

Women's policy in low-fertility society — Its policy implications —

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Social issues on ageing society attract great concerns in developed countries with fertility below replacement level as well as the developing countries which have faced rapid fertility decline.

In the current paper, analysis of mechanism of fertility decline in Japan since after World War II was presented. Recent fertility decline mainly resulted from delay of marriage which has been affected by economic development and subsequent social changes. Continuing fertility decline obviously accelerates ageing of population which may triggers unprecedented social issues in the future.

To cope with ageing society, the promising steps to take will be the political attitude toward women status. The policy efforts made by Japanese government are introduced here, and its policy implications are discussed in the light of measures taken by Swedish government.

Key Words Fertility Decline, Women's Policy, Ageing Society, Social Issues

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INTRODUCTION

The population 65 years old and over occupied 13 percent of the total population of Japan in 1992. It is estimated to reach 25.8 percent in 2025. In 1992 the average longevity was 78.09 years for men and 82.22 years for women, with a difference of 6.13 years. In other words, of the population over 65 years of age there are 3.05 million more women. In 2025, the gap is estimated to expand, reaching 4.72 million. In the meantime, birth rates, a factor for determining the rate of population aging, have been on the decline since the first oil crisis in 1973. The Total Fertility Rate recorded the lowest of 1.50 in 1992¹⁾.

These statistics reflect the recent social changes in Japan. At the same time, these figures imply new

types of social problems. Most controversial, among others, are the questions of the environment in which women are currently being placed, and the contradiction over the traditional roles of women and the new role expectations placed on them in the ever aging society.

The Japanese government had been implementing policies intended to promote economic development since the end of World War II, but in recent years this has changed to policies intended to improve the well-being of the nation as it moves toward the 21st century. The promotion of policies to support women in the low-fertility and aging society have been also on the agenda.

HOW HAS FERTILITY DECLINED ?

In the current paper, the author would like to show firstly some results obtained in the analysis of fertility changes after world war II in Japan, which

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is major contributing factor of population ageing. The analysis was carried out from socio-economic and biological points of view as well. Secondary, the current social environment and public policy related to low fertility will be described.

1) Socio-economic factors on fertility changes

In the present analysis, the extent of direct and indirect effect of socio-economic factors on fertility in Japan is estimated with path analysis²⁾. Path model is constructed based on "modernization" or "development" theory which indicates economic development resulting from industrialization and urbanization would accelerate the reduction of fertility. The changing trend was speculated each five years from 1955 through 1980, therefore, six data sets which were aggregated by prefecture (the administration unit in Japan, there are 47 currently) form the basis of analysis.

As shown in Fig. 1, from 1955 through 1965 indus-

trialization (economic development) exerted the direct effect on fertility in the initial period, but it gave indirect effect in later period through education factors.

In 1970 model, the selected variables failed to explain any contribution to fertility. Unknown factors are presumably involved. It is to be noted that economy in Japan came to turning point in early 1970's due to oil crisis. The attitude toward life style might change greatly and subsequently affected fertility. To be explicit, residence rental fee went up high sky-rocketed and the proportion of girls' educational attainment to upper level had increased greatly since then.

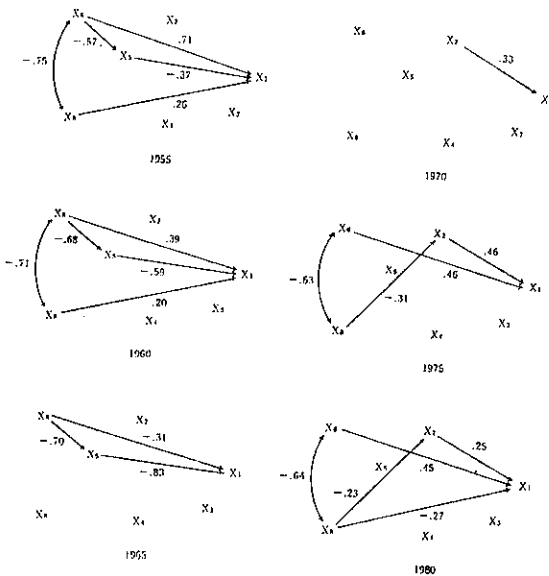
From 1975 through 1980, urbanization exerted the direct effect, and converse indirect effect at same time through marriage rate on fertility. Industrialization also played the influential role in direct way during this period. However, education factor disappeared from the model, presumably due to leveling of educational attainment by prefecture. Infant mortality had played no substantial role during the whole period concerned.

In consideration of marked change in 1970 model and the model basic pattern has been hold thereafter, some renovation of behavior or consciousness might occur during the period between 1965 and 1975 as mentioned above²⁾.

2) Biological factors on fertility

Marked fertility declines have been observed in Japan from 1950-1960 and 1975-1985. The dynamic structure of the fertility decline in the two periods was analyzed employing the Standardization Approach and Bongaarts Model of Proximate Determinants Analysis³⁾. In here, only the results obtained from the Standardization Approach will be shown since they are consistent with those from Bongaarts Model.

In the Standardization Approach, changes of crude birth rate between different time points are statistically able to decomposed into changes of five



X1: TFR, X2: Marriage rate, X3: Infant mortality
 X4: Physicians per 100,000 population
 X5: Girls' middle level education
 X6: Proportion engaged in first industry
 X8: Population density

Fig. 1 Path model: Factors affecting TFR

Table 1 Results of decomposition of the crude birth rate and general fertility rate into factors

	<u>1950-1960, (Base population, 1950)</u>			
	<u>Changes in</u>		<u>Changes in</u>	
	<u>crude birth rate</u>		<u>general fertility rate</u>	
	<u>Absolute</u>	<u>Relative</u>	<u>Absolute</u>	<u>Relative</u>
(per1,000)	(%)	(per1,000)	(%)	
Proportion of women of reproductive ages in total population	1.59	14.60		
Age structure (A)	0.35	3.22	1.37	3.09
Marital status (M)	-2.35	-21.59	-9.19	-20.74
Marital fertility (F)	-9.18	-84.07	-35.79	-80.75
Proportion of women and GFR	-0.66	-8.05		
Total change explained	-10.23	-93.89	-43.82	-98.39
Total change observed	-10.89	-100.00	-44.33	-100.00

Table 2 Results of decomposition of the crude birth rate and general fertility rate into factors

	<u>1975-1985, (Base population, 1975)</u>			
	<u>Changes in</u>		<u>Changes in</u>	
	<u>crude birth rate</u>		<u>general fertility rate</u>	
	<u>Absolute</u>	<u>Relative</u>	<u>Absolute</u>	<u>Relative</u>
(per1,000)	(%)	(per1,000)	(%)	
Proportion of women of reproductive ages in total population	-1.15	-21.85		
Age structure (A)	-3.08	-58.40	-11.25	-70.01
Marital status (M)	-3.11	-59.06	-11.37	-70.80
Marital fertility (F)	1.50	28.55	5.50	34.23
Proportion of women and GFR	0.30	5.88		
Total change explained	-5.53	-105.10	-17.12	-108.58
Total change observed	-5.27	-100.00	-16.06	-100.00

components; those are "proportion of women of reproductive ages in total population", "age structure", "marital status", "marital fertility" and "proportion of women and general fertility". Changes of general fertility rate are also able to be decomposed into three components. The extent of changes is shown by absolute and relative value as

well in Table 1-2.

The results indicated that the fertility decline in 1950-1960 was mainly caused by a drop in marital fertility (Table 1). The demographic analysis with Bongaarts Model endorsed the drastic decline of marital fertility being resulted from the expanding diffusion of contraception practices and increases in

induced abortion³⁾. In fact, the cause of campaign for contraceptives use had been actively conducted by non-governmental organizations. However, the Eugenic Protection Law promulgated by Parliament paved the way for women to access the abortion clinics. Increased age at marriage cannot be discounted as a factor also.

The fertility decline in 1975-1985 was mostly caused by delay of marriage as well as a reduction in proportion of the reproductive population which is composed of a cohort born in 1960s or later (Table 2). The reasons of delayed marriage are quite complicated that they will be discussed in the later section.

BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN

Postwar, family system had rapidly changed accompanying the remarkable development of Japanese economy. In connection with collapse of traditional type of family which used to be the life basis before the World War II, decrease of self-employed household and increase of employees household which triggered the formation of nuclear family have affected people's consciousness toward the function of the family system.

Nuclear family developed in the predominance of secondary industry has brought up the sex differential role that men work outside, and women keep house and take care of children. Why such system came up? We may be able to point out the fact that secondary industrial world requires men's manual labour in the workplace which separate the joint-work in traditional family life²⁾. A Nuclear family had been forced to determine sex differential role in daily life and gradually this idea has become accepted by the public at large to adopt the modern family life in the postwar society.

More recently, some remarkable changes in family formation have been observed. Firstly, people's attitude toward the marriage has changed greatly.

Even now, marriage rate is still very high in Japan, and most people keep the idea that marriage is an important milestone in their life plan. However, people do not expect the marriage as it meant before. In short, people have become reluctant to lead the marriage life under the sex-related duty assignment system.

As the matter of fact, a poll survey conducted by Prime Minister Office showed that more and more men and women disagree the stereotype of idea "men work outside and women keep house" (Fig. 2)⁴⁾.

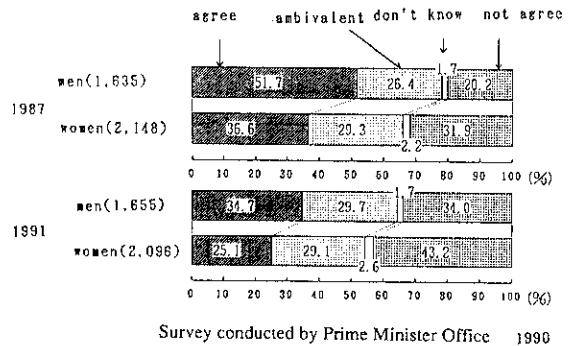


Fig. 2 Do you agree the idea "men work outside and women keep house"?

Consequently, delay of marriage or being stay unmarried has become popular these days in Japan. These new currents exert the great influence on the recent decline of birth rate. Even so the situation is as such in Japan, it is noteworthy that Japanese still preserve oriental value in viewing children. In response to a international comparison survey, Japanese ranked the top in putting the value of children for "they are the next generation for the future society" and "they play the role as the tie among family members". In contrast, Japanese as well as Korean responded differently from their western counterparts as to child-rearing. Japanese and Korean respondents said "Parents enjoy child-rearing little" (Table 3)⁵⁾.

Table 3 What means to you to have children?

(%)	Japan	USA	Britain	France	Korea
producing the next generation for the future society	61.7	52.6	29.9	25.0	48.4
tie among family members	50.7	44.2	48.2	46.6	24.8
continuing one's own life	42.4	40.8	23.3	49.3	34.0
developing mentally/maturity of parents	38.2	44.2	35.7	32.4	13.5
enjoying child-rearing	20.6	48.6	70.7	76.6	19.3
continuing family line	19.3	23.1	15.7	12.4	48.3
succeeding parents' will	18.7	10.9	6.7	3.5	43.2

Survey conducted by Japanese government (1979)

Secondly, diversification of view toward family life has become apparent as more and more women participate in labour market. The traditional family life discourages women to work outside, but birth-giving and child-caring are too costly for nuclear family to support in modern life on the other hand.

A report from Ministry of Education manifested that the gap of expenditure for education between private and public school is tangibly large (Fig. 3)⁶⁾.

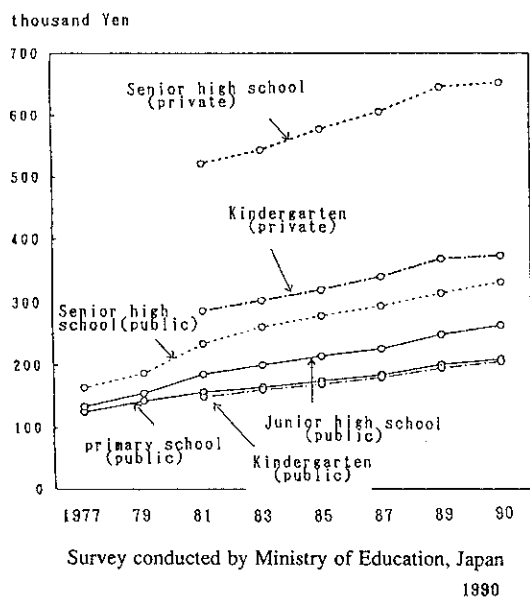


Fig. 3 Expenditure for education supported by parents

Some 70% of parents wish their children to go to college. In Japan, there is prevailing recognition that private schools prepare curriculum much more advantageous for applicants to go to colleges. Due to the social atmosphere for education, the present cost for education fee including childcare accounts for a considerable proportion of family expenditure. It seems to affect the married couples to make decision for the number of children they want to have. In this context, the cost burden seems reflect the recent decline of the number of children in family⁷⁾.

As the result, women would have to consider if their works were compatible with housekeeping or not. Full-time job, part-time job or leaving their jobs for a certain period for birthgiving and child-caring and restarting her careers are all choices.

Moreover, it should be noted that parents have in mind that social environment is not appropriate to raise children. For example, housing problems, especially in big cities, are an outstanding element for people to map out their life plan which related to the ideal number of children⁸⁾. One more thing, some are worried about their children to be involved in the heating race of current entrance examination⁷⁾.

WOMEN IN THE FAMILY

Seen from the viewpoint of family life, couples now have a smaller number of children, which means each is a valuable child. Thus, this has led to greater demands for high quality of maternal and child health services.

Another important feature is the change in the household structure. The statistics on household structure show that single-person households and husband-and-wife households are on the rise while families consisting of parents and unmarried children, or three-generation families, are on the decrease⁹⁾. This is affected by the late marriage phenomenon and the increase of elderly couples or single elderly persons living by themselves. Current-

ly, 29 percent of all households contain people over 65 years.

In the aged society, it is expected that there will be more demands for women's participation in the labor force. At the same time, this poses an important policy question as to who and how to take care of the children and elderly when women are working outside. The traditional concept of gender roles in Japan, "women at home and men at work outside" has been challenged, and the equal sharing of household chores is being called for.

Yet, according to a survey in 1991, women spend a daily average of 3 hours 52 minutes on household work, while men spend only 58 minutes. There has been a growing tendency over the past several years, however, for increasing numbers of men to spend more time on household work. This tendency is mostly seen among men who are under 40 and over 65 years of age¹⁰. Those men who are under 40 years old were born after World War II and have been educated, as such, to accept a new notion of family life. They belong to a generation which embodies "a new style family." Men over 65 years old are those who have retired from work. Taking these facts into consideration, it will take more time until the concept as well as practice of men sharing household work can take root in Japanese society.

WOMEN AT WORK

Over 50 percent of women over 15 years old were working in 1992 (77 percent of men). Looking at labour participation by age group, the graph shows M shaped curve with peaks at the 20-24 years' group (76 percent) and 45-49 years' group (72 percent) while the 30-34 years' group (53 percent) at the bottom (Fig. 4). As the 25-29 age group was at the bottom in the past, this indicates the trend of late marriage¹¹.

This contrasts with the statistics of women under employment in western countries in which high rates are maintained among the age range of 20

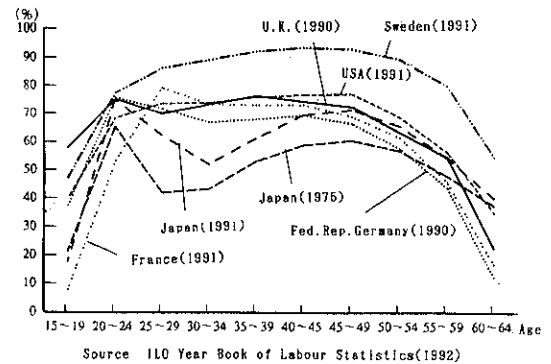


Fig. 4 Women's Participation in Labour Market by Selected Countries

through 40 years old. The irregularity of women's employment by age suggests that a greater portion of Japanese women are prevented from continuing to work by child-rearing and other responsibilities at home.

Compared with the past when many women were self-employed or worked for family businesses, an increasing portion has been employed at one time or another (93 percent employed). Two-thirds of currently employed women are employed in the service sector, i.e. clerical work, wholesale and retail shops, restaurants, and so forth¹².

There exists a gap between men and women in their salaries, determined by such factors as the number of years of employment, academic career, job description, work classification, etc. When men and women are compared in the same background and career, a female high-school graduate in her 20s receives about 90 percent of the salary of her male counterpart. With this 10-percent gap as the minimum, the gap reaches 30 percent in their 50s, when a woman receives only 70 percent of what a man receives. In the case of university graduates, a woman's salary is 95 percent of a man's when they are in their 20s, and 80 percent in their 50s¹³.

Eight years have passed since the enforcement of the Man-and-Women Equal Employment Opportunity Law. According to the survey in 1992 by the

Ministry of Labor on the placement of women in companies, 55 percent of the responding companies said that they are "placing women in all kinds of positions based on their ability and aptitude," 38 percent answered that they "place women in such positions that would make the most of woman's properties and senses," and only 5 percent said that they "only place women in positions which support or assist male workers." The ratios of these answer in 1989 were 23, 46 and 8 percent respectively¹⁴⁾. This shows that in 3 years the number of companies intending to give due evaluation to women's capabilities has increased.

Although gaps still exist between men and women in their employment conditions and job placement, the employment situation in Japan is rapidly breaking away from conventional standards.

WOMEN'S ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES AS PRESENTED IN THE MEDIA

In order to see how the media report on women, information was retrieved from the 1993 database of Asahi Shimbun, one of the major national newspapers in Japan, using the keywords of "women" and "policy"¹⁵⁾. 600 articles were retrieved, 167 among which were those dealing with women's problems and related policies in their headlines. The breakdown is as follows :

- 1) Famous women, or women active in various fields of society (culture, art, politics, social status) : 74 cases
- 2) Human rights, or discrimination against women : 37 cases
- 3) Policies of the national and local governments (child care, employment and social security) : 36 cases
- 4) Relations between husband and wife, other human relations : 20 cases

The articles about women making remarkable performances in social life reflect their increased participation in society. That the newspaper takes

up discussion of these women would mean, adversely, that women's participation in society is not taken for granted.

The articles about discrimination against women were mostly related with cases at the workplace. One of the headlines, "Stop telling us 'Hey, tea for me'", symbolically illustrates the situation in which women workers are placed at work.

The articles relating to human rights include introductions to international actions to protect women's rights, cases of violence against women and sexual harassment.

In the policy-related articles, the focus is mainly on plans and attitudes of the national and local governments towards policies related to women's issues. They are often accompanied by comments by people in the private sector. Regarding a wife's dependent benefit, a well-known woman critic says "Instead of merely evaluating the merit of a wife's assistance, we should ask for the husband to become more self-reliant in basic daily living." This comment reversely suggests the traditional husband-and-wife relationship in Japan.

The articles on husband-and-wife relations mostly depict the daily lives of different couples, some are about emotional estrangement while others reveal beautiful love stories of elderly couples. Those dealing with human relations discuss power politics in organizations mainly comprised of women. The reason why articles of this kind have been considered to draw the readers' attention would be that the management of workplaces for women only is often a topic of discussion.

DIRECTIONS TOWARD POLICIES

Needless to say, population aging is brought about by lowered birth rates resulting from decrease of proportion married. To get married or to stay single, moreover, how many children family should have? These matters basically depend on individual concerns. Whether a married woman

handles only housekeeping or not, it should be decided on her own. After all, people should decide how to handle these matters according to their own life plans.

Society including government is asked to prepare the social environment as much as comfortable and adjust the policy whatever way of life people may choose, at least not invite any predominant disadvantages for people to select one particular way of life. The measures to be taken should be in the direction to enrich the individual life, and bring up the motivation for couples to have more children which consequently results in higher fertility in total when we think about serious shortcomings of extreme aging society. Japan's low fertility and its remarkable longevity remind us of its highest velocity of aging in the world.

To achieve the goal, the responsibility is not only on the part of government. The individuals and industrial world are advised to take any necessary measures in cooperation and support each other between themselves.

People seem to be ready to accept that there are various ways of life-style, and policy should be oriented in the way that choice of it will be equally open to man and woman. As the number of working woman is increasing today, it needs to adjust the social system which allows women to be compatible with working outside and keeping house. Therefore, it is important to make consensus of it in the society that husband and wife should share the house-keeping and child-caring work to support such life style.

At the same time, companies are also advised to offer proper working condition for women-employee and man-employee as well. Moreover, public policy should be reflected such social change.

In order to cope with population aging, the Japanese government approaches it from social policies rather than population policies. In the forthcoming aged society, it is feared that the vitality of

society will be hampered, in addition to giving rise to unprecedented kinds of problems. In such circumstances, women are expected to play more important roles, and for this purpose, various concrete policies must be laid and implemented.

GOVERNMENT POLICY TO SUPPORT FAMILY AND WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY

The Japanese Government has set up the following policy which has been under implementation¹⁶⁾.

1. General policy

1) "New National Action Plan toward 2000 of Year" (1991)

The statement of plan declared that in order to achieve the goal "joint participation in formation of new society by men and women," the programs of various choice must be offered to child-rearing women.

2) "5 Year Plan to become Power Country for comfortable life" (1992)

5 Year Plan's statement includes the paragraph that it is essential to eradicate stereotype of sex differential roles and reform the social systems and traditions which hamper women to participate in the society. Working conditions and environment should be fit to women so that they can do best and play the important role in the society.

To realize the goal, annual working hours will be reduced to 1,800 hours by 1996 and flex time working system or short time working system will be introduced. In addition, re-employment of women and development of women's ability should be taken into consideration and studied.

2. Policy to realize joint participation on the basis of equity

1) Promotion of women's participation in policy-making and decision-making processes

Based on the "Recommendation and Conclusion accompanied by the First Review and Evaluation on the Implementation of the Nairobi Future Strategy for Improving Women's Status," adopted by the

United Nations in 1990, the Japanese government decided to engage more women as members of various advisory councils that have influential power on the government's policies. It is expected that women will constitute 15 percent of the total membership by 1995.

Regulations that prevented the employment of women in some sectors of the government offices (including the Defense Agency) were completely lifted in 1988. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is now considering ways to increase the proportional number of women employed in higher educational institutions such as universities.

2) Promotion of male-female equality

a) Rectifying the fixed notion on gender roles

An office exclusively in charge of women's issues is set up in the national as well as local governments to promote exchanges and networking among women's organizations. Through institution of a "Women's Week," the government also conducts nation-wide public campaigns to create awareness on women's issues.

b) Improving school education

In reference to the "Treaty for Abolition of Discrimination against Women", it was decided that sexual equality and human rights issues are to be incorporated to the school curriculum of elementary through upper secondary school. With regard to career guidance for students, guide-lines were adopted to ensure individual decision making regardless of sex.

c) Developing a life-long approach to women's health and welfare

Beginning with 1994, health and welfare services will be transferred from the prefectural government level to the municipal, township and village government levels in order to provide services closer to local residents. These services include maternal and child health to various services for the elderly.

In addition to conventional technical guidance in the fields of health and medical care, programs will

be developed so as to deal with problems faced by all women, from young girls in adolescence to elderly women. Mental health care for women through counseling services will be also initiated. As for economic assistance, the amounts of childbirth, child delivery and child care allowances have been increased. The guidance and monitoring regime for maternity protection regulations provided under the "Labor Standards Act" has also been strengthened.

3. Policy to support family life

1) "Maternity Leave Law" (1992)

Either parent is able to take one year leave but unpaid during the period. However, 20% payment during the leave is under consideration.

2) Expanding services in nursery school

The nursery services in urban areas to accommodate infants and extend the nursery hours for working women are emphasized. To subsidize the private nursery schools is also taken into account. For convenience of child-rearing parents, nursery information will be provided through multi-channels.

3) Building up child-care allowance

Although the system was introduced in 1971, current modification starts providing allowance from the first child and doubles the amount of allowance. Beneficiaries accept it until children get three years old.

4) Providing low rental housing

5) Constructing playgrounds, play-parks and children leisure halls in urban area.

6) To ease the heating up race of entrance examination

Introducing the recommendation system and expanding the number of colleges to accept students with special ability or who are prominent in extra-curricular activities.

4. Policy to support working women

1) "Men-and-Women Equal Employment Opportunity Law" (1986)

As mentioned, equal opportunities for employment and equal chances for promotion have been

intended but problems remain in some aspects.

2) Assurance of equal employment opportunity and working conditions between men and women

Offices in charge of women are instituted in many local governments to provide counseling and advisory services on the "Men-and-Women Equal Employment Opportunity Law" so as to guide employers and prevent infringement of laws and regulations. As a consequence of the law and efforts made by various parties, separate retirement age systems for men and women have almost ceased to exist. As a means to promote a well-balanced working and private life for both man and women workers, the government revised the relevant parts of the "Labor Standards Act" in order to realize the 40-hour-a-week, 1,800-hour-a-year working system.

3) Promotion of measures for women in rural and fishing villages

The mid- and long-term plan for women in rural and fishing villages was adopted by and has been implemented since 1993. This plan is aimed to cover comprehensive policies such as the enhancement of women's status, increased participation in the policy-making process, development of abilities, and betterment of working conditions.

Many of the women working in rural areas start working on the farm only after their marriage. The local governments, therefore, provide training opportunities for them to acquire agricultural skills and management capabilities.

5. Ensuring welfare for women in their older years

1) Improvement of Income security

The major source of income security for the elderly is a public pension scheme. The current pension scheme introduced in 1986 has a two-tier system: the first-tier, flat-rate basic benefits covering all, including self-employed and the second tier, earnings-related benefits applied only to employees. Employees pay pension contributions deducted from their salaries directly, and the selfemployed make

their contributions themselves through their concerned local government offices.

In the past, women who had not been employed and dependent on their husband's income were sometimes disadvantaged in the case of divorce or disability, not being eligible to receive old-age pension benefits when they become old. However, with the revision of law to introduce the two-tier system, every woman, even if she is dependent on the husband's income, is eligible for basic pension benefits, and her contribution is deducted from her husband's salary.

Nevertheless, the amounts of public pensions are not always sufficient to support the after-retirement life. As an additional means to ensure a stable life, a system was introduced whereby no tax is chargeable on the interest on savings of the widowed women and people over 60 years old. The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications offers schemes combining life insurance and pension insurance for couples. After deregulation of private insurance a greater number of life insurance and pension schemes have become available.

2) Improvement of welfare services

The government set forth the "10-Year Strategy to Promote Health Care and Welfare for the Elderly," so-called "Gold Plan" in 1990. Under this plan, the government aims to develop the infrastructure for public services in health care and welfare for the elderly including various types of welfare facilities to meet various needs of the elderly and their family.

Along with development of institutional back-up system, another important target in this plan is manpower development, specially focusing on the increase of the number of home helpers and nursing care providers who will be of greater demand in the future.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The women policies made public include promo-

tion of women's status, joint participation of men and women in social setting as well as in family life, fringe benefits for the aged women and so on. It is no question the efforts will lead the way to cope with ageing society. Nevertheless the author is still wondering if the policies command the good scope of materialization. The relevant issues as follows need to be taken into reconsideration :

1. How the policies can be accepted by industrial world, when government promote women's participation in labour market? Profit oriented business world might not be interested in employment of women without economic rationalization supported by government policy.

2. What are the transitional steps to take in eradicating the traditional gender role? Psychological or physical strains exerting on men and women would be inflated if policies did not get along with social changes.

3. How can people drive the political groups to take action in favour of women in reproductive age and children in contemporary society with increasing proportion of the aged population? In other words, the aged will form the greater majority group in forthcoming ageing society, and would be more influential on political power. The group speaking up for women in reproductive age and children might be a minority.

Three items mentioned above seem to be worth while to study from politico-sociological points of view. Our study on recent fertility increase in Sweden may provide a cue to solution¹⁷⁾. The development of women's policies apparently based on the cause toward promotion of women's status¹⁸⁾. Accordingly, fertility increase which buffer the population ageing is likely to result from a serial renovations of scheme related to maternity leave and relevant programs¹⁹⁾.

However, emphasis should be placed on the fact that the scheme of maternity leave and relating legal provisions have come up in connection with

employment policy to recruit the welfare personnel in public sector, which is intended to cope with the increase of the elderly. At the same time, increase of employment resulted in more taxpayers which favoured the government revenue. There is little reason for business world to be reluctant to go with government since employment opportunities were mostly created by public sectors and resultant fertility is obviously advantageous to labour market²⁰⁾.

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