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BOSTON COLLEGE

Work and Family Issues in Japan and the Republic of Korea

Expanding Our Understanding of Work and Family Experiences in North Asia

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WORK-FAMILY POLICY PAPER SERIES

BOSTON COLLEGE
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Acknowledgments

The Center for Work & Family would like to express its appreciation to IBM for its support of this policy paper. The opinions contained within this report are solely those of the author (or individuals quoted/cited) and may not reflect the perspectives of either IBM or people associated with the corporation.

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Graeme Russell, the author of this report, wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following people and organisations:

Nina Price
for her research and analysis
(especially in relation to South Korea)

Jeanette Simpson and Nami Ohtsuka
IBM Japan

MyungSook Yu
IBM Korea
for facilitating my visits to the two countries and for enabling the visits to be highly effective

Tony Marchak
Vice President, Human Resources
IBM Asia Pacific

Tomo Nagase
Senior Human Resource Specialist
IBM Japan

Minako Nishijima
Deputy Director, Labour Legislation Division,
Japan Federation of Employer's Associations, Ministry of Labour

Fusako Utsumi
Senior Manager, Industrial Relations Department, F & D Administration Division
NEC Corporation

Ms. Kaoru Maeda
Vice President,
Administration & Human Resources
ISETAN Finance Co. Ltd

The employees of IBM Japan and Korea and their partners who provided important insights

C. C. Shin
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Who Should Read This Paper

- Work/life managers and practitioners
- Business leaders responsible for global strategies
- Policy makers
- Work/life researchers, teaching faculty and graduate students interested in global work and family issues

What the Paper Provides

- Overview of social and demographic trends in Japan and South Korea
- Highlights of the economic and business environment in Japan and South Korea
- Discussion of public-sector responses to emergent work and family issues in Japan and South Korea
- Examples of workplace supports for employees' work and family priorities

How You Can Use This Paper

- To plan strategic responses to the work and family experiences of employees located in North East Asian countries
- To understand the priorities of employees working in the U.S. who are ex-patriates of Japan or South Korea
- To develop an analytic framework for cross-national comparisons of work and family experiences
- To help prepare managers who will be working in Japan or South Korea

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I. Work and Family
An Emerging Issue in Asia

Working in a Global Environment

The globalisation process has resulted in increased and intense competition for talented employees and for market share based on higher product quality and lower prices. A consequence has also been significant changes in the job demands experienced by many employees and especially managers. In particular, demands have increased for employees to travel and to be potentially accessible during 24 hours of operations (either in person, or via video links, telephone, or e-mail). Globalisation has also meant that organisations have a greater need to ensure higher levels of productivity and expanded market share by having flexible work forces to enable a quick response to changing market and business demands.

To ensure competitive levels of productivity and business success, it is imperative that work practices and policies are implemented that take account of the diversity of employees' needs and values, as well as the cultural influences in the areas where companies operate. The experience in western countries indicates that responsiveness to the work and family needs of employees (both ex-patriate and local) is likely to be a key factor in ensuring effective local and global business outcomes (e.g., by being responsive to employee family needs when they are on international assignments).

Organisations need to understand the variations in work/family issues from one country or region to another, and what the key drivers of these variations are. This will enable human resource staff and managers to: (i) respond appropriately to the work and family needs of ex-patriates, (ii) enable employees to make more informed decisions about relocating, and (iii) importantly, develop effective local policies to become employers of choice who attract and retain employees of choice. Information collected as part of this project indicated that many women prefer to work for foreign companies because they are perceived to be more responsive to work and family issues and to the needs of women.

"Thinking globally and acting locally," it could be argued, is even more relevant when considering work and family issues. Indeed, the long-term success of a global organisation in a particular product or work force market will depend to a large degree on the extent to which policies, practices, and marketing are sensitive to local issues. Understanding the work and family interface provides a way for an organisation to demonstrate corporate responsibility and community commitment. Organisations need to be responsive to the family and community values that sus-

tain a society. This understanding is also critical both (i) to ensure effective working relationships between local and ex-patriate staff and (ii) for ex-patriate managers and supervisors who need to be responsive to a different set of work and family needs. U.S.-based or global work and family policies (and management skills in implementing these) might also need to be revised. Our accepted western responsiveness to work and family needs may not in fact drive loyalty and commitment in other cultures in the way we expect (cf. Friedman, Christensen & DeGroot, 1998). Encouraging a Japanese father to leave the office to spend more time with his family might be resisted, for example, because arriving home early will convey the impression that he does not have a very important job.

The Dilemmas of Work and Family

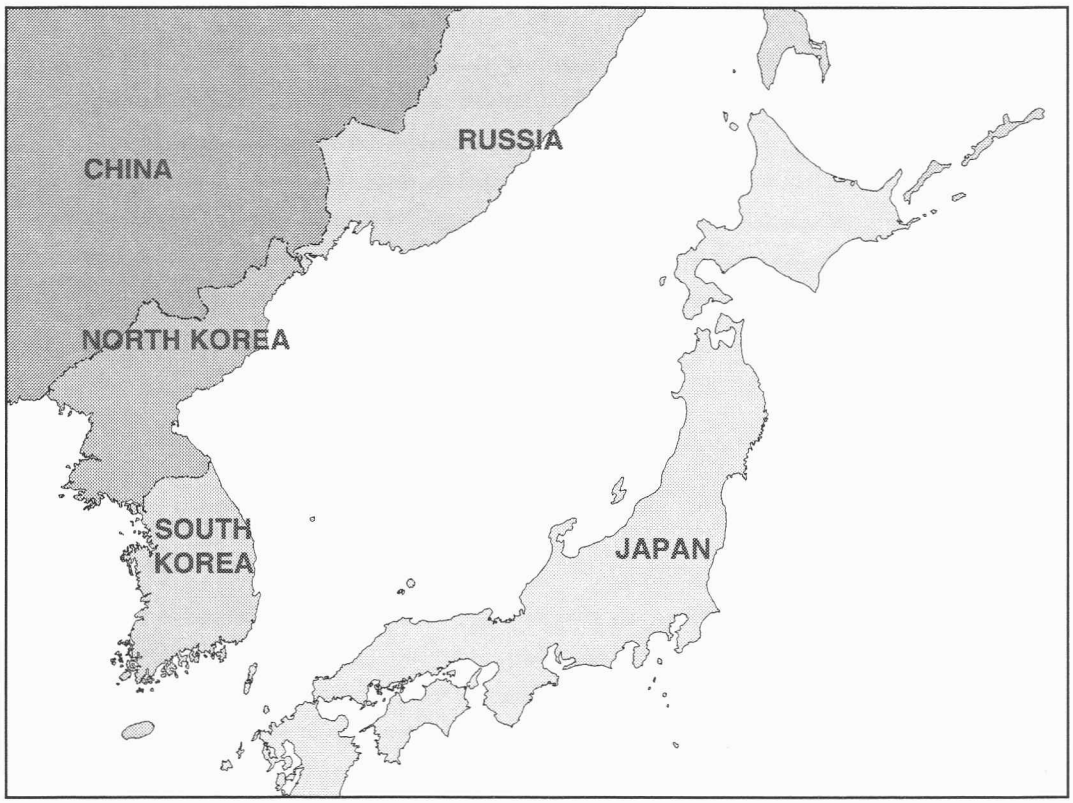
Harry is six months into his two-year assignment to a key management role in his company in Tokyo. He has been an enthusiastic advocate of the corporate work and family policy. This policy has been recognised as being at the leading edge in U.S. corporations, particularly because of its inclusive approach and the emphasis on work/life balance for both women and men. The policy has also worked reasonably well for Harry and his family — spouse Louise, and children Brodie (14) and Adam (9) — in the physical and financial aspects of relocating. They have settled into a new home and the children have adapted well to their new English School.

Louise, however, has found the move more challenging. She experienced a period of uncertainty in adapting to local customs and in establishing new routines. She also felt increased pressure at home because Harry was traveling more (both within Asia and back to the U.S.) and was working longer hours and eating out more. As he said to Louise, "This is the way business is done here — you have to be available to those you manage (and many are still in the office at 7:00 p.m.), to other managers and to your customers. Social interaction is important to establish relationships that ultimately drive business decisions." Louise had also had to put her career on hold and was feeling frustrated with her lack of social interaction and mental stimulation. Despite being generally supportive of Harry's career move, Louise's feelings of resentment have had an impact on their relationship and on Harry's focus and motivation at work.

Harry not only found that he had to adjust his ideas and expectations about his own work/life balance and his relationship with Louise, but also the expectations he had about his opportunities to implement corporate work and family policies. After a couple of months of getting to know people and their family situations, Harry had suggested to a father that he might go home at five to be with his spouse and six-

month-old. The father was polite to Harry, but continued to work on, sometimes until 8:00 p.m., or eat out with customers or colleagues (to return home after a two-hour train ride at 11:30). Somewhat frustrated by this behavior, Harry had a more detailed discussion with the father to try to figure out what the issues were. In terms of work demands, the father said that he worked the hours he did both because he needed to be available to his customers (both internal and external), and because he wanted to ensure he understood all communications and processes in relation to new products (the majority of which were written in English). He also said that he was not happy to go home early because this could give the message to his family and neighbors that he no longer had an important job. His wife might not be happy with him being home early either because this would mean she would have to pay attention to him. Finally, he argued that his wife did not experience difficulties coping with the young baby because his parents also lived with them and provided her with the support she needed.

Despite the above arguments, there is an absence of genuine global perspectives in the approaches organisations take on work and family issues. An increasing number, however, appear to be adopting global diversity strategies (e.g., IBM, Hewlett-Packard, NCR, Lend Lease in Australia and ALCOA). Genuine global perspectives are also absent in analyses conducted of government policies (e.g., *Parental Leave*, Wilkinson & Briscoe, 1996; Wilkinson, Radley, Christie, Lawson & Sainsbury, 1997) and of different organisational approaches. In a forthcoming book that includes a broad cultural perspective on work and family (Haas, Hwang & Russell, 2000), analyses are presented of Europe (especially the U.K. and Scandinavian countries), the United States and Australia. Perspectives on Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, and Africa are missing, an absence that is consistent with most writings on work and family. This is not to say, however, that work and family is not an issue of concern for individuals, governments, or organisations in these countries. Indeed, as is argued below, the evidence suggests that harmonising work and family will become an even more critical issue for Asian countries in the future, especially because future economic stability will depend on a highly skilled and engaged female work force. This paper focuses on two key countries in the North Asian Region: Japan and the Republic of Korea.



The Importance of Focusing on Japan and Korea

There are several reasons why Japan and the Republic of Korea are examined here. These include:

- their geographical proximity
- a shared heritage in terms of history (Japan occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945)
- commonalties in religion, social values (both are highly influenced by Confucian values, discussed in more detail below)
- politics (both have implemented constitutions similar to that of the U.S.)
- economic experiences (both economies have export-driven goals, both have experienced rapid industrialisation and economic growth, both now exert significant economic and social influence in the global economy, and there is an increasing presence of U.S.-based and global organisations in these two countries)

In terms of foreign trade, the U.S. is the major trading partner for both Japan and Korea. In 1997, 28% of the Japanese exports went to the U.S. and 22% of imports were from the U.S. The comparable figures for Korea (January to September 1998) were: 15% of their exports went to the U.S. and 20% of their imports were from the U.S. Japan and Korea are also major trading partners: 6% of Japanese exports are to Korea and 4% of imports are from Korea, and 8% of Korean exports are to Japan and 16% of imports are from Japan. (Japan 1998: An International Comparison).

Increased participation in the global economy is also evident in changing patterns of arrivals to and departures from Japan and Korea. From 1985 to 1997 there was a 52% increase in the number of U.S. citizens resident in Japan and an increase of 88% in the number of Japanese resident in the U.S. For Korea, comparing 1991 and 1997 figures, there has been:

- a 122% increase in the number of Koreans traveling overseas for business reasons
- a 139% increase in the number of Koreans traveling to the U.S.
- a 55% increase in the number of U.S. citizens arriving in Korea
- a 320% increase in the number of foreigners who arrived for employment purposes

(Monthly Statistics of Korea, 1998:11)

Japan and Korea are also experiencing heightened global competition that will increase the pressure for business organisations to address work and family issues. Competition in the world market means that companies have to be more concerned about productivity and labour costs, and many have responded by reducing the size of their work forces. This has also resulted in an increased emphasis on improving individual performance and organisational commitment through the use of incentives (e.g., bonuses). Addressing work and family needs could operate in the same way as an incentive to increase motivation and commitment and thus achieve higher levels of productivity from the current labour pool, especially when there are fewer career opportunities with flatter organisations.

Both countries are also experiencing significant economic difficulties. In Japan there is a major recession and unemployment rates are higher than they have been in 20 years (close to 5%). The intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been necessary to support the Korean economy, although most indicators now show that it has begun to improve. Many commentators argue that for the both countries to compete effectively in the global economy and ensure local living standards, significant changes will have to occur both in work practices and in the demographics of the work force. Economic growth (and the support of an aging population) will depend on further increases in the employment of women and family living standards will depend on both parents being in paid employment.

Increasing globalisation and continuing social and industrial change in Japan and Korea therefore highlight the importance of understanding current and likely future trends in work and family in this region. The broad social and employment drivers for addressing work and family issues in these countries appear very similar to those experienced in other countries — especially in the early stages of framing the work/family debate.

Drivers for Addressing Work and Family Issues

The factors driving response to work and family issues include:

- an increased number of women in the paid work force (especially women with younger children)
- women's higher expectations for accessing the full range of jobs at all levels of employment (e.g., management positions)
- an associated greater reliance by organisations on female employees (e.g., in the service, retail and manufacturing sectors)
- greater social acceptance of gender equity (e.g., the recent introduction of anti-harassment laws in Korea)
- a growing (but relatively small) discussion of the need for men to participate more actively in family life. (Unlike other countries, however, there appears less evidence of men being active participants in this change process in either Japan or Korea.)
- an acknowledgment of the current and expanded future responsibilities of those in employment to care for elderly parents (Japan has the highest average life expectancy of any country)

Overall, the debate and discussion about work and family in Japan and Korea is framed very much in terms of the changing role of women and the need to respond to the dependent care responsibilities women currently have. Nevertheless, it is important to expand this analysis to include the broad range of work and family issues that have been identified within the global environment.

Analytic Framework

Any analysis of work/family issues needs to take account of the diversity of factors that have an impact on employment behavior and on an individual's ability to achieve a satisfactory balance between their work and their family or personal lives. These factors include:

- **Cultural values and expectations:** Of particular concern here are beliefs associated with family responsibilities, gender roles, the value of children, and what the needs of children are.

- **Family situations:** These include taking account of partner needs for job and career, lack of partner flexibility in jobs, quality of partner relationship, degree of extended family or social network support, and assumptions about gender roles within the family.

- **Community resources:** Resources available to address family needs vary from one community and country to another. It is sometimes argued, for example, that there is more pressure on some corporations to address the work and family needs of their employees because community resources are inadequate (e.g., a lack of child-care facilities).

- **Employment factors:** Current patterns of employment, expectations about work hours, rewards and appropriate career paths are relevant considerations.

- **Individual characteristics:** Personal values and expectations about work/family balance and lifestyle and the psychological impact they have (e.g., the link between employment behavior and level of stress or conflict experienced) will vary markedly from one individual to another. Differences would also be expected in terms of attitudes and beliefs about gender roles, and about the needs of children and what is appropriate in responding to these needs (e.g., a view that you want your parents to be "grandparents" rather than nannies).

- **Organisational factors:** Important factors at the workplace include the nature of work (work design and work practices, degree of customer contact, etc.), performance management and rewards (outputs versus time inputs), career structures, supervisor and work-team support, employment conditions and pay, work/family policies and practices, and expectations about accessibility (especially in a global economy) both electronically (e.g., through video conferencing) and physically (e.g., attending meetings in different countries).

Objectives of This Paper

The work and family experiences of individuals and organisations in Japan and Korea will obviously be different given the differences in historical influences, cultural values, and current demographics. The aim of this paper is improve our understanding of work and family issues in these two countries to facilitate the development of appropriate policies and practices both for private and public sector employers in Japan and Korea and for organisations that are based elsewhere, but operate in these countries. The specific objectives are to

- Provide an overview of the social, economic, and political factors which affect work and family experiences in Japan and Korea
- Highlight the salient work/family priorities and challenges evident in Japan and Korea, comparing and contrasting the situations in the specific countries
- Identify the responses of the private and public sectors to contemporary work and family issues in Japan and Korea
- Examine the implications for corporate decision makers in Japan and Korea
- Discuss the "lessons" which U.S. corporate decision makers can learn from the work and family experiences in Japan and Korea

Subsequent chapters in this paper address a range of work and family issues relevant to both Japan and Korea. Chapter II provides a summary of the key social and demographic changes. This includes an analysis of historical, religious and cultural, broad population trends, influences, family and household composition, and aging and employment trends. Economic and employment trends are presented in Chapter III as are attitudes to work and family issues. Public-sector responses to the work and family needs of employees are covered in Chapter IV. Private-sector responses are covered in Chapter V.

II. Social, Cultural and Political Factors

Trends Affecting Work And Family Experiences In Japan And Korea

History, Religion and Culture

Introduction

The aim of this section is to outline the major historical, religious, and cultural factors that have affected current work and family patterns in Japan and Korea. Two influencing factors are common to both countries: Confucianism and the process of urbanisation and industrialisation. As is pointed out by Gelb and Palley (1994, p. 3): "In Japan and Korea, great stress is placed on the individual's conformity to group norms. 'Consciousness of hierarchy and loyalty to the family, workplace and nation may take precedence over equality and independence.'" Confucianism has had a major impact on the assumptions made in Japan and Korea about the roles of men and women and about the responsibilities that families should assume in relation to those assumed by the community/government.

Confucianism emphasises a patriarchal extended-family system in which women and men are expected to adopt separate and unequal roles. Traditionally, women were required to be obedient to the father when young, to the husband when married, and to the son in old age. Respect for the elderly and assumed family responsibility for the care of aged parents are also valued (Palley & Usui, 1995). The traditional value of filial piety, which is of greater significance in Korea, emphasises family responsibility for the economic support and care of elderly people, usually the first son and his wife (Choi, 1996). There are indications that this religious influence has been stronger in Korea.

Historical, Religious, and Cultural Factors in Japan

Shintoism (the indigenous religion of Japan), Buddhism, and Confucianism all have a significant impact on the thinking, feelings and behavior of Japanese people. Reports indicate, however, that the majority of people do not claim to be a practicing member of any particular religion. Nevertheless, most funerals are conducted according to Buddhist traditions (in a temple) and most celebrations (marriage, a new baby) are conducted according the Shintoism traditions (in a shrine).

Values and behavior associated with work and family lives in Japan have been strongly influenced by Confucianism, or more correctly, by sumarai Confucianism. Traditionally, loyalty to a person's "Lord" (or employer) was also considered to be of higher priority than loyalty to family. Dominating values include continuity, conformity, harmony, respect for hierarchy, and expectations of strong loyalty to the family, employers, and country — often to the exclusion of equity and independence. Confucianism also emphasises a patriarchal extended-family system in which women and men are expected to adopt separate and unequal roles. Despite the significant changes that occurred as a result of industrialisation, economic growth and western influences (e.g., the U.S.-based system of government), Confucian beliefs still provide the basis for maintaining loyalty to the nation and the organisation, as well as respect for hierarchy. Like most other countries, however, the family has undergone rapid change in response to industrialisation and economic factors.

Industrialisation and Modernisation

Industrial growth after the Second World War led to a significant rise in the urban population in Japan. Urbanisation bolstered the trend in the rise of the nuclear family, with rigid divisions of labour, which became the typical and accepted appropriate form in the period after the war. Between 1955 and 1995, the percentage of nuclear family households increased from 53% to 62%, whereas extended-family households decreased from 30% to 16%. Both the extended families and nuclear families, however, continue to coexist side by side. Today, Japan has one of the most urbanised populations in the world, with nearly 80% of people living in cities.

Increased productivity and economic growth in Japan during the period of 1925 to 1950 resulted in improved living standards, a reduction in death rates, and an increase in population. Those born during this period — usually referred to as the demographic change period-generation (Annual Report on Health and Welfare) — were key participants in the shift to a nuclear family structure. They had an average of three siblings and were brought up in large households, but were more likely to form their own nuclear families in their adulthood. Pressure to move out and seek work also came from the fact that improvements in sanitary and nutritional conditions caused a demographic shift from a tendency toward many births and many deaths to one of many births but few deaths. This increased the number of siblings, and thus many people had to find a place of work outside their home. The consequent availability of a large work force in urban areas was a major factor in facilitating Japan's high economic growth in the postwar period.

Industrial growth after the Second World War led to a significant rise in the urban population in Japan. Today it has one of the most urbanised populations in the world, with nearly 80% of people living in cities. This shift was also associated with a major increase in the number of nuclear families with gender-based divisions of labour (man employed, woman at home). The nuclear

family, with rigid divisions of labour, therefore became typical and accepted as an appropriate family form in the period after the war. Between 1955 and 1995, the percentage of nuclear family households increased from 53% to 62% whereas extended family households decreased from 30% to 16%. Both the extended families and nuclear families, however, continue to coexist side by side. Current attitudes support the idea of the married couple as the fundamental family unit, and as being independent of their parents.

Since 1990, as people of the demographic-change-period generation have aged, Japan has experienced more rapid progress in population ageing than any other country. And, as will be discussed below, family lifestyles have become more diversified and employment rates for women have increased. A new constitution has stressed respect for the individual and guaranteed equal rights for men and women. The introduction of the new Civil Code in 1946 was instrumental in ending the traditional family system (emphasising patrilineal lineage).

Historical, Religious, and Cultural Factors in the Republic of Korea

An understanding of Korean culture and society is not possible without comprehending the nature and role of Confucian thought (Palley, 1994). All aspects of social, political, cultural, and family life in South Korea have historically been influenced by Confucian values (Chang, 1997). The Republic of Korea has been recognised as the society with the strictest adherence to the Confucian ethical heritage (Choi, 1994).

Confucianism has been refined into a set of norms, laws, and customs for prescribing political rule and social relationships, with patriarchal family playing a central role in social control, political integration, and welfare provision (Chang, 1997). Despite the success of industrialisation in Korea and modernisation of the society since the 1960s, these values still tend to dominate many aspects of life in Korea.

The ideal family type in Korea is considered to be a patriarchal extended family. The extended family typically consists of two families in adjacent generations: a father and mother living in the same household with a married oldest son, his wife, and children. The other children are expected to reside separately after their marriages (Cho & Shin, 1996). Caring for children and the elderly was historically sanctioned and maintained as the central role for women in the Confucian Korean society (Choi, 1996).

Industrialisation and Modernisation

Since embarking on the path of economic development in 1962, Korea has transformed itself from one of the poorest agrarian societies into a rapidly industrialising country, achieving one of the fastest rates of economic growth in the world (Facts about Korea, 1998). Associated with

this has been the migration of families from rural to urban communities. Currently one in four people lives in Seoul, and it is predicted that by 2000 over 80% will live in an urban environment. These changes, although fast, took place in the background of the traditional Confucian value system that has been shaping every aspect of life in Korea for the past 500 years.

Industrialisation has resulted in changes in the employment structure, improvement in women's education, a tendency toward nuclear families, and changes in family life-cycle (Mihye, 1994). There has also been an increasing emphasis on gender equality through the legal system and in Government Policy Development. Family Law was revised in 1991, establishing equality in property rights and expanded choices in custody decisions. The modernisation process has also resulted in changes in family patterns. The number of extended families has been decreasing and the number of nuclear families has increased in recent years (Cho & Shin, 1996). Between 1970 and 1995, the percentage of two-generation family households increased from 70% to 74% whereas extended family households decreased from 22% to 11%. (One generation households also increased from 7% to 15%.)

Social Demographics

Introduction

Recent demographic changes in Japan and Korea (which are likely to continue) will have a significant impact on approaches to work and family issues. Of particular concern are:

- Declining birth rates and the need to maintain a sufficient level of population growth that will ensure long-term economic and social stability.
- Changes in the structure of families and households, with a significant reduction in extended-family households and reduced opportunities for families to provide day-to-day care for dependents.
- The growth in the ageing population, particularly in Japan. This is a concern both for providing care for the elderly (within the family and through social security) and ensuring the quality of work and social life for the physically active.

Population Trends in Japan

In 1997 Japan had a population of close to 126 million (62 males and 64 million females), and an annual growth rate of 0.24. Figures in Table I show the percentages in each of the five-year age categories for the entire population, males, and females. In comparison to patterns in other countries, Japan has proportionally more people in the upper age categories. This can be seen by comparing the figures for the two countries: currently 15.6% of Japan's population is 65 or over, whereas only 5.9% of Korea's population is.

TABLE 1

Japan's Population by Sex and Age Group — 1997

Age	Total	Male	Female
0-4	4.72	4.94	4.51
5-9	4.94	5.17	4.72
10-14	5.69	5.94	5.44
15-19	6.34	6.64	6.06
20-24	7.60	7.93	7.28
25-29	7.53	7.80	7.27
30-34	6.55	6.77	6.34
35-39	6.19	6.38	6.01
40-44	6.51	6.69	6.35
45-49	8.56	8.75	8.36
50-54	7.01	7.11	6.91
55-59	6.60	6.62	6.58
60-64	6.10	5.12	6.18
65-69	5.32	5.12	5.51
70+	10.34	8.12	12.48

(Japan: 1998, An International Comparison)

Population Growth

Similar to other developed countries, the Japanese fertility rate has fallen dramatically in the past 20 years. The total fertility rate dropped to 1.29 in 1998 (Sayle, 1998), which is well beyond the 2.08 figure required to maintain the current population. This contrasts with fertility rates of 3.65 in 1950 and 2.13 in 1970. If these trends continue, the population of Japan will peak at about 127.5 million in 2010 and then decrease to approximately 121 million in 2030. Underlying this trend, however, is an increasing reluctance by young women in particular to marry and take on the responsibility of caring for children and the ageing parents of her husband (as the expectation is from Confucian values). In 1995, 86% of women aged 20-24 were not married (the comparable figure for the U.S. is approximately 62%).

Life Expectancy

Since the 1990s, Japan has experienced more rapid progress in population ageing than any other country — it is the most rapidly ageing society in the world. Life expectancy is also the highest of any country in the world. The average life span in 1997 was 77.19 for men and 83.82 for women, increasing 27.13 and 29.86 years respectively in the 50 years after the war. The absolute number of elderly people has also increased significantly and in 1997 there were 19.76 million people aged over 65. This figure is expected to be 27.75 million in 2010. The number of elderly people requiring care is also expected to increase rapidly in the next two years. Anzai (1997) reports figures from the Ministry of Health showing that this group will increase from two million in 1993 to over five million in 2025.

Population Trends in Korea

In 1997, Korea had a population of close to 46 million (23 million males and 23 million females), and an annual population growth rate of 0.98. Figures in Table 2 show the percentages of people in each of the five-year age categories for the entire population, males, and females.

TABLE 2

Korea's Population by Sex and Age Group — 1995 Population Census

Age	Total	Male	Female
0-4	7.69	8.15	7.24
5-9	6.95	7.28	6.62
10-14	8.33	8.56	8.10
15-19	8.67	8.89	8.45
20-24	9.66	10.01	9.31
25-29	9.29	9.30	9.28
30-34	9.49	9.60	9.39
35-39	9.28	9.41	9.15
40-44	6.89	7.07	6.72
45-49	5.53	5.64	5.42
50-54	4.63	4.60	4.66
55-59	4.29	4.13	4.46
60-64	3.36	3.01	3.70
65-69	2.34	1.88	2.81
70+	3.58	2.48	4.70

(Monthly Statistics of Korea: 1998.11)

Population Growth

Until recently, rapid population growth was a major social problem in Korea. Tremendous success of the government's population-planning program means that Korea is now a below-replacement society (Chang, 1997). The fertility rate in 1997 was 1.6 and has remained around this rate for the past eight years. According to current projections, the Korean population is expected to peak at close to 53 million at around 2030 and then begin to decline. Similar to Japan, however, there is now a concern that low birth rates will severely limit the ability of working adults to support the increasingly elderly population in the future. Ageing of the Korean population, therefore, is of growing concern as well.

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy has also increased markedly in Korea. The average life span in 1995 was 69.49 for men and 77.36 for women. This contrasts with figures in 1960 of 53 years for men and 57.8 years for women. The absolute number of elderly people has also increased significantly and in 1997 there were 2.64 million people aged over 65. This figure is expected to be 6.6 million in 2021. This group will then comprise 13.1% of the total population.

Table 3 below shows 1997 data about the living arrangements for people over 65 years of age. As can be seen, 30.6% currently live alone or as a couple. This represents quite a significant change in the past 20 years — the figure was 19.7% in 1981 and 25.5% in 1990 (Choi, 1996). Choi also argues that "the proportion of single-generation elderly families is likely to increase rapidly because an increasing number of the elderly as well as their married children prefer to live apart from each other." (p. 7).

TABLE 3

Distribution of Korean Elders (65+) by Type of Living Arrangements (%) — 1997

	Total	Male	Female
Elderly Household	30.6	26.9	32.8
Elderly Alone	13.7	5.0	19.0
Elderly Couple	16.4	11.4	13.2
Other Elderly Household	0.5	0.3	0.7
Not Elderly Household	69.4	84.0	67.2

(Social Indicators in Korea, 1997)

Trends in the Composition of Families and Households

Introduction

In general, patterns of change are very similar for both countries:

- Couples having fewer children and living in nuclear rather than extended family households
- Increased divorce rates and more single parent households
- Increases in female labour participation rates

The move away from traditional patterns, however, has been even greater in Japan. This is particularly evident in the reduction in birth rates and the increased number of people who do not marry.

Changes in the Structure of Japanese Families

Significant changes have occurred in family patterns in Japan in the recent years. Fewer people are marrying, people are marrying later in life, fertility rates have declined, and divorce rates have increased.

Trends in Japanese Marriage

Many of the descriptive statistics pertaining to marriage have changed during recent decades. For example:

- People are delaying marriage and having children later in life. Currently the average age of marriage is 28.5 for men and 26.2 for women.
- Fewer people are marrying. Japan has the second highest ratio of "never marrieds" after Sweden. In 1995, 86.4% of women aged 20 to 24 were not married. The comparable figure in the U.S. was 62.8%. The younger generation also displays more positive attitudes to an unmarried way of life. Of those in their 20s, 55% of men and 70% of women are positive about this type of lifestyle, where only 35.7% of men and 52.2% of women in their 40s held positive views.

Table 4 shows changes in marital patterns from 1985 to 1996.

TABLE 4

Marital Status in Japan — 1985 To 1996

	One-person household	Married couple only	Married couple with unmarried children	One-parent household	Three-generation household	Other
1985	18.4	14.6	41.9	4.6	15.0	5.2
1996	23.5	18.9	34.6	5.6	11.6	5.9

(Health and Welfare Statistics in Japan, 1997)

Trends in Japanese Fertility Rates

Fertility rates in Japan have decreased significantly in the past 20 years, and are of major concern to the government and community.

- The average age at which women give birth is 27 years.
- Couples are having fewer children. The average number of children for a couple is now 1.76 (in 1985 it was 1.83), and there has been a significant increase in the proportion of households without children. This figure increased from 53% in 1985 to 68.3% in 1996. (Prime Minister's Task Force on Declining Birth Rates, 1997).
- As is shown in Table 5 below, there has been a significant decrease in the number of households with either one or two children and an increase in households without any children at all.

TABLE 5

Children per Household in Japan — 1985 and 1996

	One-child household	Two-child household	Three-child household	Four- or more child household	Households without children
1985	16.6	22.6	6.7	0.7	53.0
1996	13.2	13.6	6.4	0.5	68.3

(Health and Welfare Statistics in Japan, 1997)

The Council on Population Problems of the Government of Japan (Policy, Planning and Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Health and Welfare) released a major report in October 1997 which focused on issues associated with the significant decline in the number of children in Japan ("On the Basic Viewpoint Regarding the Trend Towards Fewer Children — A Society of Decreasing Population: Responsibilities and Choices for the Future"). Negative economic and social consequences of the decline in the birth rate noted in the report include:

- reduced opportunities for children in families with only one child to develop social skills and develop independence (interactions with siblings are decreased and children might become over protected)
- a decrease in the number of people available to join the work force
- an increase in the age of the work force (Those over 60 are expected to comprise 21% of the work force by 2025.)
- reduced economic growth as a result of a shrinking work force and the desire by older workers to work fewer hours
- a possible decrease in the net income of the working population and a potential reduction in financial rewards for work effort (again because of a slowing of economic growth and employment opportunities), leading to a reduction in productivity and consumption)
- an increase in elders needing long-term care and more general social support, but a decrease in the younger population available to provide it

Findings presented in the report, however, indicate that there are significant gaps between current family behavior and stated preferences in surveys: more people would prefer to marry than actually do marry and couples would prefer to have more children (average: 2.6) than they actually have (average: 2.2). The authors argue that the impending population decrease is much more threatening than had previously been assumed and that it is imperative that major changes be made in the structure of the economy, the social security system, the current inflexible attitudes towards gender roles and in employment practices. This report is particularly significant when considering work and family issues in Japan.

Divorce and Remarriage in Japan

Although the divorce rate in Japan has increased (especially for people in their 20s) with approximately 20% of couples being divorced, it is still relatively low in comparison to other countries. The divorce rate per 1,000 of the population in 1997 was 1.78, compared with 3.0 for the U.K. and 4.57 for the U.S.

The number of people who remarry has also increased over the past 20 years. In 1997, 20% of all marriages involved at least one person who had been divorced. Younger people (men under 40 and women under 30 years of age) are also more likely to remarry.

The Composition of Japanese Families

The general trend in the past 40 years has been for the percentage of extended family households (three generations) to have declined (from approximately 36% to 12%), for nuclear family households (couple and children) to have increased slightly (approximately 60%), and for single-member households to have increased dramatically (from 3 to 23.5%). Part of this increase in single-person households is accounted for by men living apart from their families when they are transferred on work assignments within Japan.

With the increasing emphasis on nuclear families, the number of households where children and the elderly live together has decreased and more are living alone or as a married couple (the majority of these, however, live within an hour's travel of their children). Table 6 includes statistics about Japanese household structures for 1985 and 1996.

TABLE 6

Households by Number of Generations in Japan (%)

	Living alone	Married couple	Three generation	Two generation	Other relative	Non related
1985	9.3	23	47.9	16.7	2.8	0.2
1996	12.6	30.6	33.9	19.2	3.5	0.2

(Health and Welfare Statistics in Japan, 1997)

Not shown in the above table, but an equally important trend, is the increase in the number of middle-aged people living with their parents. Indeed, more than half of the people providing care for the elderly are aged 60 or over and many of these resent having to do so. Anzai (1997) reports findings from a survey conducted by the Japanese Trade Union Confederation which showed that of family care providers, 30% had developed feelings of animosity towards their charges and 50% had abused them in some way or another. Expectations about caring for elderly parents have also changed, with fewer now believing that this is a "natural obligation of a child." As was mentioned earlier, the emphasis within the younger generation is on the married couple as the fundamental family unit, and being independent of their parents. Although the elderly are also beginning to change their expectations and more now want to live independently, providing for their day-to-day care is a major social concern (Anzai, 1997).

Changes in the Structure of Korean Families

Caring for children and the elderly was historically sanctioned and maintained as the central role for women in the Confucian Korean society (Choi, 1996). The extended family is still regarded as an "ideal" type of family, but there is a continuing trend towards family nucleation and separate residency of parents and their married children. Nuclear families cannot provide the same amount of support to the elderly. Also, as grandparents are no longer present to share child care responsibilities, the need for publicly supported child-care facilities to support working mothers has increased (Choi, 1994).

The Nuclear Family in Korea

As indicated by the statistics presented in Table 7, the general trend has been for the percentage of extended-family households (three generations) to have declined, for nuclear family households (couple and children) to have remained fairly constant (approximately 60%) and for single-member households to have increased (from 4.2% in 1975 to 12.7% in 1995).

TABLE 7

Korean Households by Number of Generations (%)

	One generation	Two generations	Three generations	Four or more generations
1985	10.5	73.3	15.8	0.5
1995	14.7	73.7	11.4	0.2

(Monthly Statistics of Korea, 1998: 11)

Trends in Marriage in Korea

Significant changes have occurred in the marital patterns among Koreans:

- Currently the average age of marriage is 28.6 for men and 25.7 for women and the average age at which women give birth is 24.6 years. (This has remained fairly constant over the past 20 years.)
- The percentage of people who are unmarried has remained fairly constant at approximately 30% across the past 25 years.

Trends in Fertility Rates

- Couples are having fewer children. The average number of children for a couple is now 1.8 (in 1988 the figure was 2.1).

Divorce and Remarriage

The divorce rate in Korea has also increased, with approximately 20% of couples being divorced (compared with 6% in 1975), but it is also relatively low in comparison to other countries. The divorce rate per 1,000 of the population in 1997 was 1.8. Approximately 6% of families are single-parent families.

The number of people who remarry has also increased over the past 30 years. In 1996, 20% of those who had divorced had remarried.

The composition of Korean families

Table 8 illustrates the changing pattern of the composition of Korean families from 1985 to 1995. As can be seen, the biggest shifts have occurred for married couples without children (an increase from 1985 to 1995) and three-generation families (a decrease from 1985 to 1995).

TABLE 8

Korean Households by Type of Family (%)

	Married couple	Married couple with children	Father (Mother) with children	Married couple with parent(s)	Married couple with parent(s) & child(ren)	Other types
1985	5.4	57.8	9.7	0.8	9.9	14.0
1995	12.6	58.6	8.6	1.1	8.0	11.2

(Monthly Statistics of Korea, 1998: 11)

Implications of Demographic Trends in Japan and Korea for Work and Family

Changes in patterns of family formation have several implications for work and family issues in corporations.

The reduction in extended-family households in both Japan and Korea will mean that fewer grandparents will be available to share child-care responsibilities. This would be expected to result in increases in

- The demand for child care services for employed parents
- The demand for dependent care leave to respond to the changing needs of children (e.g., during periods of illness)
- The demand for before- and after-school care programs, especially for parents in Japan where travel time to and from work is often very high

- Pressures in dual-worker families to balance work and family commitments, although given current cultural expectations, the impact will be far greater on women than on men
- Pressure on men to participate more actively in family life, resulting in increased conflicts between work and family priorities, both in terms of career decisions and hours they are available to work
- Pressure on those without family responsibilities to provide coverage for work responsibilities, and greater reliance on this group to take up expanded job responsibilities

The increasing divorce rate will have an impact both in terms of

- The number of employed people who will experience associated psychological and social difficulties that will then impact on their work attendance and productivity
- The number of employed people who are the heads of a single-parent household, resulting in potential increased work and family conflict

For Japan, the shifting patterns of marrying and having children later in life, and in having fewer children could result in

- An increased demand for policies and practices that address work/life issues rather than issues primarily concerned with dependent care. (As this generation becomes older, the demand to have time to seek partners and establish long-term relationships might become more acute)
- An increased number of women who are highly motivated to develop careers, adopt independent lifestyles, and travel (for either short-term or long-term assignments)

There are several negative economic and social consequences of the decline in the birth rate that will have an impact on the quality of life for older people.

- There will be a greater demand for older workers. For example, in Japan, over 20% of the work force in 2025 will be people over 60
- There will be a significant increase in the number of single elderly people resulting in increased demands for formal long-term care services and more general social support
- There will be fewer people to provide the economic support (and continue to contribute to pension schemes) for the elderly

III. Economic Changes and Employment Trends

Introduction

The broad changes in employment patterns are similar in both Japan and Korea. Perhaps most notably there have been substantial increases in the number of women in the paid work force, especially those with young children. Nevertheless, as can be seen in Table 9, labour force participation rates of women are still somewhat lower than in the U.S. and Australia.

Table 9

Cross-National Comparison of Labour-Market Participation of Men and Women

Country	Labour force participation rate	Labour force participation rate (male)	Labour force participation rate (female)
Korea (1997)	62.2	75.6	49.5
Japan (1998)	63.4	77.5	50.4
Germany (1995)	58.5	69.7	48.2
Italy (1996)	47.6	61.6	34.6
Portugal (1994)	58.6	68.8	49.5
Netherlands (1995)	70.1	80.8	59.1
Denmark (1996)	77.1	83.4	70.7
Sweden (1997)	76.8	79.1	74.5
Finland (1995)	61.0	67.1	55.2
USA (1997)	67.1	75.0	59.8
Australia (1997)	63.3	73.2	53.7

(International Labour Office: Year Book of Labour Statistics, 1998.)

There are several drivers of these changes:

- Women themselves have been active in this process. Attitudes have changed, with women now being more likely to believe strongly that they have a right to active participation at all levels of employment and in public life.
- There is greater community and legal acceptance of equal employment opportunities and the rights of women.
- There is greater recognition of the economic benefits to organisations and the community of utilising the full range of skills possessed by women.
- There has been widespread acceptance that future economic stability and growth will only be achieved if female employment rates increase even further.
- With changing economic circumstances and increased insecurity in employment, individual families are now recognizing their economic well-being will be improved if both parents are in the paid work force.
- In the future, both Japanese and Korean economies will have a greater dependence on an older work force because: 1) There will be reduced supply of younger workers (associated with a reduction in the birthrate), and 2) There will be increased demand for workers to remain employed longer.

Economic Conditions in Japan

The Japanese economy has changed in recent years in several significant ways. Growth has slowed considerably and the economy is currently in a recession. For the past few years, Japan's financial system has been in a state of crisis. In addition, there has been a "hollowing out" of industry, with a major component of manufacturing moving off-shore to countries where labour costs are lower. Globalisation has had an impact, with changing markets and increased competition, especially from developing economies.

The demographic trends discussed in Chapter II have resulted in important changes in the labour force which is ageing and reducing in size, limiting further the possibility for energetic economic growth. Given the anticipated decrease in the numbers of working adults, there is also concern about the ability of the social security system to support an ageing population. As is argued in the White Paper on the National Lifestyle (1997),

> In Japan, new growth sectors of industry have traditionally secured the labour required to support their development by employing large numbers of graduates and other young people. However, as the supply of graduates is expected to fall in the future, the situation is likely to change. Thus, the participation of women in the work force has an important role to play in supporting the expansion of industrial growth sectors, and indeed in contributing to the overall growth of the Japanese economy (p. 30).

Finally, there is a growing demand for shorter working weeks and working hours which could also have an impact on national productivity.

As a result of the different challenges currently confronting the Japanese economy, many Japanese corporations have restructured and are in the process of implementing major changes in their approaches to business. These changes include

- Improving management efficiency
- Placing a greater focus on innovation
- Increasing corporate emphasis on profitability
- Responding more quickly to the changing business environment
- Cutting costs by reducing the number of employees on full benefits (lifetime employment, seniority-based salary, and full retirement package)
- Increasing the number of contingent or flexible workers (part-time, casual, contract), especially in the growing service sector of the economy
- Introducing merit-based performance systems to replace the traditional seniority-based pay system

Employment Patterns in Japan

As of September 1998, 50.4% of women were in the paid work force compared with 77.5% of men (Labour Force Survey). Approximately one-third (36%) of the women were employed part-time (less than 35 hours/week), which was a significant increase since 1985, when the figure was 22% compared to the 11.2% of the men with part-time positions. On average, women earned approximately 51% of what men did.

The percentages of women and men in paid employment according to age cohorts are shown in Table 10. As has been pointed out by many commentators, women's participation in the labour force generally conforms to an M-curve. The percentage of women in paid work is highest in the 20 to 24 age group, drops for the 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 age groups, and then increases again in the age range 40 to 54. This reflects the common employment pattern for women: employment after finishing education, resigning to get married and have children, and re-employment when the children have reached school age.

TABLE 10

Labour Force Participation in Japan by Gender — 1998

	Women	Men
15-19 years	16	19.3
20-24 years	73	74.9
25-29 years	69.1	96.4
30-34 years	58.2	97.4
35-39 years	63.1	98
40-54 years	70.4	97.3
55-64 years	51.2	84.7
65 and over	15.3	35.7

(Monthly Report on the Labour Force Survey: Statistics Bureau. 1998)

The number of women in the paid work force who are married has increased dramatically in the past 25 years. In 1997, 60% of women in the paid work force were married compared with 38.6 in 1965 and 51.3% in 1975.

In 1998, 30.7% of women with children aged 0 to 3 were employed, with 55.7% of these working less than 35 hours a week (but 37.7% said they wished to be employed), whereas 70.3% of those with children aged 10 to 12 years were employed. Official statistics (Management Coordination Agency) indicate that recently there has been a small but consistent increase in the number of women in the 25 to 34 age group who have continued to be employed, suggesting that more women with young children have opted to remain in the work force. In 1987, 56.9% of women aged 25 to 29 were employed and of those in the 30 to 34 year age group, only 50.5% were employed.

Table 11 lists the percentages of positions in each of the major occupational groupings filled by women.

TABLE 11

Occupational Groupings in Japan
Percentages of Positions Filled by Women — September 1998

Managers and officials	9.7%
Professional and technical	44%
Clerical and related workers	60%
Sales	39%
Service	56%
Farming, fishing	45%
Transport and communication	5%
Mining	0%
Craftsmen, manufacturing, and construction	27%
Labourers	45%

(Monthly Report on the Labour Force Survey: Statistics Bureau, 1998)

As can be seen by the data in Table 11, women tend to dominate certain types of employment categories, comprising a majority of the clerical and service workers (60%), with very few being employed in mining and manufacturing (27%). The percentage of management positions filled by women is also low in comparison to most western countries (e.g., in the United States it is over 40%).

Working Hours in Japan

Table 12 shows the distribution of hours worked for both women and men. In Japan, companies generally expect their employees to work long hours and to be available for overtime. As can be seen, over 60% of men work 43 hours or more each week. In contrast, only 30% of women work the same long hours. Similar to the experiences in other societies, it is difficult for women to work long hours given the continuing expectation that they take the major responsibility for household work and child care. An outcome of this, of course, is that women are more likely to take part-time jobs as a way of facilitating work/family balance.

TABLE 12

Work Hours in Japan by Gender — September 1998

Hours of work	Total	Women	Men
1-14	4.7	8.3	2.2
15-34	17.1	28.7	9.0
35-42	30.1	32.8	28.2
43-48	20.4	15.8	23.6
49-59	15.6	8.9	20.2
60 and over	11.8	5.2	16.4

(Monthly Report on the Labour Force Survey: Statistics Bureau, 1998)

Expectations about Employment in Japan

It is commonly assumed that Japanese workers are extremely hard working, highly motivated, and highly committed to their employer. Nevertheless, there is growing evidence that the younger generation of workers is seeking a better balance between their commitment to their work and to their family and personal lives. Attitudes are also changing in relation to seeking lifetime employment with one organisation. Recent surveys show that those who want to remain with the one employer are now the minority. It is increasingly recognised that people have to take greater responsibility for their own careers and that they can no longer rely on organisations to provide lifetime secure employment in the context of intense global competition. There is also evidence that younger female workers are developing their careers in temporary and flexible work arrangements, while maintaining a high priority on skill development and ensuring they are employable. Similar to what has been found in other countries, the younger generation of Japanese workers is also seeking challenging, interesting, and flexible jobs that are meaningful and provide opportunities for creativity.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Law, enacted in 1986, stipulates that women should be given equal opportunities and treatment in recruitment and hiring, employment, work assignment, and promotion. It also prohibits discrimination in training and education, employee benefits, retirement ages, resignation, and dismissals. However, most commentators are of the view that many women continue to experience discrimination in the workplace. Many large companies still recruit men and women separately, and actively discriminate by not providing all universities and colleges, especially women's colleges, with information about their forthcoming employment needs and job conditions. Family contacts also play a major role in many employment decisions.

Women with four-year college or university degrees can normally choose among several categories of positions when they apply. *Soogoshoku* are management-track and "mainstay" or core business positions that involve job rotation and transfers to other cities and countries. In contrast, *ippanshoku* or support positions (more routine and clerical) have restricted opportunities for promotion and do not require transfers. In some industries, there is an additional type of mainstay position (*chuukanshoku*) that does not require the person to transfer outside the geographical region. Traditionally women are more likely to be excluded from applying for career-oriented positions involving transfers, whereas men are expected to apply for these positions. This is based on assumptions about traditional divisions of labour and men being required to be the breadwinners.

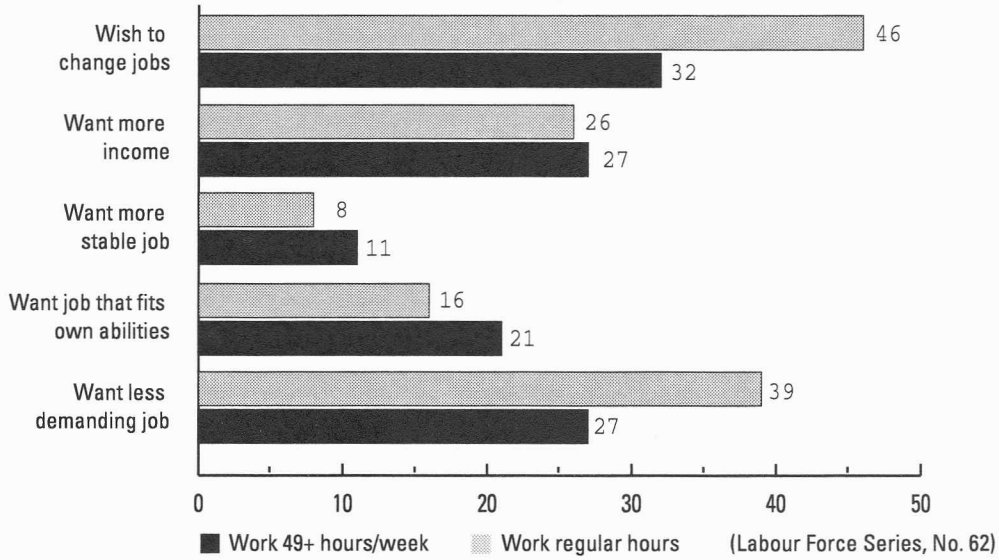
Nevertheless, it needs to be acknowledged that the position of women in Japanese society has improved considerably in the past 50 years. It is generally accepted that Japanese women essentially have achieved legal equality with men. This does not mean, however, that discrimination against women or those with family responsibilities no longer exists. In a 1995 survey conducted by the Prime Minister's Office, 62.1% of women and 55.7% of men believed that men are treated better than women in the workplace and 61.1% of women and 43.5% of men believed that men are treated better in family life. And, in a 1995 Ministry of Labour Survey on Women Workers' Employment Management, the most common reservations expressed by companies about employing women were

- "On average women tend to stay in a job for fewer years" (46.6%)
- "Allowances have to be made for a woman's duties within the home" (37.7%)
- "In general, women do not have a sufficiently professional attitude to work" (32.3%)

As is pointed out in the *White Paper on National Lifestyle* (1997) few changes are evident in these attitudes since 1992.

Attitudes also appear to be changing in relation to expectations about hours of work. The following graph shows summary data from a 1998 Labour Force Survey concerning the reasons for wanting to change jobs. Comparisons are presented for those who currently work 49 hours or more versus those who work less than these hours. As can be seen, a higher percentage of those who work longer hours want to change jobs (46% vs. 32%), and the most common reason given for wanting to change jobs is to have a less demanding job (39%).

Japan Labour Force Survey — Reasons for Wanting to Change Jobs — 1998



Changing Attitudes to Work and Family in Japan

Research indicates that attitudes to work and family have become more diverse, especially for women. These attitude changes are helping to drive and maintain the increases both in the number of women in the paid work force and dual-earner families. Women are less likely to adopt the traditional pathway of marriage and homemaker. Family lifestyles have also diversified because of the common practice of workers living apart from their families (predominantly men) when they are transferred in their jobs. Research also shows that the traditional roles of males and females are being questioned, and that as this change continues to gain momentum, it will have an even greater impact on Japanese society and the economy and on the approaches organisations will need to take to work and family issues.

Survey findings indicate that significant changes have occurred in the beliefs of both women and men about whether "men should go to work and women should take care of the home." In 1987, 32% of women and 20% of men disagreed with this view, whereas in 1995 the comparable figures were 54% and 40% (Prime Minister's Office Survey). Younger women and those who are employed are even more likely to disagree with this viewpoint. Approximately two-thirds (63%) of women and 52% of men in the age group 20 to 29 years were of this view, whereas 42% of women and 33% of men over 60 disagreed. Further, close to 80% of women were also found to agree that husbands should share equally in housework and childrearing. The reality, however, is quite different and many women report that they are not satisfied with the current situation (61% report being satisfied).

Economic Conditions in Korea

Industrialisation enhanced employment opportunities for both men and women, creating labour shortages in some industries (Chang, 1997). The need to utilise female labour increased labour force participation among Korean women, but not among mothers of young children. Although women's economic activity and labour force participation rates have increased significantly since the 1960s, inequality between the genders has been maintained in the still male-centered culture (Choi, 1996). Female labour force participation and economic activity patterns in Korea follow a "distribution" curve, due to low participation rate among women in the 25 to 34 age group, who leave the labour force due to marriage and childbirth (Kim, 1996).

The employment conditions in Korea have changed due to rapid economic growth and the improved industrial structure. The unemployment rate dropped from 8.2% in 1963 to 2% in 1996 (Facts about Korea, 1998). A foreign-exchange crisis in Southeast Asia in late 1997 triggered the financial crisis in Korea, giving rise to the unemployment rate in many sectors of the economy. The unemployment rate in the first quarter of 1998 stood at 5.7% and is expected to rise even further (Facts about Korea, 1998).

Employment Patterns in Korea

The female ratio among the total number of employees in Korea was 40.6% in 1996, a 12.3% increase since 1991. The ratio of women among the economically active population still falls well short of men, standing at 49.5% versus 75.6% in 1997.

The distribution of employed women by occupations in 1998 is shown in Table 13. As can be seen, gender segregation is high in occupational categories. Women in managerial and professional positions still form a small minority, while the majority of women are engaged in low-paid production or service-sector jobs (Mihye, 1994). More highly educated women have the highest rate of unemployment among all women in Korea (Turner & Turner, 1994). Wage differential is also high, with Korean women earning about 61.5% of what men earn.

TABLE 13

Employed Persons in Korea by Occupation (x 1,000) — September 1998

Total number %	Legislators senior officials and managers	Professionals	Technicians and associate professionals	Clerks	Service workers and shop and sales workers	Skilled agricultural and fisher workers	Craft and related trades	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	Elementary occupations
Total Population									
20,050	506	1,113	2,141	2,320	4,683	2,497	2,525	2,037	2,228
100%	*2.52*	*5.55*	*10.68*	*11.57*	*23.36*	*12.45*	*12.59*	*10.16*	*11.11*
Male									
11,901	477	755	1,475	1,232	1,894	1,295	1,915	1,776	1,083
100%	*4.01*	*6.34*	*12.39*	*10.35*	*15.91*	*10.88*	*16.09*	*14.92*	*9.10*
Female									
8,149	29	358	666	1,088	2,790	1,202	610	261	1,145
100%	*0.36*	*4.39*	*8.17*	*13.35*	*34.24*	*14.75*	*7.49*	*3.2*	*14.05*

(Monthly Statistics of Korea (1998.11))

There has been a marked shift in women's employment from the primary and secondary sectors to the tertiary between 1990 and 1996. Specifically, the distribution of female employees by industrial sector in 1996 was

- 66.1% in the social overhead and service sector (51.5% in 1990)
- 20.4% in mining and manufacturing (28.2% in 1990)
- 13.5% in agriculture, forestry and fisheries (20.3% in 1990)

The move of women from primary and secondary sectors to the tertiary sector partly reflects the massive migration of women from rural areas to the cities, and partly an abandonment by women of manufacturing jobs in favor of social overhead and services industry.

Women's working life is heavily influenced by other significant life events: marriage, childbirth and childrearing. The three major age categories of women in economic activity again form a "distribution" curve, due to low participation rate among the 25 to 34 age group. Table 14 shows the age distribution for males and females. As can be seen from the figures in the second part of the table, only 52% of women aged 25 to 20 are in employment, whereas 74% who are aged between 40 to 44 years are employed.

TABLE 14

Employed Persons by Age Group and Gender (x 1000 persons) — 1997

Total Number %	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65 and over
Total Population											
21,048	383	1,921	2,854	2,836	3,138	2,738	2,075	1,676	1,462	1,018	947
100%	*1.82*	*9.13*	*13.56*	*13.47*	*14.91*	*13.01*	*9.86*	*7.96*	*6.95*	*4.84*	*4.50*
Male											
12,409	152	709	1,783	1,899	1,966	1,626	1,269	1,040	869	591	505
100%	*1.22*	*5.71*	*14.37*	*15.30*	*15.84*	*13.10*	*10.23*	*8.38*	*7.0*	*4.76*	*4.07*
Female											
8,639	232	1,212	1,071	936	1,172	1,111	806	636	593	427	442
100%	*2.69*	*14.03*	*12.40*	*10.84*	*13.57*	*12.86*	*9.33*	*7.36*	*6.86*	*4.94*	*5.12*

Percentage of employed women in each age group

	Total (age 15-60 and over)	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	(65 and over)
Number of women	17,323	1,876	2,066	2,059	2,084	2,031	1,491	1,203	1,035	990	821	1,666
Number of employed women	8,639	232	1,212	1,071	936	1,172	1,111	806	636	593	427	442
% of employed women	49.87	12.37	58.66	52.02	44.91	57.71	74.51	66.70	61.45	59.90	52.01	26.53

(Number of women in each age group (1995, in 1000 persons) is taken from "Social Indicators in Korea" (1997), the number of employed women in each age group (1997, in 1,000 persons) is taken from the "Annual Report on Economically Active Population Survey.")

Working Hours in Korea

Korea is known for its long hours of daily and weekly work (Suh, 1994). Information presented in Table 15 shows that in 1997 men worked an average of 51.3 hours each week (compared with 47.7 hours a year earlier) and women worked an average of 47.9 hours each week (up slightly from 46.4 hours the year before).

TABLE 15

Employed Persons by Hours Worked (X 1000 persons) — December 1997

Total	1-17 hours	18-26 hours	27-35	36-44	45-53	54 hours and over	Average hours worked per week
Male							
12,299	137	270	366	2,724	3,608	5,132	51.3
100%	1.11	2.20	2.98	22.15	29.34	41.73	
Female							
8,383	197	404	414	2,349	2,122	2,834	47.9
100%	2.35	4.82	4.94	28.02	25.31	33.81	

(Annual Report on the Economically Active Population Survey, 1997.)

Expectations about Employment in Korea

There are little data available on changing expectations about the nature of jobs and careers. Some indication is given, however, by responses to two questions in National Surveys conducted in 1991 and 1995. In comparison with results from 1985 it was found in 1995 that fewer employees were satisfied with the high number of hours they worked and with their "working environment." Overall levels of satisfaction were relatively low, and especially for women, for "working environment," "prospects," "employee welfare," "personnel management," and "type of work." A question was also asked in 1991 and again in 1995 about the reasons for job selection. The most common responses (shown as a percentage who listed each reason as being the most important) in the two years for the entire sample and for males and females separately are shown in Table 16. Less emphasis is being placed on stability of employment and more on promotional opportunities. It is also of interest that women place more emphasis than men on income and on the meaningfulness of a job.

TABLE 16

Assessment of Important Dimensions of Jobs by Men and Women

	Total		Males		Females	
	1991	1995	1991	1995	1991	1995
Prestige	3.1	3.3	4.4	4.4	1.9	2.1
Stability	37.2	29.6	38.2	30.3	36.3	29.0
Income	29.7	27.1	25.8	22.5	33.2	31.2
Meaningfulness	15.1	10.5	13.6	8.5	16.6	12.3
Promotion opportunities	14.3	29.2	17.6	33.8	11.4	24.7

(Social Indicators in Korea (1997))

As was found in Japan, attitudes are changing to become more positive about the employment of women across the entire lifespan, irrespective of family responsibilities. As can be seen from the table below, this trend is even more evident in the attitudes of women and in the younger generations. Only 7.9% of 15- to 19-year-olds believe that women should confine themselves to housekeeping only. Nevertheless, it is still less than 40% who believe that women should be able to be employed "under any conditions."

TABLE 17

Attitudes Towards Female Employment — 1995
(shown as the percentage who agreed with each statement)

	Housekeeping only	Employment before marriage	Employment after maturity of children	Employment both before marriage and after maturity of children	Employment under any conditions
Total	15.8	13.2	16.1	34.1	20.9
Male	19.6	15.1	16.1	32.3	16.8
Female	12.1	11.3	16.1	35.8	24.7
15-19 years	7.9	15.4	7.2	30.8	38.6
20-29	7.7	13.4	11.0	39.4	28.5
30-39	13.9	8.7	22.6	38.8	16.1
40-49	17.4	11.4	21.9	34.0	15.4
50-59	20.2	17.4	16.3	30.3	15.7
60+	33.6	17.5	12.7	22.8	13.4

(Social Indicators in Korea (1997))

Table 18 summarizes opinions about the major barriers to the employment of women. The two major issues identified are household responsibilities and social prejudice.

TABLE 18

Opinions about the Obstruction of Female Employment — 1995
(shown as the percentages who agreed with each type of explanation)

	Ability	Social prejudice	Lack of responsibility	Working conditions	Housework	Other
Total	4.3	24.7	8.7	9.5	52.5	0.3
Male	5.0	24.5	10.8	9.1	50.3	0.3
Female	3.7	24.8	6.8	9.9	54.6	0.2

(Social Indicators in Korea (1997))

Up until the late 1980s South Korea, in comparison with other countries, had high levels of discrimination against women (Monk-Turner & Turner, 1994). It was relatively recently (in the early 1980s) that the Government, driven by the objective of utilising the female work force and facilitating economic development, has attempted to abolish gender discrimination at work (Kim, 1993). Changes to Korean Family Law, which placed women in disadvantaged positions compared to men with respect to inheritance, child custody, and other family status roles, was not modified until 1991. It still contains discriminatory provisions, although the government is taking steps to eliminate these from the law.

The South Korean economy is dominated by a few large family-owned firms called Chaebols. Extensive government ties and economic power of Chaebols give them discretionary power in hiring practices that would not exist in a purely competitive market. The bias against women in Korean Chaebols is estimated to cost South Korea 12.8% of the gross domestic product (Monk-Turner & Turner, 1994). In the last few years some Chaebols, however, have began changing their recruitment policies towards being more women-friendly, having recognised the value of female labour capital given the labour shortages experienced in the Korean labour market (Changing Asian Values, 1995).

Male-centered institutional practices and decision-making structures still dominate in social, economic, and political domains. Women continue to be discriminated against in employment, and policies that are designed to allow women to balance work and family responsibilities are poorly implemented (Kim, 1993). Women themselves have internalised traditional notions of gender roles, which inhibit these initiatives (Palley, 1994).

Changing Attitudes to Work and Family

Data collected in Korea also show that attitudes to family responsibilities are in the process of change (Korean Women's Development Institute-KWDI). A survey conducted in Seoul in 1992 showed that when asked the same question regarding gender roles as in the Japanese survey discussed above, 49.2% of women and 31.3% of men disagreed that "men should go to work and women should take care of the home." These figures are lower than those for Japan, especially for men (40% of Japanese men disagreed). Further, Kim (1996) shows that there is a relationship between women's participation in the paid work force at different stages of life and their spouse's attitudes towards women being employed. For example, after the birth of a first child, 26.7% of women who have a partner who has negative attitudes about women's return to work, whereas 53% of those whose partner is positive return to work. The KWDI is also of the view that attitudes would be even less traditional in the younger generation now, especially after the recent economic crisis (personal communication, 1999). There is far greater acceptance that stability in family income is very much more dependent on having both partners in the paid work force.

Some values have been slowly changing to reflect current economic and social trends. For example, the views on the traditional value of filial piety, although still upheld, are changing from being solely a responsibility of the eldest son and his wife to being a shared responsibility of all children. Ways of realising this value are also changing to become more practical, reasonable, and reciprocal in line with the rapidly changing social and economic environment. (Chang, 1997; Choi, 1996). Some advocate developing and transforming this value to fit a modernising Korean society (Choi, 1996).

Implications for Work and Family

Patterns of divisions of labour in both paid work and family life show quite clearly that expectations are still very high in both Japan and Korea for men to assume greater responsibility in the work force and for women to assume the majority of the responsibility for family life. With more and more women moving into the paid work force — especially women with young children — combined with the shift away from the support of extended families, women will experience even greater difficulties in balancing their work and family commitments. Corporations, therefore, will have increasing numbers of women who will be combining a high level of commitment to paid work and to family life. For these women, increased stress is likely to be experienced as they attempt to juggle dual roles and fulfill their own and their family's high performance expectations in their second shift (Hochschild, 1989). There will also be more dual-worker families who will require greater support in fulfilling their dependent care responsibilities — both for young children and for the elderly.

The extent to which a company addresses the work and family needs of employees is also likely to become a more critical issue for the recruitment of the younger generation. In this group there are higher expectations of being able to combine work and family and to have a lifestyle of higher quality. Strategies that take account of the harmonisation of career development and family life are likely to be especially effective in recruiting the more highly educated and professional groups.

For Japan, the number of men who live apart from their families while on work assignments (for some, this can be for extended periods of time), combined with the above changes, will create even greater pressure for support for dependent care, especially when these men also have a partner who is in the paid work force.

With the increasing numbers of women in the paid work force, fewer will be available to provide continuing care for the elderly. In addition, there will be more women and men in the work force who have responsibilities to provide economic support and care for elderly parents when the need arises. Work and family conflicts in relation to elder care, while acute now for many employees in Japan and Korea (especially those in older age categories), will increase dramatically in the future. As has been pointed out by others (e.g., Palley & Usui, 1995) this conflict will be

even greater for women as they will be increasingly placed in a dilemma in terms of their responsibilities for their spouses and children, caring for elderly parents, and increasing responsibilities for paid work. This will not only present difficulties for women in establishing and maintaining their involvement in paid work, but also in demonstrating their commitment to their jobs (e.g., by being flexible to work longer hours or to relocate) and in fulfilling their own changed career aspirations. The opportunities for women to argue for a redistribution of responsibilities are also likely to be less than in most western countries (even though both Japan and Korea have equal opportunity laws) because of the dominant influence of Confucian values.

Employees having to provide for the physical and economic support of elderly parents will be more pronounced in Korea where government strategies and targeted community resources for the elderly are very limited. In contrast, in Japan, providing for the care of frail aged will emerge more quickly as a significant issue.

The issues of employing older workers will also be key in both countries because they are healthy, motivated, and require the income to support themselves under the circumstances of a reduced capacity of the economy to pay for pensions. Evidence shows that these workers are less likely to be motivated to work long hours (requiring a critical evaluation of accepted measures of performance and productivity), will be seeking a better work/life balance, and will also be highly likely to have elder-care responsibilities. They are also less likely to be motivated by traditional incentives such as pay and career advancement. Increased problems might also be experienced in managing such a work force, especially in a culture that emphasises seniority and respect for elders. New management styles will need to be adopted by the younger generation of managers.

These issues have several consequences:

- There is likely to be increasing demand for family-leave policies that take account of elder care responsibilities.
- Companies will be forced to seriously consider facilitating the development of, of becoming actively involved in, and providing more appropriate services for elderly dependents of their employees (employees who are likely to be represented across the entire age range). These services might include physical care, recreation, and social and psychological support.
- Programs and services will need to be considered to address the psychological and social-support needs of employees who experience conflict and guilt in relation to the care of their elderly parents. Specialist counseling services might need to be developed within employee assistance programs.

IV. Public Sector Responses and Initiatives

Introduction

The focus in this chapter is on the responses of the Japanese and Korean governments to the changing work and family priorities of employees in the two countries. Similar to many western nations, governments in both Japan and Korea have demonstrated a degree of responsiveness to work and family issues, in terms of legislation, policies, and in the development of support systems. The focus in Japan has been characterised more by a concern for the ageing population and their very low birthrate, whereas in Korea, the emphasis has been more on women and ensuring equal employment opportunities.

The Response of the Japanese Government to Contemporary Work and Family Issues

Health and welfare measures are now being promoted both systematically and in an integrated fashion. An expanded public pension program was introduced in 1961. This covers all citizens through three pillars: public employees, those employed in the private sector, and those who are self-employed or are family workers. More recently, the Japanese government has recognised that in order to deal with the growing and diversifying needs for social security, it is necessary to enhance services in the welfare area, achieve the inter-cooperation of health, medical care, and welfare, and to develop integrated measures with a medium- to long-term perspective. For this, the Golden Plan, the Angel Plan (discussed below), and the Plan for People With Disabilities were formulated.

In 1989, the Ten-Year Strategy to Promote Health Care and Welfare for the Elderly (the Golden Plan) was established. This plan was made for building a service system that would allow elderly people requiring long-term care to be as independent as possible and continue to live in their accustomed homes and communities. It was decided to enhance in-home and institutional welfare services as well as to prevent bedridden elderly under this plan. In 1990, welfare service administration was shifted to municipalities, and the establishment of the Local Health and Welfare Plan for the Elderly became mandatory. Later, in 1994, in order to meet the expanded needs after the Golden Plan implementation, the New Golden Plan was established, under which the foundation of elderly long-term care services are being built.

The Ministry of Labour has shifted its priorities, giving greater emphasis to fostering an environment that values and responds to diverse individuality and capabilities. This focus has been prompted mainly by a recognition of the increased contribution women are making both to employment and to Japanese social life. It is accepted by the government that there is now a greater need to facilitate women's employment opportunities and to provide conditions that enable women to combine work and family commitments. To date it does not appear that the government has taken account of the needs of men nor to facilitating more options for men to balance their work and family commitments. Nevertheless, some government reports do recognise that gender inequality in contributions to family responsibilities is associated with heightened difficulties women experience in harmonising their work and family commitments.

Five government initiatives will be discussed:

1) The Ministry of Labour has adopted an active campaign to increase the effective implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law to ensure women and men achieve equal opportunity and treatment in paid work. Recently, Women's and Young Workers' Offices have been established in each prefecture as a local organisation of the Ministry of Labour, to provide support and advice for employers and female employees.

2) Efforts are being made to promote measures for part-time workers through the implementation of the Part-Time Work Law.

3) Implementation of both the Family Care Leave System and the Child Care Leave System.

4) Promoting initiatives that can help employees harmonise work and family.

5) The 10-year Angel Plan (Health and Welfare Ministry, Education Ministry, Ministry of Labour and the Construction Ministry) which is designed to promote policies which support the raising of children throughout society.

Promotion of Equal Employment Opportunity in Japan

The Ministry of Labour has recognised that women will make a significant contribution to Japan to help maintain the dynamism of its economy in the future in the face of both a decline in the number of children and an increase in the age of the population. It is accepted that this requires an employment environment that is discrimination-free and supportive of women's work/family needs to enable women to contribute fully. To deal with these issues appropriately and to further enhance the equal treatment of men and women in the employment environment, a revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was submitted to the 140th Session of the National Diet and the revised law was passed on 11 June 1997. This legislation had three important goals:

1) Promotion of measures to ensure equal opportunity and treatment between men and women in employment

The Ministry of Labour is actively providing guidance to employers to ensure both compliance to the requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and outcomes that result in equal treatment between men and women across the entire spectrum of employment and management levels in organisations. For example, Prefectural Women's and Young Workers' Offices, through the Equal Employment Opportunity Mediation Committee, provide assistance (advice, guidance, and recommendations) for reaching solutions to specific disputes between female workers and employers. These offices are also engaged in efforts to increase the understanding by companies of the importance of positive action programs to ensure equal employment practices and they provide advice on specific programs and strategies that can be adopted. These positive action programs are designed to eliminate discrepancies between male and female workers and to encourage fuller utilisation of the capabilities of female workers.

2) Promotion of measures for maternity health care

The Ministry of Labour has defined the Guidance Standards for Maternity Health Care based on specific clauses in the Equal Employment Opportunity Law. The aim is to enable female workers to have a healthy work experience without having to worry either during their pregnancy or after giving birth. Each of the Prefectural Women's and Young Workers' Office has its own maternity health care guidance doctor and responds to consultation requests from employers and female workers.

3) Promotion of measures for improving the status of women

The Ministry of Labour has also recognised that it is essential to challenge stereotyped concepts of a division in the capabilities and responsibilities of men and women in order to ensure that gender equity is achieved. Therefore, the 49th Women's Week selected a goal of striving to build a society in which men and women understand each other, cooperate, and live in their own individual ways. It employed the theme "Creating a Society for the 21st Century in Which Individuals Can Live in Their Own Way" and the slogan "Individuality: The Password for Accessing the Future." A national conference was held as a centerpiece event of this campaign.

Promotion of Measures for Part-Time Workers

Part-time workers have become an important part of the labour force both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Their numbers are increasing year by year as is the length of their employment, and part-time workers can now be found in a wider range of sectors. The Ministry of Labour is promoting the following measures to support part-time work as an attractive and rewarding work option.

The Law Concerning the Improvement of Employment Management of Part-time Workers (the Part-time Work Law) was fully enforced as of April 1994 in order to promote the welfare of part-time workers. In line with the Law, Guidelines for Employers on Improving the Management of Part-time Workers were also established. To ensure the Law and Guidelines had an impact, group briefing sessions targeted primarily at small and medium enterprises were conducted, while other publicity and promotional efforts were taken whenever there was an opportunity.

The Japan Institute of Workers' Evolution was designated Part-Time Work Support Center under the Part-time Work Law and began operations in each prefecture from April 1994. The Center provides

- grants for improving the employment and management of part-time workers
- information and counseling services to part-time workers
- training seminars for personnel in charge of part-time employment and management
- promotion of self-improvement services on employing and managing part-time workers
- sectoral meetings on utilising the abilities of part-time workers

Promotion of Work/Family Harmony Through the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law

The Ministry has accepted that it is important to encourage an environment that taps the abilities and experiences of all workers, while enabling them to harmonise their work with child care or family care, and thereby to achieve fuller working careers throughout their lives. To this end, policies to harmonise working life with family life are being comprehensively and systematically promoted based on the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law ("the Law Concerning the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave;" which was called "the Law Concerning the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care Leave" through 31 March 1999.)

This law applies to all private- and public-sector employers. It requires employers to introduce schemes guaranteeing that employees who take a certain amount of leave to care for family members are able to return to their jobs. It is anticipated that this law will both enable those with family responsibilities to keep their jobs and ensure greater compatibility between family lives and careers. The law specifies that if an employee applies for leave within the stated terms, his or her employer cannot refuse, and it forbids firing an employee for taking leave or requesting to do so. Furthermore, the law obliges

employers to establish measures for at least three months (in conjunction with any leave time that is taken) allowing employees in care-giving situations to work shortened hours, come to work later, or leave early. There are no provisions for punishing an employer that fails to comply with these standards. Although the law does not address wage compensation, it is expected that a portion of workers' salaries will be paid from the employment insurance scheme.

Some Japanese businesses had adopted family-leave provisions even before this law had been introduced. A 1993 Labour Ministry study indicated that 51.9% of all enterprises with more than 500 employees already had such a system in place. The same study showed, however, that only 14.2% of Japan's numerous small and medium-sized enterprises (those employing 30 to 99 workers) had taken similar measures, making for an overall average of 16.3%. On the basis of such studies, the ministry judged that it would require some time for all Japanese businesses, especially smaller ones, to prepare themselves to implement family leave, which led to the adoption of the four-year phase-in period. Because more than 60% of those companies that have already introduced the concept give their employees up to one year leave, labour representatives have complained that the three-month minimum standard set by the new law is too short. The Ministry of Labour, however, has stressed that the three-month period is only a minimum and that the thrust of the legislation is to encourage employers to make efforts to adopt more comprehensive schemes that surpass these standards.

Outline of the Japanese Child Care and Family Care Leave Law

There are five major components of the Japanese law mandating that employees are entitled to leave for dependent care responsibilities:

1) *Child-Care Leave System.* Workers are able, upon notification to their employers, to take child-care leave until their children reach the age of 1.

2) *Family-Care Leave System.* Workers are able, upon notification to their employers, to take family-care leave for a period of up to three consecutive months, once per each family member requiring constant care. Family members covered consist of spouses (including de-facto marriages), parents and children (including those legally regarded thereas), and parents of spouses.

3) *Child-Care and Family-Care Leave Benefits.* As outlined by the Ministry of Labour, people on leave are paid an amount of approximately 25% of the wage being paid immediately prior to the leave. This is paid as part of the National Unemployment Insurance System.

4) *Restrictions on night work.* When a request is made by an employee who takes care of a child younger than grammar-school age or another family member requiring care (e.g., an elderly parent), the employer cannot require the person to work between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., unless normal business will be disrupted if the employee is not at work.

5) *Recommendations about measures that employers should endeavor to adopt.* A range of recommendations have been made by the government to help ensure effective policy implementation. These include: (a) Fully inform workers of the system and develop employment management strategies to support these systems; (b) Develop strategies to shorten working hours (this measure is mandatory, whereas for others, employers are expected to make efforts), (c) Policies for workers caring for pre-school children one year or older, (d) Measures for workers caring for family members, and (e) Measures for the re-employment of people who take time out to care for family members.

Promotion of Measures to Harmonise Working Lives with Family Lives

Various efforts were made in 1997 to facilitate the achievement of work/family harmony. For example, the government established subsidies for employers who implement measures that contribute to the stabilisation of employment for workers with child-care or family-care duties. Unlike many other countries, however, subsidies and support in Japan are also provided to small and medium-sized employers.

Four of these initiatives are discussed below:

1) *Subsidies for employers when employees take child-care or family-care leaves.*

A subsidy for employers instituting a family care leave system is provided via the Subsidy for Mandatory Family Care Leave System (subsidies for supporting the workers caring for children or family members). Other assistance is extended to employers implementing programs (information provision, courses, etc.) to support a smooth return to work for workers after they have taken a child-care leave or a family-care leave.

Assistance is also being extended to small and medium-sized enterprise groups for taking planned steps to foster an environment among member enterprises that is conducive to harmonising working lives with family lives. This seems especially important given the finding that overall only 60% of all enterprises provided child-care leave systems, and the lowest of all were small and medium-sized enterprises (in contrast, 97% of enterprises with 500 or more employees provided such leave). (White Paper on the National Lifestyle, 1997)

2) *Subsidies for employers who establish measures such as part-time work options and workplace-based supports that promote the continuation of work for workers engaged in child care or family care.*

Starting in the 1997 financial year, the subsidy for shortening working hours to care for a family (subsidies for supporting the workers caring for children or family members) was available for employers who introduced measures that enabled workers with child or family care duties to work shorter hours.

Also, employers bearing part of the costs for their workers to use baby sitters, home helpers, or other services for child care or family care are entitled to the subsidy of the cost of child and family care (subsidies for supporting the workers caring for children or family members) to help in establishing an environment conducive to the continuation of work for workers engaged in child care or family care. Other assistance known as the subsidy for company nurseries (subsidies for supporting the workers caring for children or family members) is offered to employers setting up a company nursery (including a nursery along the workers' commuting path) or who begin operation of such a nursery or expand the facility to compensate for an increase in the number of children. The government will provide subsidies of up to 50% of the construction cost (excluding land acquisition cost) and for the labour cost of two child-care workers for up to five years.

Other initiatives include a free telephone service that provides consultation on child care and family care, as well as specific information about the local region and seminars designed to give workers the knowledge and attitude needed to succeed in continuing to work while providing child care or family care.

To respond to changing and irregular child-care needs related, for example, to unexpected overtime or the illness of a child, subsidies are being extended through prefectures to municipalities or public service corporations that set up organisations (Family Support Centres) conducting mutual child-care assistance activities at the local level. Assistance is also being extended to local public organisations establishing Family Support Facilities for Workers close to the community that enhance the functions of welfare centres to harmonise working lives with family lives.

3) *Promoting measures that support the re-employment of workers who resigned from work to engage in child or family care*

To support the re-employment of persons who have left work for child or family care reasons, a program of support for those who have registered their desire for re-employment is being implemented and the proliferation of re-employment systems is being promoted. A job-matching system is also in place (The Ladies Hellow Work Center). Furthermore, a program promoting assistance for the employment of women, which includes counseling, guidance, information, and technical courses related to work, is being implemented for women seeking employment.

4) *Work assistance for women who are widowed and single mothers*

Work assistance is extended to widowed single mothers in the form of allowances for Public Vocational Training and other programs and employment counseling at Public Employment Security Offices by employment counselors.

Japan's Angel Plan

The 10-year Angel Plan (Health and Welfare Ministry, Education Ministry, Ministry of Labour, and the Construction Ministry) was adopted in 1995 to address concerns associated with the trend towards fewer children. The plan is designed to promote policies which support the raising of children throughout society. There are five key policy areas:

- Support to enable parents to both work and raise their children
- Support for raising children within the family
- Provision of housing and facilities for raising children
- Realisation of a more relaxed education system and the healthy maturation of children
- Reduction of childrearing costs

In addition, urgent measures are being taken under this plan to meet diversified child-care needs:

- Provision of sufficient numbers of nursery schools to cater to all children between 0 and 2 years
- Extension of nursery-school care time (e.g., to cater for night-time care)
- Provision of temporary nursery-school care
- Provision of nursery schools for sick children
- After-school care for primary school students
- Provision of multifunctional nursery school
- Increased numbers of nursery-school staff
- Reduction of nursery fees
- Regional consultation centers for child rearing
- Provision of prenatal and postnatal clinics for mothers and children

THE RESPONSE OF THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO CONTEMPORARY WORK AND FAMILY ISSUES

Overview of the Work and Family Agenda in Korea

The demographic trends discussed in Chapters II and III of this paper, such as population ageing, family nucleation, the increased work force participation rates among women, and the consequent need for government assistance to families and working women in caring for children and the elderly, has facilitated a strong debate about viewing work and family issues as social issues and about the necessity to balance the role of the state, community, and the family in family welfare (e.g., Chang, 1997, Choi, 1996).

The term "work and family" is rarely used in Korean government policies or the media. Nearly all of the debate is framed as a women's issue and is aimed at increasing women's employment and social participation, and their economic conditions. Shaping new societal values to enhance gender equality at home and at work has also become an important issue (e.g., Kim, 1993), and the Korean Women's Development Institute (Wha-soon, 1999) argues that more emphasis needs to be given to the development of policies to harmonise work and family to facilitate the achievement of gender equality.

Although the new government policy priority extends to the "creation of a society where gender-equal participation and division of responsibilities in all political, social, economic and cultural spheres are guaranteed," many policies provide limited access by men to family-friendly provisions. For example the Equal Employment Act, 1995 guarantees parental leave for fathers only if both partners are working. This may reflect the real situation in the society, where women are the sole caregivers within the family.

Family care is still largely viewed by the government and the society as a private responsibility of family members, and women in particular, rather than the concern of the state and the community. Social policies pertaining to the care of elderly Koreans has been guided by the principle that the family has the primary responsibility for the care of dependents rather than the broader social security system (Choi, 1996). Child care has also been considered to be the primary responsibility of the mother, rather than a community responsibility related to labour force participation (Mihye, 1994).

During the period of rapid industrialisation the guiding principle of managing the Korean economy was clearly based on ensuring growth rather than emphasising equity in the distribution of income and community support. In the early 1980s it was replaced with the goal of building a welfare state by the beginning of the next century (Chang, 1997). Despite this change in policy, the government has been criticised for avoiding responsibility of assisting families to care for their members and neglecting the development of social policies aimed at family welfare.

The dominant Confucian value system allowed many in the government to blame family nucleation for existing social problems, claiming that "family nucleation nourishes individualism at the cost of traditional family solidarity, and thus causes the alienation and abandonment of many dependent people." (Chang, 1997)

Despite this history of emphasising the responsibility of the family, recent changes in government policies have occurred, in particular with regard to child care and leaves to care for dependent family members.

Child-Care Support: The need for additional child-care facilities is one of the main issues on the agenda of the work/family debate. While the focus of government for several decades has been on industrial and commercial maximization goals, social development initiatives to assist families with child care have been neglected (Chang, 1997; Palley & Usui, 1995). Lack of quality child-care facilities in Korea has been one of the reasons for the inability of women to simultaneously assume work and family roles. Since December 1997, all pre-school children are entitled to cost-free care and education for one year prior to entering primary school.

The government currently requires that companies employing more than 300 female employees establish child-care facilities. This mandate reflects the situation in the society where responsibility for child care is viewed as a responsibility of women. However, companies with fewer than 300 female employees are not required to establish child-care facilities (Yang, 1996). This makes it difficult for most women to balance their work and family commitments, as the majority of women work in companies with a relatively small number of employees.

Despite the limitations of current legislative requirements, the government investments in the support of child-care facilities and services since 1991 resulted in a dramatic increase of public, private, workplace, and home facilities from 1,919 in 1990 to 15,375 in 1997, registering a 74.7% average growth rate per annum.

Child Care Leaves: Child-care leave provisions have been viewed in Korea as a function of maternal protection, not acknowledging the need for establishment of equal rights for male and female workers. Since the Child Care Leave System basically ignores fathers, it thus reinforces traditional notions of sexual division of roles (Kim, 1993).

The Equal Employment Act provides 12 months child-care leave, including paid pre- and post-natal 60-day leave (Kim, 1993). The period of leave is also counted as part of the total length of employment, thus preventing women from being disadvantaged either in terms of retirement or promotion entitlements. Employers who refuse a request for child- care leave can be fined. The issue of wages for the 10 month's of child-care leave is not clearly defined, which allows its interpretation by employers as 10 months of unpaid leave. The Act applies to all establishments with more than five employees, and mothers with children under 1 year of age, regardless of length of their service with the employer.

Currently, there are no provisions to enable employees to take leave for other family-related reasons, such as looking after sick children or elderly members of the family, visits to schools, or for mothers with children older than 12 months. The leave can only be taken as a full-time leave. No alternative arrangements, such as a reduced work-schedule scheme, exist in the current child-care leave provisions (Kim, 1993). However, under the mandate of the First Five-Year Basic Plan in Women's Policies, women will soon be able to take leave to care for sick family members.

Other problems with the current system include lack of an explicit guarantee of job security to the employee on leave. An unpaid leave system may discourage women from utilising it. In addition, the issue of paid leave and hiring a replacement worker was entirely the employer's responsibility, which led employers to avoid these extra costs by not employing women (Kim, 1993). The Government is trying to redress this problem by taking steps to socialise the cost of maternity leave via a tripartite social insurance scheme. The recently implemented Employment Insurance Act also provides for an additional 30 days of paid leave beyond the 60-day paid maternity leave at the time of the birth. Also part of this act is the award of promotional grants to employers (with 50 or more employees) who retain their female employees on their payroll as insured persons for more than 30 days after the expiration of their maternity leave (Wha-soon, 1999).

There are two other types of paid leave that are related to work and family or personal commitments. All women are entitled to one day's leave per month in relation to menstruation and all employees are entitled to one day's leave per month (this is above and beyond annual leave).

Gender Equality in Korea

Despite the resistance to gender equality that might be expected in a Confucian culture, the gender-equality agenda is gaining in strength, supported by economic and social changes in the society. Educational and advertisement campaigns, assembled by government and non-government organisations that are aimed at promoting gender equality, are likely to further change the male-centered attitudes among the Korean people. Wha-soon (1999) reports on the implementation of a decision made by the 8th National Committee on Women's Policies to include gender equality education on public-sector training institutions (Article 21 of the Women's Development Act). A major goal of this training is to change men's attitudes towards household work and childrearing. In 1995, 33 of the 45 public sector-training institutions conducted a total of 185 courses.

Since inauguration in February 1998 the new Administration of South Korea has made it a policy priority to promote women's rights as an integral part of human rights. To facilitate implementation of new policies, the Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs (PCWA) was established. Unlike its predecessor, the Ministry of Political Affairs II, which was accountable to the Office of Prime Minister, the PCWA is overseen directly by the President.

Gender equality and increasing women's participation in the work force are important concerns in Korea. Many policies and programs that have been put in place aim to increase female employment by assisting women with child-care arrangements, institutionalising support for women's employment, developing women's ability and information access, and promoting gender equality to the public.

The Korean society has traditionally viewed motherhood as an important role of women. This led to many maternity protection policies, such as nursing work-breaks for women, and protection of pregnant employees. Many of these policies and programs have been influenced by Korea's participation in international affairs such as the World Conference on Women: Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

The Government Budget for the Advancement of Women was established by the Ministry of Political Affairs (II) under the mandate of the Basic Law for the Advancement of Women. The target size of the fund is 100 billion won (US$71,428,600) by the year 2001, with 10 billion won already allocated in 1997 and 1998. The Fund will make the substantive realisation of the provisions of the Women's Development Act.

The government has adopted an affirmative action strategy designed to promote an increase in the percentage of females employed in the public sector. Each year, a set ratio of women is designated for the required recruitment of females into the public sector (civil service personnel). The ratio is to rise to 20% from the 10% base in 1996. Public-sector businesses were encouraged to use a "public-sector female employment incentive system." Of the 106 public-sector establishments, 14.2% took advantage of the system in 1996. The Korea Airport Management Corporation, where female ratio among employees was 3.7% during the 1990s, in 1997 allocated 20% of all new-recruit positions to women.

The government also encourages private-sector employers to become more women-friendly in their hiring and other policies. Many employers are obliged to provide child-care leave and establish child-care facilities for female employees. There is evidence, however, that the government policies fall short of being well implemented, and that women still do not claim the maternity protection benefits for fear of discrimination (Kim, 1993).

Partnerships for Gender Equality in Korea

The government consults and cooperates with the women's non-government organisations (NGOs) in its attempt to promote gender equality and increase women's work force participation. Various government committees have been created to facilitate and oversee the implementation of the above policies and programs:

- The Gender Equality Promotion Committee was established in 1996 under the mandate of the Women's Development Act, in order to promote gender equality by taking corrective measures with reference to various gender-discriminatory elements in existing laws, institutional arrangements, administrative measures, and policies.
- The Equal Employment Committee provides arbitration for problems arising from violations of EEA.

- During the 1990s the Ministry of Political Affairs (II) (now PCWA) focused on strengthening its integrative and coordinating role with the activities of the various ministries.
- According with the 1994 amendment of the regulations of the National Committee of Women's Policies (established in 1983), each ministry is required to submit a plan for women every three years for the Committee's review and endorsement.
- The Special Committee on Women in the National Assembly was established in 1994. It reviews matters relating to the rights and welfare of women.
- The Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI) was established in 1983 as a government-supported research institute on women to carry out research on women, provide education and training to develop women's resources, and assist women's organisations in their activities. In 1991 it was transferred from the purview of the Ministry of Health and Welfare to the Ministry of Political Affairs (II) (now PCWA) in order to strengthen the Government hand in the area of women's policy formulation and implementation. In 1995 and 1997 respectively, the Women's Information Center and the Social Education Center were established within the KWDI.

The Government is committed to strengthening its cooperative and consultative ties with women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the public sector to ensure the cooperation and participation of citizens in the implementation of the programs and policies. In 1995 there were approximately 4,500 of women's NGOs.

Government Initiatives

There are a number of government plans and policies aimed specifically at promoting gender equality and enhancing the status of Korean women. These include:

1) A separate women's component, included in the Seventh Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan (1992-1996). (It was also included in the sixth plan.)
2) The second Basic Plan for Working Women (1998-2002), under implementation. This plan specifies that Women's policies will be pursued through cooperation among all the ministries concerned.

   Local autonomous bodies at all levels are also engaged in formulating their respective women's policy implementation plans within the overall framework of the Basic Plan. Six strategies and twenty policy tasks have been identified. The strategies are: (i) revision of laws, institutional arrangements, and social practices toward greater representation of women; (ii) strengthening women's employment and job security; (iii) expanding educational opportunities to strengthen women's competitiveness; (iv) increasing welfare services for women and families; (v) strengthening the foundation for cultural and social activities for women; and (vi) cooperation and unification.

3) Ten Policy Priorities for the Advancement of Korean Women, identified in 1995 as a follow-up action to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Financial requirements needed to fulfill the women's agenda are reflected in the government budget. PCWA is coordinating the efforts of the related ministries. Close consultation with women's NGOs and the public sector are sought.

The goals and the related policy areas for the advancement of Korean women are:

- **To provide the social environment in which women can be free from domestic chores.** Expanding child-care facilities, after-school care programs, and school meals through the mobilization of private resources.
- **To set in place institutional support for women's employment.** Setting a target percentage for women's participation in public service and providing incentives for recruitment of women at public enterprises. Social sharing of maternity protection costs.
- **To develop women's ability to work outside the home and their access to information.** Expanding education and training for women's employment and strengthening women's information networks (at the KWDI with links to community facilities).
- **To strengthen the social milieu that discourages gender discriminatory practices and perceptions.** Monitoring implementation of the Women's Development Act. Conducting an ongoing mass media campaign. (Ten policy priorities for the advancement of Korean women, Ministry of Political Affairs.)

Three pieces of legislation, the Women's Development Act, the Labour Standards Act, and the Equal Employment Act, guarantee equal rights for women in the political, social, and cultural spheres.

- The 1995 Women's Development Act is aimed at addressing issues of gender equality, women's social participation, and their welfare in a consistent and systematic manner. The Act prescribes the responsibilities of the state and the society for promoting gender equality to ensure that both women and men may, on an equal basis, participate and take responsibilities in realising the healthy family and society as a whole." According to the Women's Development Act (1995), the government must attempt to enlist all public-sector training and education agencies and business establishments in providing gender equality consciousness-raising training. Since 1991 various public sector training institutions and women's NGOs (non-governmental organisations) engaged in a wide variety of gender equality consciousness-raising training. Efforts were also made by the Government and NGOs to improve gender equality consciousness through mass media.

Some of the provisions of the Act are:

1) Time bound affirmative action aimed at women

2) Expanded and equal employment opportunities for women

3) Improved maternity protection

4) Expansion of child-care facilities

5) Promotion of gender equality through child and social education, and gender sensitivity through mass media

6) Promotion of women's welfare

7) Establishment of gender-equal family relationships

8) Economic assessment of domestic family work

9) Formulation of Five-year Basic Plan in Women's Policies

- The Labour Standards Act was enacted in 1953, and revised in 1989 and 1997. It prescribes basic labour conditions. The 1989 revision made the Act applicable to a wider range of organisations, and stiffened the penalties for violation (up to US$6,250 for violation of equal treatment, and up to five years imprisonment or up to US$37,500 fines for violation of maternity protection). Most work-environment regulations under the Labour Standards Act 1997 are aimed at protection of pregnant women and working mothers. Some of the protective provisions for women include:

1) Prohibition of women's labour in hazardous work environments, night work and public holidays

2) Limitation of overtime work

3) Maternity protection regulations such as menstrual leaves, pre- and post-natal leaves, protection of pregnant workers, and work breaks for women who are breastfeeding

- The Equal Employment Act (EEA) was introduced in 1987 in order to realise the principle of gender equality in employment opportunities and working conditions, and to protect motherhood as well as to develop women's occupational potential and advance their socioeconomic conditions. The Act was revised twice: in 1989 and 1995. The 1989 revision extended the maternity leave to one year. The act provides for paternity leave where both of the spouses are employed. The penalties for violation were introduced and include up to two years of imprisonment or fines of up to US$6,700.

Elders and Social Security in Korea

Although most of the work and family discussion reflects the current emphasis on gender equality, issues related to the support and care of Korean elders are important given the ageing of the Korean population.

South Korea did not have any nationwide insurance for the aged until the introduction of the National Pension Act in 1988. This Act applies to most employees. However, at the present time, the small number receiving pensions are more likely to be employed in the education system or in the military. Figures collected in 1997 indicated that 62% of elderly parents were being financially supported by their children (and mainly by their eldest sons). It is estimated that this pension will not be available to a large number of elderly — estimated to be 45 to 50% — until the year 2040 (Palley & Usui, 1995) and only 15% are expected to be covered by 2010. There is increasing concern (Choi, 1996), therefore, that the current welfare system will not be adequate to address the economic and social needs of a rapidly ageing population. The need for change is even more pressing in Korea than Japan because less emphasis has been given to the development of an integrated social welfare system. There is far greater emphasis on families maintaining this responsibility, an approach that is consistent with dominant Confucianism values in Korea. As was pointed out by Palley & Usui (1995, p. 247), the primary approach of the Korean Ageing Policy "is an emphasis on tax incentives, awards and honorifics to encourage families to provide care and shelter for elderly relatives."

Survey data also indicate that the majority of the younger generation are still of the view that families should take responsibility for their ageing parents (Social Indicators in Korea, 1997). Of those in the 20- to 29-year age category, 88.5% believed that children had this responsibility, whereas only 8.6% believed their parents should support themselves and only 3% believed they should be supported by social welfare. The most significant difference between the younger and older generations was in which child they thought should take this responsibility. Of those over 60, 38% believed it should be the first-born son, whereas only 14.4% of 20- to 29-year-olds agreed with this. (This group was much more likely to believe this responsibility should be shared among siblings.)

Conclusions and Implications

Policy tasks that are directly related to work and family issues include:

- Strengthen the framework for equality in employment opportunities
- Assist working mothers
- Diversify the forms of child-care
- Revise the labour standards law to enable women to take leaves to care for ill family members
- Develop mechanisms for the government to share costs of child care with employers
- Promote alternative forms of employment
- Improve the labour conditions of women workers (employment and medical insurance and national pension will be available to part-timers)
- Supervise lay-off process to ensure fair treatment of women
- Enhance women's professional abilities (career counseling, budget preference to female colleges)
- Lift ceiling on female recruits at civil servants colleges
- Improve women's health standards and abolish gender imbalance (medical insurance to be extended to cover the costs of routine pregnancy tests)
- Lengthen maternity leave (e.g., measures to spread the cost of paid maternity leave)
- Expand and upgrade child-care facilities (tax breaks to companies, programs to enhance quality, certification of service providers, diversification of services, facilities expansion for after-school care, caregiver training)

V. Private-Sector Responses to Contemporary Work and Family Issues

Introduction

As is all countries, private-sector approaches to the work and family needs of employees by corporations in Japan and Korea will be guided by the overall societal response, what has been mandated by the government, and what resources are available within the community (e.g., companies would be less likely to provide child care for employees when there is adequate provision in the community). It would be expected, then, that the more responsive corporations will be more likely to implement policies that go beyond what has been mandated, especially when leadership and support is demonstrated by governments.

Employer Support for Work and Family Issues in Japan

In support of the development of this paper, the Ministry of Labour identified five employers operating in Japan as providing leadership in addressing the work and family needs of their employees. These comprise a mixture of both local and international corporations, and cover a range of industries: IBM and NEC (computing/information technology); KAO (manufacturer and distributor of health-care products); Bennesse Corporation (remote-learning education provider, conducts after-school cram schools and provides nursery care at each major location), Seiyu (supermarket that provides on-site child care, flexibility in hours and a re-employment system); and Isetan (retailer of clothing and other products for women).

Initial responses to inquires made in seeking to identify "family-friendly" companies in Japan focused more on whether the organisation employed a high number of women and whether they provided child care (e.g., Bennesse fits this framework, but IBM doesn't.) That is, people tended to think of a family-friendly organisation as one which employed a high proportion of women (on the assumption that if women are employed there, it must be family friendly) and whether it provided child care.

The Ministry of Labour developed a framework for examining the workplace-based policies and programs. This framework is reflected in Table 20, which summarizes policies and practices for four organisations: IBM, NEC, Isetan, and KAO. Additional details are provided for the first three organisations.

TABLE 20

Profile of the Work and Family Policies and Programs Offered by Four Leading Employers in Japan

	IBM	NEC	Isetan	KAO
Child-care leave	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Family-care leave	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Family-illness leave	Yes	Yes	No	No
Shortened working time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flextime	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
On-site nursery	No	No	No	Yes
Reimbursement of child and family care expenses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time off (half day or by hour)	No	Yes	No	Yes
Aid for transfers	No	Yes	Yes	No
Referral	No	Yes	Yes	No
Re-employment scheme	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flexibility to move from full-time to part-time and vice versa	No	No	No	Yes
Sabbatical leave	No	Yes	No	No
Discretionary working time	No	Yes	No	Yes
Others	Loan for care expenses			

IBM

IBM has a comprehensive work/life program that extends beyond the legal requirements in several significant ways. Their maternity-leave policy provides paid leave for seven weeks before (an additional one week over the legal requirement) and eight weeks after the birth. Child-care leave of absence is available for the first two years of a child's life, and IBM pays the social security premiums for the additional year beyond the one-year legal requirement.

Flexible hours are available to address the work and family needs of women with young children. IBM has established three types of programs:

Child-care optional work system: To meet business needs, IBM can ask those women on Child-Care Leave of Absence who have agreed to work, to work on a part-time basis up to three half days a week.

Child-care early leaving: This policy allows female employees who leave their children in a day nursery to leave work 21 minutes earlier when there is no other way to be in time for the closure of the nursery.

Child-care time: This policy enables female employees to take up to one hour off each day (twice a day for 30 minutes) to nurse their infants.

Other programs IBM have include:

Patient-care leave of absence: This leave allows employees up to a maximum of one year unpaid leave to care for a sick relative. Nevertheless, employees maintain their status as a regular employee and IBM maintains the social security payments.

Family-Care Dial or Referral Service: This service provides employees with access to consultation and information about maternity and childrearing and caring for the elderly.

Home-helper program: IBM pays up to 3,600 Yen/day (up to seven days) to cover child-care (at home) costs when the regular housekeeper is ill.

Baby sitter discount tickets: Tickets are provided to cover expenses of 1,500 yen/session when employees need extra out-of-hours care for their children to enable them to contribute to the business.

Special unpaid leave. This leave enables an employee to accompany his or her spouse while on an international assignment.

Special paid leave: There are five types of special paid leave: Marriage (5 days); childbirth of the spouse of an employee (3 days); death of a spouse, parent or child of an employee (7 days); death of an employee's grandparent, spouse's parent, brother sister or grandchild (3 days); buddhist services for deceased spouse, parent, or child of an employee. (Leave is also granted for services for other religions.)

In terms of work and family programs for ex-patriates, families are given a two-day orientation program (e.g., about local customs, shopping, transport, etc). Relocation policies, however, do not cover child care, schools, or the employment of spouses. These arrangements (e.g., finding a nanny or other child-care arrangement) are essentially left to the family of the employee. Yet the importance of providing relocation support for family members is evident from recent studies (see Gender, family needs impact employee relocation. March, 1999).

NEC

Like IBM, NEC has implemented work and family initiatives beyond the legal requirements. Maternity and child-care leave are consistent with the legal requirements.

Company reports indicate that over an eight-year period, child-care leave has been taken by 1,064 women and six men. NEC has a system of family-care leave that enables employees to take leave for up to one year to care for children or elderly relatives as well as family-illness leave with an entitlement of three days paid leave each year to care for an ill family member. (This can be accumulated up to 20 days.)

Similar to other companies, NEC has a range of initiatives that provide practical support to families, such as reimbursement of child and family care expenses, providing support for transfers (e.g., to cover the costs of moving), referral and information services (provided by the Labour union), and a re-employment registration system. (It is interesting to note that very few people have applied for re-employment in the 10 years this system has been in operation, and most were women whose spouses had gone on overseas assignments.)

In comparison to other organisations, NEC has several systems related to flexible working hours:

Shortened working time: Employees can arrange to reduce their hours of work by either one or two hours per day for a period of three years either to care for children (under three years of age) or elderly parents. It is acknowledged that working on this system has a negative impact on promotion opportunities.

Flextime: Core hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Total hours to be worked are seven hours and 45 minutes.) Employees are able to adjust their working times on a monthly basis. It is recognised as being a very flexible arrangement and is widely used by all employees except managers.

Time off: An employee is able to take a half day off for any reason (e.g., to attend a child's school). This is deducted from annual leave.

Discretionary working time: Certain groups of employees, particularly senior researchers, who are measured by outputs, can use their own discretion to work outside core hours. They are also able to work at home for four days a month.

There are two other initiatives worth noting:

Intranet working-life forums: These are particularly aimed at working mothers to enable them to obtain support from each other and share information.

Management training programs: Work and family issues have been introduced into new management courses. The focus here is more on providing information and strategies to enable managers to support and promote women with family responsibilities, and to ensure that women are retained (especially engineers). It is the view of the company that the opportunities to obtain support and changes in approaches are greater with younger than with older male managers.

Isetan

The key driver for the Isetan work and family strategy is the recruitment and retention of high-quality female employees. The overwhelming majority of their customers are women, who prefer to buy products from women. They have eight stores and employ 5,267 people, 62% of whom are women. Of the women, 83% are employed in sales. Nevertheless, only 23% of the female employees are married and only 3% of the senior managers are women.

Isetan's interest in work and family issues began in the 1950s. The very clear focus in their initiatives is in providing support for those with dependent-care commitments and in enabling employees to have continuity in employment while taking time out to care for children. Significant policy initiatives include:

Child-care leave: Isetan has extended these entitlements to a possible three years for each child, with a maximum of four years if a woman has two children. For the extended period of leave the arrangement is that the company will pay 75% of the Social and Medical Insurance and the employee 25%. However, if the employee returns to the company, the employee does not have to pay the 25%.

Family-care leave: The entitlement here is one year unpaid leave (with the employee paying 50% of the Social and Medical Insurance) to care for an immediate family member (e.g., parents, spouse, child). It is also possible to extend the family-leave period by a maximum of 130 days using accumulated paid vacation leave. Isetan also makes available a loan of up to US$30,000 for employees during this period. The loan has to be repaid within five years; however, the system of repayment is reasonably flexible.

Shortened working hours: This can be used for either child-care or family reasons for a period of up to eight years (but the period of child-care leave is deducted from this). There are five different types of arrangements, although 70% of those using this system are on the first of the following arrangements (the normal workday is 7.5 hours): 9:45 a.m. to 3:25 p.m.; 11:00 a.m. to 4:40 p.m.; 12:40 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; 9:45 a.m. to 4:35 p.m.; 10:30 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. The majority of employees who are not managers are paid 100% of their normal salary (despite working reduced hours), whereas those who are managers are paid between 80% and 90% of their normal salary.

Flextime: Core hours are from noon to 4:00 p.m. and flextime is possible within the range of 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. It is difficult for salespeople to use flextime and therefore it is used mainly by staff in headquarters. There is also reasonable flexibility in the allocation of rosters, and roster swaps are possible to enable people to fulfill their family commitments.

Reimbursement of child- and family-care expenses: Isetan will subsidize dependent-care expenses (10% for elder care and up to 20 days at 15,000 yen per day for child care) when care is needed outside regular hours.

Transfers: Support is provided for financial costs when families have to move (e.g., costs involved in purchasing a new school uniform for a child) or are separated because of the transfer of an employee.

Employer Support for Work and Family Issues in Korea

There are very few examples of comprehensive work and family strategies being implemented in private-sector organisations in Korea. This is well illustrated by considering the approach of IBM in Korea in contrast to IBM strategies that have been developed in other Asia Pacific countries, and especially in contrast to Japan. Details of the IBM program are summarized below.

It is of interest to note the emphasis on providing support to employees in relation to social and emotional aspects of family life. This is a common and traditional approach for Korean organisations, and an approach that is very different from that adopted by most Western organisations where the emphasis is more on providing practical support to enable people to cover their dependent-care needs. The Korean response is more about recognizing the importance of family relationships and family celebrations in the lives of their employees.

Alternative work arrangements, such as part-time work, job-sharing, and flexible work arrangements, were largely unavailable to Korean employees until recently, although more companies have been experimenting with some of the alternative work practices. Korea has a six-day workweek, with relatively high average working hours (see earlier section). Recently, however, many private companies have adopted a five-day workweek and modified working hours. These arrangements are not being trialed as family-friendly work practices, but rather as a result of recognition that traditional work practices, such as long hours hinder productivity, and that happy workers may be more productive (New Asian Values, 1995). Employees themselves increasingly prefer spare time in favor of paid overtime (Lee, 1995). Although not explicitly implemented with the intent of facilitating harmony between work and family, reduced working hours and greater flexibility are obviously key enabling structures for those who are seeking greater harmony in their lives.

Some large employers are beginning to discover the productivity benefits of workplace flexibility and are actively introducing flexible work schedules and other alternative work arrangements (Changing Asian Values, 1995). Although these changes are being implemented as a means of increasing workers' productivity, rather than as a part of a broader work and family agenda, they represent a positive step in the development of the work/family agenda in Korean society.

Lee (1995) has summarized some of the significant changes that have occurred in approaches to work practices in Korean businesses:

- Samsung Group staggered its work force on a schedule that starts the workday earlier in the morning and ends earlier in the afternoon, a dramatic departure from the conventional concept of universal working hours. At Samsung MicroSystem, workers are required to be at the office only between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., and are free to use the rest of their working hours as they see fit. Higher productivity has been reported as an outcome.
- Samwon Precision Machine Co. broke down the workday into minutes and seconds in a campaign to control time. This was published as a time-management guide called "Time technology," and has sold 200,000 copies.
- The number of companies that now incorporate the five-day workweek are largely in the insurance and pharmaceutical industries: Kukmin Life, Hankook Life, Daewoong Pharmaceutical, Kwangdong Pharmaceutical, Hankook Bayer, Donsong Pharmaceutical, Hanmi Pharmaceutical, and Sama Pharmaceutical.
- The number of firms that give alternate Saturdays off include Kim Jungmun Aloe, Dongyang Benefit Life, Dongyang Magic, Sunkyong Group, and Hall Group.

Lucky Goldstar Group and ten other enterprises have adopted the home-office system for some of their employees, with evaluations showing improvements in productivity.

In her analysis of private-sector responses to the work and family needs of employees, Wha-soon (1999) has mainly concentrated on systems of leave and differences between implementation and utilisation rates. Findings are based on a study of 103 companies and 593 working women completed by Park Jung Eun et al (1994). Overall, implementation rates were found to be highest for paid maternity leave (96%) and menstruation leave (82%). Utilisation was very high for maternity leave (90%), but somewhat lower for menstruation leave (62%). Despite being a requirement of the Labour Standards Act, only 13% of employers said that they provided short-term leave or flexible hours for nursing mothers, and only 2% of employees said that they used this benefit. Again, despite the legal requirement, only 56% of employers said that they provided child-care leave and only 6% of employees said they had utilised this type of leave. When asked why they did not take child-care leave, the most common responses given by employees were that their company did not allow them to take child-care leave (42%) and that they could not afford the loss of wages (13%).

In her recommendations, Wha-soon draws attention to the need for the child-care system to be expanded beyond a "single leave of absence" model to include schemes that allow work schedules to be more flexible and shortened to better meet the needs of parents with young children. Further, she advocates that the following initiatives be adopted in the private sector: family-friendly job environments (integration of paid work and family life), flexible benefits, employer-sponsored day-care, paternity leave, part-time work (with or without prorated benefits), flexible work arrangements, and telecommuting or "teleworking." (It should be noted, however, that a major barrier to more widespread use of working from home in both Korea and Japan is the lack of private space in many households.)

Work/Life IBM Korea

Leave options form the core of IBM's work/life policies and programs in Korea. In addition, flexible work arrangements are available. It is of interest that IBM does not formally list leave for nursing mothers (similar to what was found in the research conducted in Japan). In discussions with the company, however, it became clear that the flexible work hours policy could be used for this purpose.

1) Special paid leave for women (menstrual leave based on Korean Labour Law): Women can take one day each month.

2) Special paid leave: IBM Korea has established four specific types of special leave with pay:

   i) Marriage leave:

   - Employee: five-day leave, 500K Won, 100K Won for flowers
   - Employee's sibling: one-day leave, 100K Won, 100K Won for flowers
   - Employee's children: one-day leave, 250K Won, 250K Won for flowers

   ii) Birthday leave:

   - Employee's 60th birthday: one-day leave, 600K Won, 50K Won for flowers
   - Employee's spouse's 60th birthday: one-day leave, 300K Won, 50K Won for flowers
   - Employee's Parents' 60th birthday: one-day leave, 300K Won, 50K Won for flowers

   iii) Paternity leave: three days leave, 200K Won, 50K Won for flowers

   iv) Maternity leave: Sixty calendar days paid leave, 200K Won, 50K Won for flowers

3) Baby-care leave to enable female employees to care for their babies. Ten months unpaid leave following 60 days paid maternity leave.

4) Leave of absence to fulfill an employee's personal needs, e.g., education or family reasons (such as a partner being relocated in their job). Two years unpaid leave.

5) Funeral Assistance Program: Funeral leave (paid, ranging from three days to six days) and financial assistance (ranging from 1,000K Won to 200K Won, as well as flowers) are provided at the deaths of the employee, employee's parents, spouse, spouse's parents, children, siblings, and grandparents.

6) Flexible work hours to enable employees to balance their work and personal or family commitments. Three options are available: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

VI. Summary and Implications

There are several points that can be made about the work and family approaches of governments and private-sector organisations in Japan and South Korea.

- *Focus of female labour force participation.* It is clear that both governments, and especially the Korean government, are concerned about enabling more women to participate actively in the paid work force and eliminating overt discriminatory practices.
- *Addressing Barriers Experienced by Working Mothers.* Japan and Korean have emphasised addressing barriers to women's employment associated with care for young children. Facilitating the employment of women through mandatory maternity and child-care leave, and providing financial support for organisations to ensure these policies, are key aspects of the policies in both countries.
- *Work and family issues primarily viewed as private issues for women.* Consistent with dominant Confucian values in both Japan and Korea, family commitments are still viewed as a women's issue and a private responsibility of families by policy makers, corporate decision makers, and the general community. The failure to acknowledge the family as a social issue and failure of the state to assume responsibility for promoting family welfare particularly hinder development of the variety of family-friendly policies in Korea (Choi, 1996, Kim, 1993).

Although there is a recognition in the policies in both countries that there is a need to promote gender equity both at work and at home, very little emphasis has been given to the role of men in family life and the potential impact their involvement in paid work has on their general well-being or on the quality of the lives of their families. Nor has there been an analysis of the dependent-care responsibilities of men and the impact they might have on their work behavior.

Viewing family as a women's issue, and excluding men from taking leave related to child care reinforces the traditional concept that childrearing is the responsibility of women alone.

- *Gender discrimination.* Male-centred institutional practices and decision-making structures still dominate in social, economic, and political domains in both countries. Women continue to be discriminated against in opportunities for employment and advancement, and policies that are designed to allow women to balance work and family responsibilities are, in general, poorly implemented.
- *Workplace responsiveness.* Corporate responses to work and family, although more expansive than legal requirements (especially in Japan), are still consistent with government responses in their intent — to enable more women with dependent-care responsibilities to either be employed or continue their employment during periods of high family demand.

A major barrier to the advancement of women identified in the research conducted for this project was the performance-appraisal system. Performance appraisals in many organisations are still

very much based on the assumption that presence = performance and hours = productivity. Women who have returned from child-care leave and work reduced hours are typically given lower scores on their performance appraisals. It is a rare manager who will assign higher levels to such women (e.g., exceeds expectations, is performing at an extraordinarily high level, etc). The opportunities for these women to advance therefore are very limited and it is not surprising that very few have more senior positions. As one woman said, "I want to work harder, not longer, and I want to be recognized for my contribution."

- *Outcomes of work and family initiatives.* There is little evidence that approaches meant to address the dependent-care needs of women have had any impact on the advancement of women in organisations. The percentages of women in management positions in each of the companies described in Chapter V are small (e.g., NEC (.01%); Isetan (2.6%); IBM - Korea (1%)).

- *Life course needs and priorities.* While current policies address the needs of those with very young children reasonably well, continuing difficulties are often experienced by those with older children. This is especially the case for those who have their children in child care from infancy to age 3, and in kindergartens when they are from 3 to 6 (typically kindergartens lasts from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30). There are also associated prep schools that many parents feel it is necessary for their children to attend on a regular basis outside of child care and kindergarten sessions. (This ensures they will be well prepared to perform in the entry exams for the next phase of their private schooling.) Employed parents experience difficulties providing transport for their children from one center to another.

- *International assignments.* Interviews with employees conducted as part of this project indicated that there was considerable dissatisfaction with whether or how work and family needs were addressed for employees on international assignments. This dissatisfaction was expressed by male employees, the male spouses of female employees, and by female employees. While there was a high level of satisfaction with personal financial arrangements (e.g., in terms of income and support for housing, etc.), the same could not be said for the way in which family needs were addressed.

Those who had their families with them raised issues about the constant high level of travel, the need to be accessible both locally and globally (and the dominance of U.S. time), and the consequent high level of need their spouses had for emotional and practical support. Difficulties were also encountered in finding employment for spouses, suitable live-in housekeepers and nannies (especially when the children were older; issues raised focused on differences in values and approaches to parenting), and child-care and backup support in the community. These concerns were also expressed by the unemployed male partners of female managers who were on international assignments.

Those who had gone on international assignments without their families also expressed significant concerns. First, there was concern about a company policy that offered an international assignment for 10 months with a paid visit home every two months. If the assignment had been

for 12 months the entire family would have relocated with the employee. A father who had been on a recent 10-month assignment talked at length about the difficulties he experienced in being separated from his family (two children; one an adolescent) and was firmly convinced that had he been able to anticipate the impact he would not have accepted the assignment.

A range of factors is encouraging South Korean society to become more family friendly. Industrialisation and modernisation created the need for an expanded female work force, and enhanced women's opportunities in education. The Korean government has established a range of policies and programs to eliminate discrimination against women in the society and the workplace and to encourage greater participation by women in all spheres of life. For instance:

1) The government at the highest level has indicated its commitment to women's issues with the recent establishment of the PCWA, which has an advisory role to the president on women's issues. Examples of other positive programs include the Ten Priorities and the First Five-Year Plan in Women's Policies. In addition, the government receives continuous feedback from the KWDI on its research on women's issues, which facilitates the update of the policies to reflect new findings and trends.

2) The Government's commitment to cooperation with women's NGOs in promoting gender equity is a positive step towards securing greater involvement and awareness of the community about the issues of gender equity.

3) Korea's involvement in the international movement and ties with UN and other international equal rights organisations ensure awareness among the government about work and family trends on the international arena.

Although a reduction in birth rates and the associated family responsibilities have made it easier for women to work, deeply entrenched Confucian values continue to hinder the progress of the work and family agenda in Korea (Chang, 1997). The economic crisis and the subsequent implementation of IMF-supported programs have placed an exceptional burden on the lifestyle of the Korean people. If the government does not vigorously pursue efforts to enhance child-care and elder-care services that will allow women to increase their participation in economic activities, families may face a particularly difficult reality in the future.

In Japan, there is a more obvious emphasis on the need to develop policies that focus on "harmonizing work and family life." A major driver for this emphasis is the concern about the declining number of children and the possible negative economic and social impact of this. It is also clear from the documents provided by the Ministry of Labour that they have framed the discussion about work and family much more broadly than "dependent care." They emphasize the need to address issues of corporate culture and outdated human resources policies (e.g., recruitment strategies, advancement through seniority, etc.), as well as acknowledging the need to develop more creative policies and practices (e.g., in terms of part-time work). The economic need to develop more efficient and globally competitive enterprises is also helping to drive these changes. Nevertheless, the overall emphasis remains on women and addressing their current dependent-care responsibilities.

International analyses of the impact of work and family initiatives suggest that the following factors are likely to facilitate the further development and effective implementation of work and family initiatives in both Japan and South Korea.

1) Government Leadership and Appropriate Policy Mandates

There is considerable variation in the extent to which countries have responded to the universal trend of an increase in the number of employed mothers with young children. In some countries there has been very little government intervention (e.g., the U.S.), while in others, providing financial support for working parents has been mandated (e.g., Sweden). As is pointed out by Russell, Haas and Hwang (2000), Sweden is more "advanced" than others in the extent to which the government has mandated family-friendly policies and programs and demonstrated a commitment to the goal of gender equity. Interestingly though, work and family policies (e.g., providing subsidised high quality child care) have been partly driven by a strong concern for the well-being of children rather than a concern to ensure harmony between work and life commitments. Another differentiating feature of Sweden is the emphasis the government has placed on changing men's roles to facilitate gender equity in both breadwinning and caregiving responsibilities. But even in Sweden, the government has been able to go only so far in supporting working parents, and many work organisations are not active in supporting parents in their efforts to combine work and family commitments. This finding is consistent with data reported above which shows that even though the Japanese and Korean governments have mandated child-care leave systems, implementation is not universal (e.g., in Japan in 1996, only 60% of all enterprises operated a child-care leave system). It is now clear that governments need to work in partnership with work organisations to enable employees to balance their work and family commitments and to ensure equal employment opportunities for those with family responsibilities. The recent approach adopted in Japan in the Ministry of Labour is very consistent with this recommendation. The Ministry is demonstrating leadership both by providing financial support to organisations (through child-care leave and the expansion of child-care centers), and by its recent emphasis on both identifying what the key issues are for organisations and which organisations are adopting more innovative approaches.

2) Expanding Organisational Policies and Programs.

A range of commentators (e.g., Bankert & Googins, 1996; Lewis, 1996; Cooper & Lewis, 1995; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Russell, James & Watson, 1988), agree that there are two major limitations of organisational work and family approaches adopted up to now, and these limitations are clearly evident in the approaches adopted in Japan and Korea. The first is that initiatives have targeted women with child-care responsibilities. Bankert and Googins have stated, "In the early 80's, the explanation for why work/family was becoming such a visible issue was focused mostly on the increase of women in the work force." (Bankert & Googins, 1996: 47). It is now clear that workers need flexible employment conditions to enable them to address a broader range of family responsibilities (e.g., the care of sick family members and the elderly). In addition, work/family champions now recognize that men increasingly are making employment decisions based on family commitments.

- *Extending the work and family concept beyond child care*: An acceptance of the need to take account of elder-care responsibilities is already a critical issue in Japan and Korea. These demands are also likely to increase further in the next ten years, requiring both governments and employers to develop appropriate policies. As a first step, corporate policies will need to be broadened to include options for leave for elder-care purposes. Employee assistance programs that address psychological and social issues associated with caring for the elderly and maintaining quality family relationships should also be considered.

- *Responding to the emergent work and family priorities of men*: As has been outlined above, the push from men to have their work and family needs addressed has not been a significant force in either Japan or Korea. Nevertheless, with continuing changes in female employment patterns and increased expectations of men to play a greater role in family life (especially in the younger generation), Japan and Korea are likely to experience increased demands from men. Mutsumi (1999), in his article Dad Takes Child-Care Leave, argues that in the past few years Japanense men have gone "through a sharp awakening as to the nature of fatherhood." (p. 87). He also suggests that there are now more fathers attending activities at elementary and nursery schools and at child-care centers, and that the government is paying more attention to the contribution that "involved fathers" can have in reducing the trend towards fewer children. It is argued that women will view childbearing as more attractive if their partners show a greater willingness to share in family responsibilities. Mutsumi argues that if men are to take greater responsibility for family life, better incentives are needed. One way is to mandate that men take a certain proportion of the child-care leave. Another is to increase the financial incentives for men to take leave. Even if these policies are not implemented, it is clear that corporations will experience an increasing demand by men to have their work and family needs taken account of. This process is likely to be slower than in Western countries because of the substantial barriers presented by Confucian values and by long-standing traditions and expectations in the workplace (e.g., working long hours).

- *Moving toward strategy*: In Western countries work and family initiatives are often considered as employee fringe benefits, designed to facilitate individual solutions to work and family conflicts. As such, they can be offered and then taken away, as economic circumstances change. Individuals may feel that using benefits marks them as less committed to the workplace. Evidence presented above about Japan supports this analysis. It is common for women with dependent children to be seen as less committed and this is often reflected in their performance appraisals. An emphasis on individual solutions to work and family conflict also reduces the possibility that work and family issues are considered to be part of strategic business decisions. Apart from ensuring an organisation has access to a female labour force (e.g., for low-paid work in factories, to address the needs of female customers), there is little evidence that organisations have taken a strategic business focus to work and family issues in Japan and Korea.

- *Addressing access to work and family supports*: Analyses conducted in the U.S., U.K., and Australia show that many workers lack formal access to any work and family services or pro-

grams because they are part of a growing portion of the contingent labour force which lacks job security. These individuals work on contract, short-term, or when called. This is part of an international trend referred to as "casualization." Part-time employees in Sweden and Australia, in contrast, are more likely to have equity in access to work/family policies and programs. There is likely to be an increase in demand for permanent part-time work and job sharing in both Japan and Korea. The tax and social security systems, however, are likely to present substantial barriers to the effective implementation of these policies.

3) Organisations With Innovative Policies and Programs

Cutting-edge strategies in U.S. companies (Haas, Hwang & Russell, 2000) have been identified as including child-care and elder-care assistance, reimbursement accounts, alternative work schedules, information and referral services, paid personal days for child and family responsibilities, fitness centres, stress management and family life education programs, and extending benefits to partners of employees in cohabiting and same-sex couples.

"Principles of good practice" in U.K. organisations have been identified as including extensive child-care facilities and career breaks of up to five years to enable employees to care for children. Brannen and Lewis (2000) argue that good practice in regard to flexibility calls for policies and practices that either "enhance employee autonomy or normalize ways of working," enabling employees to have control over balancing their work and family commitments, with mutual benefits to employees and employers. Some U.K. companies have also challenged the view that work and family integration is solely a women's issue and have tackled the long-hours culture (with the emphasis on "face" time).

Two themes are common to most companies that have been innovative in implementing policies. First, there is an emphasis on both employee and business benefits of addressing work and family issues, and second, there is a recognition that better outcomes are achieved if there is a focus on work practices, leadership and organisational culture. These are issues that are yet to be included in the work and family debate in either Japan or Korea. The changes highlighted in this paper, however, indicate that organisations that want to gain a competitive edge and recruit highly talented employees will need to shift their focus in the near future.

4) Factors Facilitating Organisational Change

Many commentators have challenged accounts of the extent to which organisations have become family-friendly, and point to the broader systemic and organisational issues that need to be addressed for this to be achieved. They argue that greater emphasis needs to be given to integrating work and family issues into strategic thinking within organisations. This parallels arguments made earlier by Friedman (1991) and Friedman and Galinsky (1991) about the need for a focus on business benefits, integration, and culture change. Friedman and Galinsky argued that organisations tend to go through three stages in their responses to family needs: (1) a programmatic approach, involving identification of needs and program development (especially with a focus on dependent care needs); (2) an integrated approach, when family needs are seen as

business issues and there is an attempt to integrate a range of work and family policies (especially flexible work arrangements); and (3) changing the corporate culture, where the emphasis is on developing a supportive, family-friendly organisational culture. It seems clear that the majority of organisations in Japan and Korea are still at stage one in this model.

It is this latter issue — change in corporate culture — that has come in for the closest scrutiny recently. This emphasis is entirely consistent with current trends in Japan to focus more on the ways in which corporate culture needs to be changed to enable employees to balance their work and family commitments. Bankert and Googins (1996: 46), in their analysis of approaches in the U.S., argue that there is a growing list of policies and programs (on paper) that appear to indicate corporate commitment to work and family balance; however, organisational cultures have not changed much at all. They argue that success with work and family "depends on a combination of top-management support, buy-in to the business case, ownership throughout the organisation, and a willingness to go after the necessary culture change."

A wide range of factors has been found to facilitate cultural change to ensure the effective implementation of work and family initiatives (Russell, Haas & Hwang, 2000).

- *Leadership*: Endorsement from the highest level, or leadership from the CEO. This also includes a focus on work/life-balance issues for senior managers and management accountability.
- *Integration*: The integration of work and family issues into business strategies and other corporate policies.
- *Addressing barriers to change*: This requires identifying and addressing the major workplace and attitudinal barriers, challenging traditional assumptions about gender roles, and accepting that men as well as women are seeking a better balance.
- *Documentation*: An emphasis on research, with data collection being used as a way to inform and educate employees as well as management.
- *Employee involvement*: Employee participation is important at every stage — from problem solving to identifying key issues and developing solutions based on effective business and employee/family outcomes. These solutions need to be designed to emphasize mutual trust and to have the potential to increase creativity and employee effectiveness.
- *Comprehensive concepts*: Insistence that work and family initiatives consider the full range of issues. This means acknowledging not only that work and family are not separate spheres, it also involves taking up the full range of work and family and equal employment issues, adopting a broader approach that includes employees' partners and their local communities, and acknowledging the links between work and family and gender equity issues and the need to provide gender equity in work practices and expectations and work and family commitments.

It is evident that developing and implementing work and family strategies in a global environment is challenging, to say the least. It is challenging both to establish policies appropriate to an ex-patriate group who move from one country to another (e.g., to enable an employee while on assignment to take a paternity leave entitlement that is applicable in his home country but not in his current country of employment), and to develop policies in a range of countries that are consistent with the intent or general principles that have been established for the global corporation. This would not mean that policies or approaches based on a dominant value system would be "forced" onto other countries. What it would mean is that the corporate principles would provide a general framework for developing local policies and practices that take account of the six factors introduced in Chapter 1:

- Cultural values and expectations
- Family situations
- Community resources
- Employment factors
- Individual characteristics (including personal expectations about work and family balance)
- Organisational factors (including work organisation, and performance management and rewards)

It would also mean that local operations would be connected to the global decision making framework to add value to the general principles and intent. The emphasis in Korea on supporting family relationships and family celebrations provides a good example of where a local policy might influence and add value to a global approach. Few corporations at this point in time place any emphasis at all on links between workplace policies and procedures and the quality of family or intimate relationships.

An example of a set of global work and family principles is:

- To provide a work environment which assists employees to balance work requirements and family responsibilities
- To provide flexibility in leave arrangements to enable employees to handle important family issues
- To maintain an environment where work and family conflict and stress are minimised and dealt with openly
- To provide flexibility in how, when and where work is done to support family requirements
- To facilitate close interaction with local community resources that cater to employees' dependent care and other work and family needs
- To recognise the needs of spouses/partners and other family members in work and family relationships

The expected outcomes of these principles might be:

- **Employees are able to manage their work and family commitments.**

  Employees can manage their work and family commitments in a way that satisfies their own individual and family values and needs. (This includes all aspects of family life, time, care, relationships, and financial support.) There should also be an absence of guilt in relation to using flexibility options.

- **There is recognized workplace support for work and family balance.**

  The organisation is characterised by work practices and design that are supportive of employees in relation to balancing work and family and in establishing and maintaining family relationships. Work is organised in such a way that it facilitates flexibility options — emphasis on productivity as opposed to hours, etc. There is also clear evidence of management and supervisor support and a lack of formal and informal penalties for those who have family commitments.

- **Reasons for turnover are unrelated to work and family conflict.**

  Reasons for exiting the company do not relate to family/work conflicts.

- **The company's work and family initiatives are recognized.**

  The company receives public recognition/has an accepted reputation for enabling employees to meet their work and family commitments. Employees who apply to the company do so because of a perceived support for work and family balance.

- **There is a diverse employee profile.**

  The employee profile reflects the diversity of gender and family responsibilities — especially in management positions.

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