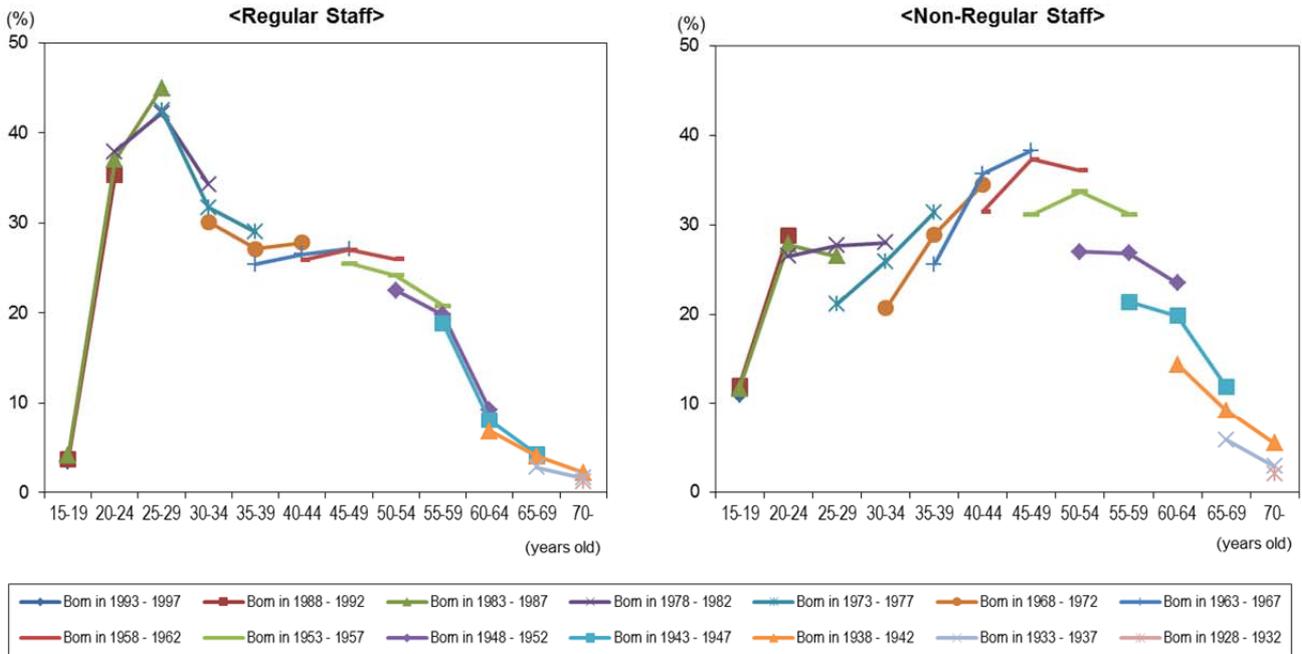
Figure 5 Employment Type Breakdown of Women's Labor Force Participation Rate by Educational Background and by Age Group (2012)



(3) Characteristics of employment type by generation

With regard to regular staff, no large difference is observed between cohorts in each age group. They scarcely return to the job market as a regular staff once they quit job when they got married or gave childbirth (Figure 6). In case of non-regular staff, on the other hand, younger cohorts have higher labour force participation rate than the previous cohort in the age groups at the bottom and the right peak of the M-shaped curve.

Figure 6 Women's Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Group by Cohort (by Type of Employment)



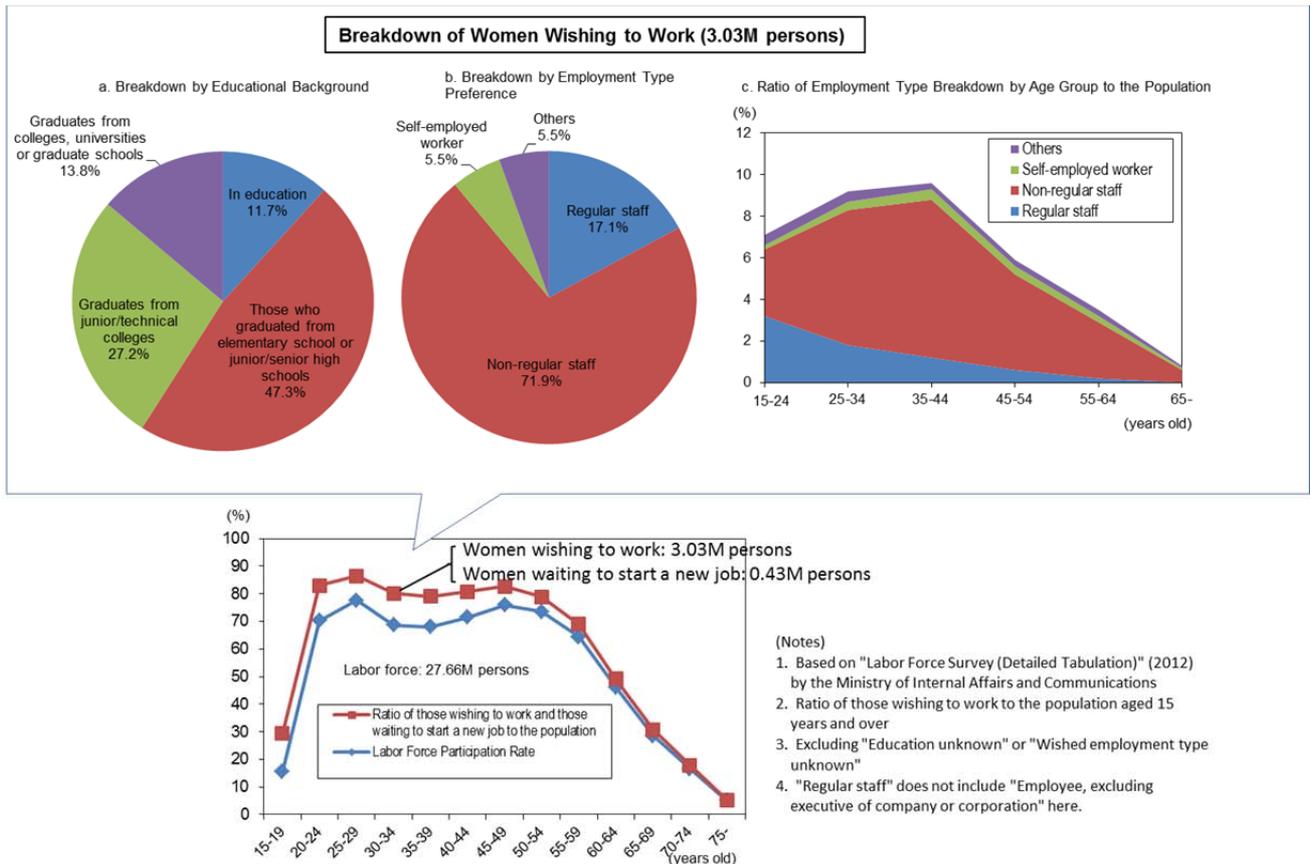
(Notes)

1. Based on "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)" (Yearly Average) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
2. "Regular Staff" does not include "Employee, excluding executive of company or corporation" here.

3. Women Wishing to Work among "Not in Labour Force"

3.03 million women not in labour force wish to work. More than half of them (1.61 million people) belong to the age groups from 25 to 44. Those who graduated from elementary school or junior/senior high schools account for 47.3%, and 71.9% of them prefer non-regular staff as the type of employment (Figure 7). The age group from 35 to 44 years old and that from 25 to 34 years account for 30.0% and 23.1% respectively in 3.03 million women wishing to work. Many women in these age groups in particular hope to be a non-regular staff.

Figure 7 Breakdown of Women Wishing to Work (2012)



Section 3 Life Stage and Employment of Women

1. Perception and Behavior of Men and Women in Relation to Women's Life Stage and Employment

(1) Women's life stage

(Married women and children)

Among couples of which both husband and wife get married for the first time, about 70% of wives in their twenties have at least one child. Older age groups have the lower ratio of wives without a child, though slightly lower than 10% of the wives in their forties do not have any child.

(Change in lifetime proportion never married)

In 2010, women's lifetime proportion never married (i.e. the ratio of those not married at the age of 50; calculated by the simple average of proportions not married at the age groups from 45 to 49 and from 50 to 54) is about 10%. This proportion has been rapidly increasing for both men and women in recent years. The proportion never married exceeds 20% in case of men.

By educational background, men with higher education have a lower proportion of those never married. In the case of women, those with higher educational background had a higher proportion of those never married before, but the proportion of those never married among those who graduated from elementary school and junior high school increases sharply in FY 2010.

(Caregiving and nursing)

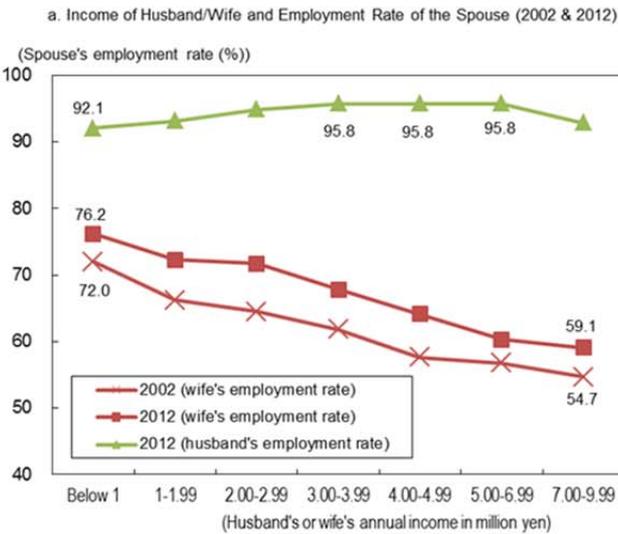
Women account for about 70% in major caregivers living together with those in need of care and also in caregivers living together with those in need of care who spend almost all day for caregiving. The number of major caregivers and nursing attendants per 100,000 people in need of care rapidly increases in their fifties for both men and women.

(2) Married women's Intentions to work

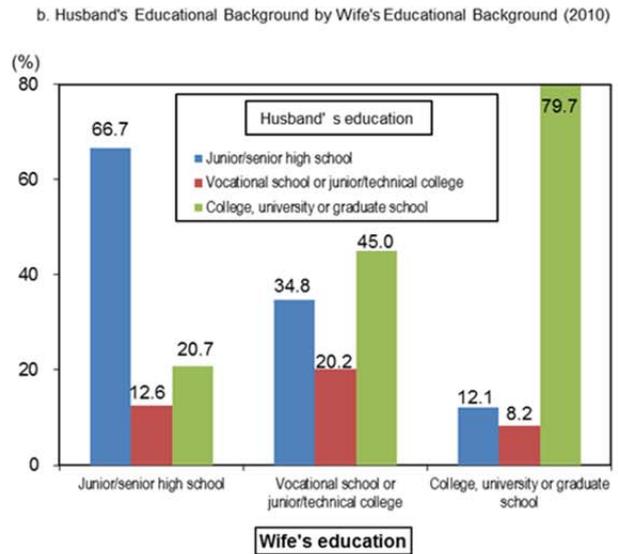
The employment rate of husbands exceeds 90% regardless of the wives' annual income level. The wives' employment rate decreases as the husbands' income becomes larger on the other hand, though the rate itself has increased from 2002 to 2012 (Figure 8a).

A man and an woman with similar educational background tend to get married (Figure 8b).

Figure 8 Combination of Employment and Education of Couples



- (Notes)
1. Based on "Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)" by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
 2. The ratio of the number of workers to the population is calculated.
 3. Wife's employment rate is for the wives at the age of 25 to 54 only.
For husband's employment rate, the age of wife is not limited.



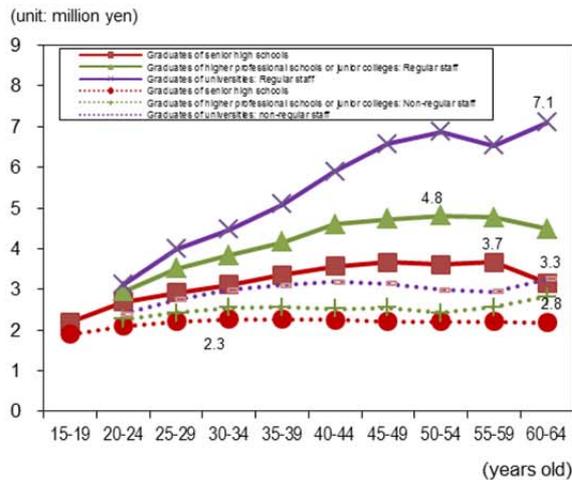
- (Notes)
1. Based on "The 14th National Fertility Survey (Annual Population and Social Security Survey)" (2010) by The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research
 2. "Others" and "Unknown" are excluded.

Looking at the average annual earnings of men belonging to the age group from 20 to 24 years old, there are not large differences among educational backgrounds. However, those with higher educational background have more substantial increase in their annual earnings as they get older. In the age groups from 45 to 54 years old, the difference in the average annual earnings reaches slightly below 3 million yen between men who graduated from senior high school and those who graduated from universities or graduate schools (Fig. 9b).

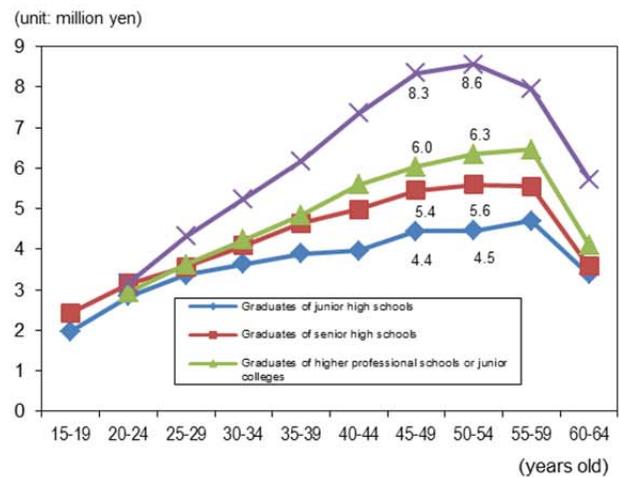
Average annual earnings of women who graduated from senior high school exceeds 3 million yen in and after their thirties in case of regular staff, while it is slightly over 2 million yen regardless of age groups in case of non-regular staff (Fig. 9a). Taking the men's difference by educational background into consideration, dual income couples of both husband and wife graduated from senior high school earn almost the same amount as men who graduated from universities or graduate schools on average.

Figure 9 Average Annual Earnings by Educational Background and by Age Group (Men and Women, 2012)

a. Women's Average Annual Earnings by Educational Background, by Age Group and by Employment Type



b. Men's Average Annual Earnings by Educational Background and by Age Group



(Notes)

1. Based on "Basic Survey on Wage Structure" (2012) by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. Survey on private establishments with 10 or more employees.
3. Calculated by "Contractual cash earnings" x 12 + "Annual special cash earnings".

(3) Perception of gender roles

According to the opinion survey conducted by the Cabinet Office in 2012, the ratio of those who are for the stereotyped gender role that a husband should earn living and a wife should be responsible for housekeeping (the sum of "completely agree" and "rather agree") exceeds the ratio of those who are against it (the sum of "completely disagree" and "rather disagree"). It is the first time since the start of this poll in 1979 that the rate of "agree" increased from the previous poll for both men and women.

(4) Ideal and reality of life course for women

Women's preference on ideal "life course" has not changed largely since 1997. On the other hand, in the women's own life course they are planning actually, the ratio of those expecting to be a housewife has halved from 17.7% in 1997 to 9.1% in 2010. The number of those who expect to be re-employed has also decreased. The numbers of those who expect to continue to work with/without getting married have increased.

As for the life course men expect for women, the ratio of those expecting women to be a housewife has decreased from 20.7% in 1997 to 10.9% in 2010, and the ratio of those expecting women to continue to work with getting married has grown largely.

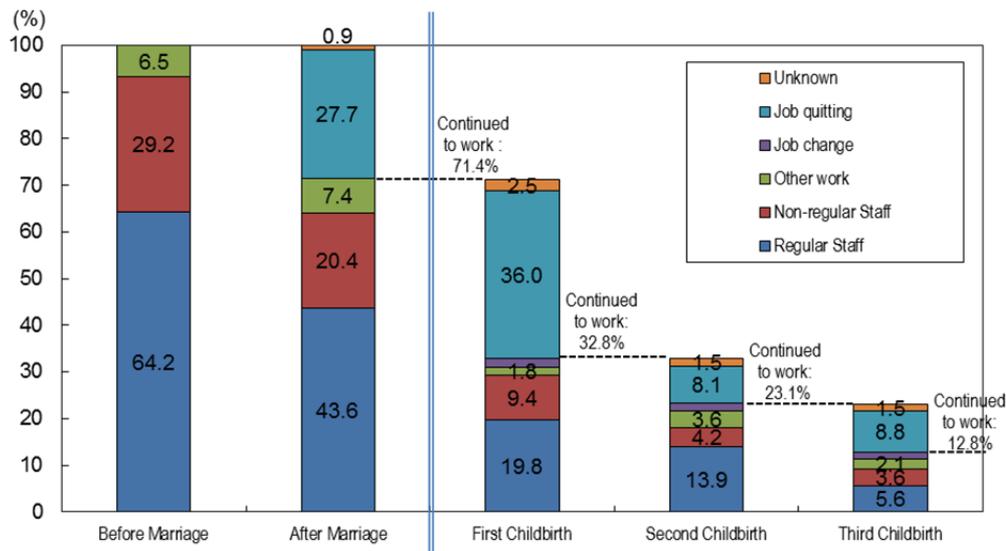
2. Women's Life Events and Employment

(1) Change of women's employment status in life events

Among women who had a job before marriage (excluding those engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishery), 27.7% discontinued their work when they got married and 36.0% did so when they gave a birth to their first child (Fig. 10).

The number of those who left the previous job for caregiving or nursing is 20,000 for men and 30,000 for women among all unemployed people (2,630,000 persons). 130,000 men and 880,000 women among 3,232,000 persons not in labour force had quit job due to caregiving or nursing.

Figure 10 Change of Women's Employment Status in Life Events (2011)



(Notes)

1. Based on "The 10th Longitudinal Survey of Adults in the 21st Century" (2011) by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
2. The number of women who were working before marriage is considered as 100%.
3. Status change on the occasion of marriage and childbirth are integrated in the graph here to see the overall tendency, though they are asked in separate questions.
4. Change of employment status on the occasion of marriage is shown based on the survey of the women who were working before marriage and got married during nine years from the first survey (2002) to 2011.
5. Change of employment status on the occasion of childbirth is shown based on the survey of couples where the wife was working before childbirth and gave birth to child(ren) in nine years from the first survey (2002) to 2011.

(2) Choice of employment type

Forty percent of female non-regular employees in the age group from 30 to 44 years old, who are at the bottom of M-shaped curve, answered that they selected to be a non-regular worker because "it is more convenient to cope with domestic duties (housework, childcare, caregiving etc.) or other activities (hobby, learning etc.)." Except for those in the latter half of their twenties, "No chance for regular employment" is not a main reason for many female employees. Not a few female employees are thought to choose non-regular employment as a flexible way of working.

Among the non-regular female employees belonging to the age groups from 25 to 34 years old, who are at the descending slope from the left peak of M-shaped curve, 35 to 40% out of those who wish to continue working desire to work as a regular employee. "Quest for higher income" and "quest for more stable status as an employee" are the most common reasons for women who wish to be a full-time worker in all age groups. Among the women belonging to the age groups from 40 to 49 years old, who are on the slope from the bottom to the right peak of M-shaped curve, "being released from housework, childcare, caregiving or other restrictions" is more common as a reason than in other age groups.

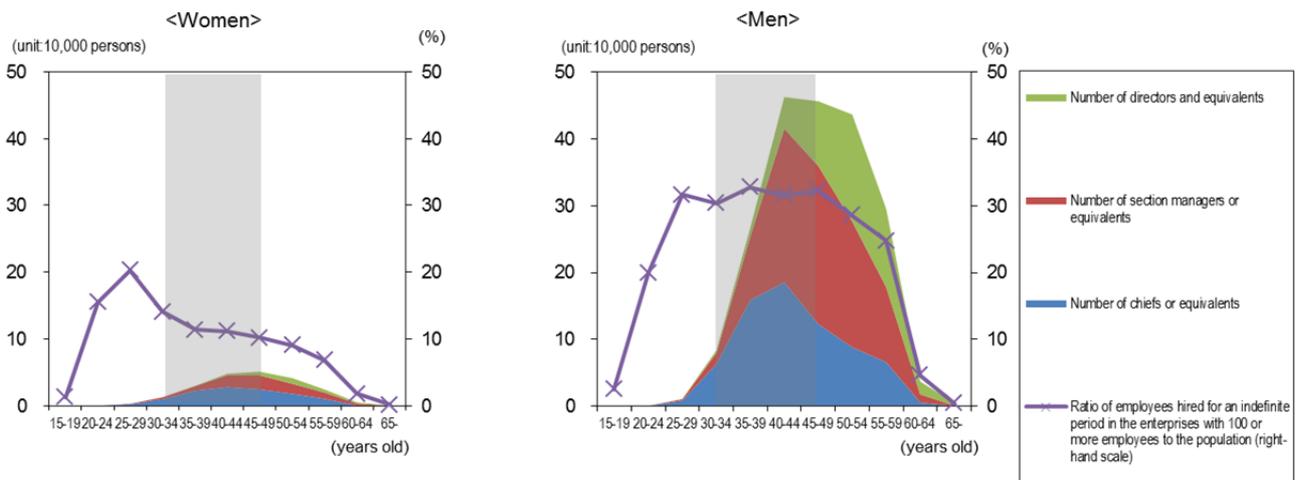
3. Women's Life Stages and Career Development

(1) Marriage, childbirth, childcare and promotion

(Synchronization of employment rate decrease and promotion increase)

Taking the rate of the number of employees for an indefinite period in companies with 100 or more employees to the whole population and drawing its graphics, the men's rate forms a trapezoid and women's shapes a mountain with the peak at the latter half of twenties. The decline of the employment rate (30 to 34 years old) and the increase of promotion to managerial position is synchronized with regard to women (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Ratio of the Number of Employees by Age Group to the Population and the Number of Managers (By Sex, 2012)



(Notes)

1. Based on "Basic Survey on Wage Structure" (2012) by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and "Labor Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)" (2012) by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
2. The numbers of workers by managerial post are tabulated for employees for an indefinite period in the enterprises with 100 or more employees.
3. Shaded area shows the age groups where the number of female managerial staff increases (30 to 49 years old).

(Perception of companies in relation to promotion of women to managers)

Among the companies with ten or more regular workers having only a few female managers (less than 10%) or having one management category without female manager, 48.9% answered "There is no female employee having necessary knowledge, experience and sense at present" as the reason.

(Employment management differentiated by career tracking)

About half of the companies with 5,000 or more employees and 45.9% of companies with 1,000 to 4,999 employees have introduced a career tracking system.

Women account for 11.6% in recruits scheduled for a main career track (2011), and the ratio of women to those currently following the main career track is 5.6%. Among the main career track employees employed ten years ago, 65.1% of women (twice the rate in case of men) have left the company already. All of the female main career track employees who had been hired ten years ago have quit already in 48.9% of companies with a career tracking system.

(2) Caregiving or nursing and assuming of executive posts

Among the companies of all business scales including small family-managed companies, women hold 23.1% of executive positions in 2012. The number of executives increases for both men and women in the latter half of their fifties. This is the age group where the number of caregivers and nursing attendants particularly increases among women.

(3) Re-learning

Re-learning is considered to provide an opportunity for a higher possibility of a career for those who are re-employed as well as for those who continue to work. Professional degrees, in law, accounting and business administration for example, are thought to be more directly linked with actual jobs in comparison with academic master degrees. The ratio of women to all new adult entrants to professional graduate school remains lower than that among the adults enrolled in master courses since 2003.