

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

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

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE 1996

1. SUMMARY

"Women's Education, Learning, and Empowerment" was the theme of the 1996 International Forum on Intercultural Exchange held by the National Women's Education Centre for two nights and three days from 20 to 22 November 1996. The objective of this forum was as follows: to provide an opportunity to discuss the problems and the situations in various countries of the world with regard to education and learning for empowerment of women; and also to aim at constructing international networks in the field of women's education.

On the first day, the keynote speech and sessions on Literacy and Access to Education, and Education for Income Generation were held. During the morning of the second day, sessions on Women and Health, and Education for Girls and Female Students were conducted, and that afternoon, participants divided into four small groups for discussions on the four major themes. The programme for the third day began with small group reports and was brought to a successful close with a plenary session.

A total of nine invited speakers, five from within Japan and four from abroad, and 213 participants, 183 Japanese and 30 non-Japanese, took part in the Forum.

2. KEYNOTE SPEECH: Toward a Society of Gender Equality

Speaker: Ms. Yoko Nuita
Chairperson, Council for Gender Equality

The Council for Gender Equality, acting as an advisory body in the Prime Minister's Office, has been involved in compiling a vision for gender equality for the past three



years, and it presented a report of its work this past summer.

A society with gender equality is a society where women and men are equal members, where opportunities for active participation in all areas at all levels within the society are ensured, where women and men can equally receive political, economic, and cultural benefits and blessings, and at the same time share equal responsibility for these. It is not a society bound by historically or culturally created gender restrictions, but rather it is a society with new values, capable of making a contribution to the global society and world peace.

There are two basic ways of considering this issue. The first says that a gender equal society is needed to solve Japan's difficult problems. This way of thinking is found mainly among men. The other emphasises that we must have a gender equal society in order to focus attention on the basic human rights of women, and this is the way women are thinking. The Council took the latter position.

There are basically four specific measures that must be put in place. To start with, customs and institutions must be reconsidered from a gender standpoint, and women must push their way into policy-making positions. Secondly,

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conditions in the work place, the home, and the local region must be brought into order. For example, social services such as day care for children and nursing care for the elderly must be improved. It is also necessary to change customs and institutions to enable men to be able to manage both work place and home. Thirdly,

human rights, especially the rights of women, must be reexamined as a major issue. In other words, problems of violence against women, human rights as portrayed in the media, and reproductive health / rights must be given a central place in education. Lastly, we must fix our attention on the global society at all times.

Based on this report, the Japanese government is presently considering what concrete measures it will take, but leaders and persons in responsible positions in both national and local governments must promote these measures with strong determination. The empowerment of women is also extremely important. For example, even if it means giving up rights they have heretofore had or taking on new responsibilities, what is important is moving toward the achievement of gender equality.

3. SESSION I: A Case Study on Access to Education and Empowerment

*Speaker: Ms. Kannikar Yaemgeasorn
Former Chief Technical Advisor for Education Projects, United Nations Development Program (from Thailand)*

*Commentator: Mr. Shinji Tajima
Board Member, Development Education Council of Japan (DECJ)*

Education and training are essential for individuals as well as national development. They are the principal means by which human potential can be transformed into knowledge, competencies and thereby act as the force that will shape the future of a nation.

The key to attempts at fundamental reforms of education is the community and its commitment to education. Community involvement is essential. The people of communities, especially the family as a strong cohesive unit (and woman in particular) must be empowered to have a major say in the education of their children.

The main focus of the education projects Improved Access to and Improving Quality of Primary Education in the Rural Areas are regarded as potent tools for raising the quality of life of the people and providing large benefits to community. For the poorer people and those with disadvantages, sound primary education and non-formal education activities i.e. community learning



centre, increase their access to self-employment and productivity. This education will serve as a firm foundation for them to continue their education for further development.

4. SESSION II: Women's Education, Income Generation, and Economic Empowerment

*Speaker: Ms. Mary Lou Biron Caharian
Coordinator, Women Collective Resourcing for Empowerment : WOMEN CORE (based in the Philippines)*

*Commentator: Prof. Yoshio Kuba
Professor, Faculty of Education, Tokyo Gakuzei University*

More than half of Filipino women in 1994 had no direct access to income from the formal wage sector. With the majority of them working in the informal wage sector, and their productive contribution is not even visible in national income account.

While most formal education system are based on the principle of equal opportunities, in reality this is not so. More women have college academic degrees than men, and more women have taken post-graduate studies. But formal education, on the whole, continues to reinforce gender stereotypes and discriminations. The case of gender in education



has led to a limited range of occupations and wage inequities as well as pushed women to low-productivity jobs. Education and poverty are so intertwined that we cannot touch one without affecting the other.

The alternative to formal education and one that truly offers women an opportunity for income generation is non-formal education and training. It is one that is woven into an economic project. It is vitally important that gender sensitisation becomes part of every phase of the economic project. The process of economic empowerment is slow and arduous. It requires women's access and control over economic resources on a sustainable basis, supports women's existing livelihood, strengthens their capabilities and builds their leadership. For indeed, without economic empowerment, the women's development agenda for change in the 21st century will not be within our reach.

5. SESSION III: Women's Health in a Historical and Cross-cultural Perspective

*Speaker: Prof. Kajsa Sundstrom
Co-ordinator, Q Web Sweden: Women's Empowerment Base (based in Sweden)*

*Commentator: Ms. Aiko Iijima
Training Division Director & Senior Programme Officer, Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation in Family Planning, Inc. (JOICFP)*

In the world today, the health of women depends on where she lives and which social class she belongs to. The disparities are immense between women in poor and rich

countries and between poor and rich women in the same country. The maternal mortality is often used to determine and to compare women's health status in different countries. Each year 600,000 women die in connection with pregnancy and childbirth.

In every society, women's reproductive health and rights are influenced by a number of factors, including the demographic development, the population policy, attitudes to sexuality and family life, religious and cultural beliefs, restrictions on contraceptives and abortion, and the quality of health services.

The most striking impression, when studying women's reproductive health in a historical and cross-cultural perspective, is the inequity when it comes to women's health. The disparities between and within counties are immense, but at the same time the differences indicated that the situation can change.



The way to a better life and health for women is through their empowerment. By solidarity and joint actions, women can change their own situation. Laws can be revised, health services can be accessible, equal opportunities in education, economy and work can be achieved, and quality and gender equality in family and society can be a reality.

6. SESSION IV: Catching up and Passing the Boys - Women's Education in Britain in the 1990s

*Speaker: Prof. Rosemary Deem
Professor & Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences,
Lancaster University (in Britain)*

*Commentator: Prof. Michiko Kanda Professor, Faculty of
Literature, Toyo University*



Gender and education are the current controversies and areas of debate in Britain at the present time. Education reform has had positive benefits for women's education, but the fact that girls are now considered to have overtaken boys in many school examination performances has meant that a 'moral panic' has broken out over the fate of boys.

Equal opportunity policies in schools, college and higher education are most capable of achieving some amelioration of inequalities in educational settings.

More women are entering educational management but the notion of a glass ceiling beyond which they cannot rise is still something which cannot be dismissed. However, men rarely recognise or admit that gender can and does affect management practices and expectations.

For many decades women didn't do well in education, and it was little public concern. But as soon as we find out that boys are not doing very well, immediately everybody

says it is terrible. It is not fair. Social class and ethnicity also affect boys as well as girls.

Mothers may play a key role in the selection of school places and also pay the price of wider choice by giving up their time.

We have to look at how education affects employment, civic life and household. The evidence that if girls are doing bad at school they are still not doing better in the other aspects of adult life must be addressed, because that is central to women's empowerment.

7. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Participants divided into the four areas of Literacy and Access to Education, Education for Income Generation, Women and Health, and Education for Girls and Female Students, and enthusiastically discussed these from a variety of positions. A Japanese specialist in each area acted as the coordinator for each group, with a specialist from abroad serving as commentator.

8. SMALL GROUP REPORTS

The coordinator for each group reported on what had been discussed in her small group, and then Ms. Nuita pulled these results together. Her summary focused on the necessity of women's networks, emphasising the importance of the gender perspective in the empowerment of women.



9. PLENARY SESSION

The eight specialists (four Japanese and four from abroad) who participated in the small groups answered questions put forth by the participants. In their answers, they agreed that education is the pillar upon which a gender equal society must be built, and that the awareness of each individual in the society must be raised in order to achieve a just society.

(Yuko Yuhara, Specialist, Information and International Exchange Division, NWEC)



FORUM ON WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES 1996

The National Women's Education Centre sponsored the three-day Forum on Women's and Gender Studies 1996 (2-4 August, 1996) under the theme, "The Empowerment of Women and Women's and Gender Studies — From Beijing to the Year 2000."



Since 1980, an interdisciplinary study of various problems related to women and women's life has been conducted at this Centre. At the same time we conducted seminars on women's studies as research programmes with the objective of offering opportunities for women to gain information and build networks helpful in their study and practical experience.

This series drew to a close in 1995, with a number of successes and issues being carried on into the future. Building on the successful outcome, we are moving forward to start a new endeavour this year entitled the Forum on Women's and Gender Studies.

Moving toward the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Conference), researchers, educators, NGO activists, and students involved in women's and gender studies and the empowerment of women came together to share a variety of issues and the results of their day-to-day research, study and practical experience. The purpose of this programme is to exchange information about activities and experiences related to women's and gender studies, in order to promote the empowerment of women as we approach the year 2000.



The meaning of "empowerment" being used here is: for women themselves to become independent entities, and gaining power to become agents of change in the cultural, social, political and economic aspects of their society.

The first day of the programme consisted of a panel discussion on "The Empowerment of Women and Women's and Gender Studies." The rest of the programme was made up of independently planned workshops that had been enlisted from different regions of the country.

Participants came from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south, with 42 different urban and rural prefectures as well as the United States represented.

While 600 places were open to registration, 809 persons actually attended. Of those, 95% were women (768 women, 41 men), and 60% (461 persons) were in their forties and fifties. With regard to occupation, 30% (231) were related to groups and organisations, and about 10% came from each of the following categories: local government employees such as members of boards of education (98), central and local government employees in charge of women's policies (96), and researchers and teachers (85).

Following is an outline of the programme.

PANEL DISCUSSION

The theme of the panel discussion was "The Empowerment of Women and Women's and Gender Studies." Based on the results of the Fourth World Conference on Women / NGO Forum on Women, we attempted a theoretical and practical consideration of issues that must be dealt with in Japan to bring about the empowerment of women, including the effectiveness, possible problem areas and methods of application of women's and gender studies.



There were four panelists: Ms. Teruko Inoue, Professor, Wako University, who conducts research in women's studies; Ms. Yumiko Ehara, Associate Professor, Tokyo Metropolitan University, who does gender research; Ms. Yuko Nakashita, an attorney who is involved at a practical level; and Mr. Kimio Ito, Professor, Osaka University, who researches in men's studies.

A short summary of each panelist's presentation follows.

The Second Stage of Women's Studies

Ms. Teruko Inoue

New horizons created by gender studies have enabled new possibilities and directions for the reconstruction of women's studies to emerge. As the point of view has shifted from women's studies to gender studies, a broadening of our outlook has become possible so that it will include:

- (1) the more diverse concepts of gender and sexuality as opposed to a simple "male - female" dichotomy;
- (2) the makeup of difference and discrimination within the female population;
- (3) the relationship between the male/female coordinates and those of a variety of variables such as ages, class, and race.



In order to penetrate the "politics of difference," so easy to be missed in the neutral approach in which gender research is carried out, a feminist or women's studies point of view is indispensable. Because of this,

women's studies and gender studies must work in cooperation at arms length.

The Meaning of the Shift to Gender Studies

Ms. Yumiko Ehara

The introduction of men as subjects of study, the diversification of research interests, and a number of other changes have occurred in the women's studies of the nineties, and in line with this, the word "women" is being replaced by the word "gender." There are four reasons for this:

- (1) With the rise of men's studies, the use of the word "gender" which includes both women and men is more convenient;
- (2) the word "gender" is used with an awareness of the female sex;
- (3) gender is used as a variable;
- (4) an increase in the number of people not wanting to be bound by either a female identity or a male identity, women's studies and female identity have become increasingly diverse causing the choice to use the term gender. At the same time, this change in word usage includes a shift from women's stud-



ies to gender studies.

The Second Stage of the Women's Movement

Ms. Yuko Nakashita

Since the International Women's Year, the legal system has been adjusted, but discrimination against women has not disappeared. The gender role system (division of labour by gender) that exists in the industrial society is behind this, and we have now come to the time when drastic change in that social



system is called for. Revolutionising the gender role system alone will not solve the problem, however. Without going for an overall solution to other problems, it will not be possible to achieve a change in the gender role system. What is needed now is the active participation of women in places where these overall solutions will be found. This involves the creation of a new holistic system, and the empowerment of each and every woman is important in this. At the same time, the networking of women in a variety of areas is called for.

The Whereabouts of Men's Studies

Mr. Kimio Ito

The field of men's studies was born in the midst of the development of women's studies and the women's movement, and is a style of study that considers the problems of the male society and the male sex from a man's viewpoint, so that as a man (or as a woman) they may design a more human way of life. Behind this is the impasse of the industrial society, the present society built on the male principles of efficiency and profit first — where men are also beginning to feel the difficulties of living.

The constructing of a society not caught up in gender issues is one of the major themes of gender studies, but in order to accomplish this feat, it is necessary to concentrate thoroughly on gender. As I look at these issues from a long-range standpoint, I think that women's studies and men's studies will someday integrated in the form of gender studies.

A heated discussion followed as the panelists interacted with each other and the many questions and comments that came from the floor, on the concepts of empowerment and gender, and actual court cases on sexual harassment.



WORKSHOPS

Sixty independently planned workshops that were enlisted from different regions of the country were held. Some of these reflected the actual experiences of women becoming empowered, some were presentations of the results of their day-to-day research, practical experience and study, and the need for network building. Following is a list of the workshops by category:

- Women's issues, gender - 16
- Study on women's issues - 4
- Women and human rights - 1
- Women and expressions - 4
- Women and the media - 2
- Women and labour - 4
- Women's policies and women's institutions - 6
- Women's participation in decision-making positions - 4
- Women and their bodies, sexuality - 2
- Development and women - 3
- Women's history - 3
- Changes in families and households - 4
- Children - 3
- Equal education for girls and boys in the schools - 3
- Other - 1

These workshops addressed "Twelve Critical Areas of Concern" listed in the Platform for Action attesting to the fact that the agenda for the empowerment of women coming out of last year's Beijing Conference / NGO Forum on Women is incorporated in the activities of women in each region of the country.

Workshops were managed and carried out with a high degree of proficiency, exhibiting necessary decision-making skills as we move toward the realization of a gender equal

society. They showed an awareness of women's issues, expressed the ideas related to decision-making in easy-to-understand terms, and presented the results of day-to-day research, education and actual life experiences. The workshops took a variety of forms besides the usual lecture / discussion format. Some of those are listed below:

- Composing of a script and acting out of a "musical," a short story, or a skit
- Debate
- Buzz session using the KJ method
- Group discussion
- Mock "Wide Show"
- Role play
- Simulation game of a development project
- Gender image game
- Communication by computer
- Practical experience in putting together of a gender check sheet
- Listening to music written by women composers
- Slides
- "Kamishibai" (picture-card show)
- Video tape recordings and movies
- Photograph displays and panel displays

A great variety of methods were used, and participants actively took part in the workshops, as lively and meaningful discussions unfolded. A number of participants expressed a desire to conduct workshop in order to share their own ideas and make their own presentations next year.

During these three days, women came together from a number of different positions to share their day-to-day activities enthusiastically and build networks, all moving toward implementing the Platform for Action.

(Chieko Kobayashi, Specialist, Programme Division, NWEC)



SURVEY REPORT

1995 Status of Women as Seen in Statistics

The social conditions surrounding women have changed greatly, and women's life styles are becoming diversified. As women make their own forward-looking decisions in the midst of these conditions, it is necessary for them to have a clear understanding of where they really are.

For reference purposes, a variety of statistics selected from materials gathered by the Study Group of Women's Education in the National Women's Education Centre since 1987 on women's education and family education have been compiled as "1995 Status of Women as Seen in Statistics."

Since the first printing, new statistical data has replaced older data in response to the changes in the times, and as a reflection of The Fourth World Conference on Women a special new edition published in April 1996 attempts at updating statistics on gender while also including a large number of comparative international statistics. I have selected a number of statistical materials from that

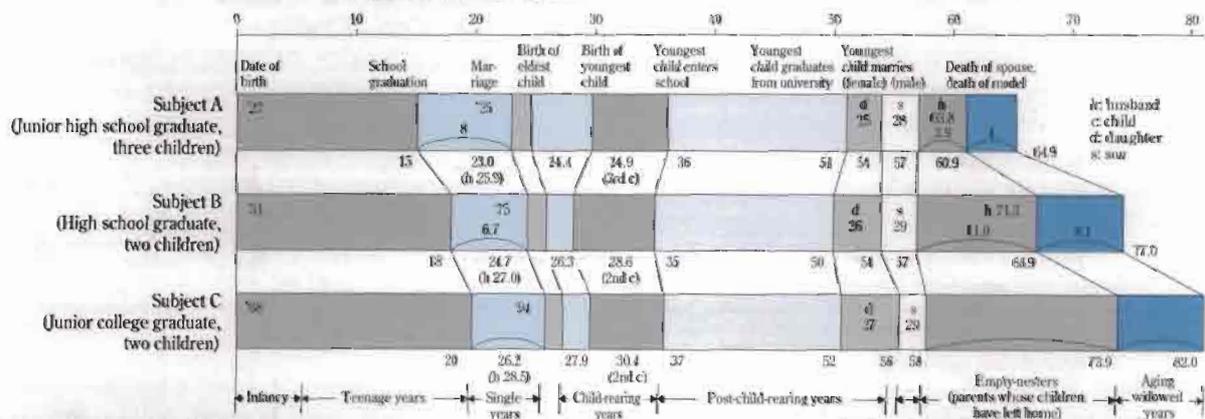
report that tell the story of the transformation of women in Japan that has taken place during the fifty years since the end of the war.

1. Changes in Life Cycle

The average life expectancy in Japan continues to be extended, and in 1994, it became the highest of any country in the world, with women living to be 82.98 and men 76.57 years. This extension of a woman's life expectancy is due to a change in her life cycle, as the number of children she bears has decreased and thus the number of years she spends raising the children has also gone down.

As husbands and wives spend a longer period of time alone together after their children are married, and because of differences between their life expectancy and the time of marriage, women are living alone for longer periods. The issue of how a woman spends her years after child-raising has become a very important issue.

Graph 1 - Changes in Life Cycle of Three Case Studies by Generation



Source of materials: Present Conditions and Policies of Women (1995 edition)

(Note: The subjects and spouse's birth years were calculated from 1950, 1975, and 1994

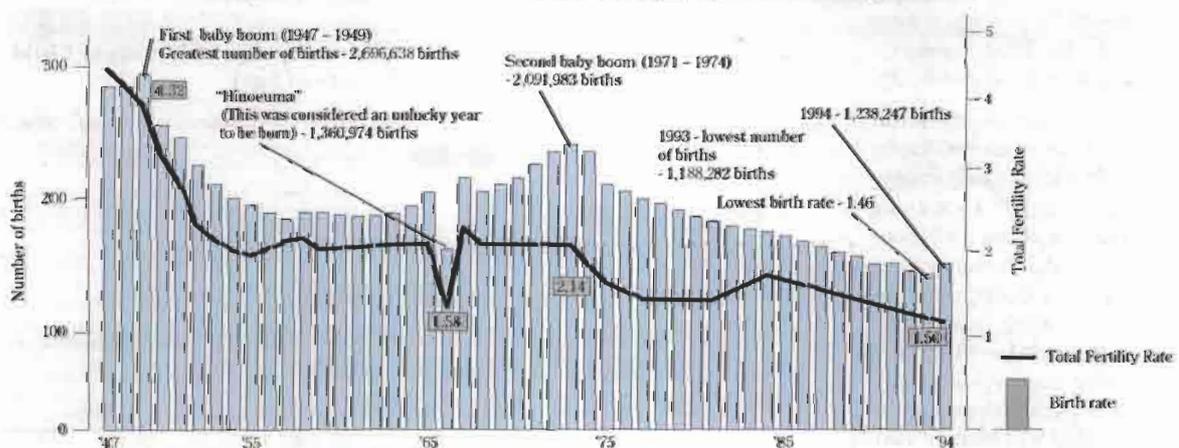
(average age at first marriage). The age of Subject A when her first child was born is calculated from 1950 (average age of mother when first and third child were born.)

In the cases of Subject B and C, the birth of the first child was calculated from 1975 and 1994 respectively (using the average number of years after marriage before the first child was born).

The birth of their second child was calculated from 1975 and 1994 (using the average of the difference between the age of the mother when her first and second child were born).

The death of the subject or her spouse was calculated using the average life expectancy (after age 20). [Subject A's spouse was calculated from 1947.]

Graph 2 - Number of Births and Changes in Total Fertility Rate



Source of materials: "Vital Statistics of Japan", Ministry of Health and Welfare

2. Decrease in birth rate

Total Fertility Rate, (the total number of children one woman bears during her lifetime figured each year, a total of the births by age of the mother, from 15 - 49) show that rates have rapidly fallen since 1970, and this decline reached the "1.57 shock" in 1989, which was referred to as an emergency situation. Subsequently, it decreased to 1.43 in 1993, revived a bit to 1.50 in 1994, and went back down to 1.43 in 1995. At the present time, this decrease in the birth rate is seen as an extremely serious social problem requiring policy attention.

The small number of births can be attributed to a rise in marriage age (couples becoming married later in life) and the accompanying rise in the child-bearing age, and an increase in the number of men and women who do not marry at all.

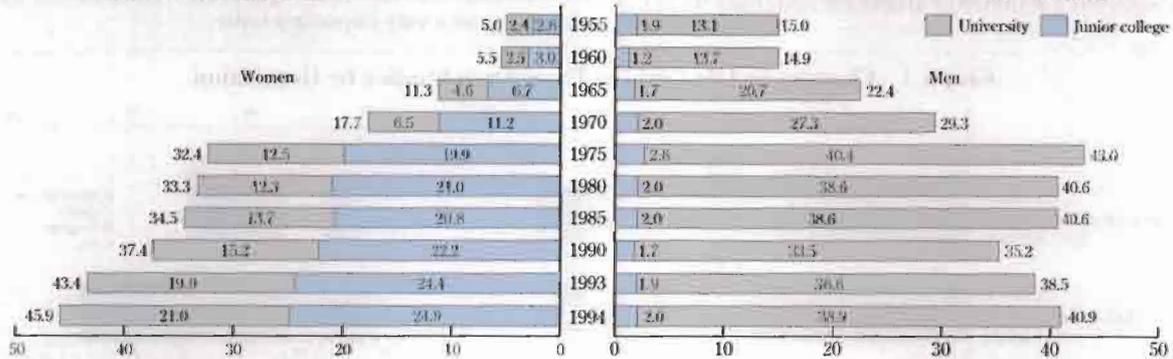
An examination of the change in the marriage age of women shows that in 1970, women were being married at 24.6 years, but this had risen to 27.3 years in 1995. In the past, a woman's marriage age was likened to a Christmas

cake (there was a market for them until (December) 24, but after that, no one wanted to buy them), but that way of thinking is a thing of the past.

3. Improvement of the level of women's education

Economic growth has made life easier financially for families, and as the demand for education has increased, the ratio of students going on to higher education has increased for both men and women, so that in 1995, 97.0% of the girls and 94.7% of the boys went on to high school after graduating from junior high school. Women's advancement into universities and junior colleges is especially noteworthy, rapidly increasing from 1960, and finally passing men's rates in 1990, with 47.6% of women and 42.9% of men going on to higher education in 1995. The increase in women's advancement, however, is maintained by the quantitative expansion into junior colleges, with women's major fields of study biased toward the humanities, sociology and education, few seen in the fields of engineering and science.

Graph 3 - Changes in the Ratio of Students Who Advance to University and Junior College



Source of materials: Basic School Survey, Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture

- (Note) 1. Ratio of students who advance to university and junior college [equals] Newly enrolled students of university (department) and junior college (regular course) [divided by] junior high school graduates of three years previous (times) 100
 2. "Newly enrolled students" does not include students taking correspondence courses
 3. 1996 figures list most up-to-date figures.

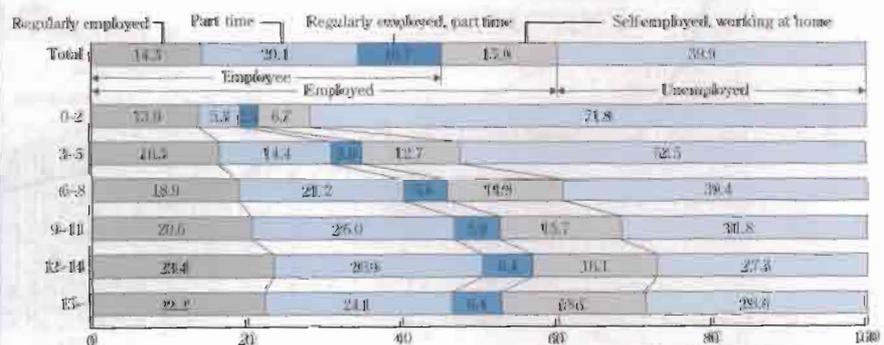
4. Changes in women's employment

There were 15,840,000 women working in 1953, with 54.6% of women over the age of 15 being in the work force. One in three of these women were gainfully employed and the remaining two-thirds worked at home. With the period of high economic growth that followed, employment increased, but women's labour participation rate decreased. In 1975, only 45.7% of women were employed. By 1993, however, the rate had recovered to 50.3%.

Women's employment has continued to increase so that by 1993, 77.0% of all working women were wage earners. Examining the changes in women's labour force participation by age, we see that the rate falls during the child-bearing and rearing years which begin in the mid-twenties, and rises during the forties and fifties, so that a graph denoting the working pattern of women continues to take the form of an M-

curve. Women's employment is greatly influenced by conditions in the home, more specifically the ages of the children. In homes where the youngest child is younger than three years old, only 28.2% of wives work, but as the age of the youngest child increases, the rate of employment also goes up, so that 72.7% of all married mothers of children aged twelve to fourteen are working. Looking at the type of work

Graph 4 - Employment Situation of Wives by Age of Youngest Child (wives under 55 years of age)



Source of materials: Employment Status Survey (1992), Statistics Bureau, Management and Coordination Agency

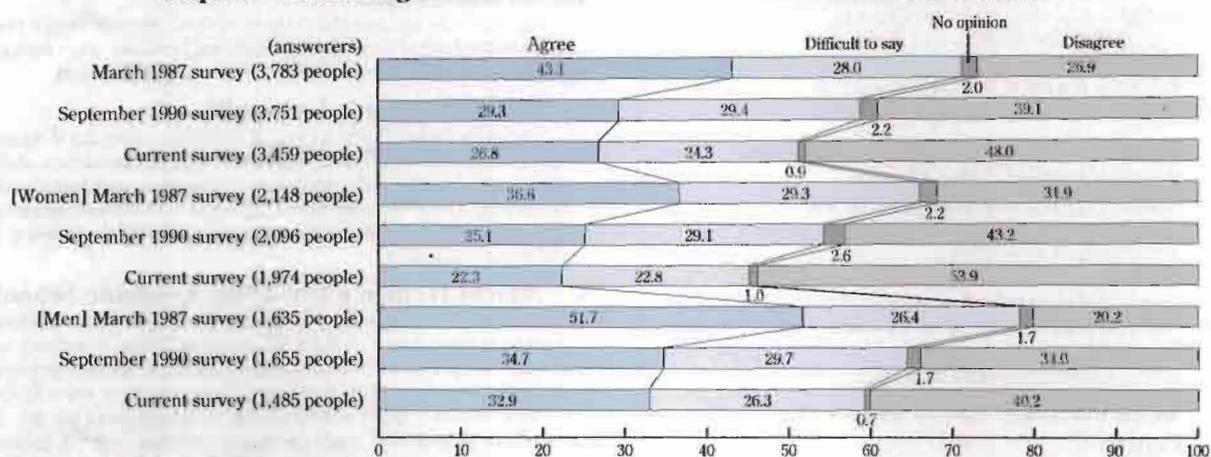
these wives are engaged in, we find that the largest percentage are engaged in part time work. Thus we can say that a great many wives become employed part time as their children grow older and take less time and care. It continues to be extremely difficult for women in the child-bearing and rearing ages to work outside the home.

5. Changes in women's awareness, men's awareness

Since the International Women's Year in 1975, measures have been developed to rectify the consciousness of division of labour by gender, and according to the results of public opinion surveys, the feeling about the gender role

system as defined by the notion "men should work while women stay home," in the long run appears to be weakening. In the Public Opinion Survey on Gender Equality conducted by the Prime Minister's Office in 1995, 22.3% of all women and 32.9% of all men supported the notion "men should work while women stay home," showing a difference in consciousness. Comparing these results to similar surveys done in 1987 and 1990, we find that the percentage of both men and women supporters has decreased. In an international comparative survey on women's issues conducted in Tokyo in 1992, our consciousness of division of labour by gender is higher than countries such as Sweden and the United States.

Graph 5 - Concerning the notion "Men should work while women stay home"



Source of material: Public Opinion Survey on Gender Equality (July 1995), Prime Minister's Office

6. Participation in decision-making

The Human Development Report was published by the 1995 United Nations Development Plan.

According to this report, one of the characteristic movements of the twentieth century is a passionate call for gender equality, led mainly by women. The support of men, however, has also increased, sending the message that we are at a critical point where human development cannot go forward without a resolution of gender issues. According to the Human Development Index (the average life expectancy at birth, level of education, and income), Japan is third, behind Canada and the United States. On the Gender Empowerment Measure (measuring the number of women in the parliament, management, professional, and technical occupations), however, Japan's ranking falls to twenty-seventh.

6.3% of the members of the national parliament were women.

In the local government sector, we find more women members in urban areas, but fewer in small towns and villages. One of the requirements of a democracy is equal participation by women and men in planning and decision-making processes. To advance the empowerment of women as we move into the twenty-first century, there is a need in the society to include women in decision-making, rather than entrusting it only to men.

(Hiroe Nakano, Researcher, Programme Division, NWEC)

Graph 6 - Changes in the Number of Women Members of the Parliament

Classification	Members of the national parliament			Number of members of the House of Representatives			Number of members of the House of Councillors		
	Women members	Total members	Percentage of women members	Women members	Total members	Percentage of women members	Women members	Total members	Percentage of women members
April 1946	-	-	-	39	466	8.4	-	-	-
April 1947	25	716	3.5	15	466	3.2	10	250	4.0
November 1950	24	699	3.4	12	449	2.7	12	250	4.8
September 1960	24	698	3.4	11	451	2.4	13	247	5.3
January 1970	21	733	2.9	8	486	1.7	13	247	5.6
July 1980	26	762	3.4	9	511	1.8	17	251	6.8
December 1983	26	759	3.4	8	511	1.6	18	248	7.3
September 1984	27	752	3.6	8	508	1.6	19	249	7.6
January 1986	27	750	3.6	8	502	1.6	19	248	7.7
April 1987	29	761	3.8	7	509	1.4	22	252	8.7
April 1988	29	758	3.8	7	506	1.4	22	252	8.7
February 1989	29	752	3.9	7	500	1.4	22	252	8.7
July 1989	40	749	5.3	7	497	1.4	33	252	13.1
February 1990	45	763	5.9	12	512	2.3	33	251	13.1
July 1993	52	764	6.8	14	512	2.7	38	252	15.1
September 1995	47	752	6.3	12	500	2.4	35	252	13.9

Source of material: Studies conducted by the Secretariat of the House of Representatives and the Secretariat of the House of Councillors

In 1995, only

WOMEN'S CENTRES IN JAPAN

The Women's Centres Section is written by representative of the institutions introduced.

ADACHI WOMEN'S AFFAIRS CENTRE

Adachi Ward is one of twenty-three special wards located in the extreme northern part of Tokyo, the capital city of Japan. It has an area of 53.25 square kilometers, a population of over 637,000 people, and is the third largest ward in the city, behind Setagaya and Ota.

Adachi Ward has a women's administration since 1979 when it established a special organisation devoted to the issue. And the Adachi Women's Affairs Centre was opened in April 1988, as a result of seventeen years of work by women in the ward.

The Centre was set up as a place that provides opportunities for lifelong learning for women; it acts as a base for exchange and activities, combining functions of collecting and disseminating information, and developing skills needed for involvement in women's affairs; it is thus a comprehensive coordinating facility that promotes women's affairs as participants search for solutions to women-related problems.

Following is a list of the work in which the Centre is presently involved.

1. As an overall coordination facility for women's affairs, the Centre

- (1) promotes the planning of activities for women (now in the first year of a revised Women's Master Plan Adachi II),
- (2) is engaged in a comprehensive research and survey of women's issues,
- (3) coordinates communication among related agencies,
- (4) conducts activities that promote enlightenment on women's issues, and
- (5) offers counseling services for women.

2. As an exchange and activities centre, the Centre

- (1) supports the activities of women's organisations and groups,
- (2) supports mutual exchange activities among women's organisations and groups,
- (3) supports volunteer movements and activities, and
- (4) provides areas for children and in-service training for care-giving.

3. As an ability development centre, the Centre sponsors classes on

- (1) women's issues,
- (2) the various stages of women's lives,
- (3) women and labour,
- (4) men's issues, and
- (5) volunteering.

4. As an information centre, the Centre

- (1) collects, lends, and displays books especially related to women's issues,
- (2) collects, lends, and displays government materials and resources,
- (3) clips and displays newspaper articles,
- (4) collects and displays newsletters and papers from groups such as PTA,

- (5) administers a reference service,
- (6) provides audio-visual materials, and
- (7) provides women's information (by using the on-line service by the National Women's Education Centre).

A few special programmes Adachi Ward provides include:

1. Classes for volunteers in a Japanese language programme

Fifteen thousand persons from abroad reside in Adachi Ward. These classes focus on preparing volunteers to teach Japanese, in Japanese, to these people.

Anyone who attends thirty-three of these classes in one year qualifies as a volunteer to teach conversational Japanese to the persons from abroad at eight different locations throughout the ward.

2. Adachi Women's University

Under the theme, "From a Created Woman to a Creating Woman," this programme strives to enable women to think for themselves, make decisions, and gain the skills necessary to assume a participatory role in the society. This year is our thirteenth time to offer this programme. Those who completed last year's training are presently involved in administrative planning.

3. Adachi Women's University Graduate School

As a strategy to achieve a better reflection of women's opinions in ward-level governance, Adachi Ward is attempting to actively appoint more women as members of councils and committees throughout the various sections of the government, as it is in these councils and committees where policies and directions for government are set. At this graduate school, they study the finances of Adachi Ward, gaining competence to function as committee and council members. The purpose of this study is to enable participants to become able to construct policy proposals to the Ward.

4. Classes on the Remaking of Men

Women's issues and men's issues are really the two sides of a coin. This programme, in its seventh year, aims to enable men to search for solutions to their own problems. "The Remaking of Men - toward Men's Tomorrow" was published in 1993 by Domesu Shuppan. (Japanese title: Dansei Kaizo Koza - Otokotachi no asu e)

A number of other programmes are also being conducted, including a one-day care-giving class for men, a debate class to promote the empowerment of women, and a training programme to assist women in Adachi Ward who are starting their own businesses.



From the beginning, we recruited ward residents to serve on the planning / steering committee, and they have built up the programme. What is more, they have also sponsored seminars in local areas.

In order to ensure that classes held at the Centre do not end when the last session is finished, it makes efforts to tie class participants into group activities that will continue on. Many groups conduct their activities from the Centre. This Centre is distinctive for the way it supports women in their efforts to better themselves, especially with its night classes for women who work outside the home, and its provision of child care for women with small children.

The staff consists of twelve members, including three who are part time. They work to promote women's affairs, aiming at an Adachi Ward where "women are alive, men are alive, and the community is alive" confident that active women and men make an active community.



PUBLICATION

ENGLISH BOOKS ON JAPANESE WOMEN

1. A New Woman of Japan: A Political Biography of Kato Shizue

(by Helen M. Hopper. Published in 1996 by Westview Press, Inc., 5500 Central Avenue, Boulder, Colorado 80301-2877, U.S.A. 304 pages. ISBN 0-8133-8971-2.

This perceptive, detailed biography traces the life of Kato Shizue, one of Japan's most powerful female activists and politicians. Kato's activism initially was sparked by her friendship with Margaret Sanger, who inspired Kato to found a Japanese birth control movement in the 1920s. Kato then opened one of Japan's first birth control clinics in the 1930s and worked for women's rights up to World War II despite the growing oppression of the country's militarists. After the war, she returned to public life, running for elective office. She served as a representative and as a senator, and with her entree to the offices of the American Occupation she became one of the most effective women in postwar politics.

Although primarily a political biography, this book also traces Kato's joys and sorrows as wife and mother. Helen M. Hopper movingly describes Kato's solitary struggle when her formerly radical husband abandoned her for imperialist adventurism; her secret liaison with the political labour leader Kato Kanju and the birth of a daughter during the U.S. firebombing of Tokyo. Still active at ninety-eight, Kato Shizue continues to speak out forcefully for the causes she espouses. Scholars of Japan and of women's history will find this book a richly documented and engaging view of women's issues and political life in Japan.

Helen M. Hopper received her Ph.D. from Washington University, and is adjunct professor of history at the University of Pittsburgh. She is the author of several articles on twentieth-century Japanese society.

Contents are:

1. Good Wife, Wise Mother
2. "New Woman" of Japan
3. Independence
4. "Dangerous Thoughts"
5. Discreet Activism
6. Political Suppression
7. Quiet Disapproval
8. "The Winter Years"
9. Rising from the Ashes
10. Political Triumph
11. Populist Politics
12. Discord
13. Conflict over Birth Control
14. "Life-Changes"
15. A Political Maverick



2. Voices from the Japanese Women's Movement

(Edited by AMPO, Japan Asia Quarterly Review. Published in 1996 by M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, New York 10504. 207 pages. ISBN 1-56324-725-9 (hardcover: alk. paper). ISBN 1-56324-726-7 (pbk.: alk. paper).)

In the Forward Charlotte Bunch says: "Women often ask how they can be more global in their approaches to feminism. How can they know what is happening in women's movements

elsewhere or what can they teach to make their courses more international in scope? This book helps to answer those questions. It is the kind of collection that I long for from every country in the world. It includes a wide array of diverse voices from a rural farmer to a lesbian translator, from lawyers to artists and trade unionists. And it spans the generations from veteran feminist pioneers to younger voices from the so-called "post-feminist" generation.

This collection introduces the reader to the history of feminism in Japan and to current debates among Japanese feminists. But it also offers fresh insights on questions being asked by women elsewhere.

The editor AMPO is an English-language quarterly magazine which has been produced since 1969 by the Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC), a Tokyo-based citizens' group. The purpose of AMPO has long been to act as a channel for Japanese people's voices, and to present alternative analyses of Japan and Asia. To this collection 29 Japanese women contributed 26 articles as follows:

I. The Women's Movement

1. Issues for Japanese Feminism
2. The Women's Movement: Progress and Obstacles
3. The Movement Today: Difficult but Critical Issues

II. Issues Facing Women

4. Economic Development and Asian Women
5. Ten Years Under the Equal Employment Opportunity Law
6. Policies of the Japanese Government Toward Women
7. Military Sexual Slavery and the Women's Movement
8. Commodified Sex: Japan's Pornographic Culture
9. Promoting Prostitution
10. The Trafficking of Women
11. In Search of Ruby Moreno
12. Lesbians and Sexual Self-Determination
13. The Past and Future of Unai, Sisters in Okinawa
14. Women and Alternatives to Agricultural Decline



III. Voices of Women

15. Commitments to Women's and Buraku Issues
16. Looking at Sexual Slavery from a Zainichi Perspective
17. My Work as an Ainu Woman
18. Mizura: Providing Service to Women in Yokohama
19. Promoting Women's Participation in Yokohama
20. Photography from a Woman's Perspective
21. A Cooperative Restaurant on the Miura Coast
22. A Women's Space in Sapporo
23. Apron: A Restaurant Run by Women
24. Working at a Consumer Cooperative
25. Fighting Back Against Serving Tea
26. From Child-Care to Local Politics

INTRODUCING NWEC

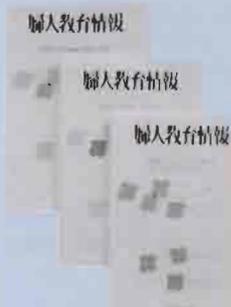
1. Publications

(1) Proceedings of International Forum on Intercultural Exchange 1995 (Japanese and English)

The report of the above Forum held on 15-17 November 1995 has been completed. As a general outline of this forum was included in the last newsletter, we will not include it here. The report is available in English; please contact us should you wish to receive a copy.



(2) Japanese Journal of Women's Education (Japanese)



This journal was created in 1979 to provide information on domestic and international materials related to women's education. Accompanied by the publishing of a research bulletin, the journal will publish its final issue in March 1997 (Issue #34). The special theme for this issue will be "Toward a Twenty-First Century Women's Centre." It will deal with what a women's centre

should be, and focusing on future prospects, it will clarify the roles and issues related to a women's centre, while introducing future aspirations of local women's centres around Japan and their hopes for this Centre.

2. The programmes of the Centre

(1) 1996 Programme

1996 NWEC Training Course for Information Processing on Women's Issues was held for six weeks from 25 July to 4 September 1996. Six trainees were invited from six countries of Bangladesh, Iran, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Tonga.



(2) 1997 Programme

The Centre will celebrate its twentieth anniversary next year. Under the general theme, "Empowerment is the Password to the Twenty-first Century - Let's Share the Joy of Living (tentative)", we will sponsor a number of commemo-

orative events, and are now in the final stages of planning for content and timing of these events. Below is a brief list of the major events.

- a. Formal Anniversary Celebration (to include the selection of nickname and symbol mark)
- b. Anniversary Study Programme - Seminar for staff members of women's education facilities
Director's course, general staff course (two courses - for persons in charge of planning and persons in charge of information)
- c. Anniversary Exchange Programme:
 - (1) Women's Exchange Festival
Build a network for lifelong learning facilities for women all over Japan
 - (2) International Forum on Women and Lifelong Learning
Examine the roles played by women-related facilities from an international perspective; build international networks
- d. Anniversary Research Programme
NWEC Open Symposium
- e. Special Anniversary Exhibition
- f. Anniversary Publications
 - (1) "Our Twenty Year Journey" (photograph collection)
 - (2) NWEC Research Bulletin



EDITOR'S NOTE

As of December 1996, our Newsletter is mailed to 1,533 organisations and individuals in 177 countries. We wish to expand our network for a wider and more active exchange of information. Please advise us of any organisation which should be placed on our mailing list. We also invite your comments and questions concerning the NWEC Newsletter.

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