

working. However, more women returned to work when their children became older, and an earlier return to work was seen among the younger generation.

A comparison of the labor participation rate among women correlated with education for those in the younger age group but not for those in the middle age group. Women with a university degree were presumed to be more likely to continue working even upon childbirth, but as much as 70% of them became full-time housewives. In fact, more high school graduates return to work as compared to university graduates as children grow older.

### Increase in Non-standard Work

Recent increase in work for women is mostly in the non-standard work. According to the Ministry of Labor's *Diversification of Work Status Survey of 1999*, as much as 47% of women engage in non-standard work, while the corresponding figure is 15% for males. Such trend is due partly to the deep recession. The hiring of newly graduated females has plunged compared to males in the 90's. Houseman and Osawa (2000) point out that the increase in non-standard work is demand-led.

The non-standard work is part-time work, contract work, dispatched work, temporary work and others. Among them, part-time work comprises 40% of 47% of non-standard work among females.

Compared to "standard work", hourly pay of non-standard work is low. The male and female wage gap for "standard work" is narrowing, but the wage gap between standard and non-standard work is widening. Compared with female standard workers, the hourly wage of part-time workers was roughly 80% of that of standard workers in 1970, and the gap diminished to approximately 60% in 1998, inclusive of yearly bonuses. Consequently, the overall male and female wage gap has been widening. Nevertheless, it should be noted that many married part-time workers are actually satisfied with their work despite their lower salary (Sato, 1998).

**Table 3 Changes in Non-standard Job**

	1994	1999
Percentage of non-standard jobs (Average of Both Male and Female)	22.8	27.5

**Table 4 Constituency of Type of Employed Workers(1999)**

	Standard	contract	temporary	part-time	shukko	dispatched	other
Male	85.1	2.1	1.8	20.3	1.3	1.1	0.7
Female	53.0	2.6	2.0	39.6	0.4	1.8	0.6

(Source) Ministry of Labor *Shugyo Keitai no Tayouka ni Kanusuru Chosa*  
(Survey on the Diversification of Workers)