

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

A Biannual Publication of the National Women's Education Centre of Japan

EFFECTIVE TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN'S SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

With longer life-expectancy and fewer number of children and general change in lifestyle, an increasing number of married women with high educational qualification wish to take part in some form of social activity after devoting exclusively to housekeeping and child-rearing.

Many women, however, have no more than a vague notion of what they want to do, what is best for them, or where to start. There are too few facilities that offer career advice or necessary training.

With the objective of developing training programme for these women, NWEC set up a four-year research committee in FY1988 to launch the study. Its 11 members include researchers in sociology, economics, women's studies, psychology and social education, company executives and NWEC staff members.

A guideline for organizing an effective training programme has been prepared by the committee. Two women's centres, one in Nagoya and the other in Shiga, have started an experimental programme based on this guideline. The results will be used to review the guideline. Some women's centers plan to launch pilot programme based on revised guideline from next fiscal year.

It should be noted that the committee has developed a guideline, and not a model programme. This is because needs of women are different in according to situations and regions, and guideline would allow each women's center to develop its own programme according to local need. The guideline is outlined below.

When women want greater participation in Japan, they are not necessarily seeking employment. Some have volunteer activities in mind, while others consider joining women's organization or group. A significant number of women want to study—a phenomenon that may be unique to Japan.

For many of them, study is an end in itself and not a means to find a job. By taking a course, for instance, on a classic Japanese novel "The Tale of Genji", at one of the "culture centers" or public halls, women get to know people they would have never met had they stayed home. This gives them a sense of 'participation' in social activities.

Under the circumstances, it was concluded that the programme should be developed with employment opportunities in mind.

Consequently, the programme includes the following

three points :

1) The project should encourage woman to learn more about herself.

Accordingly, counselling technique would be employed. This includes reviewing value system, way of judgement and likes and dislikes ; to learn the differences between one's self and others ; to identify one's pattern of behavior and problems associated with it.

2) The programme should encourage her to examine her relationship with society and family—to know how one's society identifies her.

It is often said that Japanese woman has a strong sense of guilt which leads in turn a lack of confidence in herself. She needs to realize that the root cause of her lack of identity lies in the social norms—particularly sex-roles—imposed on her.

Unless she is made aware of this, it is difficult for her to stop blaming herself and to begin to have confidence in herself.

The programme approaches this comprehensive issue from various points. This includes, for example, analyzing her relationship with people around her through discussion and writing an autobiographical note, learning how the society has affected her and studying her relation with the family.

3) The programme should help woman form career consciousness, offer information on the current female employment status and assist her in finding a job.

Information from abroad is very much wanted to develop a good programme. Information on a programme similar to ours would be highly appreciated.



Experimental programme of Women's center in Shiga

NWEC ACTIVITIES

WORKSHOP FOR STAFF OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION CENTRE

The Workshop was held for three days from Tuesday, May 30 to Thursday, June 1, 1989 on the topic of "Development of Women's Ability and Women's Educational Facilities - Theory and Practice of Self-Discovery". Participants were 88 staff members (57 women and 31 men) who are in charge of planning and executing women's education in public and private women's education facilities and related facilities throughout Japan.

Continuing from last year's theme "Women need to know themselves to develop their abilities", this year's workshop put emphasis on the theory and practice of self-discovery. The programme was designed to have some participants "experience" details and methods, and thereby facilitate daily planning and management of the centres.

The programme consisting of lecture, presentation of information, practice and symposium was successful for communicating the importance and necessity of knowing one's self.

In group practice session entitled "Self-discovery for Ability Development", staff members were introduced to various techniques including (1) Role playing to seek

better relationship ; (2) Group counselling to encourage people to display their abilities ; (3) Questionnaires to help a person know more about herself ; (4) Programme designing and methodology for self-discovery. Enthusiasm on the part of lecturer made the workshop worthwhile, motivating participants to understand the importance of knowing the self.

The workshop identified the following points to be noted by staff members :

- 1) They must set their eyes on the 21st century to anticipate the shape of the society to come.
- 2) They must have an opportunity to discover themselves so that they may choose right option in a society where increasing alternatives will be made available.
- 3) It is important to develop initiative and possibilities of each person.
- 4) It is necessary to develop one's mind and consciousness by (a) having confidence in oneself ; (b) keeping up the will for betterment ; and (c) learning to accept others.
- 5) Task for each centre is to plan programmes and offer employment so that women can utilize the things they have learnt.
- 6) Various centres must redefine the characteristics, regional conditions and reexamine their role and functions.

The workshop was worthwhile in communicating the importance of knowing one's self. But a way must yet to be found to incorporate the lessons in centre's planning and management.

In future, the workshop will have to further study ways of applying and promoting ability development programmes to fit various regional conditions.

NATIONAL SEMINAR FOR LEADERS OF PARENT EDUCATION CLASSES 1989

The three-day Seminar was held from July 5 to 7 on the theme of "Parent Education for the 21st Century - Child-rearing and Equal Involvement by Man and Woman". Ninety people (59 women and 31 men) engaged in parent education in the board of education, public halls and PTAs throughout Japan participated.

The programme started with lecture, followed by speech, visit to the Information Centre for Women's

Education, small group discussion and symposium. The seminar discussion focused not only on how to raise children but on the beliefs and life-styles of parents and participants, encompassing women's issues that lie behind parent education.

In a lecture titled "Child-rearing and Equal Involvement by Man and Woman", suggestions made on the topic included "equal involvement community", "sex role" and "parenting". The focus of the small

group discussion on the second day was not clear due to the divergence of the participants in terms of their status, ideas or geographical representations. Active and substantial discussion took place in the symposium, the final part of the programme, with active male participation.

The seminar concluded that the following points are particularly important in parent education.

- 1) Children of today lack exposure to nature and to household chores. Parent need to devote much more time and efforts to nurture self-help.
- 2) Sex differences lead to discrimination and to double standards (different standards applied to man and woman) in Japanese society. Parents should bear this point in mind so that education does not foster discrimination based on sex.
- 3) Parents also grow up through child-rearing. They gain from 'partnership' and 'parenting' experiences.
- 4) Fathers should communicate directly with their children without expecting mothers to be intermediaries.
- 5) Education at home, which deals with the child's whole life, may not always be compatible with school education.



MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE FOR WOMEN HELD

Women play major role in grass-roots cross-cultural activities.

Recently Japan has been promoting internationalization at a speed unprecedented elsewhere with increasing number of cross-cultural exchange programmes on going at national and local government levels.

With a view to reviewing the present situation of boom in internationalization from women's perspective and to seek key to building network of activities at the grass-roots, "Meeting of International Exchange for Women" was held at the National Women's Education Centre.

During the 3-day meeting which began on September 29, heated discussion on various issues concerning international exchange was held among 80 participants who came from throughout the country. In fact, National Women's Education Centre has been holding annual meeting on international exchange for women since 1985. This year, remarkable participation from grass-root groups in which women play major role was seen. They accounted for over 80 percent of the total participation.

Approximately 20 expatriots from 10 countries joined the meeting representing broad area including prefectural cross-cultural exchange officials, diplomats, journalists, students, those involved in foster-parent movements and Amnesty, international human-rights movement, etc.

The meeting began with presentations given by 5 groups having characteristic organizational or managerial features. Speakers reported on how activities had started, purpose and current issues and problems.

Representative of "We Love Asia Tomo no Kai" in Yokohama reported on annual charity concert it held in collaboration with Asians from 11 countries living in Japan. The objective of such activities was to enhance cross-cultural understanding as well as help Asian people achieve self-help. "Let us seriously consider how we as people living in Asian region can share difficulties and foster true friendship with people living in Japan who are suffering from economic, social and linguistic handicaps," appealed Ms. Yaeko Suzuki, President of the society.

Mr. Ken Joseph, representative of Nihon Agape House introduced its activities and said that it organized relief network for Japanese living abroad in 98 countries. Recently, it had expanded range of activities to include telephone counselling for foreign residents in Japan as well as Japanese children returning from abroad experiencing difficulty in re-adjusting to Japanese society. Institutional and social factors were reasons for vulnerable basis of voluntary activities in Japan. The best strength in overcoming obstacles lay in volunteering spirit as practicing love without demanding reward, he said.

Ms. Sonoko Matsuda, Secretary General of The Society to Introduce Kanazawa to the World, spoke from her experience saying "Women become lively

through grass-roots civic activities. The greater the citizen-initiated activity, the greater the vitality of community." Kanazawa Society started its activities with the publication of guidebook in English and had been successful in promoting campaign to study Japanese language in Kanazawa.



Mr. Akimitsu Hirano, President of the Society for Local Culture and International Exchange in Oita Prefecture, has been involved in promoting mobilizing local families to sponsor homestay guests. "We want to be parents to young people everywhere. Lack of funds is not an insurmountable obstacle. With innovative ideas network can expand without limits," he said positively sharing his secret in promoting successful grass-roots activities.

Also, although it may not come under the category of cross-cultural activity, a presentation was made by Ms. Noriko Mori on the activities of the Society to Consider Problems of Asian Women Living in Japan. Society located in Kumamoto Prefecture was organized to provide relief to Asian women working in Japan whose human rights had been violated to the extent that something had to be done. Ms. Mori stated in a quiet and gentle way how sometimes courage is needed in standing up to organized gangsters.

General session, following these presentations, discussed organizational and managerial requirements for international exchange. Topics of interest were: motivation of members, attributes of leadership, fund raising and cooperation with other organizations. Participants were then divided into groups to exchange views on a wide range of issues such as teaching Japanese, publishing English magazines, organizing homestay programmes, and providing counselling for foreign students and residents. Issues on intercultural marriage and education to enhance cross-cultural understanding were also discussed.

Finally, symposium on Women and International Exchange was held with a view to analyze the meaning of internationalization and to review the meaning of international exchange for women. It concluded by expressing enormous expectation on women. Internationalization of Japan depended greatly on successful internationalization of women's attitude and development of grass-roots intercultural activities depended on women power.

NWEC TRAINING COURSE FOR INFORMATION PROCESSING ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

Improvement in women's status is being called for in many parts of the world. One big step in achieving this goal would be to establish an information system on areas related to women so that data can be drawn whenever necessary.

NWEC has devoted itself to building an international information network on women. Accordingly, it held the international Seminar on Women's Information Network System in 1985, 1987 and 1988, and supported ESCAP in holding the "Regional Seminar on Development of Women's Information Network System for Asia and the Pacific" in 1986.

The training course has been planned in response to the request of the participants of previous international seminars on computers and high technology for women's information managers in Asia and the Pacific.

The seminar, drawing from our experience in building database on women's education, will be run as an ODA (official development aid)

project.

1989 is the first year of the five-year training course which is outlined below :

1. Target:

Women working on women's issues or persons in charge of women's information in Asia and the Pacific. Four persons from four countries.

2. Period of course :

Nine weeks, from January 17 (Wed) to March 20 (Tue), 1990.

3. Course topics :

Lecture and practice on information processing technology using personal computer.

Visits to women's education centres and information-related facilities.

As noted above, the course will provide training in information processing technology using personal computer. Five out of nine weeks are set aside for practical training on the basic knowledge and operation of PC software used widely throughout the world.

This includes BASIC program-

ming, preparation of flow chart, spread sheet and word processor operation. Much time will be devoted to data processing technology (dBASE-IV), a reinforced networking function.

We believe this training will provide women with the skills necessary to design and build their own information system and network.

Lectures and visits will not be confined to PC technology but emphasize acquisition of general knowledge on status and characteristics of women and information on women. We believe that a common perception on women's information is essential in building an international information network.

In spite of the small number of course participants, we expect it to offer much more than just skills in making great contribution to improving the status of women, as four leading women from different countries will live together for nine weeks, share training and exchange opinion and get to know each other.

Participants for this year's seminar, one each from Fiji, Indonesia, Nepal and Thailand have already been decided. Application for next year's course will start after April. NWEC is requesting the government to increase the budget so that the course can accommodate five persons.

WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE 1989

NWEC has held women's studies courses in late August every year from 1980 to 1988.

These three-day seminars, which were designed to bridge between theory and practice of women's studies were co-sponsored by researchers recommended by Japan's four leading women's organizations : International Group for the Study of Women, Women's Studies Society of Japan, Women's Studies Group and The women's Studies Association of Japan.

The course, which was attended annually by some 300 persons, has played an important role in providing an opportunity for exchange among women of different generations, regions, organizations, classes and occupations. It has also served

as a foundation in the formation of various networks.

This year, NWEC and seven members of the steering committee are planning to hold an international seminar to commemorate the tenth anniversary, under the title "Global Perspectives on Changing Sex-role". Seven overseas participants will be invited.

The women's studies course for 1989 was run by private groups. The reasons are as follows (1) it would be disappointing if women's studies course was cancelled because of the international seminar ; (2) some people have already prepared presentations at the courses concerning their research or activities ; (3) also, some municipal government staffs have allocat-

ed funds to participate in these courses.

After discussing the matter, representative of the four women's organizations decided to set up a voluntary executive committee which would conduct courses on behalf of NWEC this year. NWEC supported the project as a co-sponsor.

Women's Studies Course 1989 was held at NWEC on August 26 (Sat) and 27 (Sun) with the participation of 340 people (including 10 men).

Animated discussions characterized small groups formed to discuss free topics, rather than a common theme. Discussions were held in freer and more relaxed atmosphere compared to those held by NWEC.

It is hoped that this will provide a momentum for women's studies groups and leaders to form a nationwide network and cast significant

impact on research, education and movement in Japan.

The following are the themes of research and practice presented at the Women's Studies Cours 1989:

<Groups Presentation>

1. Education

- 1) "Theoretical and Practical Study of Women's Studies Education"
- 2) "What Women Have Been Up To — Lecture on Municipality and Women's Studies"

2. Lower Structure

- 1) "Frontier of Marxist Feminism"
- 2) "Development and Women"

3. Family

- 1) "Surname, Household and Grave in the Era of First Sons and Daughters"
- 2) "Mother and Daughter"

<Individual Presentation>

1. Views on Women

- 1) "The Mongolian Woman in Historical Perspective"
- 2) "Overview of Feminism Art"
- 3) "Stories of Prostitutes I Met in India"
- 4) "View of Woman by Women's Leaders in Prewar Japan—Case of Yayoi Yoshioka"

2. Reproduction

- 1) "Symbolic Meaning of the Role of Midwife—Case of Village in France"
- 2) "Culture and Oppression of Women : Status in Japan from 1970-1980-On the Eugenic Protection Act and Religion"
- 3) "Decision-making on Whether or Not to Have a Child—Interview with Young Couples in West Germany"

3. Review of Socialization

- 1) "Woman in Nursing Class (Case in Kasu-cho, Saitama Prefecture)"
- 2) "Women's Networking on Child-rearing —Cases of Voluntary Child-care"
- 3) "Practice of Sharing Memorial Tablet in Saku Region, Nagano Prefecture—Festival of Memorial Tablets of the Dead Mediator by Woman"
- 4) "Teaching the Family to First Grader"

4. Restructuring Sex Differences

- 1) "Case from Hunting and Gathering Community, the Hair Indians-Analysing Requirements to Minimize Sex Discrimination"
- 2) "Evolving Sex-Roles among Double Income Families—A Comparison between U.S. and Japan"

JAPANESE WOMEN TODAY

FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE PACIFIC RIM CONSORTIUM ON WOMEN'S STUDIES

The first conference of the Pacific Rim Consortium on Women's Studies was held as "Japan-U.S. Conference on Women and the Family" at NWECC from March 28 to 30, 1989.

The Pacific Rim Consortium on Women's Studies was co-sponsored by Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies and Education, Josai University and Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Stanford University to promote exchanges and development of women's studies in the Pacific rim countries.

The Conference was attended by some 180 people including seven speakers from universities on the West coast and ten researchers working on the topic in Japanese universities and the private sector in areas such as sociology, cultural anthropology and comparative literature.

In the three-day first section, speakers from Japan (Emiko Ochiai, Michiko Obayashi, Sumiko Hoshino, Michiko Takahashi, Motoko Serizawa, Mioko Fujieda and Kiyomi Kawano) and the U.S. (Marilyn Yalom, Sylvia Yanagisako, Irene Diamond, Deborah Rhode, Myra Strober, Emily Abel and Miriam Johnson) spoke on seven sub-topics including law, paid work, issues of the aged and violence in the family to clarify similarities and differences.

Exact comparison could not be made in all cases as speakers sometimes discussed the same sub-topic from different viewpoint. However, they gave clue to issues in both countries, and ways of dealing with them. Some issues, such as "Women and the Issues of the Aged", appeared similar on the surface but bared differences in basic concept of family and roles and standards expected of wife, husband, parent and child.

The lectures titled "Changing Relations between Capitalism and Patriarchy"(Chizuko Ueno) and "The Family—Past to Present" (Hiroko Hara) were presented to identify issues important in dealing with the topic, 'women and the family'.

The second part consisted of a symposium titled "Women and the Family : Post-Family Alternatives" (panelists : Taeko Tomioka, Chizuko Ueno, Noriko Mizuta, Miriam Johnson and Myra Strober).

The symposium discussed visions of the future family starting from common perspective : 'modern family' as a historical product adapted to industrialization in the modern era, oppresses women and creates irrevocable gap in the rapidly changing present society.



Various alternatives were suggested. Taeko Tomioka spoke of the possibility of creating quasi-families, formed not by traditional kinship or by man-women relationship but one in which members can come together and disperse as need arises.

Chizuko Ueno advocated feminism that offers alternatives between free shelters and the conventional form of family, which will continue to exist in future, even as "money-lineal family."

Miriam Johnson offered possibility of maternal values changing marriage, family and society. Myra Strober suggested human survival depended on moving away from the current economic model based on competition to creating society based on mutual help and cooperation.

Noriko Mizuta considered human relationship in

"post-family" era, pointing out that women and culture need to be reconstructed from the very root.

It has been long believed that nuclear family would create enviable community notwithstanding the contradictory notions on which it was based : individualism, partnership and childcare.

Long after the illusory nuclear family had disintegrated, women was trapped between having sexual partner or being left alone to herself. This had created the so-called women's culture—wedded to literature, psycho-analysis and writing self-history—enriched by unhappiness of women.

This was followed by discussion on issues such as "disintegration on nuclear family and women's inner crisis," "women's self-representation and culture" and "women, wealth and power". The question and answer session dealt, among others, with "lesbian community", "possibility of alternative community", "future of family and feminism".

The proceedings and papers will be included and

published before the end of the year in Vo.3 of the REVIEW OF JAPANESE CULTURE AND SOCIETY, an English journal issued by the Center for Inter-Cultural Studies and Education, Josai University.

The second conference of the Pacific Rim Consortium on Women's Studies on the topic of "women's self-representation and culture" is scheduled to be held at NWECC from March 28 to 30, 1990.

The theme of the symposium will be "women's culture as consumption".

We hope speakers, including those from Asian nations, will report on development of "women's self-representation" in patriarchal socio-culture, and discuss how it will progress in the post-feminism era.

For inquiries on the conference and English journal, please contact the following :

Center for Inter-Cultural Studies and Education
Josai University
1-1 Keyakidai, Sakado-shi, Saitama 350-02
phone : 0492-86-2233 (ext.645)

WOMEN'S GROUPS IN JAPAN

The Women's Group section is written by representatives of the group introduced.

PAN PACIFIC SOUTH EAST ASIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF JAPAN (PPSEAWA),

History

"The women first gathered in Honolulu in 1928 when Miss Jane Addams of Hull House, one of America's foremost citizens, presided.....The countries represented at the time of the founding and designated as charter or foundation members were Australia, Canada, China, Fiji, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands East Indies, New Zealand, Philippines, American Samoa, United States of America and Hawaii. This last because of its unique contribution to the affairs of the Association has held an independent status within the Association."

"In 1930 the Pan Pacific women met again in Hawaii to discuss mutual problems and achievements...The Association was then formally organized, its objects as outlined in the Constitution being :

- (a) To strengthen the bonds of peace among Pacific Peoples by promoting a better understanding and friendship among the women of all Pacific countries.
- (b) To initiate and promote co-operation among women of the Pacific region for the study and betterment of existing conditions.

"The Association was to organize conferences as an essential means of attaining its objectives."

When a number of women from the Pacific Area met at Honolulu in 1928, the Japanese delegation then consisted of 20 members. Among them were, Fusae Ichikawa, Hide Inoue, Tsune Gauntlett, Taki Fujita, and Yayoi Yosioka. In 1937 at the 4th Conference held at Van-



couwer, Mrs. Tsune Gauntlett of Japan was elected President. In 1958, the 8th Conference was held in Tokyo at the International Christian University and Miss Ai Hoshino was the President of the Japanese members.

PPSEAWA, Japan started as the Japan Committee of Pan Pacific Women's Association and had been participating in the International Conferences held in various countries ever since.

Under the leadership of Miss Taki Fujita, a small body was re-organized and was enlarged with a new Constitution in effect July 9,

1977. Miss Fusae Ichikawa, who had taken responsibility in keeping all the papers and records and the funds of the Committee till this time, became the Advisor. Since then, the new Board of Officers met regularly on the 2nd Sunday each month and started to establish whatever duties the Board Members should be doing. The membership grew rapidly.

Mrs. Rinko Yamazaki, who was, from 1972-1978 Vice President at large and from 1978-1981 Second Vice President, was elected International President (1981-1984) and presided the 16th Conference held in Japan. This International Conference was held for the second time in Japan at National Women's Education Center. The experience gave the members opportunities to understand and to share the importance of being members of PPSEAWA of Japan as well as of the International. Meeting friends and exchanging ideas and thoughts of members from different cultures and backgrounds are always precious.

Activities

PPSEAWA, as a NGO, co-operates with NGO activities. As for international co-operation, from 1986, it has been assisting 2 children



Members of PPSEAWA Japan

in Nepal and from 1987, the Association joined the Foster Plan and adopted 2 children in the Philippines.

From 1988, 4 students from South East Asia studying in Tokyo are being awarded scholarship grants. This year the students from Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Taiwan (2) received the grants.

To help make the activities possible, bazaar is held for fund-

raising. To keep better relations among the members, Newsletters, "PPSEAWA" is issued twice a year. Special programmes and gatherings such as lectures, discussions with tea, are being planned. From April, study group meetings on Conference Theme, "The Changing World-Our Heritage and Our Future" for 1990 in Bangkok are being held once a month at present.

Membership 500

Office 2-2-2
Higashi-Nakano
Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164

Officers

Advisor Taki Fujita
President Rinko Yamazaki
Vice President

Mitchiko Nakamura
Michi Nakamura
Shigeko Inoue

Kyoto Chapter Shizue Nishide
Aichi Chapter Fumiko Sakaki

JAPANESE CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATIVE UNION (JCCU)

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union was established in 1951 under its first President, Toyohiko Kagawa. Since its establishment, immediately following World War II, JCCU has been actively pursuing "peace and better standards of living"

The status of JCCU as of the end of March 1989 :

- Number of member co-op societies : 654
- Number of co-op members : 12.64 million
- Total business : 2371.5 billion yen
- Share capital paid by co-op members : 190.1 billion yen

A. Types of co-op in Japan

Co-ops in Japan may be divided by type of business into :

1. Retail co-ops

Co-ops are supplying everyday items from food to electric appliances through joint buying and co-op stores.

Co-ops are developing and improving "Co-op brand products" by feeding back members' responses under the motto "supply better products at reasonable price"

2. Medical co-ops

Medical co-ops were formed to meet the needs of people in the community to receive reliable medical treatment. Co-ops operate hospitals and clinics, with emphasis on preventive medicine and promotion of good health.

3. Insurance co-ops

Insurance co-ops provide safeguard against accidents. They include life insurance and mutual benefits for fire and traffic accidents.

4. Housing co-ops

Housing co-ops seek to provide better housing environment for workers.

B. Role of co-ops in today's Japanese society

Housewives are a key element in retail co-ops, which make up over



80 percent of all co-op members. As women, housewives and local residents, they play positive role in following activities.

1. Consumer movement

a) Controlling prices

Many co-ops promote original co-op brand products to lower prices through bulk purchase.

Co-op members maintain household books to record and analyze data on living, which are used to voice their opinion in public. Household log is an important tool in heightening consumers' consciousness and promoting their autonomy. Approximately 500 thousand copies of co-op household logs are in use.

As part of consumer movement, co-ops sued oil companies for unfair price cartel during the first Oil Crisis in 1973. The trial is still in progress.

b) Banning health-hazard products

There is increasing consumer awareness today on safety of foods. JCCU established "Round Table on Food Safety" by scholars and experts, to carry out comprehensive studies on food safety. A list of "unnecessary food additives" and "dangerous food additives" (called ListZ) has been prepared to call on the government to gradually reduce their use.

2. Activities to protect health, livelihood and peace

a) Activities to protect good health

In addition to improving dietary habits, Co-ops promote self-

examination of urine, blood pressure, and color of tongue to manage one's own health.

b) Welfare and mutual help

Co-op does not merely work on the government to improve welfare administration but exerts efforts to upgrade neighbourhood welfare true to its commitment to "mutual sharing and caring". Co-op keeps registry of people who need help with housework, (such as the elderly and post-natal women,) as well as members who can offer support as volunteers.

c) In search for peaceful society

Housewives in charge of the well-being of the family earnestly wish for peaceful world without war. As organization of people of the only nation which has experienced atrocities of atomic bomb, co-ops are calling for abolition of nuclear arms. Co-op co-sponsors annual "Photo Exhibition on A-bomb for Mothers and Children" throughout the country.

3. Activities to promote local culture and develop local economy

Fostering a safe and sound cultural environment for young and old does not conflict with development of local economy which provides job worth working for. In fact, they are opposite sides of the same coin. Co-ops promote human-oriented economy through human exchanges—cooperation, joint work and tie-ups—among agricultural and fishery cooperatives and small and medium enterprises.

CHANGES IN WOMEN'S AWARENESS OF AND PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

1. Background

Japanese women gained political rights in 1945. The new constitution promulgated the following year declared equal rights for both sexes. The condition of Japanese women has changed dramatically in four decades since then.

Women's standard of education has improved rapidly; today, the proportion of women receiving higher education, including junior college, exceeds that of men's. Japanese women's average life expectancy has extended by 30 years during this period. They now enjoy the longest longevity in the world. The average number of children has dropped from 4 to 1.7. As a result, women have much time on their hands after child-rearing as never before.

Housewives of today need not work as much as before, thanks to the pervasive use of home electronic appliances brought about by economic growth and technological development. More women now keep their jobs after marriage or join the labour market after their children have grown up. Many women take part in community activities and study and learning activities.

Various surveys have shown that women are more involved than men in a broader range of communal and

study activities. The government has enforced the Equal Opportunities Law to pave the way for legal requirements on equal treatment.

In reality, however, inequalities still remain at work-site and other places. The social status of women has been believed to be low in Japan than in other countries, as shown by the result of an international statistical survey ('Country rankings of the status of women, Population Crisis Committee, 1988'). Women's political awareness and participation did not seem to advance. Even in the U.N. Decade for Women, many women turn to the opinion of their husbands and other family members when it comes to voting.

It was found that some 30 percent of the wives voted for the same candidate as their husbands in Tokyo ('The status of the 11th and 13th Election of the Members of the House of Councilors' 1977, 1983 by the Committee for Promotion of Open Election; and 'Opinion Survey on Male and Female Voters in Tokyo' by Citizen's Center for Reconstruction of Politics based on Democracy). There were many other signs of dependency on the part of female voters. The proportion of female M.P.s has hovered around 3-4 percent for the past forty years until 1988 notwithstanding higher female voter turnout than men.

Japan is yet to see a female prime minister. Only three women have been appointed minister in Japan between 1946 and 1988. Women have not assumed the post of governor or mayor since they gained suffrage. Only three women have become town elders in Japan.

Women, however, are gradually stepping up their representation in local assemblies, particularly in urban areas, as shown in Table 1. In the 1987 election, women organized networks to elect female candidates. Women have started to take an active part in politics and their power has helped many female candidates win local assembly and Upper House election in 1989.

Table 1 Changes in the Number of Female Members in Local Assembly

Figures in parenthesis indicate proportion (%) of female members

Year	Prefectural assembly		Municipal & Special district assembly		Town assembly		Total	
	Total	Number of female members	Total	Number of female members	Total	Number of female members	Total	Number of female members
1950	2,438	22 (0.9)	8,611	94 (1.1)	18,515	677 (3.7)	29,564	793 (2.7)
1955	2,468	32 (1.3)	21,398	158 (0.7)	114,470	455 (0.4)	138,336	645 (0.5)
1960	2,643	36 (1.4)	17,617	190 (1.1)	63,974	275 (0.4)	84,234	501 (0.6)
1965	2,606	41 (1.6)	17,930	198 (1.1)	57,023	311 (0.5)	77,550	550 (0.7)
1970	2,628	33 (1.3)	19,502	272 (1.3)	50,869	202 (0.4)	72,999	507 (0.2)
1975	2,828	32 (1.1)	21,255	432 (2.0)	48,220	217 (0.5)	72,303	681 (0.9)
1980	2,833	34 (1.2)	21,153	514 (2.4)	47,221	274 (0.6)	71,207	822 (1.2)
1985	2,857	38 (1.3)	20,761	674 (3.2)	45,293	390 (0.8)	68,911	1,102 (1.6)
1986	2,811	39 (1.4)	20,628	711 (3.4)	44,827	404 (0.9)	68,266	1,154 (1.7)
1987	2,895	64 (2.2)	20,481	861 (4.2)	43,923	522 (1.2)	67,299	1,447 (2.2)

Sources: Survey by Election Department, Ministry of Home Affairs

2. 1989 Election

1989 marked a landmark year for women's participation in politics. It started in June with an election in Niigata, which was conducted to fill a vacancy. A male candidate supported by the ruling LDP was favoured to win the election in this conservative prefecture that relies on agriculture. As it turned out, a female candidate backed by the Socialist party won the election by a wide margin. This came as a big surprise, as she neither had the experience in politics nor the organizational support enjoyed by the rival LDP candidate.

The result of this election sent shock waves throughout Japan. It triggered active debate on its significance; some interpreted it as a sign of change in the LDP-dominated politics that lasted 34 years since the end of war, while others attributed the result to the emergence of women's power.

The successful candidate, Kinuko Obuchi, is 44 years old. After graduating from junior high school, she found a job at a spinning factory in Tokyo. Obuchi worked her way through part-time high school. She took part in union activities in her spare time, dealing with women's issues and discrimination on employment. While working, she looked after her bedridden parents for five years.

Through her experience in raising children and managing household, Obuchi regards herself a professional in education, living, and caring for the aged that are serious issues in this country. She appealed to voters that politics need to pay more attention what consumers want.

Obuchi's appeal based on the consumer's viewpoint won voters' support in the election. She successfully challenged traditional values in the Japanese society that say 'women's place is the home, and women are not fit for politics' (Tokyo Shimbun, July 10; Nihon Keizai Shimbun, July 31).

The second highlight election took place for the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly, held one week after the Niigata election. Thirty-three women ran for the 128-seat assembly, of which 17 were successfully filled by women, elected with high vote counts. A record number of women ran and were elected to the Metropolitan Assembly and the proportion of female members nearly doubled from the last election, from 7 to 13 percent. The LDP lost more than 30 percent of its seats in the election, while the opposition Socialist party, which backed many female candidates, increased its seat 2.6-fold.

The LDP also suffered a great setback in the elec-

tion of the House of Councilors held three weeks later. Female candidates, backed primarily by the opposition party, enjoyed overwhelming support; they now account for 13 percent of all Upper House members, up from 8.7 percent.

In this election, female candidates used a new campaign tactic. Most of the campaigners were housewives who volunteered to help in their time off housework. No doubt this refreshing campaign helped capture women's votes.

The election to nominate prime minister was held during the first session of the Diet after the Upper House election. The House of Representatives nominated Toshiki Kaifu, member of the LDP, and the House of Councilors designated Takako Doi, Chairperson of the Socialist Party. Japan's first female prime minister did not materialize, as the decision of the Lower House prevails over that of the Upper House under the Japanese political system. But Doi has become the first woman candidate in Japan for prime minister. Doi became the chairperson of the Socialist party three years ago as the first woman to head a major political party in Japan. She has actively promoted women to take part in politics, backing many female candidates in local and national elections.

The new Kaifu cabinet appointed two female ministers. Mayumi Moriyama, an LDP member who became the first female Chief Cabinet Secretary, says; "I've always thought this day would come. I became aware of this explosive power of women five or six years ago, and I thought 'something's going to happen one day that'd shock all those men.' It's like magma starting to blow and erupt. Men's last fort, politics, is giving way." (Asahi Shimbun, July 18)

According to a survey by the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), women make up 12.7 percent of all members of parliament in the world as of June 1989. Japan has joined the ranks of the world, at least in the Upper House, following its election. But as shown in the attached table, the rate in the Lower House lags far behind other countries.

Changes in women's political activities have captured attention in the three elections this year. Are these changes here to stay? Will the changes encourage truly equal participation under the present political framework? These questions will be answered in the election of the Lower House-whose decision prevails over the Upper House - scheduled to be held soon. In this context, the outcome of the Lower House election draws much attention in Japan and elsewhere.

Table 2 Number and Proportion of Female Members in Lower House

Country	Number in 1975	Proportion (%)	Number after recent general election	Proportion (%)
Bangladesh	15	4.7	4	1.2
Turkey	9	2.0	6	1.3
Japan	7	1.4	7	1.4
Thailand	3	1.1	12	3.4
Egypt	9	2.5	18	3.9
Malaysia	5	3.2	9	5.1
Brazil	1	0.2	26	5.3
U.S.A.	16	3.6	23	5.3
England	27	4.2	41	6.3
France	8	1.6	37	6.4
India	22	4.2	43	7.9
Canada	9	3.4	28	9.9
Mexico	15	5.0	43	10.7
Italy	24	3.8	81	12.8
West Germany	30	5.6	80	15.4
China	653	22.6	632	21.2
Sweden	75	21.4	108	30.9
Finland	46	23.0	63	31.5
Norway	24	15.5	54	34.1
U.S.S.R.	241	32.1	259	34.5

Source: Mainichi Shimbun, June 19, 1989

SURVEY REPORT

The "Women's Education Study Group" was established by National Women's Education Centre in fiscal 1986. The Group selects basic data on women from various statistics and through its analysis, studies the change in the awareness and social conditions of women in Japan. Each year it also publishes "Status of Women as seen in Statistics".

This report introduces *statistical survey on social activities of women in Japan*.

(1) Political Participation

(a) Let us look at the changes in voter turnout for Upper and Lower House elections. Women's turnout in the 1946 Lower House election, when women exercised voting rights for the first time, was 67.0 percent. It was lower than that of men, 78.5 percent.

Since the end of the 1960s (1969 Lower House election and 1968 Upper House election), however, women's turnout has been on the rise, the watershed year being 1968.

Women's voter turnout has also surpassed that of men's in local elections since the 60s. The rate is particularly high in mayoral and municipal assembly elections, at over 91 percent.

(b) In the first general election held after the war, 39 female representatives were elected to the Diet. This proved to be an exception with women's representation hovering around 3 percent since. In the 1989 Upper House election, however, women accounted for 5.3 percent of the total.

Changes in the Number of Female Members in the Diet and Local Assembly

Year	Diet members			Member of Local (prefectural) Assembly		
	Total	No. of female members	Proportion of female members	Total	No. of female members	Proportion of female members
1950	699	24	3.4%	29,564	793	2.7%
1960	698	24	3.4	84,234	501	0.6
1970	733	21	2.9	72,999	507	0.7
1980	762	26	3.4	71,207	822	1.2
1986	750	27	3.6	68,266	1,154	1.7
1989.7	749	40	5.3			

(2) Participation in Public Office

Proportion of women in national public service has remained about the same for the past decade. However, more women are assuming higher managerial positions. The number of female local public employees are

Changes in Voter Turnout

	Year of Election	Turnout	
		Female	Male
House of Representatives	1946	67.0%	78.5%
	1949	68.0	80.7
	1958	74.4	79.8
	1969	69.1	67.9
	1980	75.4	73.7
	1983	68.3	67.6
House of Councilors (N.B.)	1947	54.0	68.4
	1950	66.7	78.2
	1959	55.2	62.6
	1968	69.0	68.9
	1980	75.3	73.7
	1983	57.1	56.9
Municipal Assembly Election	1955	92.3%	92.3%
	1967	93.1	91.0
	1975	93.7	91.6
	1979	93.6	91.2
	1983	93.5	90.8
	1987	91.7	88.7

(N.B.) Members of the House of Representatives are elected in two elections: electoral and proportional representation districts. The above table shows the result of the latter.

The proportion of female members is gradually increasing in local assemblies, from 0.5 percent in 1955 to 1.7 percent in 1986. The lowest female representation can be found in municipal assemblies where women's voter turnout is the highest.

increasing.

Women's participation in national and local councils has increased slightly in the past decade. They represented 6.6 percent of national council members as of March 31, 1988.

Changes in the Number of Women in National Public Service Management

Fiscal year	Director General of Ministry			Director of Ministry		
	Total	Women	Proportion of women	Total	Women	Proportion of women
1975	1,271	1	0.1%	5,667	19	0.3%
1980	1,559	3	0.2	6,459	39	0.6
1984	1,623	2	0.1	6,815	47	0.7
1985	1,606	4	0.2	6,512	36	0.6
1986	1,626	7	0.4	6,694	46	0.7

Changes in the Number of Female Members in Advisory Councils of Governmental Agencies

Year	Total number of advisory councils	Number of advisory councils which include female members	Proportion of advisory councils which include female members	Total number of members of advisory councils	Number of female members	Proportion of female members
1975	237	73	30.8 %	5,436 人	133 人	2.4 %
1980	199	92	46.2 %	4,504	186	4.1 %
1985	206	114	55.3 %	4,664	255	5.5 %
1988	203	123	60.6 %	4,509	297	6.6 %

(3) Participation in Corporate Policy Making

In a survey on personnel management of female workers conducted by the Ministry of Labor, almost half the people surveyed said women have no opportunity for promotion.

However, the survey also showed a slight increase in the number of people who think women can assume executive positions above department managers.

Opportunities for Promotion of Women to Executive Position

(%)

Year	Total	Women have no opportunity for promotion	Women have opportunity for promotion	Women can assume positions above department manager	Women can assume position of department manager but no higher	Women can assume position of section manager but no higher	Women can assume position of chief clerk but no higher	Others
1977	100.0	52.3	47.7 (100.0)	(11.2)	(4.1)	(27.3)	(40.5)	(16.9)
1981	100.0	45.1	54.9 (100.0)	(14.3)	(5.4)	(24.8)	(35.6)	(19.9)
1984	100.0	43.7	56.3 (100.0)	(15.9)	(4.7)	(28.3)	(30.9)	(20.0)

Changes in the number of Trade Union Members and Estimated Organization Rate for Men and Women

Year	Female			Male			Proportion of Women among all union members
	Number of union members	Number of employees	Estimated organization rate	Number of union members	Number of employees	Estimated organization rate	
	ten thousand	ten thousand	%	ten thousand	ten thousand	%	%
1950	130	344	37.9	447	910	49.1	22.5
1960	194	668	28.0	557	1,523	36.9	25.9
1970	320	1,089	29.4	828	2,187	37.9	27.9
1980	338	1,374	24.6	886	2,638	33.6	27.6
1985	339	1,537	22.1	893	2,739	32.6	27.5
1988	336	1,680	20.0	880	2,885	30.5	27.6

(4) Participation in group and social activities

Some social activities are conducted exclusively or largely by women. They include activities to improve lives as consumers, health, medical and welfare activities. As of 1987, women's groups totaled 36,890, organizing some 8.84 million people. In the past four decades, the number of groups and members peaked in 1971 and 1960, respectively. Both numbers have been declining since then.

On the other hand, consumer and PTA groups are increasing every year. In spite of the high percentage of women in PTA groups, only 2.98 percent of all presidents and 36.0 percent of vice presidents are women (in 1983), showing persistence of traditional concept of role playing by sex.

Changes in the Number of Women's Groups and Members

Fiscal Year	Classification	Number of Woman's groups	Number of members
			(thousand)
1950		13,000	7,074
1955		22,260	7,074
1960		43,220	13,017
1965		31,290	10,583
1971		45,447	11,076
1975		36,908	9,811
1980		36,949	9,339
1985		42,259	9,816
1986		38,113	8,886
1987		36,890	8,843

INTRODUCING NWEC

The National Women's Education Centre was founded in 1977 by Japan's Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. The Centre's activities include :

Training for women in the form of seminars, lectures, group discussions, individual study projects, and other educational programmes. The Centre's comprehensive training facilities are available to any group whose subject matter relates to women's education.

Exchange of information among women's education leaders from Japan and overseas, as well as others who are interested in women's issues.

Information gathered and disseminated by NWEC's extensive libraries of printed and audio/visual materials.

Research of issues touching on women's and family education.

Apart from NWEC-sponsored programmes, our facilities are available to women's groups and individuals for study programmes and cultural exchange free of charge (excluding meals and accommodation).

To use our facilities, please complete and submit a NWEC application form no more than six months and no less than 10 days in advance.

NWEC welcomes your inquiries and comments.

NWEC Newsletter
National Women's Education
Centre
728 Sugaya, Ranzan-machi,
Hikigun, Saitama 355-02
Japan
Tel : 0493-62-6711
Fax : 0493-62-6721
Cable : NWEC HIGASHI-
MATSUYAMA

PUBLICATION

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE OFFERING ON JAPANESE WOMEN

**JAPANESE WOMEN WRITERS
IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION :
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY** (by Claire Zebroski Mamola, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities (Vol. 877), Garland Publishing, Inc., 136 Madison Avenue, New York NY 10016 (212) 686-7492, July 1989, 469 pages \$52.

This book lists the name of author, English title, publisher and year of publication of 971 fiction and non-fiction works written by Japanese women and translated into English.

The book is made up of six parts as shown below. Brief outline is given for 583 works in sections from (1) to (3).

(1) 13 novels, diaries and essays in the Heian period (794-1185).

(2) 209 non-fiction works published from 19th century to 1987.

(3) 361 fiction works published from 19th century to 1987.

(4) 111 technical papers published between 1960 and 1987.

(5) 79 articles written by women from those published in the periodical AMPO, issued from 1969 by Japan Peace for Vietnam Committee and its affiliate organization for foreign residents in Japan (AMPO is one of the few periodicals that carry essays by Japanese women in English translation)

(6) 198 dissertations published between 1949 and 1986. Dr. Mamola, the author, began compiling the list after starting to lecture History of Modern Japan at the Appalachian State University, in the



United States. The author's original focus was on novels and short stories but ended up listing various non-fiction works-from biography and autobiography in contemporary Japan published in general magazines- written on and by Japanese women.

According to the author, the list of works reveals that female writers in Japan tend to focus on certain topics. They include tension between wife and mother-in-law, issues of married couple, adopted children, psychology of wife living in foreign countries, extra-marital affair, mother-child relationship, caring for the elderly, religion and Japanese women, discrimination in Japanese society, and war and women.

Many books on other topics are also published : abortion, arts, women and education, friendship among women, pollution, future of mankind, United Nations Decade for Women, labour issues, treatment of sex in Japanese society, suicide and women's groups.

The book is only a first step and the author plans to update the list in future.

FOREIGN VISITORS TO NWEC

As of 30 September 1989, the NWEC received 6,782 visitors from 118 countries. Followings are some of the recent visitors of the Centre.

26 May 1989 : Ms Saisuree Chutikul, Secretary-General, National Youth Bureau, Office of the Prime Minister, Thailand

10-11 August 1989 : 68 English Teachers from 7 countries who came to Japan under AET (Assis-

tant English Teacher) programme supported by Japanese Government

5-7 September 1989 : 17 Specialists from 12 Asian-Pacific countries to attend the ASPBAE (Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education) Japan Conference on Adult Education for Women, 1989

7 September 1989 : Dr. Chung Yun-Choon, Vice Minister of Political Affairs (II) Korea