

WORKING PARENTS AND CHILDCARE (1)  
— A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE U.K. AND JAPAN —

AKIKO FUSE

---

INTRODUCTION

Why is the provision of public funds for the under-fives childcare in the U.K. lower than in any other country in the European community as well as in Japan? This study presents an analysis of the prevailing conditions, problems and causes of childcare in the U.K. as compared with Japan.

Hanna Gavron wrote *The Captive Wife* in 1966<sup>(1)</sup>. In her book she clarified the current state of the working class wife in the U.K.. She pointed out that many wives thought of themselves as 'Captives'. Because, in spite of their willingness to work, they had to give up the desire and to devote themselves entirely to bringing up their children. They assumed "they could never leave their children—not even occasionally for a couple of hours." There were few provisions for childcare and their husbands disapproved of their wives working. In other words, the male/female roles were clearly defined (the husband: the breadwinner, the wife: the housewife). There was also a lack of public support and funds for childcare by the State.

H.Gavron wrote her book over thirty years ago. During the past thirty years, the number of working women in the U.K. has increased tremendously. This reflected a world wide trend. In 1996, 53.5 per cent of U.K. women over 16 were working. The work force was 44.9 per cent female and 55.1 per cent male according to *Census and Labour Force Survey*<sup>(2)</sup>. However, this increase was due to an increase in part-time employees. 45 per cent of all women employees were part-time employees in 1996. The provision of public funds for the under-fives childcare in the U.K. is limited. The assumption in Britain that the care of young children is primarily and naturally carried out by mothers at home is so deeply embedded in public policy that a recent survey of day care services for children in England defined these services as "all the arrangements mothers may make for their children to be looked after when they are absent" including "care by the father—when it

was done on a regular basis, while mothers were absent” (OPCS, 1994) <sup>(3)</sup>. It is not only public policy but almost everyone in the U.K. thinks that it is best for women to devote themselves solely to raising their children while they are young after which they can return to work as part-time employees. In short, the structure of division of labour and role by both parents has changed very little since the time of H.Gavron. In other words, there have been few fundamental changes in the social and economic structure of the work force as determined by gender since the time of H.Gavron.

On the other hand, when the translation of *The Captive Wife* was published in Japan, the citizens' movement demanding the expansion of childcare provisions had already begun. The slogan of the citizens' movement was, 'The same number of childcare provisions as the number of post-boxes!' Childcare provision in Japan expanded dramatically from the 1960s to the 1980s. Jean Gardiner cited in her book in 1997 <sup>(4)</sup>, "Developmental states are those like Japan, France and Sweden... the expansion of childcare provisions in Japan finally realised a certain level." The number of employed women in Japan also increased steadily. In 1997, according to *Labour Force Survey*, 50.4 per cent of Japanese women over 15 were working. The work force was 40.7 female and 59.3 per cent male. 34 per cent of all women employees were part-time employees in 1996. Public policy in Japan also seems to consider it best that women devote themselves solely to raising their children while they are young after which they can work as part-time employees. However, at least, on expanding childcare provisions, the Government's policy "accepted that the abilities of their citizens to compete with those of other nations were enhanced by the state using its power and resources to direct and harmonise the efforts of market actors" <sup>(5)</sup>. Overall, in Japan, there have been few fundamental changes in the social and economic structure of the work force as determined by gender since 1960s, apart from the expansion of public childcare provisions.

In any country, the development of the system of welfare or education and the results these produce will be influenced by a large number of considerations. Historical influences may play a large part, as well as the prevailing social policies or education policies at a particular time and expanding resources. Social and economic demand from the labour force market and the value system of families, especially on child bearing will influence the condition of childcare. It goes without saying that there are a great many differences between the U.K. and Japan in history, economy, politics, social values and so on. The U.K. is a country which took the initiative in the industrialisation in the world. This industrialisation resulted in huge differences among classes and regions. The U.K. colonised many other countries and made up 'the affluent society' in the Victorian Era. The administrators in particular established the value system concerning the family in the Victorian Era. The U.K. was a victorious nation in the Second World War. It is

also the country which lead the way in establishing the welfare state during the Second World War. It was the model of the welfare state for a long time. Nevertheless, with the deterioration of the economy, Sweden became the new model. It is well known that U.K. politics have been run by the two major political parties i.e. the Conservatives and Labour. By comparison, Japan underwent industrialisation later than other advanced countries. Moreover, Japan is the only country in Asia which was neither occupied nor colonised by a great power. It is also well known that the process of industrialisation in Japan was unique, i.e. mixed process of industrialisation and feudalism. The function of welfare had been borne by 'ie' and 'mura' (the network of kinship and neighbourhood) . Japan was defeated in the Second World War and a third of the national wealth was reduced to ashes. As the greater part of the government budget had to concentrate on rebuilding the nations economy, the level of welfare in Japan did not improve even after the Second World War. In the 1960s, when the economy eventually started to prosper, welfare levels gradually started to increased. Japan's politics have been monopolised for over fifty years by the same Conservative Party, i.e. LDP.

Given these distinctive differences between the U.K. and Japan, it may seem insignificant to compare the two countries concerning 'working parents and childcare'. However, it is interesting that the expansion of childcare is far more progressive in Japan where the expansion of welfare occurred much later than it did in the U.K. which was long held to be the model of the welfare state. There must have been some fundamental causes leading to the progress made in Japanese childcare provision. At the same time, there must have been other fundamental causes which delayed the expansion of U.K. childcare provisions.

For our part, we feel that at least we can offer some relevant issues;

1. The differences in the economic demand for the labour force,
2. The influence of J.Bowlby,
3. Thought on the relationship between the family and the state,
4. The different definition of 'children in need',
5. The trend of citizens'movement.

If we analyse these issues and causes, we'll be able to highlight the distinctive characteristics which symbolise the family in each country.

- a) We will look at the movement of married women into paid work.
- b) We will compare the forms of childcare used by working parents.
- c) We will assess what help working parents get from the State, employers and their informal network.
- d) Finally, we will analyse the distinctive characteristics of five aspects of the U.K. and

Japan's childcare.

## 1 THE MOVEMENT OF MARRIED WOMEN INTO PAID WORK

### 1) The U.K.: A MODEL OF POLARISATION

In this chapter, we compare the movement of married women into paid work in the U.K. and Japan focussing on the period after the Second World War. First, we confirm the tendency of married women into paid work in both countries. Secondly, we clarify the similarities and the differences between the U.K. and Japan.

It is possible to divide the movement of married women into paid work in the U.K. into four stages.

- (1) The first stage; the so-called 'Mothers, go back to your own homes', from 1945 to the middle of the 1950s.
- (2) The second stage; the increase of married women's employment step by step, from the middle of the 1950s to the 1960s.
- (3) The third stage; the drastic increase of married women's employment, from the 1970s to the middle of 1980s.
- (4) The fourth stage; the polarisation into two types of married working women, from the middle of the 1980s to the present time.

#### (1) The first stage; 'Mothers, go back to your own homes'

During the Second World War, women worked in industries and in the armed forces, in the same way as during the First World War. After the First World War, the majority of working women returned home. Similarly, after the Second World War, almost all working women became housewives again. "When the men came back in 1945, two million women melted away and returned to their homes" (H.Martin, 1988) <sup>(6)</sup>.

The Beveridge Report (1942) <sup>(7)</sup> implied that the State should provide social support and services in maintaining the family in its traditional division of labour in gender; men as breadwinners, women as housewives (J.Lewis 1984) <sup>(8)</sup>. In other words, from the beginning of the welfare state, British social policy had the ideology of the traditional women's role; as the natural provider of care and support for its members (F.Williams 1989) <sup>(9)</sup>. However, there was a constant and increasing demand from married women who wanted to be employed. Therefore, the percentage of all working women who were married increased gradually. The figure for 1951 was 22 per cent.

**(2) The second stage; the increase of married women's employment step by step**

In 1961, 30 per cent of all working women were married. During the 1960s, the innovation and the prosperity of tertiary industries resulted in the absorption of the women's labour force, "the rising prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s saw many married women being encouraged to return to work" <sup>(10)</sup>. Married women's employment increased swiftly, and in 1971, 42 per cent of all working women were married.

The distinctive characteristics of the second stage are;

- a) The increase of working mothers with two or more dependent children,
- b) The conflict of two opposing points of view concerning working mothers.

In 1961, less than 25 per cent of married women with two or more dependent children were in employment (either full or part time), by 1971 this had risen to almost 35 per cent. Despite this trend, there was a severe conflict between two opposing points of view concerning working mothers. Many people have pointed out the influence of 'maternal deprivation' by J. Bowlby (J. Bowlby 1953) <sup>(11)</sup>. However, apart from the expression of 'maternal deprivation', there were many organizations which put forward the same opinions as J. Bowlby. The Royal commission (set up in 1945) encouraged parents to have three or four children. It reaffirmed the importance of the family and stressed the necessity of women's maternal role for the stability of the family and for the proper care of children <sup>(12)</sup>. Accordingly, as we pointed out in the Introduction, almost all wives, both middle class and working class, believed that "they could never leave their children not even occasionally for a couple of hours" <sup>(13)</sup>.

However, the provision of a free secondary education for all (The Education Act, 1944) and grant-aided university freed many girls from the trap of parental poverty. And, as we have already cited, the rising prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s saw many married women being encouraged to return to work. Eventually, some of the women who got a higher education set an example for the middle class and the working class mothers. On the other hand, quite a few women whose husbands' wages were too low to support the family were obliged to work. Whether they worked as specialists or labourers, women had to bear the burden as working women, as mothers and as housewives. There were also a lot of women who were searching for ways to work and were conscious of their antinomy and frustration.

In 1957, A. Myrdal and V. Klein published their book; *Women's Two Roles: Home and Work* (A. Myrdal & V. Klein, 1957) <sup>(14)</sup>. In their book, they advocated that women were in need of social reforms if they were to be able to reconcile the demands of both a family and a professional life. They maintained that it was desirable for women to have three stages of the life cycle; at first women became workers, after their marriage they became housewives and mothers and finally after

their children had grown up, they returned to their jobs. Given the way things have developed, their advocacy seems moderate. However, in the 1950s, it must have been very threatening, because, in the 1950s and the 1960s, several professions including psychology and psychiatry, as well as the popular press demanded the complete absorption of women in family life. Most women as well as men believed that only single women or childless married women should be in a paid work (A.Hunt, 1968)<sup>(15)</sup>.

Then, in 1966, H.Gavron wrote *The Captive Wife*<sup>(16)</sup>. In her book, she made clear the frustrations, irritations, annoyances and high degree of stress of wives of the working class. In 1963, B.Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*<sup>(17)</sup>. In this book, she shed light on the frustrations of middle class women in the U.S.A.. It was a grave warning to the society of the day. Gavron's research also sounded the alarm to the society of the day which was built on supporting the division of role by gender. In their books, they suggested that women workers needed more social support, if they were to cope with the combined demands of family life and a career outside the home. There is much evidence that this problem still exists.

### (3) **The third stage; the drastic increase of married women's employment**

We can cite four distinctive characteristics in this third stage;

- a) The drastic increase of married women's employment,
- b) The rapid increase of part-time workers,
- c) The difference of economic activity rates by age and sex,
- d) The search for equal opportunities.

During the 1970s, married women's employment became a major trend. In 1981, 50 per cent of all working women were married, and 62 per cent of working women below retirement age were married. A considerable number of married women workers were occupied as part-time employees. The figure for 1961 was 26.1 per cent. It increased to 37.8 per cent in 1971, and it is still increasing. As we have already pointed out, in 1971, 42 per cent of all working women were married. The percentage of working mothers with two or more dependent children reached 35 per cent in the same year. According to *Labour Force Survey* of 1975<sup>(18)</sup>, women in the U.K. and Denmark had a higher economic activity rate than women in other EEC countries. Proportionally more women in these two countries worked as part-time employees. In addition, when we compared the figures of the five EEC countries by age group, we found that the female economic activity rate in the U.K. decreased between the age of 25 and 34 and then increased again. These data showed us how a lot of women workers retired from their job when they got married or when they were pregnant, but after raising their children they began to work again as part-time employees under

lower rates of pay and much worse conditions.

Due to these circumstances, the demand for equal pay, equal employment and equal promotion became more insistent. "During the 1960s and 1970s, the major legislation to outlaw 'race and sex' discrimination was laid down." "For women the initiative for 'equal opportunities' legislation came from a combination of pressures, ranging from the newly emergent and growing women's movement to more long-standing and traditional forms of women's organisations, such as trade unions. These pressures converged institutionally in campaigns for equal pay and anti-discrimination legislation, culminating in the Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975" (J.Campling 1997) <sup>(19)</sup>.

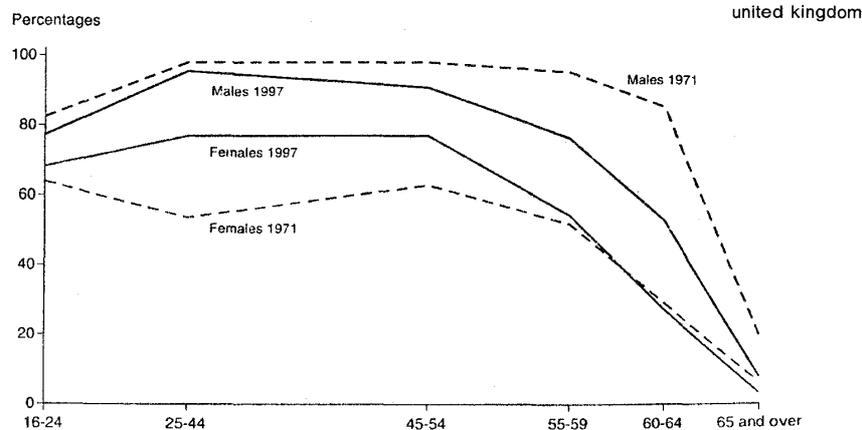
It goes without saying that there was an international movement for the emancipation of women that culminated in a conference of the 'International Women's Year' and the publication of *The Declaration in Mexico* and *The International Women's Action Plan*. These movements were backed up by the U.N., I.L.O. and N.G.O. all over the world. However, it has taken a lot of time to set overcome the disparities and make things right. Unfortunately it seems highly unlikely that we can ever achieve equal opportunity regarding sex, race and disability.

#### **(4) The fourth stage; the polarisation into two types of married working women**

We can refer to four distinctive characteristics in the fourth stage;

- a) The decrease of the difference in the economic activity rate by age and sex,
- b) The increase of working mothers with dependent children,
- c) The establishment of the part-time employee,
- d) The polarisation into two types of married working women.

Since the mid-1980s, the size of the labour force aged between 16 and 24 has decreased. This reflects both a fall in births in the early 1970s and an increase in those wanting to continue their education beyond mandatory schooling. On the other hand, the number of people aged between 25 and 44 in the labour force, which was the product of the high birth rates in the early 1960s, has increased. In 1971, there was a clear difference in the economic activity rate for men and women in the U.K.. But since then, while the overall rate for men has been falling somewhat, it has been rising for women. As we can see in Fig.1, the graph for the economic activity rate for women had changed drastically by 1997. The curve for females aged between 25 and 44 rose and the women's curve became similar to that of men. These changes resulted in the decrease of the difference in the economic activity rate, by age and sex.

Fig.1 Economic activity rates<sup>1</sup>: by gender and age, 1971 and 1997

1 The percentage of the population that is in the labour force. The definition of the labour force changed in 1984 when the former Great Britain civilian labour force definition was replaced by the ILO definition which excludes members of the armed forces.  
source: Census and Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics (Social Trends 29, 1999 edition)

These changes are also linked to the increase of working mothers with dependent children. In 1998, 60 per cent of mothers with dependent children under 5 were economically active. 77 per cent of mothers with dependent children between 5 and 10 were economically active. The percentage rose to 80 per cent in the case of mothers with young children between 11 and 15. If we compare the 1998 rate for mothers with dependent children under 5 with the rate in 1987, we find a large increase in that decade. The rate of working mothers with dependent children under 5 working full-time increased two-fold. In 1990, K.Kiernan and M.Wicks pointed out that “each successive group of new mothers returns to the labour market more quickly than the one before” (K.Kiernan and M.Wicks 1990)<sup>(20)</sup>. The swift return to work of mothers is reflected in the increase in the number of two earner households. In just over three fifths of married couple families of working age with dependent children both adults were in employment in 1996-1997 compared with half in the early 1980s (Fig.2).

We have already shown how in the third stage women in the U.K. made great efforts to obtain equal opportunities. Ironically, the polarisation into the two types of married working women became more marked. As a result of the improvement in equal education opportunity, there appeared quite a few young women with a high level education and a high professional ability. The following trend that P.Armstrong and H.Armstrong wrote about in the Canadian context in 1988 must be relevant elsewhere; “In fact the changes have polarised women, with differences especially found between those career women married to men with good jobs and those women without paid work or employed husbands” (P.Armstrong and H.Armstrong 1988)<sup>(21)</sup>. For those women, who are highly educated and have professional jobs, becoming mothers doesn't impede

**Fig.2 Couples<sup>1</sup> with dependent children: by number of earners**

1 Married and cohabiting couples with males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59. See also Appendix, Part4: Labour market analyses.

2 Calendar years up to 1990.

source: General Household Survey, Office for National Statistics (Social Trends 28, 1998 edition)

them from keeping their jobs as they are able employ nannies or get professional childminders. Some of them ask their elderly mothers to care for their children. So, almost all of them can keep working as career women in full time jobs. On the other hand, there is another type of full time employee. They have to work to support their family. There are many reasons; husbands' low wage, husbands' unemployment, husbands' sickness and so on. Families of minorities are often included in this group. There are two types of part-time employees, i.e. those in positive part-time employees and others in reluctant part time employees.

In 1961, 26.1 per cent of women workers in the U.K. worked part-time. This percentage reached 30 per cent between the 1960s and the 1970s and has maintained the 40 per cent mark since the 1980s. It is clear that a lot of working mothers in the U.K. preferred the part-time work. When we check the statistics of the *Social Attitude* in the U.K., we find that many women want to work as part-time employees. For example, there was a survey by the Employment Department in the spring of 1994. Answering the questionnaire; of the 4923 persons who worked part-time, 89.5 per cent of the married females answered that they "did not want a full time job". That is, the majority preferred to work part-time. Most married women with young children were likely to work as part-timers. However, if we analyse the answers deeply, we find that some of them answered very positively while others were reluctant; they felt that they had no choice but to work part-time because of many difficulties-they are the so called reluctant part-time employees. One of the biggest problems was the availability of suitable childcare provision. "The availability of suitable childcare provision is one of the determining factors in whether a mother works full-time, part-time or at all" (Social Trends 28) <sup>(22)</sup>.

## 2) JAPAN; A MODEL OF PRE-POLARISATION

It is possible to divide the movement of married women into paid work in Japan into four stages.

- (1) The first stage; the so called 'Women, go back to your own homes', from 1945 to the middle of the 1950s.
- (2) The second stage; the increase of middle aged women workers, from the middle of the 1950s to the 1960s.
- (3) The third stage; the increase of married women workers, from the 1970s to the middle of the 1980s.
- (4) The fourth stage; the polarisation into two types of married working women, from the 1980s to the present time.

### (1) The first stage; 'Women, go back to your own homes'

During the 15 Years War (from the Manchurian War to the Second World War), a lot of women worked in industries and in the armed forces. However, the Government of Japan did not encourage young mothers to go out to work. They were expected to bear a lot of children who later on became potential soldiers.

After the Second World War, almost all working women were fired from their workplaces. The slogan was 'Women, go back to your own homes!'. However, there was a constant and increasing demand for work from young women between the age of 20 and 24 who were obliged to work because of living expenses or for pin money. As a result the number of unmarried women workers increased considerably. On the other hand, along with the reform of compulsory education, the percentage of workers between the age of 15 and 19 decreased rapidly.

### (2) The second stage; the increase of middle aged women workers

The distinctive characteristics in this second stage are;

- a) The increase of middle aged working women,
- b) The relative decrease of working women between the age of 25 and 34,
- c) The citizens' movement demanding extra childcare provisions.

Several years after the Second World War, the Japanese economy consisted largely of farmers and self-employed people, most women were involved in some production work as family employees. However, in economic terms, the importance of agriculture has rapidly diminished since the 1960s, when the high economic growth period began. Japan's farm workers have decreased in

number and have become older.

As the weight of industry shifted away from agriculture, first to engineering and then to services, the so-called 'salary men' whose wives were mostly 'full time housewives' increased. Just at that time, the sharp increase in the number of students going to high school resulted in a reduction of the labour force between the age of 15 and 19 (the per cent of students going to senior high school was 59.7 per cent in 1960, 70.7 per cent in 1965, 82.1 per cent in 1970, 91.9 per cent in 1980 and 95.9 per cent in 1997). To replace the young workers, there was a marked increase in middle aged women workers. During the 1960s, the innovation and the prosperity of tertiary industries resulted in the absorption of the women's labour force as a substitute for the young labour force. A lot of housewives wanted to work in manufacturing industries or in tertiary industries because of the high cost of education and housing and because they wanted to own consumer durables.

At this stage, as we have already indicated, women workers aged between 25 and 34; just at the peak of childbirth, decreased about 5 per cent. Consequently they changed from being family employees to housewives with dependent children. However, under the stress of city life, some salary men's wives began to work again as employees. As they moved from villages and set up nuclear family units, there were no longer relatives or reliable friendly neighbours around. Therefore, when mothers wanted to work away from their homes, they had to get someone to care for their children. This was the time when they started thinking of organising a movement demanding childcare provision.

At this very same time, the first generation who had received a higher grade education after the Second World War began to work in professional careers and were already having children. It was far too expensive for ordinary workers to employ a babysitter for their children, and anyway, there was not enough space for a babysitter in a small Japanese house. Therefore, both husbands and wives of these new professionals began to organise a movement demanding child care provisions. Thus, the citizens' movement demanding the expansion of childcare provisions began. Under the high rate of economic growth, the citizens' movement demanding childcare provisions got some concessions as we shall indicate in the statistics later.

### **(3) The third stage; the increase of the married women workers**

We can now mention four distinctive characteristics, all of which are a continuation of the developments of the second stage;

- a) The increase of married women workers,
- b) The increase of working mothers,

- c) The increase of part-time employees,
- d) The increase of childcare provisions.

From 1970 to 1975, under the influence of the Oil Shock recession, the women's labour force decreased. However, from the end of the 1970s, the labour force participation ratio started rising. During the 1970s and the 1980s, married women's employment became a major pattern. In 1974, 50.1 per cent of all working women were married and by 1985 the figure had risen to 59.2 per cent. However, the per cent of unmarried women workers fell below 50 per cent in 1969 and dropped to 31.3 per cent in 1985. One of the remarkable characteristics at that stage was the rapid increase of working women between the age of 25 and 34. It meant an increase of working mothers with dependent children.

One notable feature in the trend is the increased number of women employees working as part-time employees against a background of slower growth in male wages. In 1970, 12.2 per cent of all female employees worked part-time. By 1985, this figure had risen to 22 per cent and it has continued to rise ever since. However, the so-called working hours of part-time employees were never 'part' at all in Japan. There were a lot of part-time employees who had to work almost the same long hours as full time employees. They were expected to work as much, but were paid less. Many were given the sack when it suited the employer. Those employers, especially the Group of Major Employers preferred this type of employment and were keen for the State to finance the cost of childcare provisions. And Government agreed to their demand, at this stage, childcare provisions increased steadily.

#### **(4) The fourth stage; the pre-polarisation into two types of working mothers**

We can herewith refer to four distinctive characteristics;

- a) The decrease in the age difference in the economic activity rate,
- b) The increase of working mothers with dependent children,
- c) The continuous increase of part-time employees,
- d) A period of transition to the polarisation into two types of working mothers.

In 1980, the economic activity rates for women aged 25-34 and 35-55 were very different. But since then the economic activity rate for women aged 25-34 has increased considerably. Fig. 3 shows the marked increase in the number of economically active women, in particular those aged between 25-34. This increase has resulted in the decrease in the age difference of economically active women. These changes are linked to the increase in the number of working mothers with dependent children and the delay in the age of marriage and child bearing. The difference in employment becomes clear if we look at the age of the youngest child. In 1996, 28.2 per cent of mothers with dependent

children between the age of 0 and 3 years were economically active. The rate was 50 per cent in the case of mothers with dependent children between the age of 4 and 6, and 69.1 per cent in the case of mothers with young children between the age of 13 and 14 (Fig.4).

The swift return to the workplace of mothers was reflected in the increase in the number of two earner householders. The proportion of salary men's wives in employment rose from 10 per cent in 1955 to 24.7 per cent in 1970, 31.8 per cent in 1980 and 45.7 per cent in 1995, finally exceeding the proportion of full-time housewives in 1996. A considerable number of these mothers worked as part-time employees. The percentage of part-time employees has been increasing ever since (it was 34 per cent in 1996). In Japan, once full-time working women retire from their jobs it is very difficult to obtain another full-time job. Consequently, quite a few working mothers

Fig.3 Civilian Labour Force Economic Activity Rates in Japan by Age;1970-1997

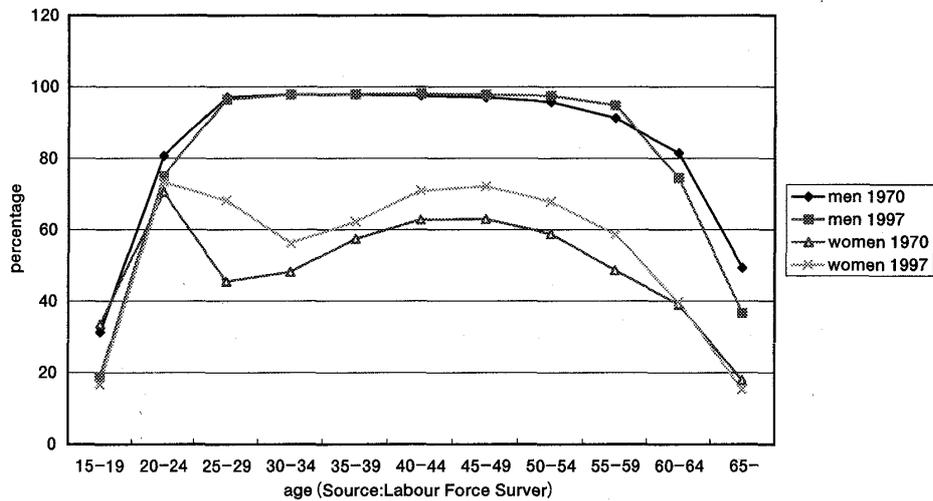
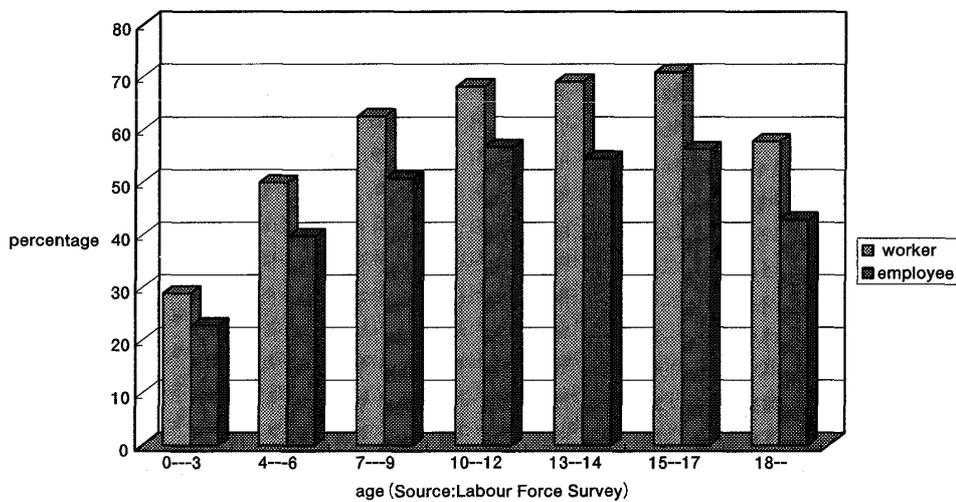


Fig.4 Women in Employment by the Age of the Youngest Dependent Child (Japan) -1996



have to work as part-time employees, in low pay, low status jobs with a poor insecure conditions. When part-time workers accounted for over 20 per cent of all women workers, a new movement was established for women's jobs. Since the second half of the 1980s, the number of women in equal status and pay has risen even within corporations, but a more remarkable trend has been the growing number of women entering the professions including medicine and law. For instance, pharmacists and primary school teachers have emerged as professions where women are found in relatively large numbers, and the proportions of women passing the National Bar Examination or becoming physicians, dentists, certified public accountants and so on, is also rising. A comparison of surveys<sup>(23)</sup> carried out between 1983 and 1989 investigating women's reasons for taking up employment identified no change in the high proportion of women citing to supplement the household income and to help support the family. At the same time we note that the number of respondents selecting to make use of their abilities, skills, qualifications etc. rose consistently. We must pay attention to the increase in the numbers of women who gave the following reason. "Because it would be difficult to get another job with the same conditions if I left." Almost all the above women must be professional working women. Thus, professional working women are increasing steadily.

Therefore, we can foresee the process of polarisation into two types of married working women. However, everyone is by now aware of the large gap in wages paid to male and female workers in Japan and some international comparisons show that Japan has a low proportion of women with high qualifications in the labour force. Therefore, generally speaking, Japanese married working women are now in a process of the polarisation into two types of married working women: semi-skilled or unskilled labourers and professional workers.

### **3) The U.K. and Japan: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

First, we confirmed the tendency of married women to go into paid work in the two countries. Now, we shall clarify the common characteristics and the differences in the two countries.

#### **(1) Common characteristics:**

We can indicate three common characteristics between the U.K. and Japan concerning the tendency of married women to go into paid work between the U.K. and Japan.

- a) The increase of the economic activity of women from the age of 15,
- b) The increase of the economic activity of married women,
- c) The increase of married women workers as a proportion of all women workers.

Fig.5 is the Labour Force Participation Ratio for 15 countries in 1996. The male labour force participation ratio converges between 61.1 per cent in Hungary and 83.2 per cent in Denmark. The female labour force participation ratio is spread between 34.6 per cent in Italy and 75.6 per cent in Sweden. This spread indicates to us the various differences amongst women's labour force participation in the world. The U.K. and Japan take their position side by side in the middle of these 15 countries. There are considerable common characteristics concerning the tendency of women to go into paid work.

As we have already indicated we have tried to divide the movement of married women into paid work into stages. This work was undertaken separately in Japan and the U.K.. We found that not only was the division of stages analogous but also the movement at every stage bore a striking resemblance. This is obvious in the transition of economic activity of women from the age of 15 (Fig.6), the transition of economic activity of married women (Fig.7) and the change in the number of married women workers as a proportion of all women workers (Fig.8). It goes without saying, that the employment in each country was prescribed basically by the industrial structure and the market conditions. For example, as previously stated, in Japan, the transition from the primary to the secondary and the tertiary industries was directly linked to the decrease in the number of women workers.

Fig.5 Labour Force Participation Ratio -1996-

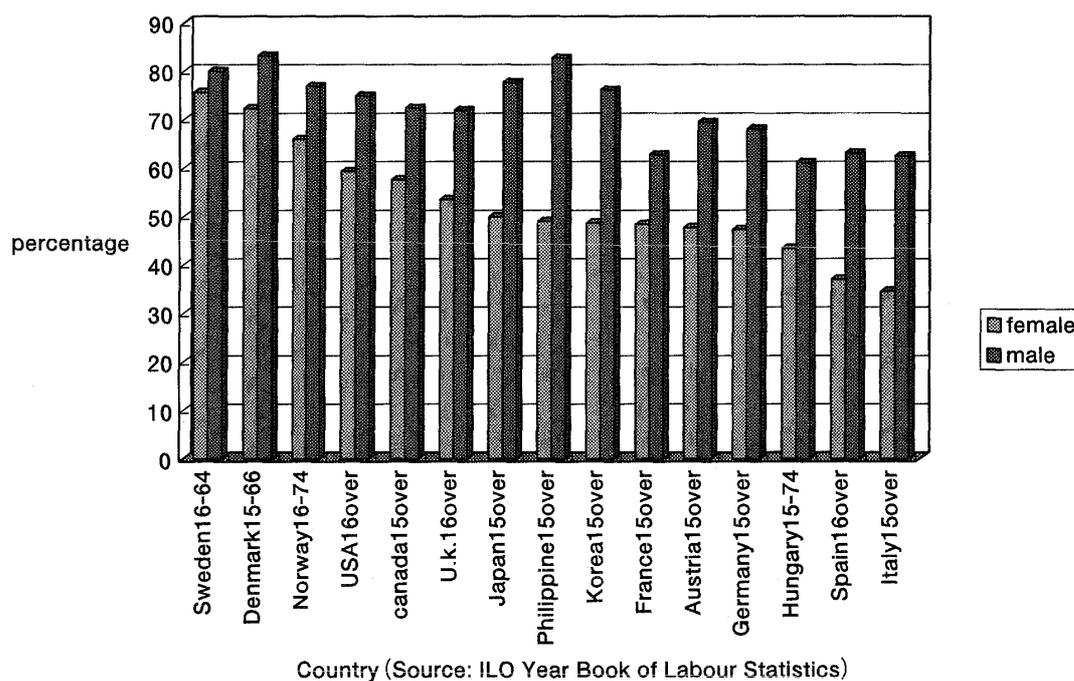


Fig.6 Economic Activity of Women - U.K.:Japan

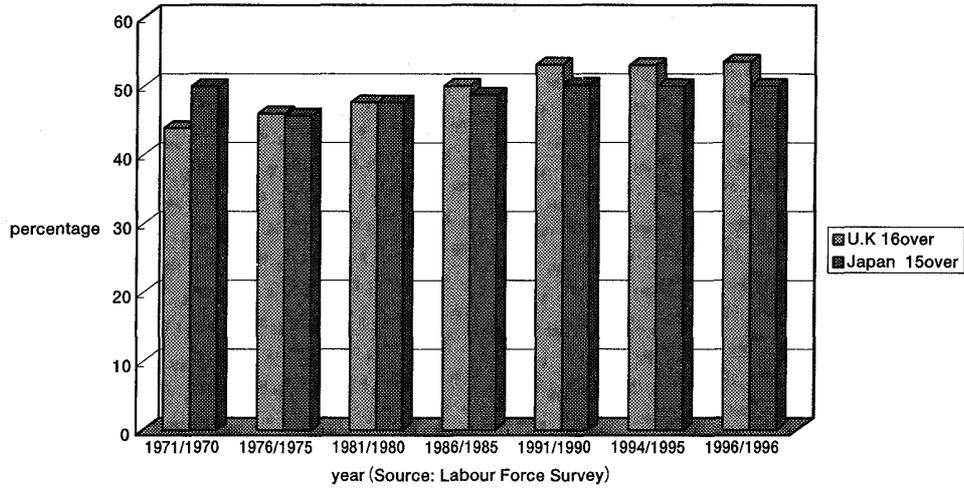


Fig.7 Economic Activity of Married Women

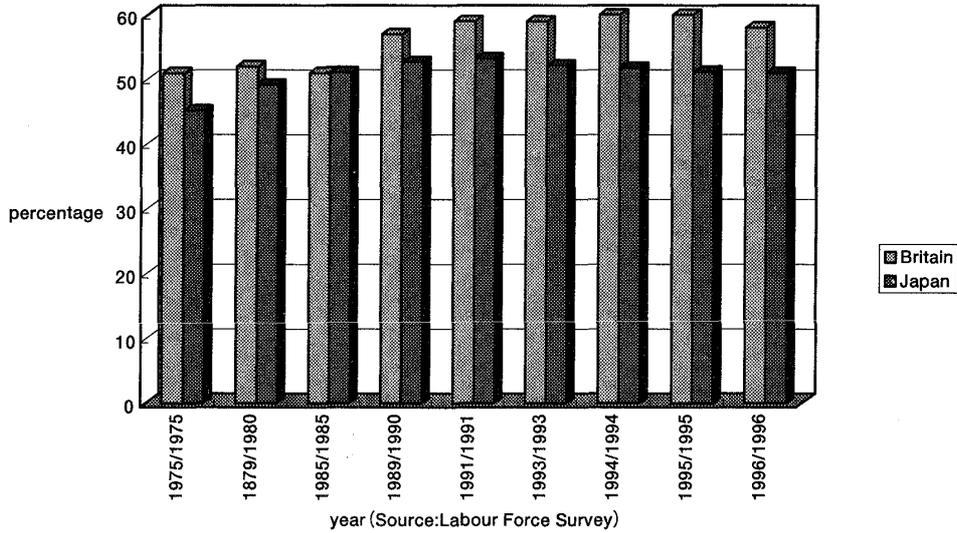
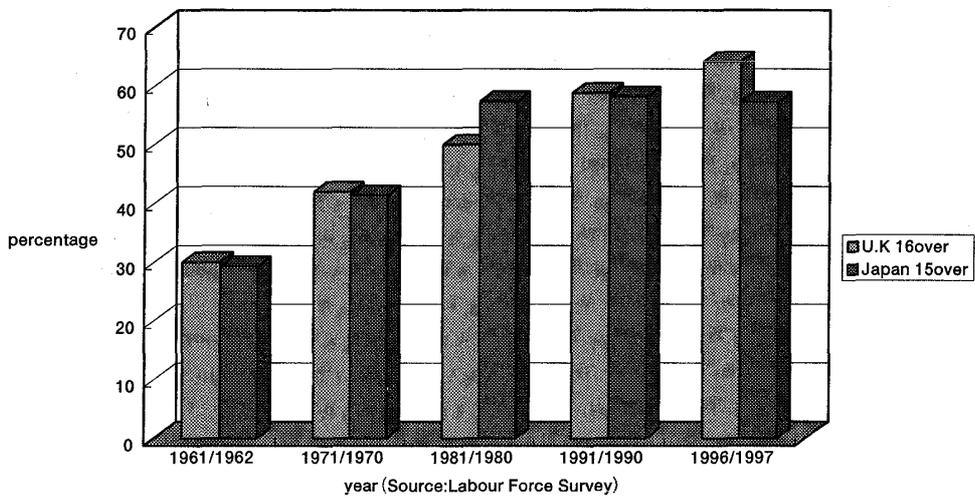


Fig.8 Married Women Workers as a Proportion of All Women Workers



**(2) Different Characteristics;**

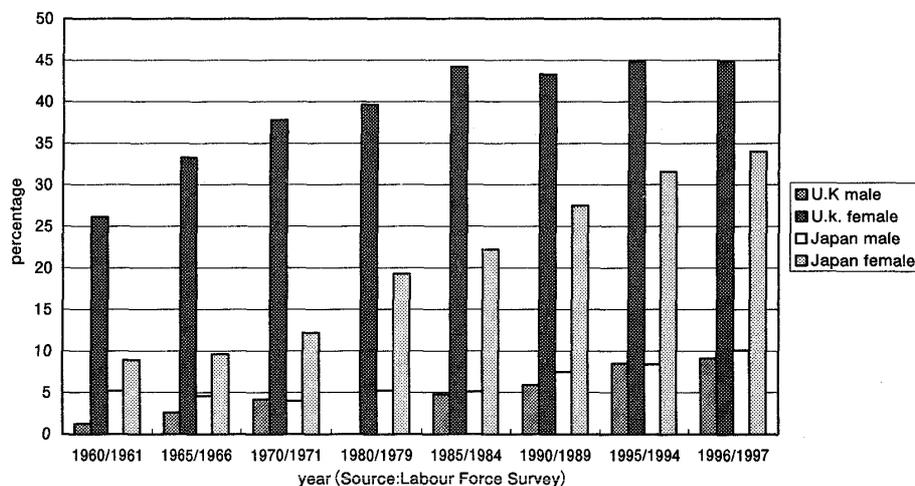
On the other hand, we can indicate four differences between the U.K. and Japan in the tendency of married women to go into paid work. They are;

- a) The percentage of part-time employees as a proportion of all women workers,
- b) The curve of women workers according to age,
- c) The growth rate of working mothers with dependent children,
- d) The expansion of childcare provision.

The percentage of part-time employees as a proportion of all women workers in the U.K. had already risen to over a fourth in 1961. It continued to rise up to the mid 80s and it has kept at 45 per cent for the past 15 years. The percentage of part-time employees in Japan is about ten per cent lower than in the U.K. but it is still growing (Fig.9). As we have already indicated, the female economic activity rate for those aged 25-34 in the U.K. decreased in 1975 and then increased again. If we compare Fig 1 with Fig.3 (civilian labour force economic activity rates in Japan by age:1970:1997), it is clear that the percentage of working women between the ages of 25 and 34 in the U.K. increased rapidly, by contrast, the percentage of working women between the age of 30 and 34 in Japan did not increase so rapidly.

Thus, the ratio of women workers with dependent children was higher in the U.K. than in Japan. Consequently, nearly half of working mothers in the U.K. were working as part-time employees. The percentage increased as the age of their youngest dependent child increased. By comparison, nearly a third of working women were working as part-time employees in Japan. Therefore it is very interesting that the expansion of childcare provisions, especially day nurseries, is far more progressive in Japan as we indicate later. The trend towards married women taking up employment is not confined to the U.K. and Japan, but it is evident throughout the world. The increasing participation

**Fig.9 The Percentage of Part-time Employees of All Workers by Gender**



of women in employment is an irreversible phenomenon. Nevertheless, the considerable growth rate of part-time employees in the U.K. indicates the polarisation into the two types of married working women, and Japan seems to be undergoing the same process.

We assume that the forms of childcare will hold the key to the answer to our initial question. Therefore, we shall now start comparing the forms of childcare used by working parents in the two countries.

## 2 FORMS OF CHILDCARE USED BY WORKING PARENTS

### 1) THE U.K.: A MODEL OF DIVERSITY

In this chapter, we'll compare the forms of childcare used by working parents in both the U.K. and Japan. First, we confirm the trends in the forms of childcare in the two countries. Secondly, we clarify the common grounds and the differences between the U.K. and Japan.

We can mention five distinctive characteristics of the forms of childcare in the the U.K.;

- (1) A dramatic increase in provision for day care during the last decade,
- (2) A decline of provisions from the local authorities,
- (3) Poor provision compared with other EC countries,
- (4) Distinctive characteristics of child care in the U.K. up to the end of 1980s.,
- (5) The latest trends from 'The Children Act 1989' to 'The Childcare Challenge 1998'.

#### (1) A dramatic increase in provision for day care facilities during the last decade

As we have already indicated, more mothers in the U.K. have jobs today than at any other time since the end of the Second World War. By 1998, nearly 60 per cent of mothers with a child under 5 were in paid work. Two third's of working mothers had part-time jobs and a third were full-timers. We are certain that one determining factor in whether a mother works full-time or part-time depends on the availability of suitable childcare provision.

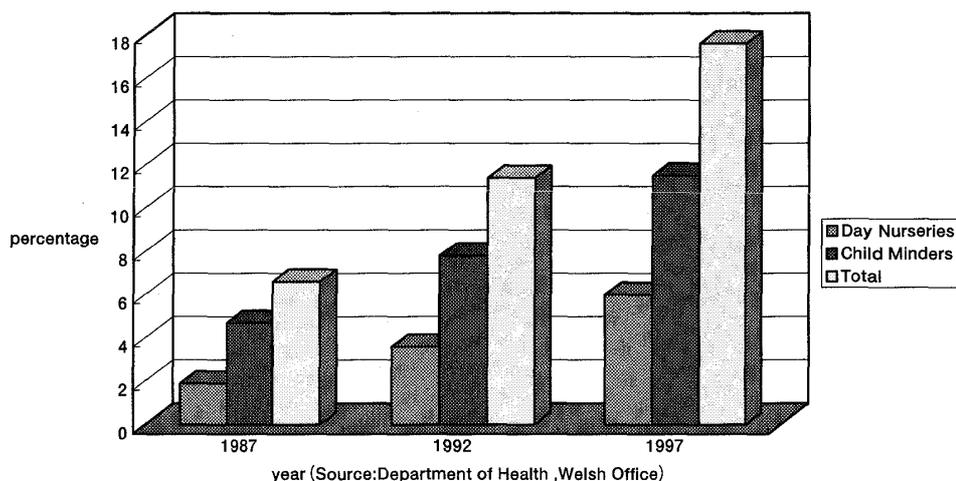
There are several different kinds of child care available for children under five in the U.K.. These include full-time day nurseries, childminders, nannies, relatives, neighbours and friends, nursery schools opening for a few hours either morning or afternoon during school term, reception classes, play groups and care-groups with various hours. Nursery school, nursery classes and reception classes all offer pre-school options. As they only open on school terms, it is very difficult for full-time working parents to leave their children in these pre-schools. There are some nurseries which open longer for working parents.

However, these has been a dramatic increase in provision over the last decade. Since 1987,

there has been an overall increase in the number of places in day nurseries. Over 6,000 day nurseries were estimated to be providing 202,000 places in England and Wales in 1997. The number of places at day nurseries more than trebled between 1987 and 1997. In 1987, there were day nursery places for 1.9 per cent of all children in England and Wales between childbirth and four years. By 1992, this figure had increased to 3.6 per cent by 1992 and then reached 6.0 per cent by 1997.

There were estimated to be about 100,000 registered childminders providing over 383,000 places. The number of places with childminders increased more than 2.5 times between 1987 and 1997. In 1987, there were childminder places for 4.7 per cent of all children in England and Wales. By 1992 this figure had increased to 7.8 per cent and reached 11.5 per cent by 1997. By 1997, at day nurseries and childminders combined, there were places for 17.6 per cent of all the children in England and Wales aged between 0 and 5. A dramatic increase from the 6.6 per cent available in 1987 (Fig.10).

**Fig.10 Childcare Places - The Percentage of Childcare Places of All Children between Day One and Four in England and Wales**



The number of nursery school pupils also increased rapidly. In 1970/71, the number of nursery pupils was approximately 50,000 and the number of school pupils and nursery classes in primary school accounted for 20 per cent of all three and four year old children in the U.K.. In 1997/98, the number of nursery school pupils increased to approximately 110,000 and the number of pupils under five increased to 61 per cent of all the three and four year old children in the U.K.. In contrast, play groups have diminished slightly.

**(2) A decline in provisions from the local authorities**

In 1970, the Department of Health and Social Security took over responsibility from the Ministry

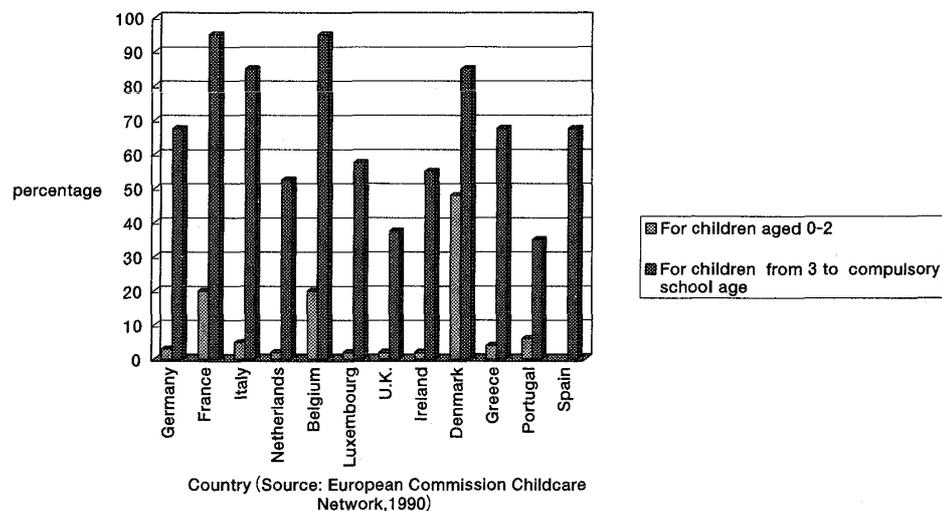
of Health for nursery provisions, but the role of local authorities organising the admission of their nurseries remained unchanged. At the same time, local authorities changed their services for children under five from traditional day nurseries to services in family centres.

'The Children Act 1989' required that the vast majority of day nurseries were registered with and supervised by the local authorities. It also required the re-registration of childminders in order to ensure minimum standards. As we have already pointed out, day nursery provision more than trebled over the period 1987-1997, places with childminders increased more than 2.5 times during the same years. At the same time, the local authority's provision of day nurseries declined from 46.8 per cent to 9.9 per cent of the total. Therefore, it is certain that the number of places in day nurseries and childminders which increased in the decade were registered by local authorities rather than provided by them.

### (3) Poor provision compared with other EC countries,

In 1990 the European Commission Child Care Network reported on full-time equivalent places in publicly funded child care services. The U.K.'s level was the lowest amongst 12 countries as we can see in Fig.11. The highest provision of full-time equivalent places for children aged from day 1 to 2 years was Denmark at 48 per cent. Provision in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the U.K. and Ireland was lowest at 2 per cent. Top for full-time equivalent places for children from 3 to compulsory school age were Belgium and France at over 95 per cent. Among the lowest were Portugal and the U.K. at approximately 35 per cent. The provision of equivalent nursery places for children aged 0-2 in Portugal was 6 per cent, accordingly the U.K. was located at the bottom of all 12 countries.

Fig.11 Full-time Equivalent Places in Publicly Funded Childcare Services -1990-



In 1996, the same organisation reported on *Levels of Publicly-funded Services for Young Children 1991-1994*. This report shows that the level of publicly-funded services for children from 3 to 5 in the U.K. expanded from 35-40 per cent to 60 per cent. However, the level for children 0-3 was the lowest of all countries. When FPSC reported the statistics in the *Family Policy Bulletin*, it commented; "Ireland and the U.K. have seen the choice as a private matter, supporting neither public provision nor extended leave or financial support for parents at home, though this is changing here with the national childcare strategy." <sup>(24)</sup>

#### (4) Distinctive characteristics of child care in the U.K until the end of the 1980s.

We can point out seven distinctive characteristics of childcare in the U.K. until the end of the 1980s;

- a) A general consensus that childcare is a predominantly private matter,
- b) A belief that public involvement must be limited to children at risk,
- c) A reliance on private and voluntary provision,
- d) A complex of informal and formal provision,
- e) A delay of integration and re-organisation between provisions in educational areas and provisions in welfare areas,
- f) Unclear policy for the consistent care for the under three's of working parents,
- g) Patch work, piecemeal or diversified structure.

There is a widespread consensus that the national policy in the U.K. has to maintain the position, that the care of young children is a predominantly private matter, with public involvement for children at risk. For example, it was explained by the Home Office in 1987. "Long-standing Government policy is that public provision of daycare (i.e. services provided or funded by local authorities) should be concentrated on those whose need for it is greatest—those families with particular health or social need", "the assumption in Britain that the care of young children is primarily and naturally carried out by mothers at home is so deeply embedded in public policy" (J.Gardiner 1997) <sup>(25)</sup> and "with day care as a specific example, the assumption is that families (usually meaning mothers) will make their own arrangements, except in cases where children are clearly at risk. In a sense, then, the state's role in children care is minimalist—it stands back until there is clear evidence of a need for help or control." (L.F.Harding. 1996) <sup>(26)</sup>. However, as we have already stated in Chapter 1, working mothers, particularly those with dependent children, increased dramatically. In just over three fifths of married couples of working age with dependent children, both adults were in employment between 1996-1997. Therefore, those working parents had to use private or voluntary provisions depending on their income.

Up to the present day, many writers abstracted the distinctive characteristics of childcare in the U.K. as follows; “piecemeal structure” (B.Cohen, 1988)<sup>(27)</sup>, “a jumble of fragmented quality services” (A.Coote, 1991)<sup>(28)</sup>, “Choice and diversity” (B.Cohen and N.Fraser, 1991)<sup>(29)</sup>, “diversity” (C.Cameron, 1996)<sup>(30)</sup>, “complex patchwork” (J.Gardiner, 1997)<sup>(31)</sup>.

In my opinion, childcare provisions for working parents in the U.K. has been mostly disregarded in areas of public provisions, it has been left to the family, private and voluntary provisions. This piece-meal situation between education and care has left many parents to integrate personally from informal provisions to formal provisions, thereby neglecting the care of the under three's.

#### **(5) The latest tendency; from the Children Act 1989 to the Childcare Challenge 1998**

As we have already seen, ‘the Ministry of Health Circular 37/60’ recommended that priority for the local authority nurseries should be given to children with only one parent who has no option but to go out to work, the so-called, ‘children in need’ or ‘children at risk’. This recommendation was extended between the 1960s and 1980s in the U.K. ‘The Children Act of 1989’ a) reaffirmed this position. It emphasised the duties of local authorities to provide day care services for children who are in need. b) At the same time, The Act placed a duty on local authorities to provide ‘family support services’. The services were defined as day nurseries, play groups, childminders and out-of school services for children aged 5-7. c) The Act placed a duty on local authorities to regulate the private and voluntary day care services. d) The Act indicated a duty on local authorities to provide family centres which are likely to provide a range of services and facilities for children, adults and the whole family. e) The 1989 Act gives the power to local authorities to provide day care for children not ‘in need.’ However, “Guidance makes it clear that the power given to local authorities to provide day care for children not ‘in need’ is not expected to be widely exercised” (J.Bull and P.Moss, 1996)<sup>(32)</sup>. Briefly, for the great majority of children, the provision of day care continues to be deemed as a private matter, for which parents are entirely responsible.

In the spring of 1998 the national childcare strategy of New Labour, The Green Paper; *Meeting the Child Care Challenge*, was published<sup>(33)</sup>. It summarised the approach taken by the previous Government as follows. “For too long the U.K. has lagged behind in developing good quality, affordable and accessible childcare. The approach taken by previous Governments to the formal childcare sector has been to leave it almost exclusively to the market. But this simply hasn’t worked. And the voluntary sector has been expected to provide, with little Government support, most of the services for parents looking after their own children.” And it concluded, as a result that there are three key problems in the U.K; a) The quality of childcare can be variable, b) The cost of care is high and out of the reach of many parents, c) In some areas there are not

enough childcare places and parents' access to them is hampered by poor information.

The Green Paper then pointed out "Three steps to a National Childcare Strategy". a) "Raising the quality of care"; including plans to provide models of good quality integrated education and childcare, Early Excellence Centres. b) "Making childcare more affordable"; including a new childcare tax credit for working families. c) "Making childcare more accessible by increasing places and improving information"; including plans for out of school childcare places and a free education place for every four year old.

We think that these schemes will lead to an extraordinary reform and they will change the condition of children in the U.K. remarkably. However, regarding childcare provisions for the under fives of working parents, we must point out the following; a) The Green Paper indicated that local authorities are located as important providers of childcare in their own right, " particularly childcare geared to children in need." b) The Green Paper emphasised 'employers' awareness of financial provision for children in care. c) The Green Paper pointed out that "Government pump-prime the provision of new childcare places in areas where there is a market failure, and provide other appropriate targeted funding". d) To sum up, the private and voluntary sector should play the leading role as providers and the Government and local authorities should continue to cover regulations and inspection.

Nowadays, most day nurseries are private. Private nurseries are usually run as a business. "The Daycare Trust estimates that the typical weekly cost of a full-time childminding place for a child under five varies from £50 to £120 and that the cost of full-time places at a private day nursery for the same child ranges from £70 to £180. This means that a family on average income, with two children, could pay out as much as one third on childcare." (Green Paper 1998) . We understand that the purpose of the Green Paper implies that the parents will cope with these costs by a working families tax credit. However, the distinctive characteristics of the childcare in the U.K., i.e. 'diversity and choice' will continue and working parents will still be forced to choose childcare provision according to their income.

In 1987, J.Gardiner commented; "manual occupational groups rely mainly on informal care (most often by the child's father or grand-parents) , whilst professional and managerial groups are more likely to employ childminders or nannies." "Nonetheless, most women across social classes are forced to rely on a complex patchwork of informal and formal provision."<sup>(34)</sup> This situation will continue. Resulting in a tendency that working parents' polarisation according to social and economic status influences shildcare provision. This polarisation will continue.

## 2) JAPAN: A MODEL OF THE EXPANSION OF CHILDCARE PROVISIONS

We can mention four distinctive characteristics of forms of childcare in Japan ;

- (1) A dramatic increase in provisions for day care between 1960 and 1980,
- (2) High rate of publicly funded provisions,
- (3) A delay in the expansion of provisions for the under three's,
- (4) The latest tendency—from 'The Angel Plan 1995' to 'The Amendment of the Child Welfare Action 1997'.

### (1) A dramatic increase in provision for day care between 1960 and 1980

As we have already indicated, more mothers have jobs today than at any other time since the

Fig.12 The Number of Nurseries in Japan - Public:Private

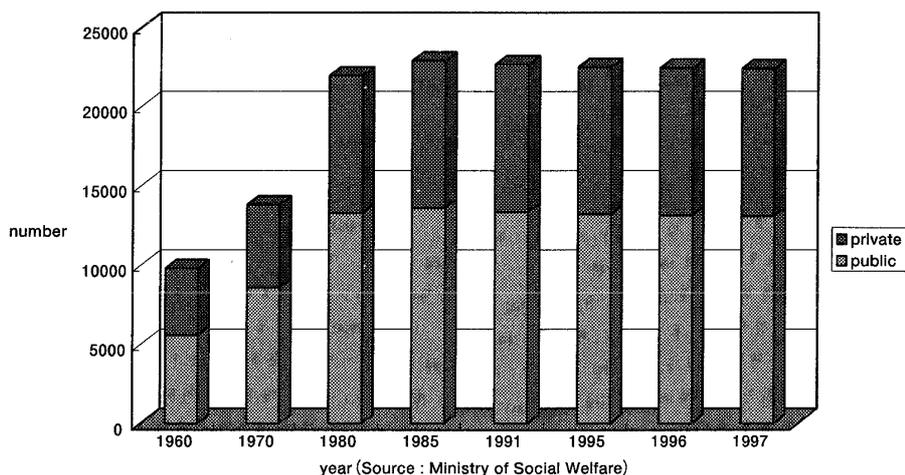
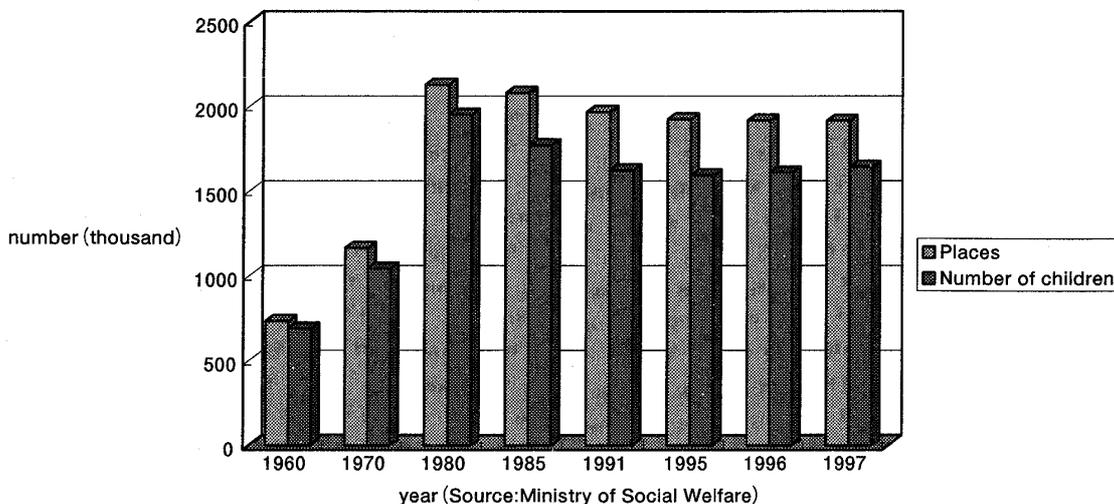


Fig.13 The Number of Children in Day Nurseries (Japan)



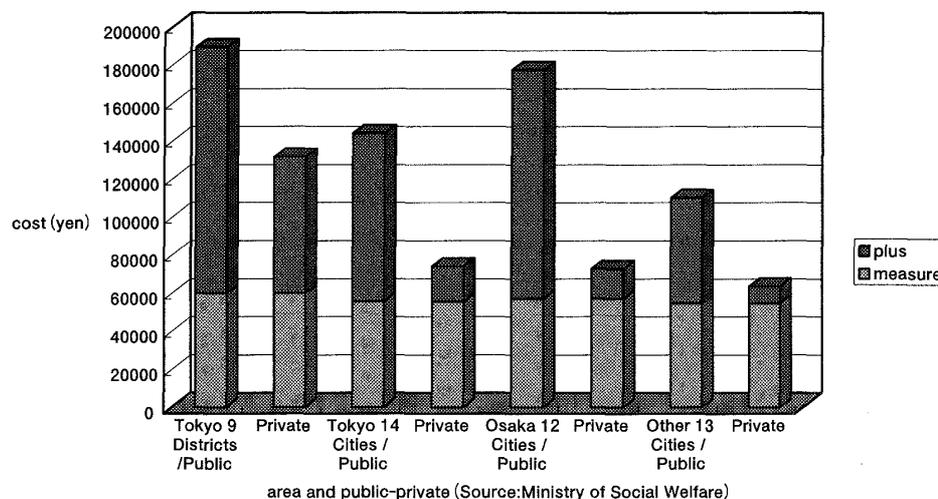
end of the Second World War in Japan. By 1997, 28.2 per cent of mothers with a child under three were economically active. The rate rose to 50 per cent in the case of mothers with dependent children between the age of four and six. As we have already mentioned, there was a dramatic increase in provisions for day care between 1960 and 1980 (Fig. 12, 13). In 1960, the number of day nurseries was 9,782 and the number of places was 734,000. In 1980, the number of day nurseries had increased to 21,960 and the number of places increased to 2,128,000. The number of day nurseries increased 2.2 times and the number of places increased 2.9 times in these two decades.

However, the birth rate decrease resulted in a decrease in the number of places at day nurseries. The places at day nurseries decreased from 1980 and the number of day nurseries also decreased from 1984. In 1997, the number of day nurseries was 22,401 and the number of places was 1,915,000. In 1997, there were about 7,800,000 children from day one up to the compulsory school age in Japan. Of these, 1,640,000 children were admitted to registered day nurseries, that is 21.2 per cent of all children. In addition, 230,000 children were admitted to non-registered day nurseries that is 3.0 per cent of all children. Consequently, in Japan, 24.2 per cent of all children from day one to compulsory school age were admitted to day nurseries. As the number of children who were admitted to kindergarten was 179,000, the number and percentage of children in day nurseries was more than the percentage of children in kindergarten. It was estimated that there were 5,000 childminders and 25,000 baby-sitters. Some of these were used in addition to day nurseries. In 1997, there were out of school clubs in 39.3 per cent of all local authorities in Japan. The number of clubs was 9,191 and these were approximately 370,000 places.

## **(2) High rate of publicly funded provisions**

In addition to the distinctive characteristics as above, the percentage of publicly funded day nurseries in Japan was 60 per cent. While, the percentage of private nurseries was 40 per cent. These percentages have remained the same for the last 40 years. As we have already pointed out, from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, the weight of industry shifted from agriculture to the secondary and the tertiary industries. This resulted in the so-called salary men and full-time housewives. Many employers needed housewives to enter the work force. At the same time, housewives wanted to work to help provide a higher standard of living. However, as some of them moved from farm villages whilst others were transferred, there were no longer relatives or reliable friendly neighbours around. Thus, as we have already seen, many publicly funded day nurseries were set up. In Japan, when mothers could not devote themselves to their children, the

Fig.14 Comparison of Cost - Public:Private (1993)



children were accepted as 'children in need' whether their parents salary was high or low. The registered private day nurseries were subsidised by the Government.

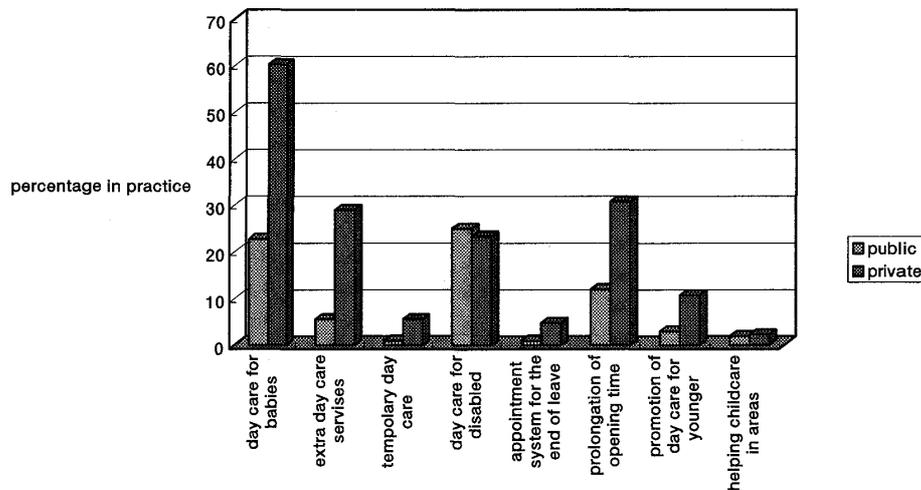
Therefore, in Japan, the amount of money which working parents have to pay for day care is even the same regardless of whether the care is publicly or privately funded. However, as we can see in Fig.14, although the Government standard unit cost per child is the same, the amount which is added to the unit cost by the local authorities differs. Therefore, the economic base is different for the publicly funded nurseries and private nurseries. Regional differences are also apparent. As few non-registered day nurseries were subsidised, their fees were expensive. There were 9,644 non-registered day nurseries, of these 3,561 were work place nurseries. These were also 649 so called baby hotels. The ratio of public and private provision of out of school clubs was the same, in 1997.

### (3) A delay in the expansion of provisions for the under three's

Day nurseries in Japan provide many kinds of day care; i.e. day care for babies, extra day care services, day care for disabled children, the prolongation of opening time, temporary day care, an appointment system for the end of maternity leave, the promotion of day care for younger children, helping childcare centres in some areas etc. Of these services, day care for babies has been mainly run by private nurseries (Fig.15). The rate of provision of baby care amongst publicly funded nurseries is 22.7 per cent. Whereas, the rate for private nurseries is 60.2 per cent.

As we can seen, day nurseries in Japan have expanded. The Government and the local authorities have promoted the expansion of day nurseries in accordance with the demand of enterprises to

Fig.15 Kinds of Day Care - Public:Private (1997)



secure part-timers. However, the Government never changed their stance opposing child care facilities for the under three's. Though the number of day nurseries increased, those provisions did not meet the requirements of full-time working mothers. Therefore, private nurseries fulfilled those demands. However, as we have already indicated, there were several problems concerning the quality of care in those private nurseries, especially in baby hotels. When the inefficiency of some of these provisions became a matter of public concern, the Government reluctantly agreed to the expansion of childcare provision for the under three's.

#### (4) The latest tendency; from 'The Angel Plan' to 'The Amendment of the Child Welfare Act 1997'

The policy on day nurseries in Japan has changed since 1990. Concerned about the declining fertility rate, the Government decided to get over the crisis by supporting women who wanted to combine work with raising children. First of all, the Japanese Government introduced some basic changes to encourage childraising. This was known as 'The Angel Plan.' In this plan, the Government promised steps which would meet the great demand by working parents; for an increase of day nurseries for younger children, day nurseries with extra hours, day nurseries which provide temporary centres. Secondly, the Government of Japan amended 'The Child Welfare Act' in 1997 and reinforced the policy of 'The Angel Plan'.

According to this amendment, the Government and the local authorities should provide all day nurseries with all necessary equipment etc. The Government also decided to subsidise the payment for teachers of day nurseries which were to increase from one teacher per six children to one per three children. The Government agreed to have a flexible and diverse policy. Under

the amendment, all day nurseries were permitted to offer extra hours day care, temporary day care and the prolongation of opening hours. In addition, working parents were permitted to choose the day nurseries according to the information provided by each day nurseries. 'The Angel Plan' pledged the following publicly; "The Government will arrange circumstances so that all parents who wish to have children can give birth to babies and can bring them up without anxiety". Whether or nor this commitment will be fulfilled will be seen in the near future.

### 3) THE U.K.AND JAPAN : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

First, we confirmed the tendency of forms of childcare used by working parents in the two countries. Now, we shall clarify the similarities and the differences between two countries.

#### (1) Common characteristics

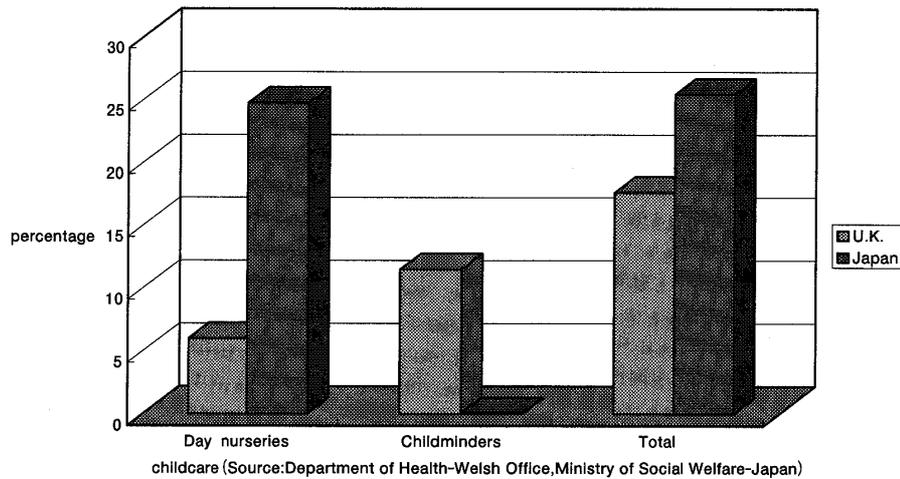
We can indicate two common characteristics in the trends in forms of childcare used by working parents in the U.K. and Japan as follows;

- a) The consistently passive policy on the expansion of day nurseries,
- b) The consistently negative policy on the expansion of day nurseries for the under two's in the U.K. and three's in Japan.

As we previously indicated, there was a consistently passive policy on the expansion of day nurseries. This tendency was particularly strong on the expansion of provisions for the under two's or three's. In the U.K., 'The Ministry of Health Circular 22/45' pointed out in 1945, "The right policy to pursue would be positively to discourage mothers of children under two from going to work." This policy was strengthened by J.Bowlby among others. Their ideas on maternal deprivation became widely accepted. Day nurseries were set up to accept only children in need and the nursery schools to be part-time. Therefore, almost all women who wanted to work, or had to work, retired once they had a child and went back to work in a new job as part-timers after they had brought up their children.

In Japan, the situation was not dissimilar. Until recently, the Government of Japan had advocated that mothers must care for their own children themselves both day and the night, at least for the under three's. Therefore, when *The White Paper of the Ministry of Welfare 1998* in Japan pointed out those policies had been incorrect and indicated "this is the time to re-think", not only the people but also many members of Parliament were amazed <sup>(35)</sup>.

Fig.16 Comparison of Childcare - Day Nurseries and Childminders - U.K.:Japan(1997)



## (2) Differences

On the other hand, we can indicate four different characteristics in the trends of forms of childcare used by working parents between the U.K. and Japan. They are;

- a) The expansion of the number and places of day nurseries,
- b) The role of local authorities,
- c) The different definitions of the expression 'children in need'
- d) The diversity and choice.

The expansion of the number of day nurseries and the places available in Japan had already begun in the 1960s and it reached its peak in the middle of the 1980s. In comparison with Japan, the expansion in the U.K. began approximately 20 years later and it is still continuing. There are considerable differences in the expansion between the two countries. Fig.16 is a comparison of the availability of day nurseries and childminders per number of children from day one up to compulsory school age in the U.K. and Japan. The percentage of children who entered day nurseries from day one up to compulsory school age in Japan was 4 times more than the same figure for the U.K. In comparison, the same figure for the percentage of children who were cared for by childminders in the U.K. was 164 times more than the same figure for Japan.

Consequently, in the U.K., of those children who were left in either day nurseries or with childminders, two thirds were left in the care of childminders. By comparison, almost all children in Japan were left in day nurseries. In the U.K., some working parents employ nannies or baby-sitters. Others use full-time nursery schools. There are many mothers who leave their children in part-time nursery schools and work as part-timers in order to collect their children after school. There are many kinds of kindergarten, such as nursery school, nursery classes in primary schools, receptionist classes, play groups etc. Therefore, almost all parents are forced to choose adequate

provisions from the many kinds of diversified provisions available while taking into account their own income and working conditions. In comparison, the system is much simpler in Japan. There are two kinds of kindergarten; i.e. private and publicly funded. There are day nurseries; i.e. publicly funded, private and non-registered. Very few people use childminders and baby-sitters. As the Government subsidises the basic expenses of private nurseries, and the fees for day nurseries are in proportion to the working parents' income, it is rare that working parents choose day nurseries taking into consideration their own income and social class.

In Japan, although the local authorities are the organisations which register and supervise private day nurseries, they also run publicly funded day nurseries. These account for 60 per cent of all day nurseries. On the other hand, in the U.K., local authorities function mainly as organisations to register and supervise private nurseries. They also run day nurseries. However these same nurseries are only for children in need. There are considerable differences about who qualifies as 'children in need'. In the U.K. it refers to "the children with only one parent who have no other option but to go out to work". However, in Japan, it refers to "all children whose parents are working and there is no one who can care for them."

As we have already described, the Government of the U.K. introduced New Labour's childcare policy, *Meeting the Child Care Challenge*, in 1998. The main strategy was Family Tax Credit for working parents, the expansion plan of nursery schools and out of school clubs, and the campaign for family friendly employment. In other words, the Government expected working parents to choose the best child care provisions from among various private provisions taking into account their income, including tax credit, and working conditions. While, in Japan, the policy mainly concentrated on the expansion of child care provisions taking into consideration not only the quantity but also the quality. As a result, there are considerable differences in the quantity and the quality of child care provisions in both countries.

References :

- (1) Gavron, H., *The Captive Wife*, Routledge, 1966
- (2) *Labour Force Survey*, Office for National Statistics, 1996
- (3) *Office of Population Censuses and Surveys*, Day Care Services for Children, HMSO, 1994
- (4) Gardiner, J., *Gender, Care and Economics*, MacMillan, 1997
- (5) Gardiner, Jane. *op.cit.*, 1997
- (6) Martin, H., *Britain since 1800*, MacMillan, 1988
- (7) Beveridge, W. H., *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, 1942
- (8) Lewis, J., *Women in England*, Wheatsheaf Books, 1984
- (9) Williams, F., *Social Policy*, Polity 1989
- (10) Martin, H., *op. cit.*, 1988
- (11) Bowlby, J., *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 1951

- (12) Royal Commission, 1949
- (13) Gavron, H., *op.cit.*,1966
- (14) Myrdal, A. & Klein, V., *Women's Two Roles-Home and Work*, Routledge, 1962
- (15) Hunt, A., *A Survey of Women's Employment*,Vol.1, Vol.2, HMSO, 1968
- (16) Gavron, H. *op. cit.*, 1966
- (17) Friedan, B., *The Feminine Mystique*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963
- (18) *Labour Force Survey*, Office for National Statistics, 1975
- (19) Campling, Jo. *Equal Opportunities and Social Policy*, Longman, 1997
- (20) Kiernan, K. and Wicks, M., *Family Change and Future Policy*, Rowntree/Family Policy Studies Centre, 1990
- (21) Armstrong, p. and Armstrong, H., "Women, Family and Economy", in Mandell, N. and Duffy, A. (eds) , *Reconstructing the Canadian Family:Feminist Perspectives*, Butterworths, 1988
- (22) *Social Trends 28*, The Stationery Office, 1998
- (23) Prime Minister's Secretariat, PublicRelations Office, *Survey of Public Opinion on Women Working Outside the Home (1983 and 1989)* , Prime Ministers Office, 1990
- (24) Family Policy Study Centre, *Family Policy, Bulletin*, 1997/98 winter
- (25) Gardiner, J., *op.cit.*,1997
- (26) Harding, L. F., *Family State & Social Policy*, MacMillan ,1996
- (27) Cohen, B., *Caring for Children*, Commission of the European Communities, 1988
- (28) Coote, A. Harman, H and Hewitt, P., *The Family Way*, London/Institute for Public Policy Research, 1990
- (29) Cohen, B. and Fraser, N., *Childcare in a Modern Welfare System*, Institute for Public Policy Research. 1991
- (30) Cameron, C., "Provision of Services for Young Children", in Candappa, M. et al, *Policy into Practice*, The Stationery Office, 1996
- (31) Gardiner, J., *op. cit.*, 1997
- (32) Bull, J. and Moss P., "Introduction", in Candappa, M. et. al, *op.cit.*, 1996
- (33) DfEE & Ministers for Women, *Meeting the Childcare Challenge*, 1998
- (34) Gardiner, J., *op.cit.*, 1997
- (35) *White Paper on Social Welfare*, Ministry of Social Welfare (Japan) , 1998

WORKING PARENTS AND CHILDCARE (1)

— A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE U.K. AND JAPAN —

FUSE, Akiko

**【Abstract】**

Why is the provision of public funds for the under-fives childcare in the UK lower than in any other country in the European community as well as in Japan? This study presents an analysis of the prevailing conditions, problems and causes of childcare in the UK compared with Japan.

We analysed the distinctive characteristics of the UK and Japan's childcare focussing on five issues;the differences in the economic demand for the labour force,the influence of J.Bowlby, the thoughts on the relationship between the family and the state, the different definition of "children in need", the trend of citizens' movement. We hold that these five issues are deeply related to the existing childcare in both Countries.

Finally, we can say that the difference in the economic, social and political situation, both historically and recently, has resulted in the difference of expansion of childcare in the two

Countries. We can also say however that the difference in the relationship and ideology between the family and the State and enterprises and the State are the greatest influences.

Keywords: working parents, childcare, comparison between the UK and Japan

(ふせ あきこ 本学人文学部教授 家族社会学専攻)