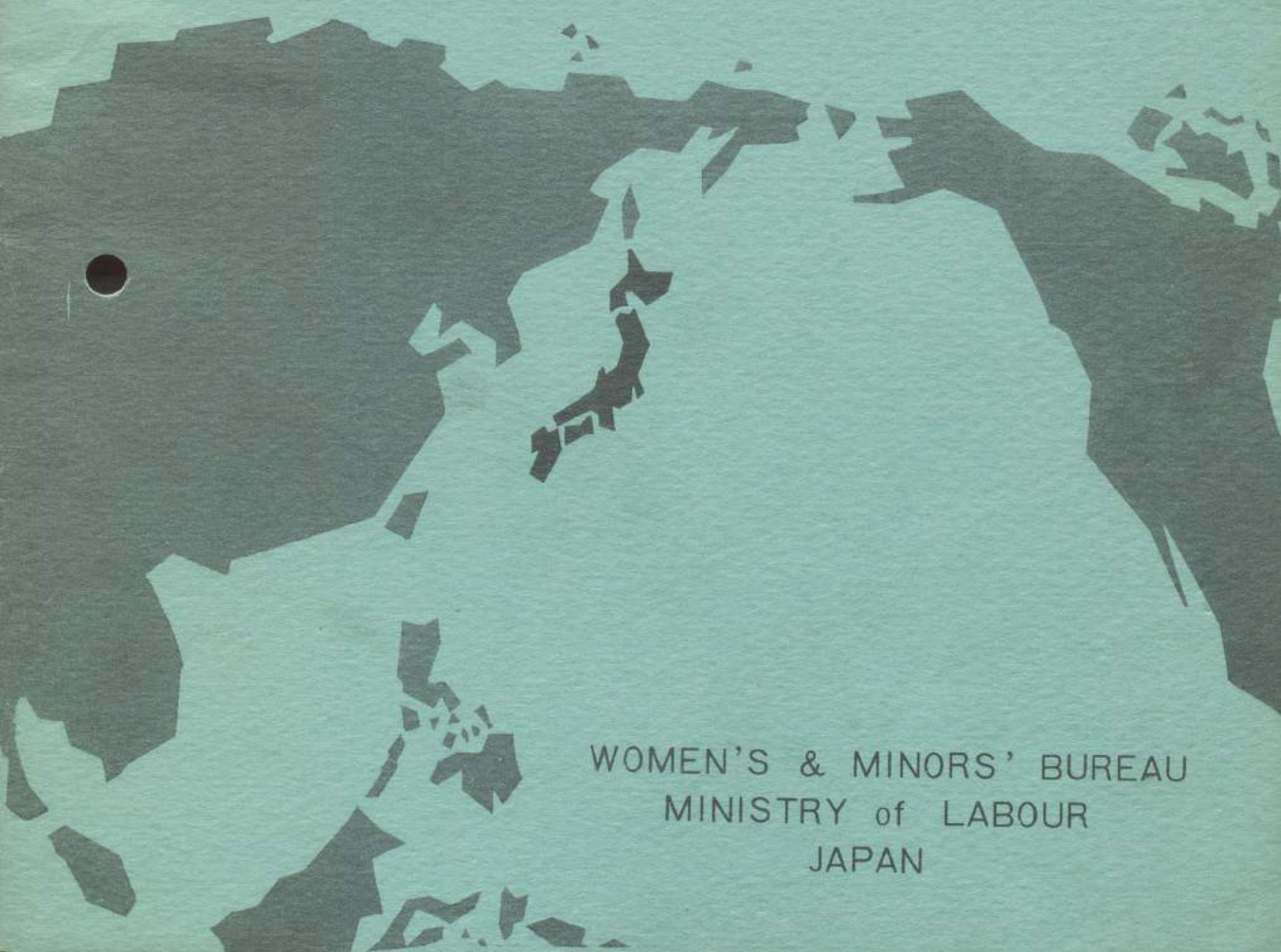


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WOMEN WORKERS in JAPAN

1964

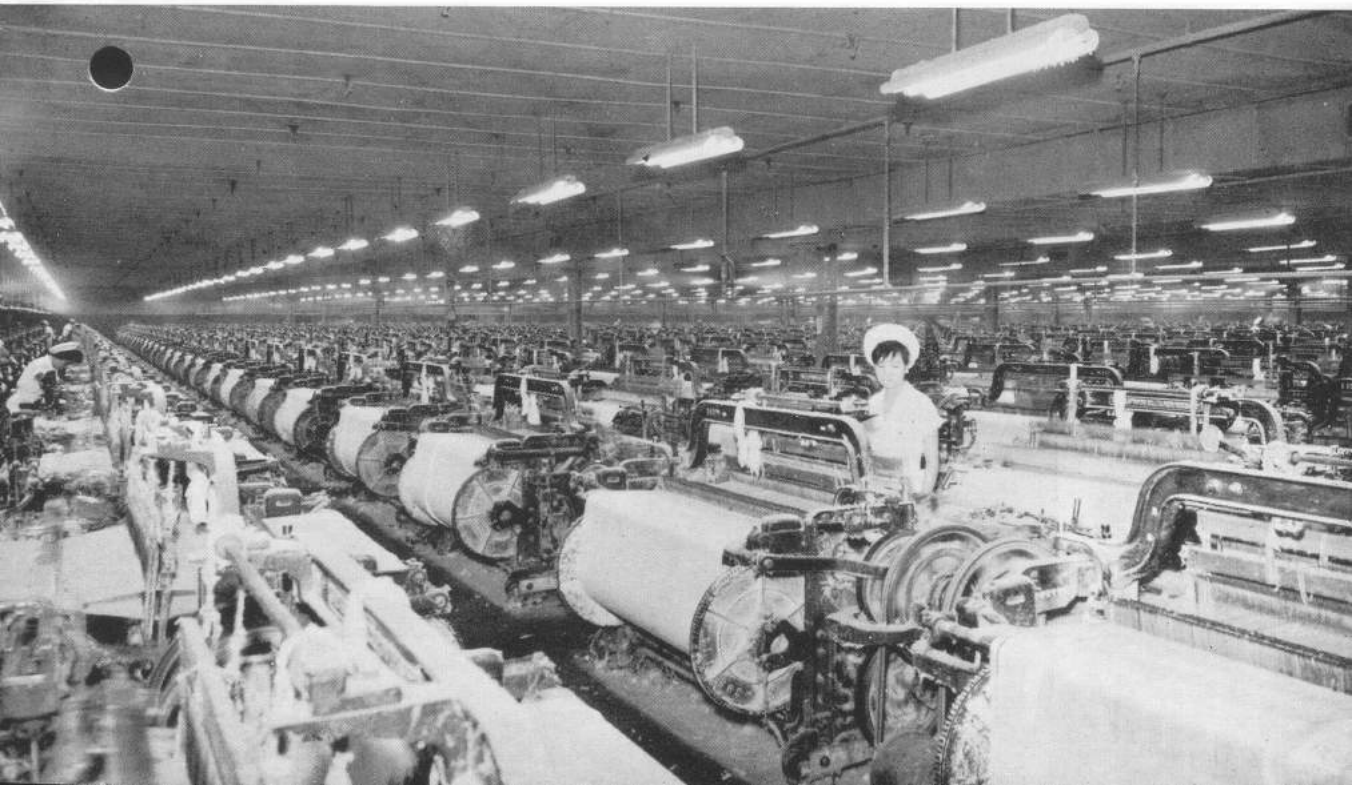


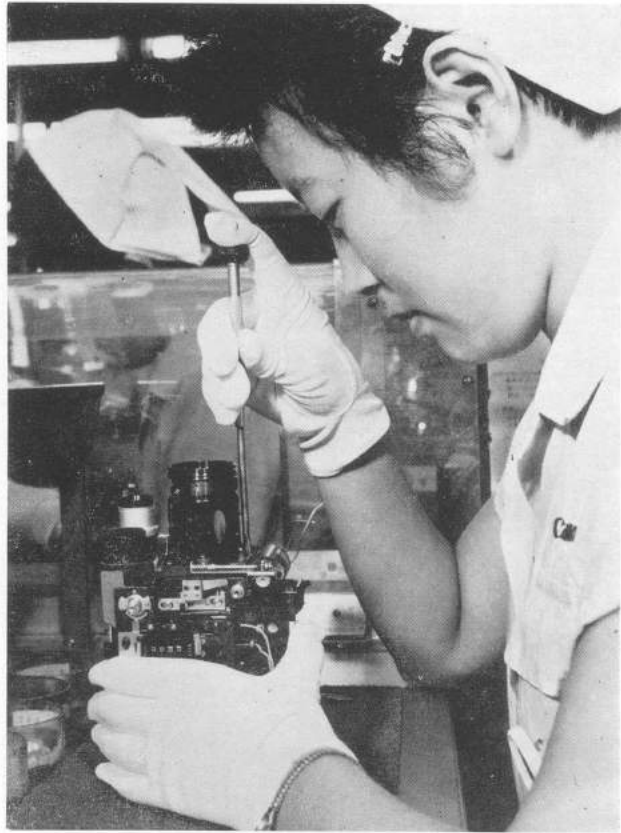
WOMEN'S & MINORS' BUREAU
MINISTRY of LABOUR
JAPAN



A high-speed printing machine operator

Weavers





Women workers in camera assembling plants



Foreword

With the high-rate growth of the Japanese economy in recent years, the number of working women has increased sharply. Working women now constitute one-third of the total employees, playing an important role in the development of the Japanese economy.

This pamphlet is designed to give a brief account of the present situation of working women in Japan, on the basis of recent statistics, with reference to their employment and conditions of work, statutory protection accorded to them, trade union situations, etc.

It is hoped that this pamphlet would serve as a reference for people at large.

March 1964

Women's & Minors' Bureau,
Ministry of Labour

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1 Outline

The trend of women's employment in Japan has been similar to that seen in highly industrialized countries, due primarily to the rapid growth of the post-war Japanese economy and the progress of technological innovations. Namely, the number of women employees has increased sharply, the range of their occupations has expanded and particularly they have made a significant inroad into professional and technical occupations, office work and sales occupations. The average age of working women has become higher, the length of their service extended, and the number of married women workers has also increased.

The working conditions of women have been markedly improved, and the rate of wage increase for women in recent years has been greater than that of men, resulting in the narrowing of the wage differentials between men and women.

The Labour Standards Law enacted in 1947 provides for the hours of work for women workers, prohibition of midnight work, equal remuneration for both sexes for work of equal value, maternity protection, etc., and thereby affords protection to working women. Also in 1947 the Women's and Minors' Bureau was established in the Ministry of Labour, and has since been rendering efforts to improve the protection, welfare and status of working women.

There are many women who are affiliated with trade unions, and they, through the union activities play a great role in elevating the status of women workers.

2 Employed Women

In 1963 the population of women aged 15 and above was 35,810,000, of which 18,620,000 constituted the labour force, representing 52% of the female population mentioned above.

The labour force consists of employed persons and unemployed persons, and employed persons in turn include self-employed persons, family workers and employees.

Family workers account for a large proportion of the working women, and they occupied 43% of the female work force in 1963. A greater portion of these female

family workers were engaged in the agricultural sector (forestry included) of the economy; and of the 6,600,000 female workers in this sector, 5,500,000 were family workers.

The recent high-rate growth of the Japanese economy has brought with it a modernization of the employment structure, and the past several years have witnessed a steady decline in the size of the agricultural work force, parallel shrinkage of family workers and increase of employees. (Table I, Diagrams 1 and 2)

Table I Population by Sex and Employment Status

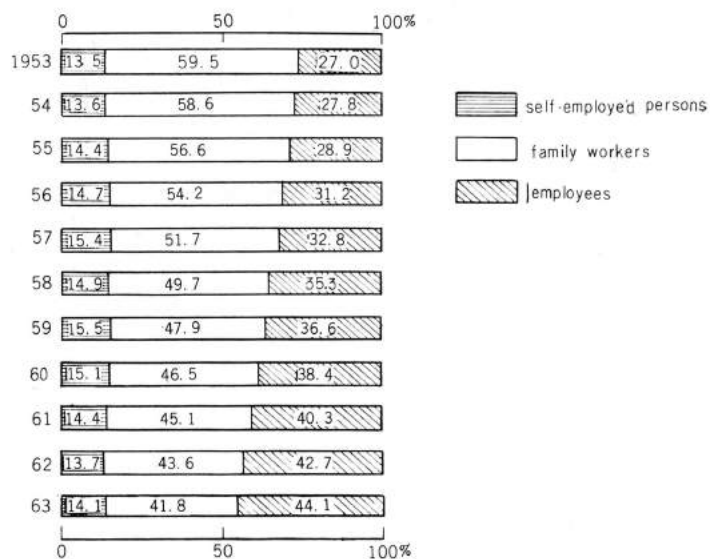
	(1963)	(1,000 persons)
	Female	Male
Population, 15 years and over	35,810	33,580
Labour Force ¹⁾	18,620	27,910
Employed ²⁾ { Total	18,410	27,720
{ Agricultural	6,600	5,800
{ Non-agricultural	11,800	21,890
Self-employed ³⁾ { Total	2,600	7,210
{ Agricultural	950	3,710
{ Non-agricultural	1,640	3,500
Unpaid family workers ⁴⁾ { Total	7,690	2,810
{ Agricultural	5,500	1,840
{ Non-agricultural	2,190	970
Employees ⁵⁾ { Total	8,110	17,680
{ Agricultural	140	250
{ Non-agricultural	7,970	17,410
Unemployed persons	210	190
Not in the labour force	17,170	5,660

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister
"Labour Force Survey"

Notes

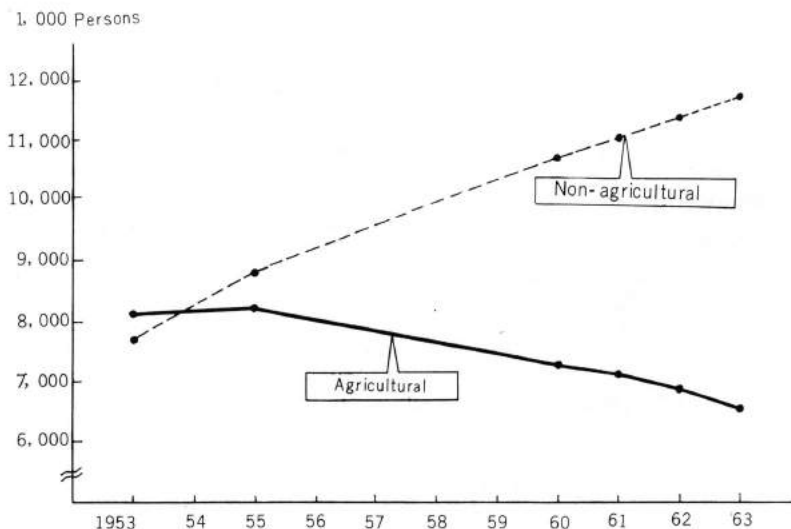
- (1) The labour force includes employed and unemployed persons.
- (2) The employed persons include self-employed persons, family workers and employees.
- (3) The self-employed persons mean those who operate business on their own account.
- (4) The family workers mean members of the family of the self-employed person, who work for the latter without wages.
- (5) The employees mean those who are employed and paid by individuals, companies, organizations, government departments, etc.

Diagram 1 Trend of Employed Women by Employment Status (1953—1963)



Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

Diagram 2 Trend of Employed Women by Agriculture & Non-agriculture



Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

3 Women Employees

Increase of Women Employees

The rapid growth of the Japanese economy propelled by technological innovations in recent years has brought forth a large-scale increase in the number of women employees. The index of the female employment went up to 189 in 1963 over the base year of 1953 and this increase rate was by far greater than that of male employment (155) (Diagram 3).

In 1963 women employees numbered 8,110,000, representing 31.5% of all the employees. The increase in the number of women employees is reflected in the year-to-year increase in the proportion of women workers amongst all the employees. (Table II)

Table II Trend of Employees

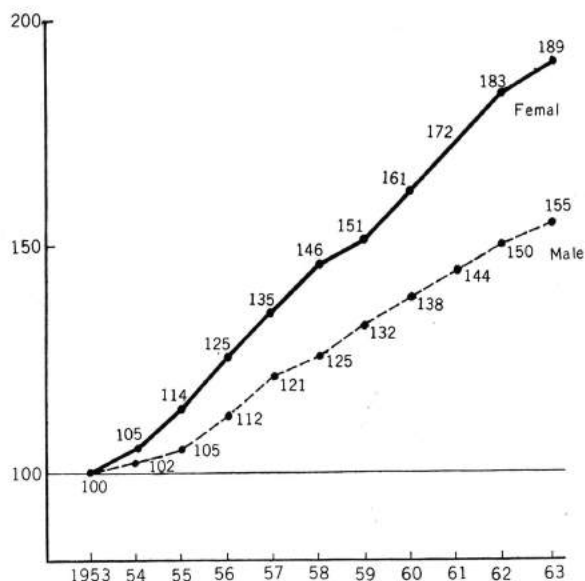
(1953 to 1963)

Year	Total	Female	Male	Female Employees as a percentage of all employees
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	%
1953	15,720	4,300	11,420	27.4
54	16,200	4,510	11,690	27.8
55	16,900	4,920	11,980	29.1
56	18,230	5,390	12,840	29.6
57	19,570	5,800	13,770	29.6
58	20,500	6,260	14,240	30.5
59	21,580	6,500	15,080	30.1
60	22,730	6,950	15,780	30.6
61	23,790	7,380	16,410	31.0
62	24,960	7,850	17,110	31.5
63	25,780	8,110	17,680	31.5

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

Diagram 3 Trend of Employees by Sex (1953—1963)

(1953=100)



Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

Distribution of Women Employees by Industry

An analysis of the women's employment by industry in 1963 shows that 1.7% of the total of 8,110,000 female employees were engaged in the agricultural sector, and the remaining 98.3% in the non-agricultural sector.

The manufacturing industry employed the largest number of female employees, comprising 37.1% of the total female employment, followed by wholesale, retail, finance, insurance, and real estate which employed 25.5%, and by service trades which employed 23.7%. These three industries altogether employed 86.3% of the total female employment. (Table III and Diagram 4)

When we compare these figures with those for 1953, the women's employment shows a marked decline in the agricultural sector and mining, despite the sharp increase in the total employment, while a conspicuous increase was registered in the three branches of the economy mentioned above. (Table III)

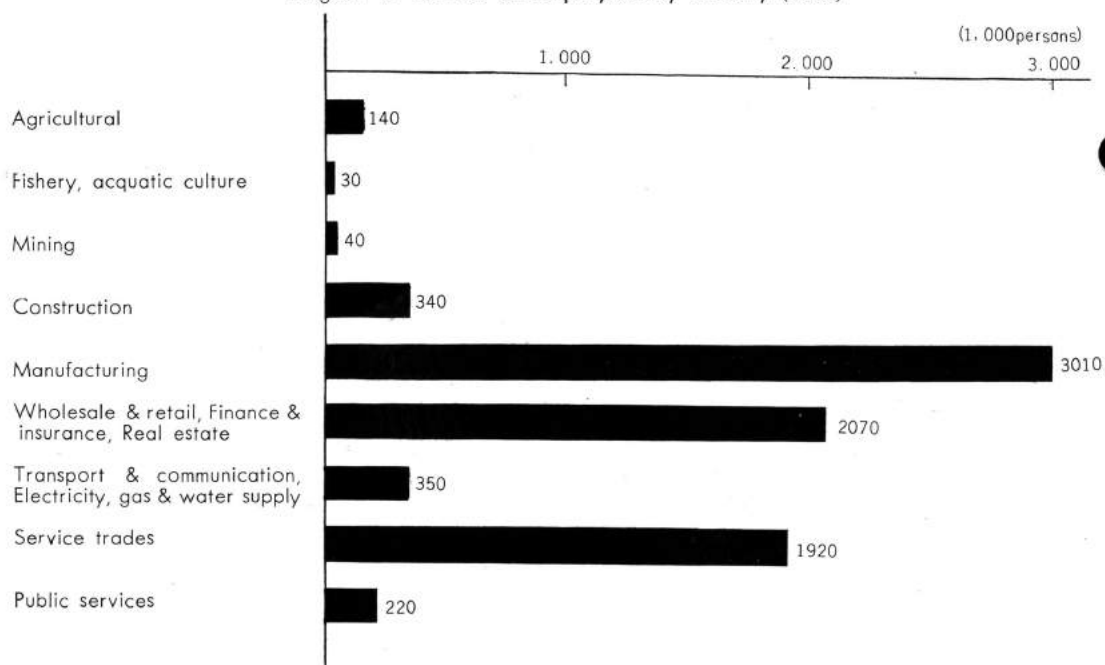
Table III Number of Employees by Industry and Percentage Distribution

(1,000 persons)

Industry	Sex	Year	Absolute Figures				Percentage Distribution			
			Female		Male		Female		Male	
			1963	1953	1963	1953	1963	1953	1963	1953
Total			8,110	4,300	17,670	11,420	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agricultural			140	170	250	330	1.7	4.0	1.5	3.0
Non-agricultural			7,970	4,130	17,410	11,100	98.3	96.0	98.5	97.0
Fishery, aquatic culture			30	10	160	220	0.4	0.2	0.9	2.0
Mining			40	50	350	520	0.5	1.2	2.0	4.6
Construction			340	140	1,800	1,050	4.2	3.3	10.2	9.2
Manufacturing			3,010	1,640	6,420	3,650	37.1	38.1	36.2	32.0
Wholesale, retail, finance, insurance			2,070	880	3,050	1,710	25.5	20.5	17.3	15.0
Transport, communication, Electricity, gas, water supply			350	190	2,320	1,620	4.3	4.4	13.2	14.2
Service trades			1,920	1,090	2,090	1,350	23.7	23.5	11.8	11.8
Public service			220	200	1,220	980	27.0	4.7	6.9	8.6

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

Diagram 4 Number of Employees by Industry (1963)



Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

The distribution of female employees by major group of occupational classification shows that in 1960 the largest number of women workers were engaged in skilled occupations, production processes and as simple labourers, followed in numerical order by clerical work, service trades, professional and technical occupations, and sales occupations.

When this trend is compared with that in 1955, though there has been no change in the order of occupations in which women were engaged, a marked increase is recorded in the female employment in each of these 5 groups. (Table IV)

In 1960, occupations in which more than 200,000 women were engaged (excluding those engaged in agriculture and sericulture, but including self-employed persons, family workers and employees) are as shown in Table V, and registered a marked increase in sales work, general clerical work, accounting work, etc. over the 1950 level. (Table V)

Table IV Number of Employees by Sex and Major Group of Occupational Classification

Major Division of O. C.	Female		Male	
	1960	1955	1960	1955
Total	7,108,600	5,075,100	16,380,900	12,754,100
Professional & Technical	645,000	492,000	1,164,900	1,142,300
Managerial	38,100	18,600	881,300	715,600
Clerical	1,615,400	1,122,500	2,842,800	2,214,200
Sales	640,800	408,700	1,243,800	1,000,000
Agriculture, forestry, fishery & related work	187,200	161,600	579,200	636,200
Mining & quarrying	24,900	21,200	326,100	308,100
Transport & communication	181,900	31,300	1,152,400	734,500
Skilled workers, production process workers and simple labourers	2,431,500	1,777,000	7,310,700	5,286,000
Service trades	1,241,800	1,042,200	887,300	711,200

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Population Census"

Table V Number of Employed Women by Unit Group of Occupational Classification¹⁾

(Women 200,000 or more)

(1,000 persons)

Unit group of O. C.	Female	
	1960	1950
Sales clerk	1,256	748
General clerk	973	483
Accountant	617	246
Waitress, personal service maids	500	241
Owner of retail shop	348	217
Weaver	272	217
Cook, bar-tender	270	43
Barber, hairdresser	257	105
School teacher	243	220
Domestic maid	237	234
Sewing machine operator	217	99

Note (1) Excludes those engaged in agriculture and sericulture.

The 1950 figures relate to those aged 14 and over.

The 1960 figures relate to those aged 15 and over.

Number of employed women includes self-employed, family workers and employees.

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Labour Force Survey"

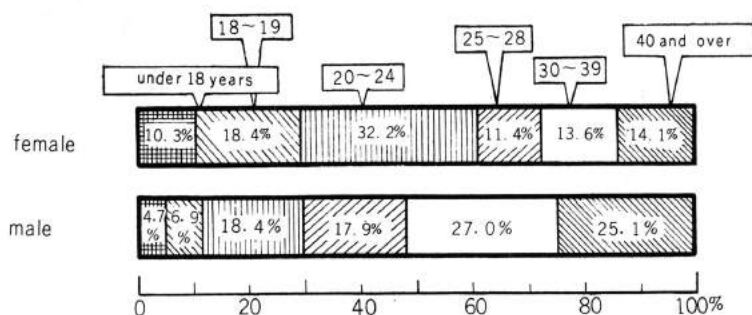
Some Features of Women's Employment

Younger age, shorter length of service and numerical predominance of unmarried workers are general features of women's employment in Japan as compared with men's employment.

The age structure of women workers in 1962 indicates that women aged less than 20 occupied 28.7%, those from 20—24 accounted for 32.2%, and thus a total of 60.8% were occupied by women under 25 years of age. (Diagram 5)

Diagram 5 Structure of Employees by Age Group

(As of April 1962)



Source: Ministry of Labour "Wage Structure Survey"

With the increase of women workers, however, both their average age and length of service have been gradually extended. The average age rose from 23.8 years in 1949 to 26.9 in 1962, while the average length of service extended from 3.2 years to 3.9 over the same period. (Table VI)

Table VI Average Age and Length of Service of Workers

Coverage: Establishments employing 10 workers and more

	Average Age		Average Length of Service	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
1949	23.8 years	32.5 years	3.2 years	6.6 years
1962	26.9	32.8	3.9	7.8

Source: Ministry of Labour Survey

With the extension of the average age of women workers, the proportion of married women employees has grown year after year. In 1955 such proportion was 20.9% of the total women employees, rising to 25.0% in 1960. (Table VII)

Again in 1960, one out of ten married women were working outside their homes.

Table VII Women Employees by Marital Status and Percentage Distribution

	1960		1955	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total	7,108,600	100.0	5,075,100	100.0
Single	4,435,000	62.4	3,281,500	64.7
Married	1,779,300	25.0	1,062,600	20.9
Others	893,800	12.6	731,000	14.4

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister, "Population Census"

4 Wages

The average wages of women workers in 1963 was 18,039 yen per month, forming 46.5% of the average men's wages of 38,780 yen. (Table VIII)

Table VIII Wages by Industry (Major Group), 1963

(Establishments employing 30 regular workers and more)

Industry	Total Cash Earning		Ratio of Women's Wage to Men's Wage
	Female	Male	
Total	18,039 ^{yen}	38,780 ^{yen}	46.5
Mining	14,334	35,500	40.4
Construction	15,407	34,148	45.1
Manufacturing	16,128	37,400	43.1
Wholesale & retail	18,954	38,421	49.3
Finance & insurance	26,623	56,900	46.8
Transport & communication	23,814	41,075	58.0
Electricity, gas & water supply	29,973	50,531	59.3

Source: Ministry of Labour, "Monthly Labour Survey"

In 1947 the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for equal work was established by the Labour Standards Law, and the wage differentials between the starting wages of men and women have since then been largely narrowed. However, average women's wages are lower than that of men under the wage system based on seniority due to the above-mentioned fact that the women's average age is lower

than men's, their average length of service is shorter and a greater number of women are engaged in unskilled work for a short duration. Recent progress of technological innovations and the shortage of young workers, however, have caused to bring about a sharp rise in the starting wages of school-leavers, and the wage differentials by sex have been tending to contract. (Table IX)

Table IX Starting Wages by School and Sex (1960—1963)

		Lower Secondary School	Upper Secondary School	College (2 years)	University
1960	Female	yen 5,590 (94.6)	yen 7,300 (89.5)	yen 9,560 (89.8)	yen 12,520 (95.7)
	Male	5,910 (100.0)	8,160 (100.0)	10,640 (100.0)	13,080 (100.0)
1961	Female	6,790 (93.0)	8,690 (89.5)	11,190 (95.2)	15,150 (98.9)
	Male	7,300 (100.0)	9,710 (100.0)	11,750 (100.0)	15,320 (100.0)
1962	Female	8,990 (99.8)	10,100 (80.7)	13,270 (88.6)	17,200 (91.6)
	Male	9,000 (100.0)	12,520 (100.0)	14,970 (100.0)	18,780 (100.0)
1963	Female	9,790 (99.0)	12,340 (93.7)	14,550 (90.8)	18,030 (91.1)
	Male	9,890 (100.0)	13,170 (100.0)	16,030 (100.0)	19,800 (100.0)

Note ● The figures in brackets which relate to women represent the rate of women's wages to men's.

● Based on the median.

● The starting wages refer to the "Contract cash earnings" among the total monthly wages before tax for June of the workers who were on the payroll at the end of June. However, the figures for 1963 do not include "over time pay", and therefore do not stand to direct comparison with the figures for the earlier years.

● The survey covered establishments employing 15 workers and more up to 1961, and those employing 30 workers and more afterwards.

Source: Employment Security Bureau, Ministry of Labour, "Survey of the Starting Wages of School-leavers"

When we take a look at the increase rate of women's wages in recent years having the 1960 level as 100, the women's wages registered an increase rate of 145.3 which was higher than that of men's wages (133.6). This also indicates that the wage differentials by sex are being narrowed year after year. (Table X)

Table X Wage Indices

(1960=100)

Year	Sex	Female	Male
1958		85.5	86.3
59		92.0	92.4
60		100.0	100.0
61		112.2	109.8
62		128.9	120.6
63		145.3	133.6

Note: The wage indices were calculated, using the total amount of average monthly cash earnings per regular worker taken from the "Monthly Labour Survey." The wage indices for 1960 and earlier years are not linked with those for '62 and '63 due to a change in the sample of establishments effected in 1961.

Source: Ministry of Labour, "Monthly Labour Survey"

5 Women in the Trade Union

There were 47,812 local trade unions in Japan in 1962, to which 2,370,000 women and 6,410,000 men were affiliated. Of the total membership, women represented 26% and men 74%. The proportion of unionized women workers among all women employees (unionization rate) is 30%, while the unionization rate of men workers is 38%.

Many trade unions have a women's department or youths & women's department which carries out activities to protect women's interests. There are many unions which have appointed women to head certain departments or as union officers.

6 Protective Legislation for Women Workers

The most remarkable changes in labor laws in postwar Japan were the extension of protection for workers and the guarantee of their rights of co-organization and collective activities. These protection and rights of workers are materialized in several national labor laws.

A. *The Labor Standards Law*, covering all industries except for industrial home work and domestic service at home, promulgated in 1947, regulates the minimum

standards of working conditions. It establishes principle of equal remuneration for men and women and contains some special measures for the protection of women and minors. Women are chiefly protected for their maternity. Some of these measures affecting women workers are stated in the following.

(1) *Principle of Equal Pay for Men and Women*: This provision is similar in aim to that stipulated in the preamble of the Constitution of the International Labor Organization which states that equal wages should be paid to men and women for work of equal value. The article provides that "the employer shall not discriminate women against men concerning wages by reason of the worker being a woman."

(2) *Working Hours and Rest Days*: As a principle the employer must not employ the worker more than 8 hours a day excluding recess or 48 hours a week, and must provide at least one rest day per week to the worker.

(3) *Prohibition of Night Work*: The employer must not employ women between the hours of 10 p. m. and 5 a. m. in principle. But this stipulation is not applied to the jobs specified by Ordinance as telephone operator, air-stewardess, etc. and not applied either to the agriculture, forestry, fishery, etc.

(4) *Restrictions on Hazardous and Injurious Jobs*: The employer must not employ a woman in the dangerous or harmful jobs specified by Ordinances, nor in jobs which require the conveyance of heavy goods beyond 30 kg.

(5) *Ban on Underground Labor*: The employer must not employ women in underground labor.

(6) *Maternity Leave*: The employer must not employ a woman for 6 weeks before childbirth when she requests rest days during the period. The employer must not employ a woman within 6 weeks after childbirth. However, when the woman requests to work after 5 weeks, it is permissible to assign her to a job that doctor pronounces unharmed to her.

When the pregnant woman requires, the employer shall change her to a lighter job.

The employer must not dismiss a woman who are on maternity leave during the period and 30 days thereafter.

(7) *Nursing Period*: A woman nursing a baby less than one year old may request nursing time, twice a day, each at least 30 minutes during the working hours, besides the ordinary recess.

(8) *Menstruation Leave*: The employer must not employ a woman who suffers heavily from menstruation or a woman engaged in jobs injurious to menstruation if

she requests a menstruation leave.

B. *The Employment Security Law*, promulgated in 1947, provides all people with opportunities to get jobs suitable to their abilities. For the enforcement of this law 691 Public Employment Security Offices have been established all over the country, and woman who got placements through these offices were 1,250,000 out of 2,560,000 applicants in 1962.

C. *Vocational Training Law*, established in 1958, the purpose of this law is to foster skilled workers needed for the manufacturing and other industries by providing vocational training and conducting the trade test in order to enable workers to acquire and improve necessary skills, and thereby to assure the security of employment and the improvement of the worker's status as well as contribute to the development of the national economy.

There are 351 Vocational Training Centers at present, where workers acquire skills necessary for jobs of about 80 items such as radio and television engineering and repairing, accounting, typewriting, design of pottery, tensorial art, knitting, beauty art, woodworking, printing, painting, etc. according to their inclination.

In this respect, Women's and Minors' Bureau initiated two types of special vocational training centres primarily for widows and house wives who generally find greater difficulty in obtaining suitable jobs.

(1) *Public Vocational Training Centres for Industrial Home Work*: The aims of these centres are to provide people who are widows, house wives, physically handicapped, aged or those encountered with difficulty in doing gainful work outside their homes, with information, consultation, reference and other conveniences, and thus help to solve problems concerning industrial home work. Altogether there are 35 centres which were established in the years between 1956 and 1963. Women's and Minors' Bureau subsidized these centres with one-third of initial expenses and gives necessary guidance and supervision as to their management and services.

(2) *Public Vocational Training Centres for Domestic Work*: These centres are also meant for widows and others who have difficulty in finding jobs. The centres give such services as to provide them with training in domestic work; promote their placement and enlarge the field of employment fit for them. At present there are eight centres. The Bureau gave subsidy of one-third of initial expenses and gives them guidance as to their services. A term of training is three months and the training covers 12 subjects including general knowledge, cooking, care of infants, home admini-

stration, etc. There is great demand for the graduates of both centres who hold high public reputation and whose influence, it is expected, will contribute a good deal to improve the working conditions of domestic workers in general.

D. *The Labor Union Law*, promulgated in 1945, aims to promote the status of workers by establishing equal standing for both workers and employers in their bargaining, and to protect workers on their collective activities.

E. *Legislatures concerning social security for women workers*: The welfare of women workers are also protected by other social insurance laws which cover all workers. These laws assure workers of benefits for accident, sickness, unemployment, old age etc.

Workmen's Accident Compensation Insurance Law, established in 1947, provides a worker with prompt and equitable protection against his injury, invalidity or death due to the causes of occupational accidents or diseases for which the employer has an obligation to compensate according to the stipulation of the Labor Standards Law. The law also regulates to establish the necessary institutions for the welfare of the worker in occupational accidents or diseases.

The Health Insurance Law, established in 1922, provides for the payment of benefits to insured persons and to persons supported by them in case of sickness, injury and death attributable to causes of sources outside of their employment. This law contains maternity benefit provisions as follows:

(1) When an insured person has been confined in bed because of giving birth to a child, she is paid an amount for confinement equal to 50% of her standard monthly remuneration. When an insured person is incapable to work because of confinement, she is paid an amount equal to 60% of her standard daily remuneration for a period of 84 days, covering 42 days preceding and 42 days on and after the date of birth.

(2) When an insured person has given birth to a baby and she nurses the same baby, she is paid 200 yen per month for six months as a nursing allowance.

The Unemployment Insurance Law, established in 1947, grants an unemployment insurance benefit to the insured person when he or she is out of a job. An insured person who is out of a job and cannot be employed in spite of his or her will and ability to work, is paid 90 times in minimum, 270 times in maximum of 60% of his average daily wage in proportion to his or her length of service.

The Welfare Pension Insurance Law, established in 1941, provides for the payment of benefits in case of old age, invalidity, death or retirement of a worker and attributes

to the stabilization of livelihood and the promotion of welfare, of a worker and his or her survivors.

Appendix

Ministry of Labor Establishment Law

(Law No. 162 of May 31, 1949)

Functions of Women's and Minors' Bureau

Article 9. The Women's and Minors' Bureau shall take charge of the following affairs:

- (1) Promotion of the working conditions peculiar to women and minor workers, and their protection;
- (2) Prohibition of employment of children;
- (3) Family labor problems and domestic servants;
- (4) Other labor problems peculiar to women and minor workers, in addition to those listed in the preceding items;
- (5) Worker's family problems, excepting, however, matters assigned to other Ministries by law;
- (6) Research, liaison and coordination on problems of the promotion of women's status and other women's problems, provided that such adjustment and coordination shall not preclude other ministries from carrying out such affairs as are placed thereunder by law.

