

Special Feature: Young People's Attitude toward Work

Key points of the survey result

- **There are still many young people with concerns related to work**
- **Young people who prioritize their family and private life to work have increased**
- **Few young people think a job-change negatively**

1 Introduction

- Our country has problems of a rapidly declining birthrate and a growing population of elderly people, which leads to the reduction of the working-age population. In addition, overpopulation continues in Tokyo, while depopulation particularly becomes a serious situation in rural areas. To overcome this problem the government is aiming at the realization of a society participated by all citizen in which all people can be active at every place of homes, work places, and local communities.
- While building an economic base through work is the main factor for being active and self-reliant, work is not only a means to get incomes but also to realize oneself through a relationship with people and society. In that sense, it could be thought that “how to work” is equivalent to “how to live.” Based on this basic concept, the government has formulated “Action Plan for the Realization of Work Style Reform” so that people can work in various ways according to their hope and situation in the current society with diversified lifestyles, and is also promoting investment in people in anticipation of the 100-year-life, under “New Economic Policy Package” (approved by the Cabinet in December, 2017). With the advent of innovations in IoT, big data, robots, and artificial intelligence, there is a possibility of drastic change in the contents of work and in the way of working.
- This special feature introduces the results of “the survey on children’s and young people’s awareness” (hereinafter referred to as “the FY 2017 Survey”) conducted by the Cabinet Office in FY 2017, in which young people’s attitude toward work is considered. In the survey the following questions were asked: what they think of work; what they think important for their career decision; whether they want to continue learning after employed; and what prospects they have for the future. With the comparison of the results of a past survey, the analysis of the results is introduced here in addition to our efforts to support young people’s career development.

2 Results of the survey on young people's attitude toward work

(1) Overview of the survey

- The FY 2017 Survey was an Internet survey using a research monitoring system registered in an Internet survey company, and conducted from October 27 to November 13, 2017 by targeting at nationwide men and women aged 16 to 29 (valid responses are 10,000).
- The special feature also shows part of comparisons with a relevant survey¹ conducted in FY 2011 (hereinafter referred to as “the FY 2011 Survey”) by the Cabinet Office.

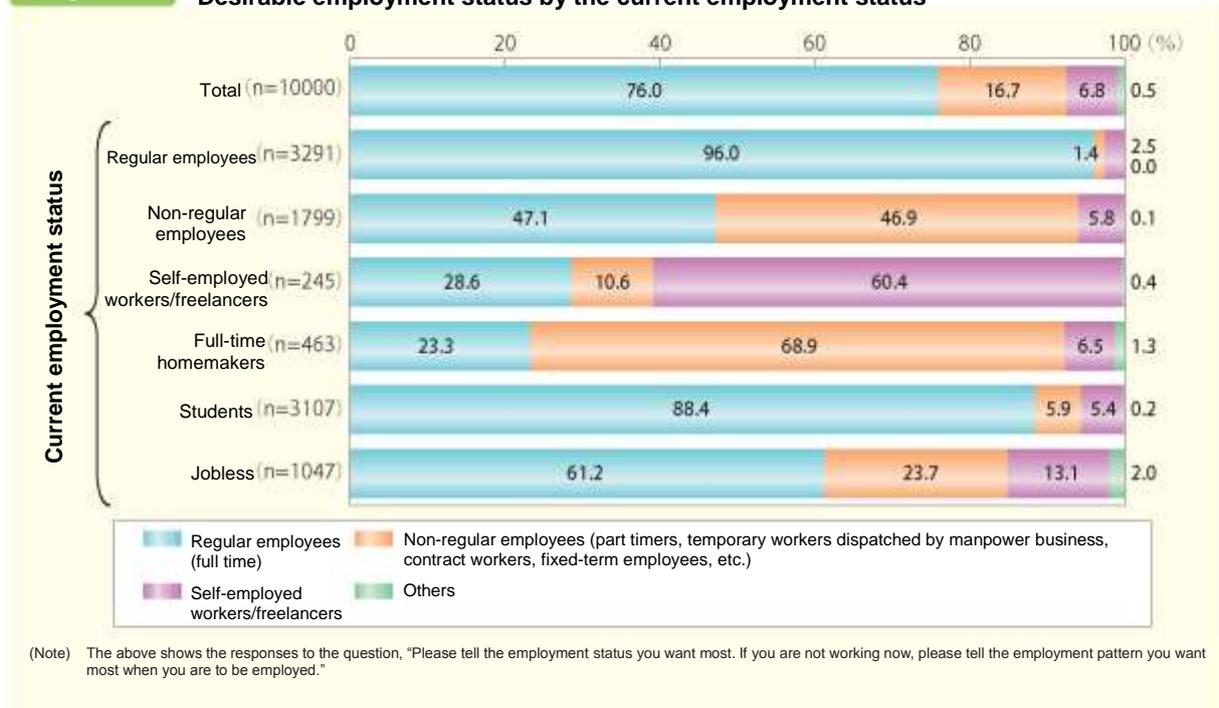
(2) Young people's thoughts about work and their first employment status

a Desirable employment status

- As for “the most desirable employment status” by the current employment status, 96.0% of “regular employees” and 88.4% of “students” prefer “regular employment”. 47.1% of “non-regular employees” prefer “regular employment”, while 46.9% of them prefer “non-regular employment”. 60.4% of current “self-employed workers/freelancers” prefer “self-employed/freelance” while 68.9% of current “full-time homemakers” prefer “non-regular employment”. (Figure 1)

Figure 1

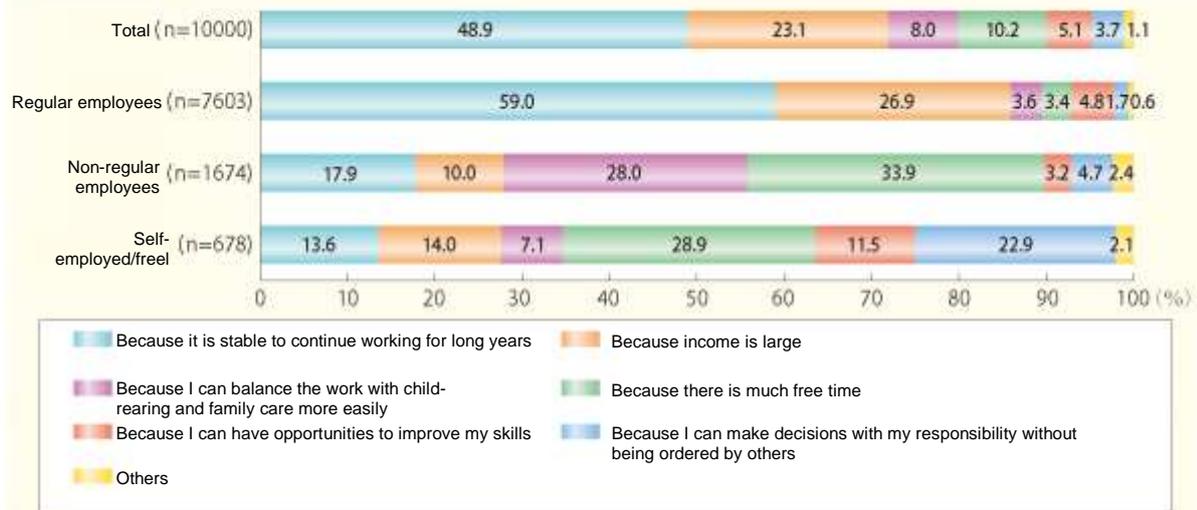
Desirable employment status by the current employment status



¹ The FY 2011 survey was an Internet survey conducted from December 28, 2011 to January 13, 2012 by targeting at nationwide men and women aged 15 to 29 (valid responses are 3,000)

- As for the most important reason by the employment status, the majority of those who want “regular employment” chose “because it is stable to continue working for long years” (59.0%) and “because income is large” (26.9%). The majority of those who want “non-regular employment” chose “because there is much free time” (33.9%) and “because I can balance the work with childrearing and family care more easily” (28.0%). The majority of those who want to be “self-employed/freelance” chose “because there is much free time” (28.9%) and “because I can make decisions with my responsibility without being ordered by others” (22.9%). (Figure 2)

Figure 2 Reasons for the choice on the desirable employment status (the most important reason)



(Note) The above shows the responses to the question "Please tell the reason why you want the employment status" (the most important reason).

b Status of the first employment

- As for the first employment status of current or former employees (employed just after school graduation or dropout), 57.8% was “regular employees” of all respondents while 34.2% was “non-regular employees”. Among them, 68.3% of “those aged 25 to 29” was “regular employees”, and the rate is larger than 26.4% of “non-regular employees”. On the other hand, 30.6% of “those aged 16 to 19” was “regular employees”, and this is smaller than the number of “non-regular employees”, 53.1% (Figure 3).

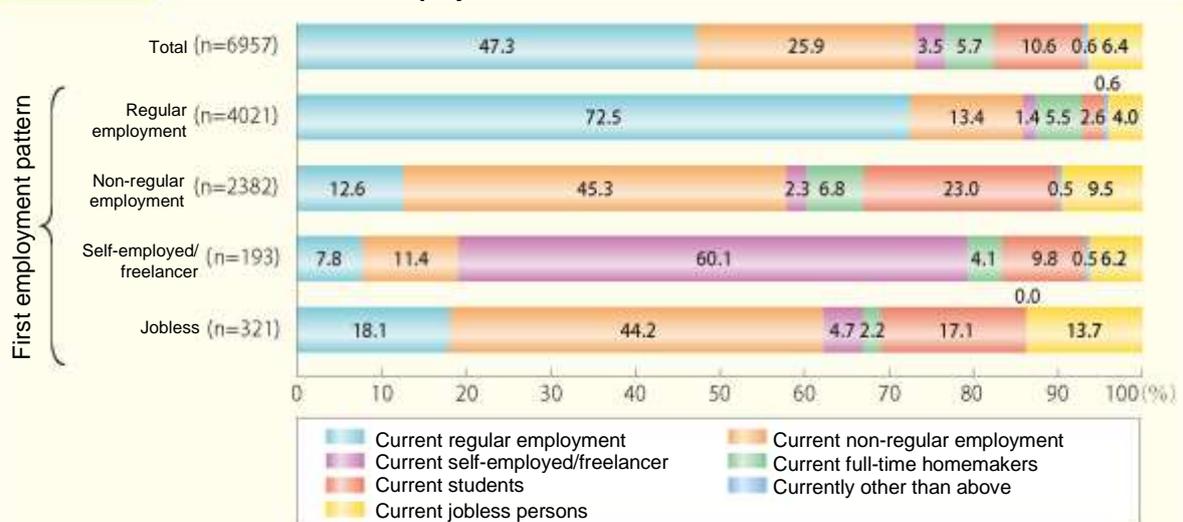
Figure 3 Status of the first employment



(Note) The above is the aggregation of responses by age of current/former employees to the question, “Please tell your first employment pattern just after school graduation or dropout.”

- As for the employment/school status of those whose first employment status was “regular employment”, 72.5% of their current status are “regular employment”, while “non-regular employment” and “jobless” are 13.4%, and 4.0%, respectively. Of those whose first employment status was “non-regular employment”, 12.6% of their current status are “regular employment”, while “non-regular employment” and “jobless” are 45.3%, and 9.5%, respectively. Of those who were “jobless” just after school graduation or dropout, 18.1% of their current status are “regular employment”, while “non-regular employment” and “jobless” are 44.2%, and 13.7%, respectively. (Figure 4)

Figure 4 First and current employment status



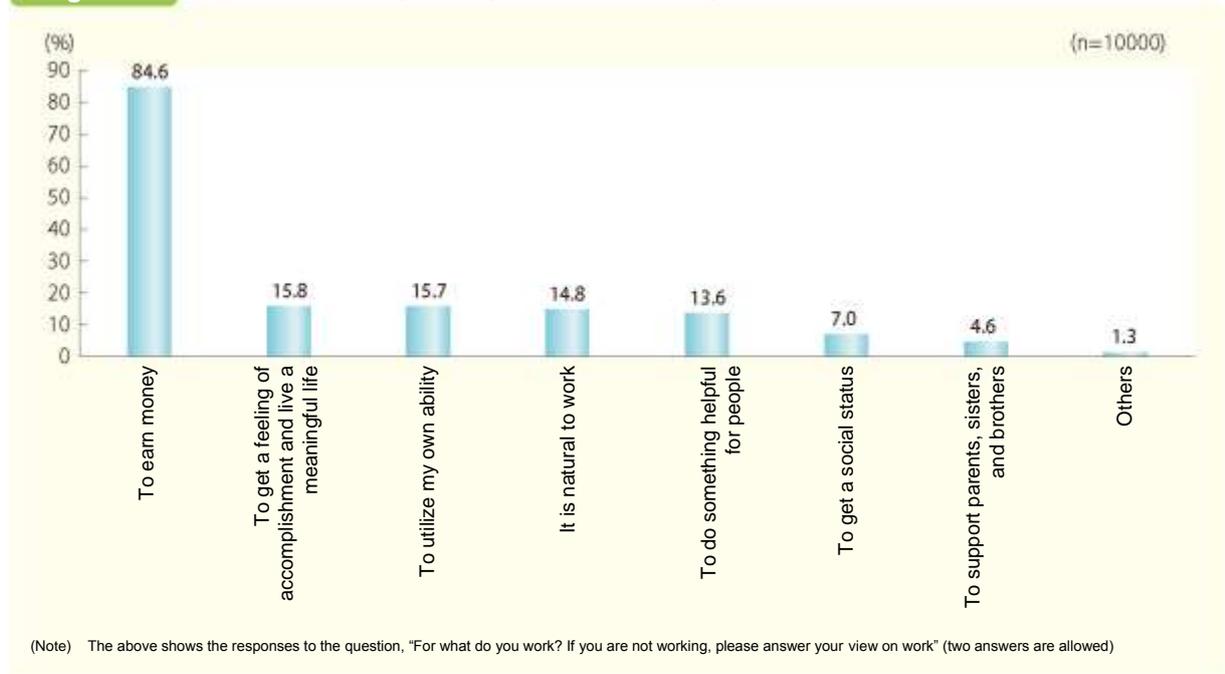
(Note) The above is the comparison of current employment patterns with former ones: responses of those with employment experience to the question, “Please tell your first employment pattern just after graduation or dropout.”

(3) View on work

a Objective of work

- When asked the objective of work (two responses are allowed), 84.6% responded “to earn money,” a predominantly high number; 15.8% responded “to get a feeling of accomplishment and live a meaningful life”; 15.7% responded “to utilize my own ability”; 14.8% responded “it is natural to work”; and 13.6% responded “to do something helpful for people”. (Figure 5)

Figure 5 Objective of work (two responses are allowed)



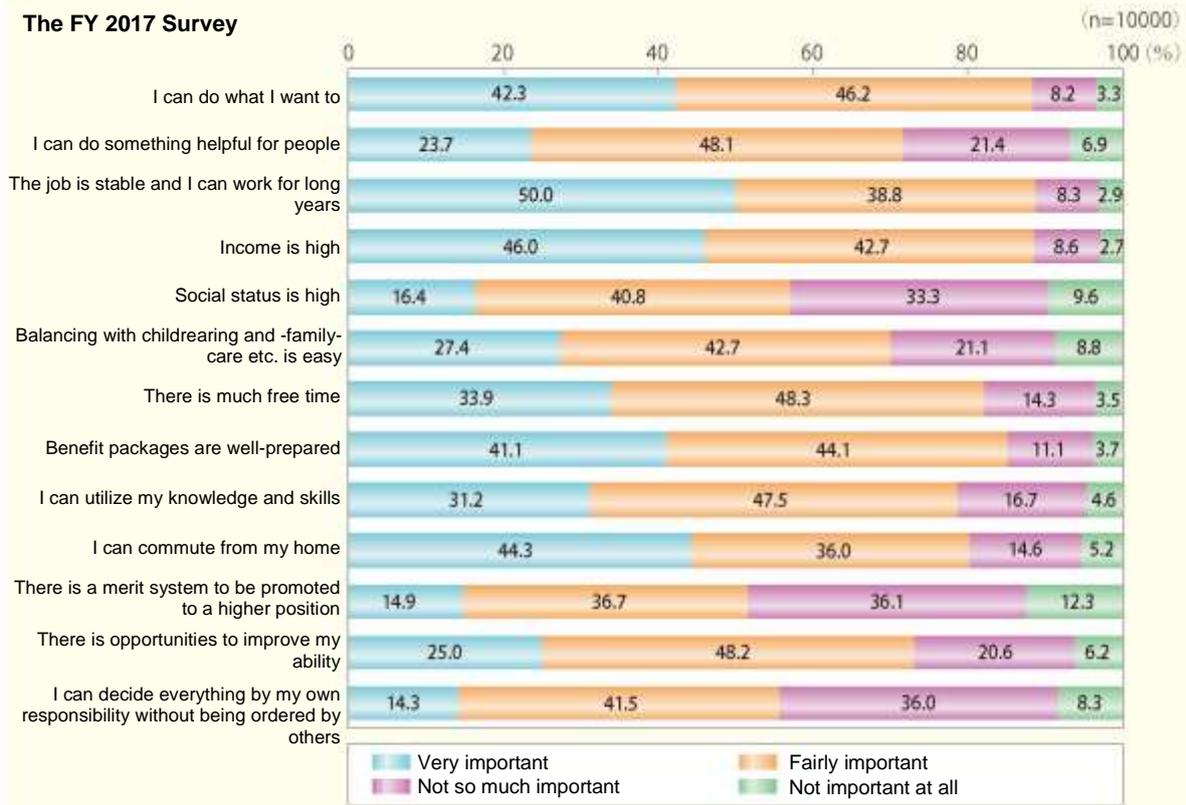
b Important points when choosing work

- Asked the important points when choosing work, “The job is stable employment and I can work for long years” and “income is high” are selected at the most by 88.7% of respondents as “very important” or “fairly important”. The second highest number of respondents chose the item of “I can do what I want to”, “benefit packages are well-prepared”, and “there is much free time,” being 88.5%, 85.2%, and 82.2%, respectively. On the other hand, relatively smaller number of respondents answered that “there is a merit system to be promoted to a higher position” and “I can decide everything by my own responsibility without being ordered by others” are “very important” or “fairly important,” being 51.6% and 55.8%, respectively. (Figure 6)

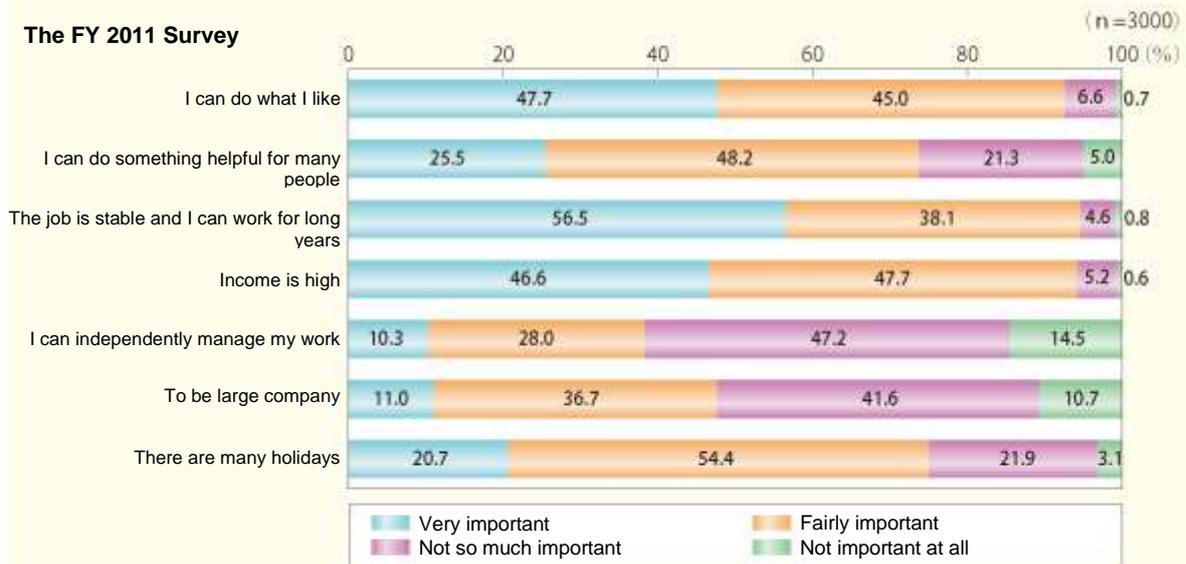
Although a direct comparison is difficult because the question items are different, many respondents in the FY 2011 Survey also answered similar points are “very important” or “fairly important.”

Figure 6 Important points emphasized when choosing work

The FY 2017 Survey



The FY 2011 Survey



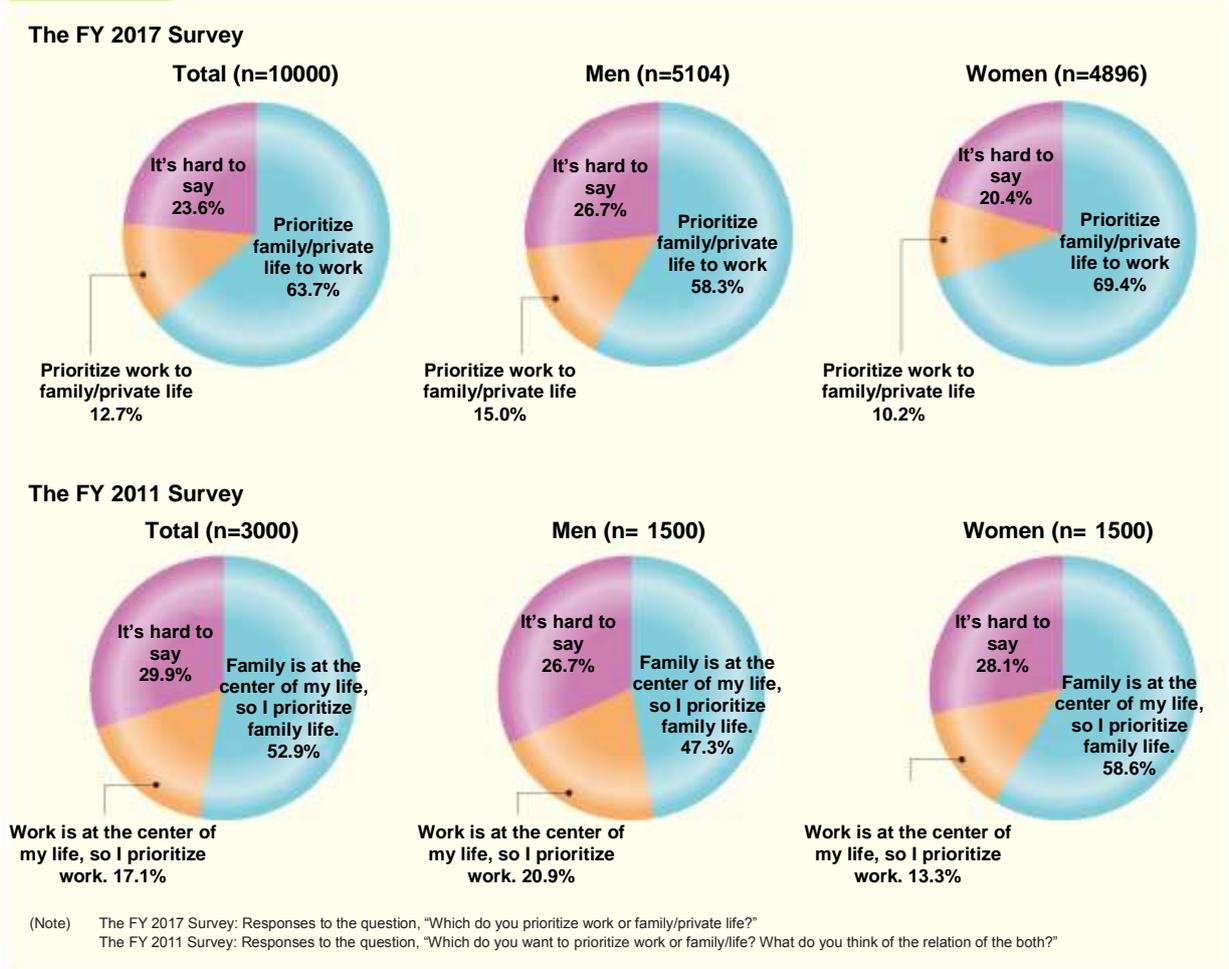
(Note) 1. The above graphs are the results of the FY 2017 and FY 2011 Surveys expressed in percentages of "very important," "fairly important," "not so much important," and "not important at all" for each item to the question, "How much important do you think of each item when choosing a job? If you are not working, please answer which item is important when choosing a job in the future".

2. In the above graphs, the response rates of "very important" and "fairly important" were rounded off to the second decimal place, so the total number of responses and the rate do not match. The same applies hereinafter.

c Balance between work and family/private life

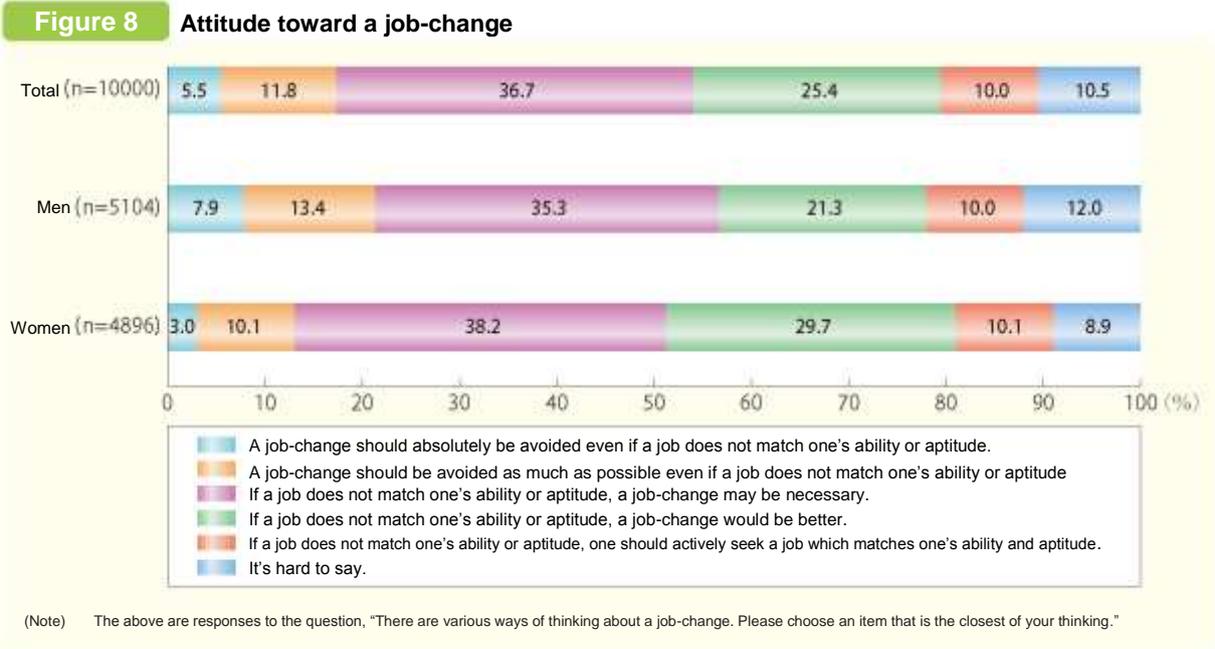
- To the question “Which do you prioritize work or family/private life?” 63.7% of respondents answered “Prioritize family/private life to work”, exceeding 52.9% of the FY 2011 Survey.
- By gender, 58.3% of men answered “Prioritize family/private life to work”, being lower than 69.4% of women’s same answer, but 10 percentage points higher than the number of the FY 2011 Survey. (Figure 7)

Figure 7 Balance between work and family/private life



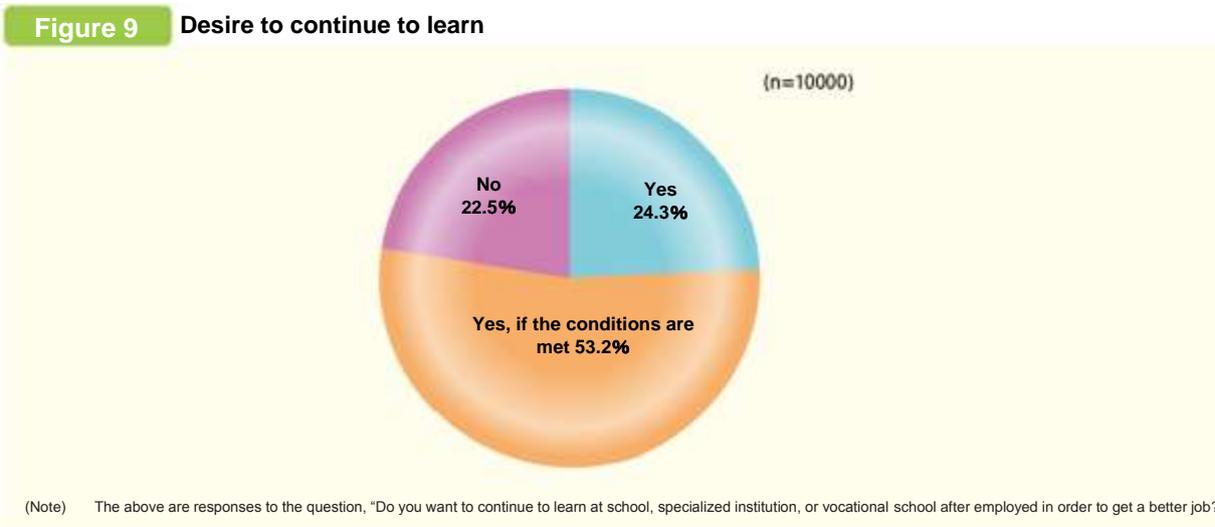
d Attitude toward a job-change

- Less than 20% (17.3%) of the respondents thought a job-change as negative, answering “A job-change should absolutely be avoided even if a job does not match one’s ability or aptitude” or “A job-change should be avoided as much as possible even if a job does not match one’s ability or aptitude.”
- By gender, 21.4% of male respondents thought a job-change as negative, exceeding 13.2% of females’ same response. (Figure 8)



e Desire to continue to learn

- When asked whether they want to continue to learn after employed in order to get a better job, the responses of “Yes, if conditions are met,” “Yes,” and “No” were 53.2%, 24.3%, and 22.5%, respectively. (Figure 9)

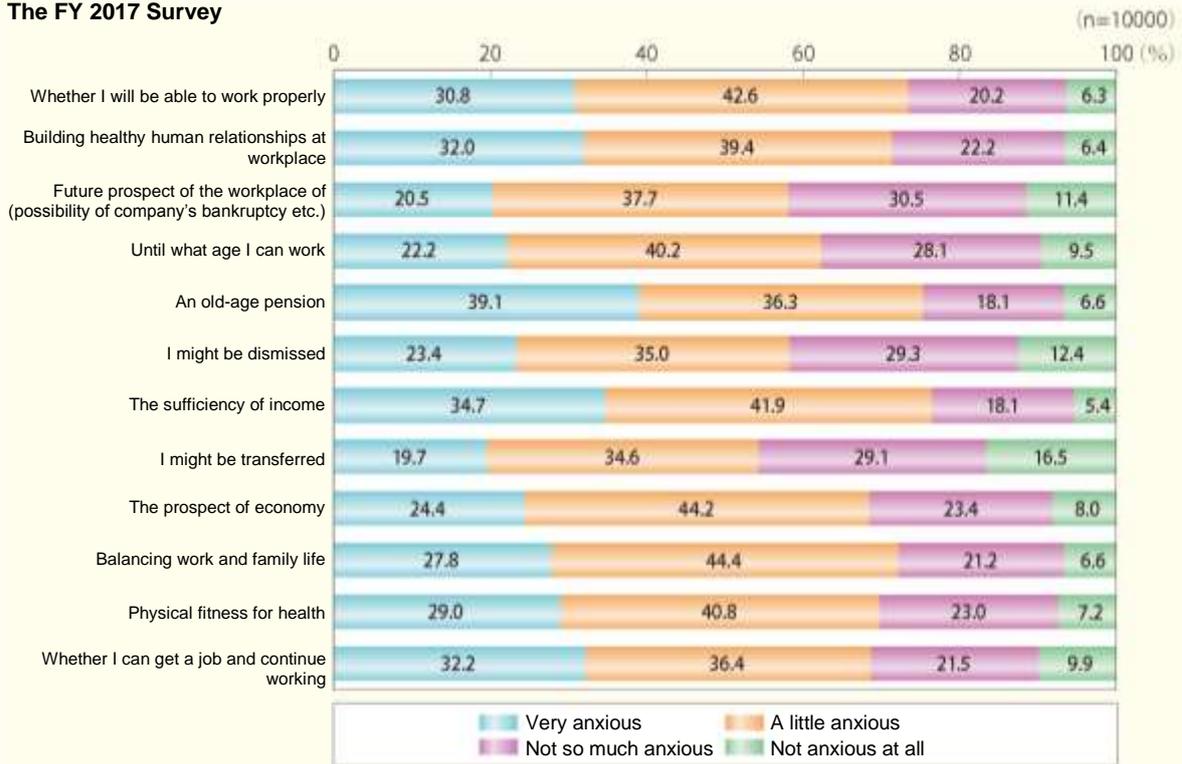


(4) Anxiety about work

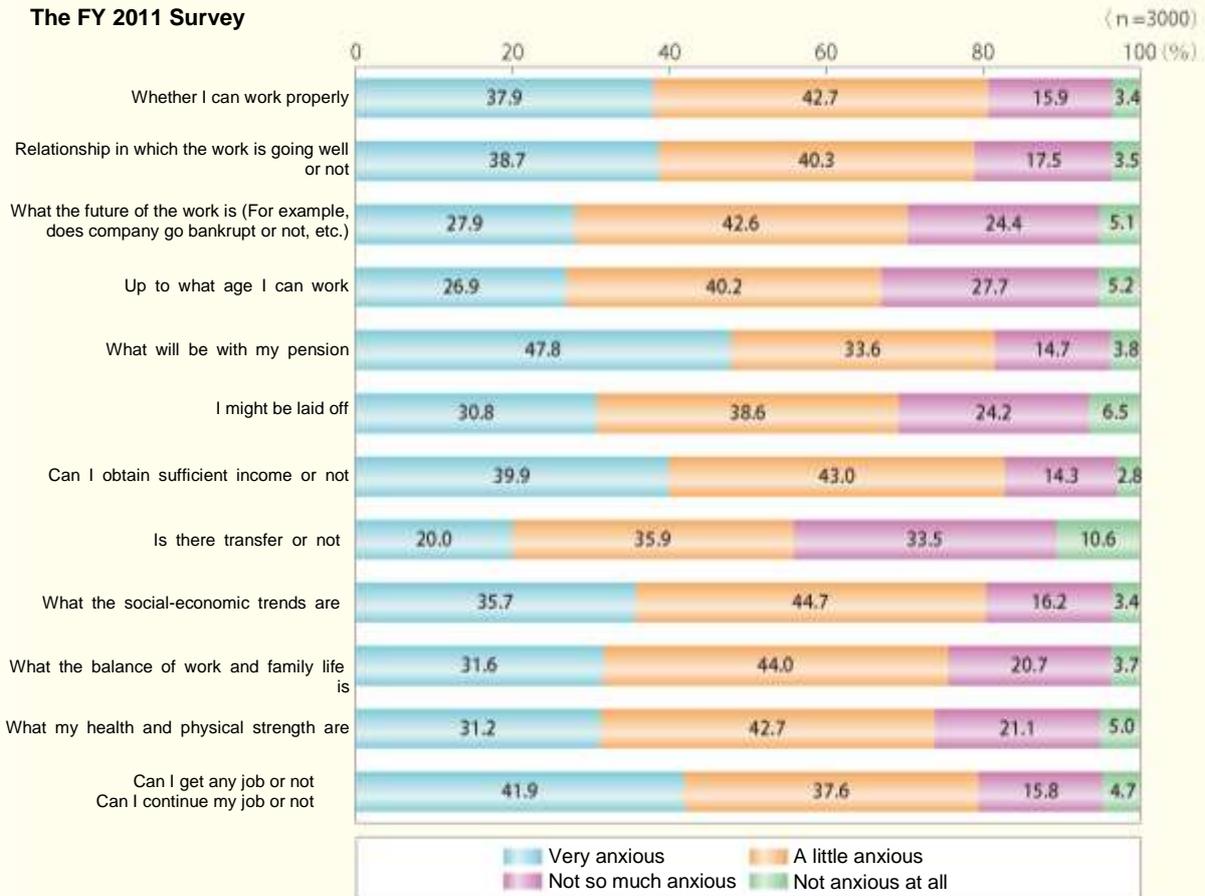
- As for anxiety about work, 76.5%, the highest number, of respondents answered, “very anxious” and “a little anxious” about “the sufficiency of income”. The other common answers were “an old-age pension” (75.4%), “whether I will be able to work properly” (73.5%), “balancing work and family life” (72.2%), and “building healthy human relationships at workplace” (71.4%). When compared with the FY 2011 Survey, the answers, “very anxious” or “a little anxious,” were fewer in all items. (Figure 10)

Figure 10 Anxiety about work

The FY 2017 Survey



The FY 2011 Survey

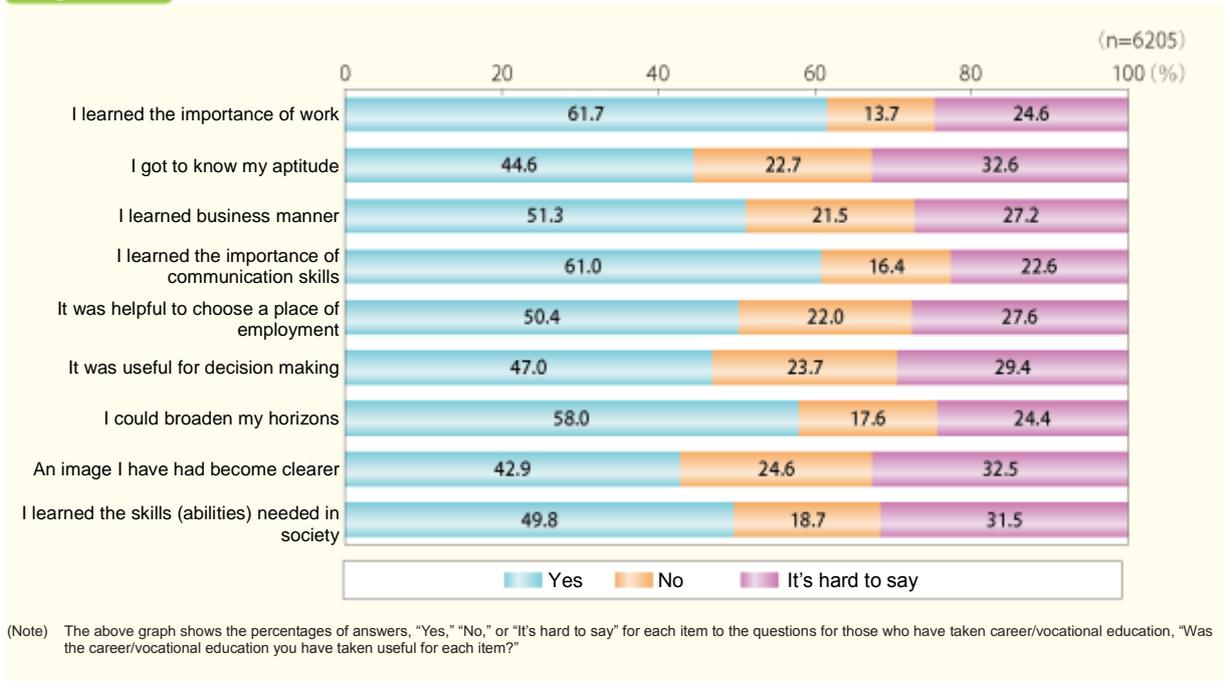


(Note) The FY 2017 and FY 2011 Surveys: The above graphs show the percentages of the answers of "very anxious," "a little anxious," "not so much anxious," or "not anxious at all" for each item to the question, "How much anxious do you feel about work for now or future?"

(5) Career/vocational education

- Questioned about the positive effects of career/vocational education to those who have taken such programs, “I learned the importance of work” was selected by 61.7%, the highest number, of the respondents; the other common answers were “I learned the importance of communication skills” (61.0%), “I could broaden my horizons” (58.0%), “I learned business manner” (51.3%), and “It was helpful to choose a place of employment” (50.4%). (Figure 11)

Figure 11 Positive effects of career/vocational education



3 Conclusion

- **The FY 2017 survey has revealed that many young people are still likely to have anxieties about work, although their concerns were smaller about some items than those of the FY 2011 Survey: such as about whether I can get a sufficient income; whether I can properly work; whether I can find a balance between work and family; and whether I can build healthy human relationships at workplace. Also, it has suggested that the number of young people who want to prioritize family/private life to work has increased; a few sees a job-change negative; and many think that career education is effective.**
- With the advent of innovations in IoT, big data, robots, and artificial intelligence, there is a possibility of drastic change in the contents of work and the way of working. Therefore, it can be said that people are able to choose a more flexible workstyle in terms of time and place.
- Under these circumstances, young people are expected to have a better outlook for the future and play an active role in society, by choosing various and flexible ways of working according to their will, abilities, and situations. It is required to improve career education and work environment, so that they can choose their own way of living while considering a balance of childrearing, family-care, work, and family life.
- Finally, some approaches that give young people opportunities to think about work or that support their career development will be introduced.

○ Case Study

Career education in high school

- Approach of Okayama Prefectural Wakeshizutani Senior High School -

This is an approach launched in FY 2013 with the cooperation of Wake Town, which thinks it is important to improve education to prevent the community weakening brought by declining birthrate, and Wakeshizutani Senior High School, which wants to raise students' academic ability and motivation for making the high school attractive with distinctive educational activities.

Wakeshizutani Senior High School aims to revitalize the region, develop human resources who love the region and will become leaders of the community, and make the high school attractive through the regional problem solution learning (integrated study), cooperating with the Wake Town Hall, the town board of education, the commercial and industrial association, the advocates for the regional vitalization, and companies.

For instance, the town hall allocates the regional vitalization advocates and company workers to the high school, as learning-support staff; the town board of education helps high school students by involving them into the its events, or encourages elementary and middle schoolchildren to join the high school events; the commercial and industrial association accepts high school students' internship, sends lecturers, and supports product development, etc.; and the station-front business association offers store spaces, accepts volunteers, and sends lecturers, etc.



“After-school learning support at the local middle school)

In addition, a stakeholder meeting consisting of representatives from the educational circle, local administrations, local communities, and business industries is held in every two week, in order to share information, check local needs and learning-support staff's activities. Also, the town holds the Council for Attractiveness Promotion five times/year to discuss what the school and community should be toward 2020, thus aiming at sustainable development of both the community and the high school.

Student job seekers are supposed to do an internship at the time of the second year, which is arranged by the town hall and the commercial and industrial association. This is defined as Exploration-Based Internship, in which students must not only experience a job, but also formulate a hypothesis about “Contemporary Issues to Work”, verify it through internship experiences and interviews, and make a proposal for problem solution.

Furthermore, in cooperation with elementary and junior high schools and the town board of education, Wakeshizutani Senior High School conducts sessions at elementary & junior high school where students in the high school play a role of teachers and teach English and Analects of Confucius, science classes, and after-school learning support. In the event named English Camp, students in the high school make a plan for programs to make English familiar to elementary & junior high schoolchildren. Through these programs carried out by students' initiative to provide children with familiar role models, they can develop the sense of responsibility and self-esteem.

Moreover, A process for planning, activities, evaluation, and review has been established: check-up of students' attainment levels, the stakeholder meeting, and an annual questionnaire survey to people inside and outside the high school are conducted under the process, thereby the entire town supports students' career development. The high school also holds “Wake International Forum” and implements exchange programs with foreign high schools based on sister-school agreements (two in China, two in South Korea, and one in Taiwan), in order to develop human resources who cultivate global knowledge and can act and think from the global and regional perspectives.

Thus, Wakeshizutani Senior High School's approach makes the most use of various local educational resources, and supports elementary/junior high/high schools in cooperation with the local administration, the commercial and industrial association, and local businesses as a whole. This can be said an integrated support system to provide children with various opportunities by both the school and the town. At the same time, the local residents' thought is also changing and this change leads to the revitalization of the town.

Besides, the other approaches below are introduced in the original version of the white paper.

- Career education that has been addressed outside schools (Kochi Prefecture's "Tosacco-Town")
- Support for young people who dropped out of school (Gunma Prefecture's approach in cooperation with the Local Support Network Systems for Children and Young People)