

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

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

SEMINAR FOR OFFICERS OF WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Under commission of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the National Women's Education Centre (NWEC) and the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture have co-sponsored a Seminar for Officers of Women's Education annually since FY1996. An outline of the programme is described below.

1. Background

Women's unequal access to education and inequalities therein constitute a major issue for women in developing countries.

"Education and training" was listed as a critical area of concern for human rights and empowerment of women in the Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995. The Declaration points out the importance of education in a

number of fields such as promoting health and correcting the notion of fixed gender roles, and requires each country to tackle these issues as a matter of priority.

In announcing the Women in Development Initiative (WID Initiative) at this conference, the Japanese government raised education as an important field in implementing official development assistance and pledged support to secure education opportunities for the girl child and correction of gender differences in developing countries.

Based on international trends concerning women the JICA, the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture and the NWEC have held Seminars for Officers of Women's Education annually since FY1996, to improve the abilities of officers of women's education.

2. Outline of the Seminar

(1) Objective

The Seminar aims to study measures for promoting women's education in developing countries through a series of lectures, discussions and visits to educational institutions in Japan, and to exchange information and ideas on various issues such as education administration and education systems and their functions in participating countries.

(2) Training Period

4 Weeks

(3) The Number of Trainees

The course is designed for 9 trainees but the number of applications received increases annually. Nine people from 9 countries participated in FY1996, 13 people from



FY 1998 participants and staff from NWEC and JICA

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12 countries in FY1997, and 16 people from 13 countries in FY1998.

(4) Expenses

Through ODA (Official Development Assistance) the Japanese government bears costs for trainees' travel to and from Japan, travel within Japan and their accommodation and living expenses.

(5) Trainee Selection and Selection Criteria

- ① The JICA sends general information (application guidelines) to designated countries via the Embassy of Japan in these countries. The governments of countries wishing to participate submit their candidates' application documents to the Embassy of Japan.
- ② The Institute for International Cooperation, JICA; the Gender Equality Learning Division, Lifelong Learning Bureau of the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture; and the NWEC select trainees after deliberating the documents submitted.
- ③ Participation Qualifications
Applicants should
 - be recommended by their country.
 - be a government officer or administrator in charge of development of women's education (in particular, education curricula programming or drafting and planning of a wide range of programmes including education and lifelong learning).
 - have occupational experience of five or more years in the central government agency or similar institution.
 - have a competent command of English.
 - be in good health, both physically and mentally, to undergo the course of training.
 - not be serving in the military.

3. Outline of the FY1998 Programme

(1) Training Period

Training was held from Tuesday, 23rd February to Wednesday, 21st March 1999. Please note that the Japanese fiscal year runs from April through March of the following year.

(2) Participating Countries

The 13 countries that participated are listed in alphabetical order below.

Cambodia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos (2 people), Madagascar, Malawi, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan (2 people), Swaziland, Tanzania, Thailand (2 people) and Yemen.

(3) Main Study Topics

In structuring the programme for FY1998, special

attention was given to having participants grasp the reasons behind the high levels of literacy and basic education for both gender in Japan. The 16 trainees enthusiastically grappled with a variety of issues relating to problems in women's education. They enjoyed meeting Japanese families through home visits and became familiar with aspects of Japanese culture through trying on kimonos (traditional Japanese dress) and participating in a tea ceremony. The main topics of studies are listed below:

- ① Programmes conducted by the JICA
 - General Orientation
 - Presentation and Discussion of Country Reports



Country report presentation

- ② Lectures on education presented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and culture
The Japanese Education System, A History of Education in Japan, Gender Equality in Education, Promotion of Life-long Learning, Health Education, and Japan's International Cooperation
- ③ NWEC lectures and discussions on women's issues
The Role of Women's Education in Developing Countries, The Present Situation of Women in Japan and Issues, NWEC and the Role of Women's Education Facilities, Home Education and Gender Equality, Women/Gender in Development, and Gender Sensitivity Training, and Gender and Education



Lecture

- ④ Visits to related institutions (in order of visit)
- Bunka Fukuso (Dressmaking) College
 - JOICEP (Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation in Family Planning)
 - Kyoto Prefectural Women's Centre
 - National Museum of Ethnology
 - Fujitsu Co. Ltd. Headquarters
 - Ochanomizu University
 - Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)
 - Ranzan Municipal Kamagata Primary School
 - Ranzan Municipal Tamanooka Junior High School
 - Courtesy visit to the Mayor of Ranzan Town
 - Ootsuma Ranzan Girls Senior High School (a high school affiliated to a private university)



Primary school visit



Junior high school visit

- ⑤ NWEC cultural programmes
- Exchange meeting with PTA members on raising children, family problems, etc.
 - Home visits
 - Tea ceremony

(4) Trainees' Impressions

Trainees expressed their high regard for the Seminar at the evaluation meeting following the Seminar. All

most all participants expressed their gratitude to the many Japanese who had helped them. Their main impressions are described below.

- The Japanese hold each other in mutual respect even in close relationships; they are punctual and value traditional culture such as the tea ceremony.
- Japan enjoys a high standard of education and a safe living environment.
- I learned how education give through subjects not found in other developed countries, including classes in calligraphy and Japanese drumming in primary school, fulfil an important role in cultivating students' aesthetic sensitivity. I realised that my own country, which attempts to imitate western education, needs to reconsider its methods of education.

- I came to realise that teaching obedience at school results in loyalty → respect → good behaviour → little crime.

- I learned about systems and concepts that have not yet been introduced in my own country, such as the significance of girls' schools

(primary schools to universities), the roles of women's centres, volunteer activities, curricula in vocational colleges and the concept of life-long learning.

- Statistical evidence is necessary to convince superiors and related persons so I learned about the important roles of databases.
- It was extremely meaningful to learn from trainees from other developing nations.

4. Regarding FY1999

The FY1999 Seminar is to be held from Tuesday, 22nd February to Sunday, 19th March 2000. Application guides are due to be sent to the Embassy of Japan in each of the designated countries between September and October 1999. Thirteen countries are designated for FY1999: Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Egypt, Swaziland, Tanzania, Senegal, Myanmar, Palau, Peru, Lesotho, Uganda and Niger.

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



Tea ceremony

FY1998 NWEC ADVANCED COURSE

With the aim of overcoming the pervasive practise of gender-role and to realise gender equality in all fields, the National Women's Education Centre has been conducting NWEC Advanced Courses since 1995, as a leader-training programme that fosters creative human resources with a high level of specialised knowledge.

In particular, the Advanced Course is provided to those involved in women's and home education having successfully completed the basic training course (including staff training). The course aims to improve the quality of gender sensitivity, knowledge and skills required both at work and other activities, and enable participants to actively carry out education and learning which promotes the creation of a gender-equal society.

The NWEC provides completion certificates to all persons completing their courses.

An outline of the FY1998 NWEC Advanced Course is described below.

1. Objective

Conducted with the objective of creating a gender-equal society, this practical training course provides an opportunity to learn the necessary knowledge and skills for planning and drafting women's and home education programmes with a gender-sensitive perspective, that is, an awareness of gender differences created socially and culturally.

2. Date

Monday, 25th January - Friday, 29th January 1999

3. Participants

The 122 participants included administrative officers, people involved in planning and managing government programmes for women's and home education, leaders from groups and associations involved with women's and home education.

Breaking this number down by gender, there were



Lecture by Director, Gender Equality Learning Division, Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture

103 female and 19 male participants. In comparison to participation in previous years, few though there were, the number of male administrative staff participating is on the increase. Further, looking at participation by affiliation, administrative staff accounted for 40%, staff from institutions 30%, and leaders from groups and associations 30%. Further, the increase in female administrative officers is noticeable as a recent trend.

4. Programme

(1) Factors considered when planning the programme

- ① The programme was designed to provide gender sensitivity training (training aimed at acquisition of a gender-sensitive perspective) throughout.
- ② Workshops and a number of other formats were utilised to introduce study methods aimed at independent learning and practice. Further, with the aim of deepening participants understanding,



Experiencing debate



WINET training

consideration was given to materials used.

- ③ The programme's focus of study was placed on the process of "noticing" and "looking back", and time was left for discussion after each lecture as a means of deepening participants' understanding. The programme required participants to submit reports prior to the course, to enable us to grasp their individual aims and issues at hand, and on the final day, to evaluate and summarise the results of the course; what they had learned and what they had become aware of.
- ④ Introduction of programmes for each course separately enabled us to respond to the varying needs of the participants. Further, it was hoped that

individual selections from courses offered would encourage positive learning attitudes.

(2) Programme Contents

The programme was divided into the following five categories, and training was conducted over a period of 31 hours.

- ① Women's policies
- ② Research on issues and measures aimed at creating a gender-equal society
- ③ Current issues in women's education and home education
- ④ Learning methods in women's education and home education
- ⑤ Evaluation and summarising of training results

Main Programme

	Course	Lecturer, etc
Women's Policies	Issues in and the situation surrounding policies on women's and home education aimed at creating a gender-equal society	Mamoru Orihara, Division Chief, Gender Equality Learning Division, Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture
	The Basic Law on a Gender-Equal Society (provisional name)	Yoshiko Terao, Professor University of Tokyo
Issues & Measures	Workshop A Planning and drafting study programs for women's education	Yoko Watanabe, Lecture, Niigata Chuo Junior College
	Workshop B Planning and drafting study programmes for home education	Moriho Hirooka, Professor, Chuo University
Research	Workshop C Women's empowerment and organisation/ group activities	Setsuko Egami, Associate Professor, Sanno University
Current Issues	I Women's Education Course Discussion "Social Policies and the Ageing of Society"	Sojiro Takiue, President, Green Tokyo (home for the elderly) Ayako Miyazaki, Journalist
	II Home Education Course Lecture "Fathers' Participation in the Family and Enrichment of Home Education"	Masako Ishii-Kuntz, Professor, and Director, Univ. of Calif. Tokyo Study Centre
Learning Methods and Evaluation	Learning Methods and Evaluation	Yoshihiro Yamamoto, Chief, Evaluation and Development of Programmes, Research Dept. for Life-long Learning, National Institute for Educational Research of Japan
	Learning Presentation Skills - based on a Gender Perspective	Yumiko Inoue, Director, Lifestyles & Culture Research Institute
	Music & Dance Therapy Workshop	Anna Maria Christina, Therapist
	Workshop I Film & Discussion "Women Directors' Films"	Sachi Hamano, Film Director Yumiko Matsumoto, Journalist

	Course	Lecturer, etc
Learning Methods and Evaluation	Workshop II Improving Communication Skills	Michihiro Matsumoto, President, International Debating Society
	Workshop III Creating activities from child-care magazines	Megumi Yuki, Visiting Associate, NWEC/ Assistant Professor, Gunma University
	Workshop IV Thinking about home education and telephone counselling	Seizo Fukuyama, Professor, Rikkyo University
	Evaluation and summarising of training results	Yoshihiro Yamamoto, Chief, Evaluation and Development of Programmes, Research Dept. for Life-long Learning, National Institute for Educational Research of Japan
	Group Discussions, Information Exchange, Individual Research	



Workshop of dance and music therapy



Evaluation of four nights and five days

5. Evaluation & Future Issues

- (1) Participants valued the programme as an opportunity for administration officers and leaders from groups and associations nation-wide to undergo training together and gain a mutual awareness of situations and issues in their respective workplaces and activities, and as a means of enlarging national networks.
- (2) Participants responded that the specialist knowledge and skills for planning, drafting and managing programmes for women's and home education would be very useful.
- (3) The course is mainly held as a leader-training programme for administrative officers, persons who have completed a basic regional training programme. However, the participants' knowledge and experience of programmes and activities related to women's and home education were very diverse.

(Chieko Kobayashi, Specialist, Administrative Division, NWEC)



Awarding certificates to the participants who have completed the whole programme

SURVEY REPORT

THE NEW EDITION OF "THE STATUS OF WOMEN AS SEEN IN STATISTICS"

The National Women's Education Centre selects from among various types of statistical data, basic documents covering the current status of women's education and home education, and problems encountered therein, and summarises them in its publication "The Status of Women as Seen in Statistics". This survey report has been updated approximately every two years since its first publication in 1987. The latest edition, published in 1999, includes information based on data from 1997-1998 together with new information. The status of women in Japan and the new problems they face are introduced using the latest data.

1. Population & Demographics

The birth rate (per thousand) in Japan has continued to fall since the end of the war. Although the number of births in 1997 (1,191,665) was slightly more than that of 1995 (1,187,064), which had the lowest number of births ever, the birth rate of 9.5 was the lowest in the history of Population Demographics (recorded since 1900). In addition, the Total Fertility Rate (calculated by totalling the number of children one woman is assumed to bear during her lifetime figured each year by age of the mother, between 15 and 49) fell rapidly from around 1950 stabilising at approximately 2.0 - 2.2 in the latter half of the 50s. Subsequent to the second baby boom of 1971-1974 it further declined to 1.38 in 1998. This is substantially lower than 2.08, the level required to maintain the population (population replacement level) (Figure 1).

On the other hand, the average life expectancy of Japanese women (the average life expectancy at birth)

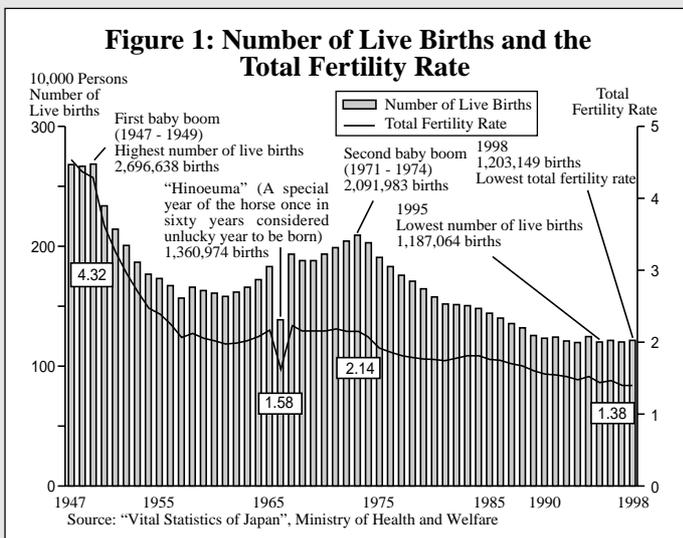
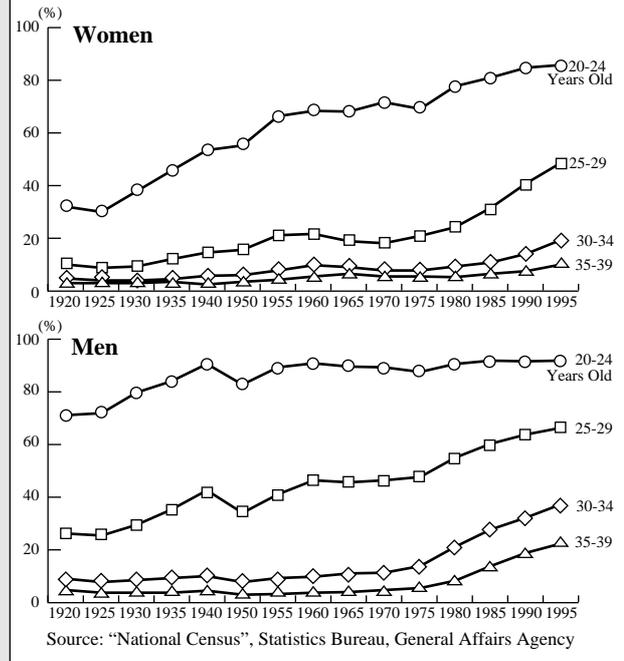


Figure 2: Ratio of Unmarried Persons by Age



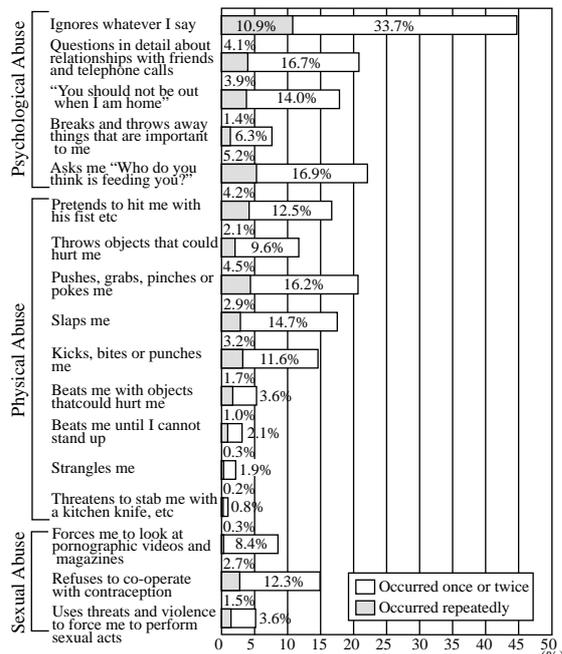
has increased continuously since 1945. In 1997, the average life expectancy of both men and women became the highest in the world, standing at 83.82 for women and 77.19 for men. Coping with the declining birth rate and the ageing of society has become an important issue.

2. Homes and Families

The ratio of nuclear families has risen continuously since 1965 when it stood at 54.9%. By 1997 it had increased to 58.1%. Conversely, the ratio of three-generation families has fallen continuously, from 27.3% in 1965 to 11.2% in 1997. The average number of members per household has fallen repeatedly, from 5.00 in 1953 to 2.79 in 1997. The fall of 2.21 members in this timeframe makes the downsizing of the family particularly striking.

Whilst the age of both men and women marrying for the first time has been rising since 1970, the age of men getting married has tended to level out since 1987. The age of first marriage of women increased annually since 1991. The increase in the ratio of people remaining single is also striking. In particular, the rate for the 20-24 age group rose from 69.2 in 1975 to 86.4% in 1995, and that for the 25-29 age group from 20.9% to 48.0%, clearly revealing an increasing tendency to marry later in life or to remain single (Figure 2).

Figure 3: Abuse Inflicted by Husbands and Partners



Note: "No Abuse" and "No Comment" responses are not represented in the Figure.
Source: "Survey Report on Violence Against Women", Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs, Tokyo Metropolitan Government. (March 1998)

On the contrary, divorce increased annually since 1964, and in 1971 the number of couples getting a divorce exceeded the 100,000 mark. Divorce continued to rise until it peaked in 1983 after which it began to fall. However, it began to increase again from 1991 onwards, and in 1997, both the number of couples divorcing (222,635) and the divorce rate (1.78) reached the highest in the history of Population Statistics. Looking at the number of divorces based on the number of years the couple had lived together, increases in divorce among couples living together for less than five years or more than 20 years are noticeable.

3. Health & Social Welfare

Home is said to be the place of relaxation. The modern family concept of it being a "community of love" had no place for violence or at least it did not surface as a conceivable problem. However, domestic violence (violence inflicted by a husband or boyfriend) is becoming increasingly tangible, and responses such as "Ignores whatever I say" (44.6%), (Pushes, grabs and pinches me" (20.7%) and "Slaps me" (17.6%) were given to a Tokyo Metropolitan survey "Violence Against Women" (1997) (Figure 3).

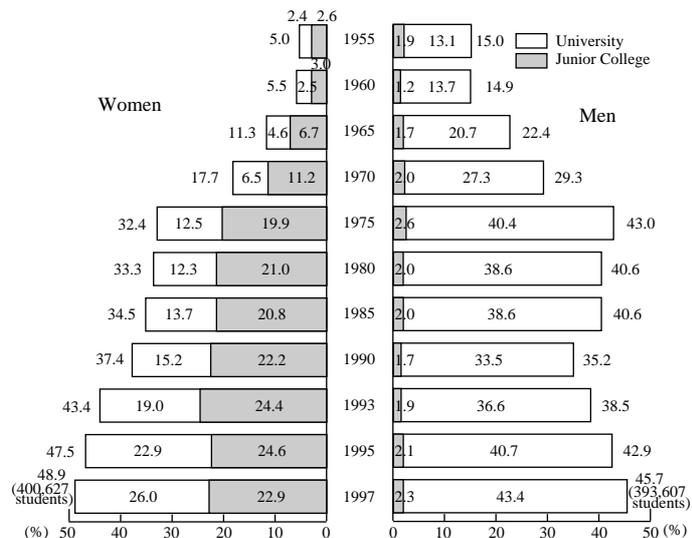
Also, the number of child abuse within the family dealt with by children's counselling centres increases annually. In

1996 there were 4,102 cases; 3.7 times more than the number dealt with in 1990. Children's natural mothers account for 49.9% of abusers, followed by their natural fathers at 28.0%. Social responses to counteract violence are urgently required.

4. Education & Training

Well-educated women are not a recent phenomenon. The ratio of girls enrolling at high school has consistently exceeded that of boys since 1969 when the enrolment of girls first surpassed boys, reaching 97% in 1998. Looking at the ratio of students enrolled at institutions of higher education such as universities and junior colleges, girls have outnumbered boys since 1989. These figures suggest that gender equality has been achieved in the field of education. However, both universities and junior colleges are classified as institutions of higher education. In reality girls attend junior colleges almost exclusively. In other words, the high ratio of girls enrolling at junior college has bolstered the trend of girls advancing into higher education. An indication of a change in this trend came in 1996, when the ratio of girls enrolling at university exceeded that of girls enrolling at junior college. There is, however, still a large gap between the percentage of boys enrolling at university 43.4% and that of girls, 26.0%. This notwithstanding increases in the number of girls enrolling at university to acquire specialisation can be seen as a definite progress along the path to gender equality (Figure 4). Furthermore, the number of mature students enrolling at university and graduate school has been increasing in recent years, and education opportunities for women are expanding.

Figure 4: Ratio of Students Advancing to Junior College and University



Source: "Basic School Survey", Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture
Notes: 1. Ratio of Students Advancing to Junior College or University = Newly enrolled students at university (undergraduate) and junior college (regular courses) [divided by] Junior high school graduates of three previous years times 100
2. "Newly enrolled students" excludes students commencing remote learning courses.

5. Work

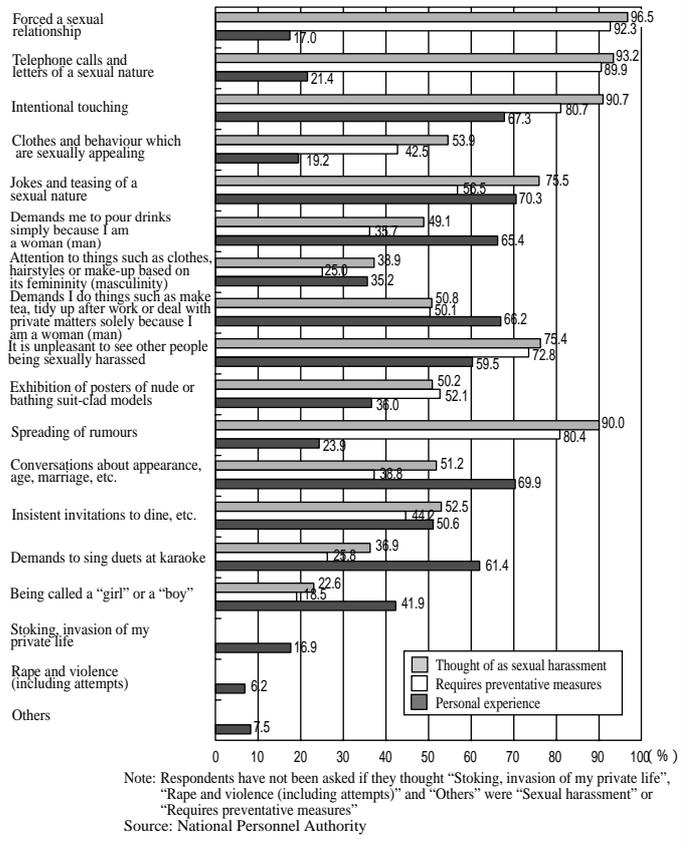
In 1997, the population of working women aged 15 years or over stood at 27.6 million, 50.4% of the population of women aged 15 years or over. Amongst working women, the increase in the number of women employers in particular is remarkable. The number of women employers stood at 21.27 million in 1997, marking an increase of nearly 300% over 1960 at 7.38 million. However, looking at the ratio of working women by age, a distinct pattern is observed with the age group 30-34 falling like a valley between two peaks representing the 20-24 and 45-49 age groups. The so-called M-curve employment pattern for women remains unchanged indicating that it is still hard for women with children to work.

In order to improve the situation and to promote gender equality in the workplace, the Revised Equal Employment Opportunity Law, the Revised Labour Standard Law and the Revised Child Care Leave Law were enacted on April 1, 1999.

Accompanying the increase in the number of women employers is a new problem encountered at work, namely sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can be defined as words or behaviour of sexual nature that go against the wish of the person involved that interferes with job performance or cause work environment to deteriorate.

The "Results of a Survey of Sexual Harassment among Government Public Servants" compiled by the National Personnel Authority revealed the state of sexual

Figure 5: Awareness and Experience of Sexual Harassment among Female Employees (Multiple Response)



harassment at work: women respondents said they had personally experienced "Jokes and teases of a sexual nature, etc." (70.3%), "Conversations about appearance, age, marriage, etc." (69.9%); and "Intentional touching" (67.3%). (Figure 5).

Figure 6: Changes in the Number of Women Members of Parliament

Classification	Number of 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	1.0	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
March 1996	48	764	6.4	12	494	2.4	36	252	14.3
March 1997	57	752	7.6	23	500	4.6	34	252	13.5
March 1998	60	750	8.0	24	499	4.8	36	251	14.3

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

6. Social Activities

Women's participation in social activities are expanding to encompass a wide variety of fields including politics, administration, law, business, international organisations and volunteer activities. Looking at women's involvement in politics, the ratio of women who voted in 1946 (67.0%) when women first won suffrage, was less than that of men, the ratio of women voters has consistently exceeded that of men since 1968. However, the participation of women in politics fall behind international standards with the number of women Members of Parliament a mere 60 in 1998 (8% of the total). (Figure 6). (Hiroe Nakano, Senior Researcher, Programme Division, NWEC)

WOMEN'S CENTRE IN JAPAN

TOKYO WOMEN'S PLAZA

Tokyo Women's Plaza opened in November 1995 (with Yoko Sato as President), as a strongpoint for the government and the people of Tokyo to co-operate and carry out concrete and practical activities aimed at resolving women's issues and realising a gender-equal society which is both peaceful and affluent. Managed and operated by the Tokyo Women's Foundation, it is used by more than 220,000 citizens of Tokyo and people from other groups active within the capital each year.

Main Facilities for Hire

- **Auditorium:** A circular auditorium with 246 seats and supplementary seating. Floor storage of the stage and chairs facilitates flexibility of use. A parent and child room cum simultaneous interpretation booth is also available.
- **Audio-visual Room:** Accommodating up to 100 people, this room can be divided into three separate rooms. 16mm, video and slide projectors are available.
- **Conference Rooms:** Accommodating 80 and 50 people respectively, both Conference Rooms No. 1 and No. 2 can be divided into two separate rooms. Conference Room No. 3 is a Japanese-style room which can be used by 20 people.
An accompanying child-care nursery is available for people utilising hired facilities.

Main Facilities Available Free of Charge

- **Library:** Approximately 43,000 books and documents on gender equality, both in Japan and world wide, are available for perusal (a selection of



materials is available for borrowing). The library also includes a newspaper and magazine corner and a number of video booths.

- **Free Space & Exchange Corner:** Available to anyone, this space can be used for information exchange.
- **Group Activity Corner:** Accommodates meetings for organisations and group activities.
- **Counselling Room:** Accommodates telephone and person-to-person counselling on women's issues.

Opening Hours:

9:00 - 21:00 (except over the New Years' Holidays)
(Open till 17:00 on Sundays and public holidays)

Address:

5-53-67 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Nearest Subway Station: Omotesando
Tel: 03-5467-1711
Fax: 03-5467-1977

U R L:

<http://www.tokyo-womens-plaza.or.jp>
womens@tokyo-womens-plaza.or.jp



PUBLICATIONS

1. Proceedings of NWEC Twentieth Anniversary International Forum on Women and Life-long Learning 1997

(Published in 1999 by National Women's Education Centre)

The NWEC was established in 1977 in commemoration of the International Year of Women, and celebrated its 20th anniversary in 1997.

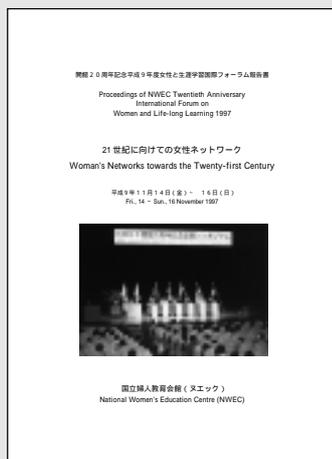
In November 1997 the NWEC held the International Forum on Women and Life-long Learning as a commemorative function. The general theme of the Forum was "Women's Networks towards the Twenty-first Century", and the number of participants exceeded 500.

Since the Forum was over, the NWEC has received many requests to publish the proceedings of the Forum, and has come to the conclusion that it should publish this book.

The contents of this book are as follows:

- I. Prospectus and Summary of Participants
- II. Part 1: Report of Sessions
 - 1. Symposium
 - 2. Report of Group Discussion
 - 3. Plenary
- III. Part 2: Full-texts Prepared by Invited Speakers for Group Discussion
 - 1. Gender and Education/Learning
 - 2. Women's Studies - Their Fruits and Problems
 - 3. Women's Information and Empowerment

Anyone who wants to read this book is asked to contact the NWEC Newsletter editor. For NWEC's contact address, please refer to pp. 12 of this newsletter.



2. Office Ladies and Salaried Men

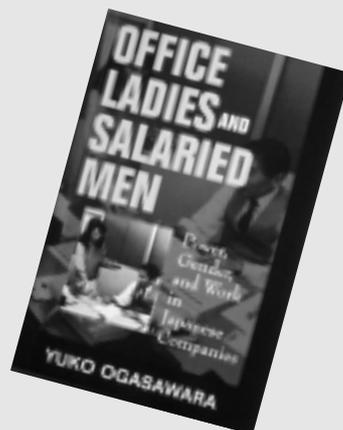
(Written by Yuko Ogasawara. Published in 1998 by University of California Press. 221 pages. ISBN 0-520-21043-3 and 0-520-21044-1.)

The author is Assistant Professor of Sociology, Edogawa University, Japan.

In Japan female clerical workers, "flowers of the workplace," are seen by men and women alike as primarily decorative, only moderately useful, and utterly powerless. But in this intimate ethnography, a Japanese sociologist trained in the United States reveals the true stories behind the myth: the subtle and not-so-subtle ways in which these women manipulate men and subvert the power structure to their advantage.

In large corporations in Japan, clerical work is almost exclusively carried out by young, unmarried women. Known by the English term "office ladies" (OLs), these women are largely nameless, working collectively in pools to serve tea to the men and type and file their reports. Many are required to wear uniforms, whereas the men are not, and all are expected to resign after a few years of work, upon marriage. They are exempt from the traditional lifetime employment and have no opportunities for promotion. Curious about why these women would subject themselves to such an experience, Yuko Ogasawara spent six months in participant observation in a large bank in Tokyo and conducted interviews with more than a hundred salaried men, their wives, and current and former clerical workers. Her discoveries are fascinating: while outlining the tensions and humiliations of OL work, she also demonstrates that through gossip, outright work refusal, and public gift-giving, OLs can make or break the careers of the men. Ultimately, she finds that men must accede to the OLs' manipulative strategies in order to retain their positions of power.

The costs of publishing this book were supported in part by an award from the Hiromi Arisawa Memorial Fund and financed by Japanese citizens and Japanese corporations to recognise excellence in scholarship in Japan.



Introduction to the Centre

1. Publications

Report on Research on Urbanisation of Society and the Educational Function of the Community (in Japanese)

The NWEC devoted fiscal years 1997 and 1998 on how families and community could collaborate on the theme: "Urbanisation of Society and the Educational Function of the Community". Focusing on "the educational ability of communities to support families", the NWEC surveyed examples of ways in which people were trying to make use of the communities' educational abilities. As a result, it became clear that both mothers and fathers should share the responsibility of child raising, and that we need to build communities that support this concept. Further, we realised that creating a place for children is congruous with creating a place for adults. This report is a summary of these research results.

Handbook of Women's Studies Education/Learning (New Edition) (in Japanese)

In 1997, NWEC summarised the results of the "Research on Teaching Methods and Course Contents of Women's Studies in the Context of Social Education", conducted from fiscal year 1993 through 1996, and published the first edition of the Handbook of Women's Education/Learning. This year, we updated the statistical data and keywords, included a revised chronology of women's studies and a list of institutions concerned with women's studies, and published a new edition. The handbook contains information fundamental to individual and group study of women's studies and will be very helpful when giving lectures. It also includes descriptions of teaching methods.

WINET Information No. 3 (in Japanese)

This magazine focuses on the NWEC's books and materials and information relating to usage of these. It is published with the aim of stimulating dissemination of information from the NWEC and promoting distribution of women's information and usage of NWEC's Information Centre. This is the third time it has been published.

2. Sponsored Programmes

FY1999 NWEC Training Course for Information Processing on Women's Issues

This programme will be held over a period of 40 days from Sunday, 25th July to Thursday, 2nd September 1999. In addition to facilitating the acquisition of skills required to analyse and summarise information relating to awareness on women's issues and the use of information media, it aims to deepen mutual understanding of women's issues in the Asia-Pacific region and promote the creation of women's information

networks within the region. Six participants from six countries (Fuji, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and Uzbekistan) will be invited to this year's course. Uzbekistan will be invited for the first time.

NWEC Public Symposium

The NWEC, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Tokyo Municipal Board of Education co-sponsored the "International Symposium on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development" held on Friday, 28th May 1999. The aims of this symposium was to present the latest results attained from NWEC's research on women, homes and families; to enhance research leading to gender equality; and to promote international cooperation. Approximately 150 researchers and concerned persons participated in this symposium.



EDITOR'S NOTE

The NWEC Newsletter is published semiannually with the aim of introducing NWEC activities, such as study, exchange, research and information, and other information concerning women in Japan to readers overseas. It also aims to promote the formation of international information networks in the fields of women's education and home education.

As of April 1999, the newsletter is been distributed free of charge to approximately 1500 institutions (including individuals) in 178 countries throughout the world. However, we are constantly increasing our distribution, and we would appreciate it if you could contact us at the address below of any institution that would be interested in receiving a copy of this newsletter.

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