

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

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

International Forum on Women's Information 2002



1. Introduction

The National Women's Education Center has held an international forum around the theme "Global networking of women's information" annually since fiscal 2001, as part of a three-year plan. "Searching for enlargement of women's information" comprised the sub-theme of the fiscal 2001 forum, the first in this series. This involved thinking about the current status of and issues pertaining to women's information from a variety of perspectives, such as research, administration and NGOs, and discussion on women and ICT. (Information and Communication Technology)

This fiscal year's International Forum on Women's Information, the second in the series, was held on October 12th~13th, 2002, around the sub-theme "Beginning with information rooted in daily life". This forum endeavored to provoke thought on issues

concerning women and the use of ICT in the differing fields of health, labor and learning, and to promote the creation of a global information network among participants.

Trainees on the International Training Course on Processing Women's Information (please refer to p.4~5 for details) participated in all of the forum's programs, just as they did the previous year.

2. Summary of the Program

(1) Saturday, October 12th

Keynote Speech: Know How Conference 2002

Ms. Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng

Director, Isis-WICCE (Uganda)

Ms. Ochieng, Director of Isis-WICCE (Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange) in Uganda, provided an introduction to the history of the ISIS office to which she belongs, and expounded upon the importance of networking among women.



This was followed by an explanation about the Know How Conference. The Conference gathered specialists in women's information under a single roof with the aim of reviewing the status of provision and access to women's information, and the extent of

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progress made by proposing policies that facilitate such access and other similar activities. The first conference was held in Amsterdam, and the second in Uganda in July 2002. The fiscal 2002 conference focused on dissemination of women's information from regional and rural areas in particular. It was suggested that whilst it is our responsibility to ensure that every woman has access to information, we also need to know how to produce, process and disseminate information without ICT.

Finally, issues such as who should be involved and what kind of network should be built, what we hoped to achieve by building such a network, and whether or not resources were available were considered, and the importance of finding answers and building a network was noted.

Keynote Report: Research on Women's Information Thesaurus

Ms. Kazuko Tanaka, leader of the research committee that conducted the study "Research on Women's Information Thesaurus" during fiscal years 2000~2001, started by explaining details of the development of the thesaurus at NWEC. Identifying the ability to use its editing system to edit information as a key feature of the revised Women's Information Thesaurus, she demonstrated how the thesaurus was incorporated into searches of the NWEC's Literature database on a computer screen.

Workshops

Session I: Information environment in the medical field

Foreign expert:

Ms. Robin Barnet, Canadian Women's Health Network (Canada)

Japanese expert:

Mr. Keiichi Ichikawa, Representative, Rescunow.net.com

Ms. Fujiko Miyahara, Manager, Women's Health Forum 21

Coordinator:

Dr. Keiko Amano, Director, Chiba Prefectural Institute of Public Health

Dr. Amano started by outlining the history of gender-specific medicine in America and Canada, and commented on the fact that few doctors or patients in Japan took any notice of gender-specific medicine.

Ms. Barnet, one of the panelists, commented that information from the internet was by no means suitable for everyone, and that it was important that sponsors providing information on health issues in particular, should evaluate the quality of the material by checking when and where the information originated from. She also introduced the activities of the Canadian Women's

Health Network (CWHN) to which she belongs.

Ms. Miyahara, one of the Japanese experts, spoke about the current state of women-specific medicine in Japan, and commented that we could not really call this women-specific medicine unless doctors capable of diagnosing women were trained. Moreover, she stressed the need for women to recognize that maintaining their health and looking for information on doctors who can take care of them properly, is their own responsibility

Mr. Ichikawa, another Japanese expert, explained the services of Rescunow.net, an organization that collects and disseminates crisis management information for individuals, and spoke of the merits of receiving micro-information real time rather than macro. Information collects at dissemination hubs, and it is important to create a system that enables us to pool together and share information within a large community.



Session II: Changes in work patterns due to the impact of ICT

Foreign expert:

Dr. Ellen Balka, Associate Professor, School of Communication, Simon & Fraser University (Canada)

Japanese expert:

Mr. Masakimi Fukumoto, Senior Manager, Telework Division, Japan Novel Corporation

Coordinator:

Ms. Mieko Takenobu, Newspaper Reporter, Asahi Shimbun

Dr. Balka initiated the session by talking about the impact technology was having on women's work whilst introducing case studies from Canada. She stressed that impact should be considered in three areas: changes in job level, institutional changes and changes in the actual job process.

Mr. Fukumoto of Japan Novel Corporation then introduced the structure of SELA (System Engineering Ladies Advancement), an organization of female engineers his company formed to enable women skilled in information processing technology to work from home.

Problematic issues concerning SOHO and at-home work were identified, and discussion focused on two issues in particular, the lack of social security and the lack of opportunity for education and training. The point that working from home should always be based on personal choice, and the essential nature of support with child raising, whether women work at home or in a company, were raised. Depending on how it is used, ICT can have a negative impact on some women, and deciding what kind of framework is needed to minimize this burden comprises a new topic.

Session III: Literacy in an information-oriented era

Foreign expert:

Dr. Kio Chung Kim, Director, Asian Pacific Women's Information Network Center (APWINC) (Korea)

Japanese expert:

Ms. Fumiko Uryu, Director, CCCNET

Coordinator:

Ms. Yoko Nakagawa, Lecturer, St. Catherine Women's Junior College

Dr. Kim started the session by talking about women and ICT education in Korea based on the activities of the Asian Pacific Women's Information Network Center. Ms. Uryu followed by introducing the circumstances leading to establishment of an NPO devoted to supporting child raising and women's endeavors to work, and the content of its activities.

Based on this, the question of who should be targeted for a basic level of information literacy and what kind of programs should be conducted, and the fact that literacy education is divided into numerous steps; education geared towards specialized technical positions in ICT, e-business and entrepreneurs, and so forth, were discussed. Thinking about collaboration between institutions of higher education, the government and the private sector, including NPOs, will be unavoidable in the future. Discussion also touched on the problem of arranging financing and the production of concrete contents. The need to conduct a follow-up survey of how skills acquired proved useful at a later point in time was identified.

(2) Sunday, October 13th

Reports on workshops

The coordinator for each session presented a report.

Panel discussion

Panelists:

Ms. Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng

Dr. Ellen Balka

Dr. Kio Chung Kim

Dr. Keiko Amano

Ms. Mieko Takenobu

Ms. Yoko Nakagawa

Coordinator:

Ms. Yasuko Muramatsu, Professor, Tokyo Gakugei University

Following reports on the previous day's workshops, panelists expressed their views on "The use of ICT in empowerment". Panelists then answered questions from the floor concerning keywords such as "rights" and "networking" in particular. A remarkably large number of questions were fielded by trainees on the International Training Course on Processing Women's Information. The first question arose from the view that people could be divided into two different groups, those who manage information and those who use it. In response, the opinion that women must look at existing technologies and social frameworks, and societies incorporating such technologies, identify women's needs, and participate in information management, was offered. With regard to the issue of access to ICT, an opinion was expressed to the effect that it was important that women recognize the essential nature of being skilled in ICT while seeking to establish such skills as a woman's right. Even without the necessary infrastructure, women can use human networks to engage in policy-proposal activities, and it is important that we combine the use of old media and new media in an effective manner.

3. Future issues and prospects

Next fiscal year, the third international forum in this series, will be held around the sub-theme "Women's Information". It is hoped that this forum will build on the results of discussions held over the previous two years and reach some conclusions. Moreover, given that "Women, the Media, and ICT" comprises one of the themes for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to be held in March 2003, we would like to plan a forum that reflects the results of conferences of this kind.

(Kazue AOKI, Chief, International Affairs Unit, NWEC)



International Training Course on Processing Women's Information 2002

An International Training Course on Processing Women's Information was held at NWECC during the period October 3rd~14th, 2002. This program provides government officials and NGO supervisors in the Asian Pacific region with training in information processing of women's information with the aim of supporting women's empowerment in developing countries that have fallen behind developments in information technology, towards the realization of a gender-equal society. The program aims to have trainees learn not only theory and skills, but also techniques for holding training programs and fostering leaders of women's information appropriate for their respective situations. It also aims to contribute toward the formation of an international network that includes Japan.



The first of these training courses was held in fiscal 2001, and this was attended by thirty-one trainees from twenty-one countries.

1. Trainees

(1) By country (Table 1)

Table 1

Country	Number
Bhutan	1
Cambodia	1
China	1
India	2
Indonesia	1
Iran	1
Kiribati	2
Malaysia	1
Marshall Islands	1
Micronesia	1
Mongolia	2
Nepal	2
Pakistan	1
Philippine	2
Palau	1
Sri Lanka	2
Thailand	2
Vanuatu	1
Viet Nam	2
Myanmar	1
Total	28

(2) By age

- 20s: 4 (14%)
- 30s: 8 (29%)
- 40s: 13 (46%)
- 50s: 3 (11%)

(3) By affiliation

- Government entities: 9 (32%)
- NGO: 11 (39%)
- Research institutes for women's studies, etc.: 8 (29%)

aim. Consequently, the content of the training was arranged in the following order.

Lecture "Women's issues and information":

Learn about perspectives that consider women's issues

Lecture "What is women's information?":

What kind of information is needed to resolve women's issues? How can we collect and provide that kind of information?

Practical training in information processing:

Learn information processing skills necessary for the collection and provision of women's information

Workshop:

Using the skills acquired, present and discuss your own choice of women's issues, and measures to resolve them.

(1) Women's issues and information

A lecture by Dr. Kumiko Fujimura of Toyo Eiwa University was followed by a discussion held mainly among the trainees. Trainees also watched a twenty-minute video depicting the current situation of women in developing countries before breaking into groups to share comparisons between the video and the current status of women in their own countries, and discuss outlooks that are balanced in terms of gender issues. The results of these discussions were then presented by a representative from each group. It was concluded that having a gender-sensitive perspective was important as it enabled you to view various issues from an alternative perspective.

(2) What is women's information?

Ms. Reiko Aoki, Director of the Koshigaya Gender Equality Support Center, put forward the argument that

2. Summary of the program (Table 2)

3. Content of training

Although this program comprises a training course in information processing, raising trainees' awareness of just how much the ability to use information contributes to improving the status of women is also an important

information was equivalent to power, and that women's information often led to action of some kind. In addition to clarifying the basic concept of women's information, the current status of media used to provide such information, and issues involved therein, this lecture touched on future issues such as ICT and women, and women's information networks.

(3) Practical training in information processing

Each trainee was asked about their experience of computer-based information processing technology and what they used it for at the application stage, and although there was a difference in levels, the content of the training course was designed to match trainees' experience. Training in the use of Microsoft Word focused on importing images and using Word to create Web pages. Furthermore, although most trainees had experience of using Microsoft Excel, this part of the program reviewed what could be done using Excel software, and provided training in the use of advanced computation and graph functions.

And each instructor compiled teaching materials for the section they were responsible for, and these were distributed to trainees beforehand in the form of a textbook. Rather than simply covering material necessary for the practical training, this comprised a comprehensive manual that could be used as a textbook after the course.

(4) Workshop

Dr. Kumiko Fujimura, presenter of the first lecture, coordinated the workshop held at the end of the training course.



At the beginning of the session, the trainees were split into five groups where they presented themes based on presentation materials compiled by each member, and engaged in discussion. A group representative and a person to report on the content and developments of discussion within the group were selected. In the afternoon session, presentations by these two members of each group were followed by a question and answer session, and some comments and conclusions by Dr. Fujimura, the instructors and the President of NWEC.

(5) Participation in the International Forum on Women's Information

Consideration was given to trainees' responses to a questionnaire regarding their choice of session circulated beforehand, and to striking a balance in terms of the number of participants when dividing the trainees among the three workshop sessions. The trainees participated in all of the forum's programs together with participants solicited from the general public.

Trainee participation in the above workshop and the international forum was very enthusiastic, not to mention the practical training in information processing, and the training course proved to be very rewarding overall.

Next fiscal year, the international forum is scheduled to be held immediately before this training course, with the result that the schedule for the training course will need to be changed. Given that each countries' trainees' level of information processing skills improves each year, we would like to examine the possibility of incorporating information management and managerial perspectives into this training course.

(Kazue AOKI, Chief, International Affairs Unit, NWEC)

Table 2

Date	Time	Contents
October Thurs. 3		Arrival in Japan
Fri. 4	10:30	Move to NWEC by bus
	13:00	Arrival at NWEC
	14:30-15:00	Opening ceremony
	15:15-17:00	Program orientation
	18:00-19:30	Welcome party
Sat. 5	10:00-12:00	Lecture by Dr. Kumiko FUJIMURA
	13:30-17:00	Exercises of personal computer
Sun. 6		Free
Mon. 7	10:00-12:00	Lecture by Ms. Reiko AOKI
	13:30-17:00	Exercises of personal computer (PowerPoint)
Tues. 8	9:00-17:00	Exercises of personal computer (Internet, Excel)
Wed. 9	9:00-17:00	Exercises of personal computer (Word)
Thurs. 10	9:00-17:00	Exercises of personal computer (Word)
Fri. 11	10:00-16:00	Workshop
	16:30-17:00	Closing ceremony
Sat. 12	10:00-17:00	International Forum on Women's Information
	18:00-19:30	Social gathering
Sun. 13	9:30-12:10	↕
	12:20-13:45	
	14:30	
Mon. 14		Leaving Japan

SURVEY REPORT

Research on Women's Information Thesaurus

1. Background

One of the most important missions of the National Women's Education Center is to compile and facilitate information pertaining to women and to disseminate information that responds precisely to the information needs. This can also be said for many women's centers and other women-related facilities in the country.

A thesaurus unifies and systemizes the terms that are used to index information and to search for specific information, and it is a glossary of regulated terms (a search dictionary) whose principle objectives are to simplify the searches and to enhance their precision. Since the beginning of our operation, NWEC has been involved in the development of a thesaurus that encompasses issues on women and the family. In addition to the *Thesaurus on Women's Education, 1986 Edition* published in 1987, the *Thesaurus on Women's Education, 2nd Edition* published in 1990 with scope notes has been the reference for over ten years from which NWEC has assigned keywords on the compiled information and materials, and it has also been adopted as the framework for organizing other relevant information. However, from the end of the 20th century toward the beginning of the new millennium, new developments in women's studies, gender researches, women's movements, women's policies, and other related activities have made it necessary to review and re-systemize the terminology and the relationship of the terms used for searching women-related information. Furthermore, rapid advances in the highly-networked information society brought about a new challenge to the information-search system: the dissemination of information on the Internet.

Thus, "to systemize the new conceptual structure of the terminology on women's education in order to effectively utilize the information resources of NWEC and other women's centers and facilities in the country, and to seek the new concepts and possibilities of the 'terminology search (thesaurus)' in the online information-search system," the "Research on the Women's Education Thesaurus" was launched in fiscal year 2000. A research team was organized, and it began a study on a new framework for the thesaurus on women's information, consolidation and selection of the terminology, and stratification process; and at the same time, the construction of a database for the new thesaurus and an online search system was also initiated.

NWEC Open Symposium "Development and application of Women's Information Thesaurus" March 2nd at Dawn Center in Osaka

2. Reviewing the framework of the *Women's Information Thesaurus*

Critical objectives of the research team were to "organize and systemize the 'common keywords' to enable an effective search on women-related information in the databases of NWEC and the country's other women-related facilities" and to "organize and systemize the 'categories and terms' of general issues concerning women, women's studies, and gender researches." The primary task of the team during its first year was to create the framework of a new thesaurus, that is to say, to set up the new categories.

The categorization plays a critical role in the systemization of the thesaurus's main contents and in consolidating and stratifying the terms by the system. For that reason, it was necessary to review the categorization (nine categories) of the *Thesaurus on Women's Education, 2nd Edition*. Moreover, a comparative study of thesauri on women's issues published overseas between 1990 and 2000 shows that categories have increased and have broken down into smaller segments (for example, the *European Women's Thesaurus* (EWT) (1998), which was one of our main references, has 20 categories). Taking this into account, the *Women's Information Thesaurus* has set up 14 new categories whose structure is easily distinguishable but not overly complex. In the second edition, the category of "thoughts/theories/history/movements" has been broken down into "thoughts/theories/movements" and "history/folklore/religion"; "family/home" into "households/family" and "life/environment"; and "culture/arts/sports" into "language/information/media" and "culture/arts/sports." The two categories that involve relatively more terms than the others and that deeply concern the autonomous lifestyles of women, "society/welfare" and "labor/economics/industry," have been regrouped into four new categories of "society," "labor/social security," "economics," and "sciences/technology." (Refer to the left column of Table 1.)



Table 1. Contents of the *Women's Information Thesaurus*

No.	Category	Main contents	Number of terms	
			Indexed terms	Synonyms
1	thoughts/theories/movements	feminism/women's liberation/philosophy/women's studies/gender/sex difference/discrimination/sex roles/men's studies/women's problems/women's movement	149	77
2	history/folklore/religion	history/women's history/folklore/anthropology/religion	93	30
3	education/study	education/learning/school education/social education/home education/women's education/youth education/lifelong learning/academic research	370	133
4	sex/mind/body/health	sexuality/sexual behavior/commercialization of sex/prostitution/sexual violence/reproduction/pregnancy/psychology/development/counseling/health/medicine/reproductive health/reproductive rights	362	175
5	politics/policy/law	politics/voting/policy/gender mainstreaming/administration/state/international relations/diplomacy/war/peace/treaty/rights/human rights/ethnic groups/law/administration of justice	349	137
6	society	social system/social change/social relations/social groups/social problems/social movements/women's organizations/networks/volunteer/local community/city/rural community/birthrate declining/aging of the population/demography/aging/poverty/crime	328	124
7	labour/social security	labour/unpaid work/workers/employment equity/working conditions/occupations/social security/social insurance/social welfare/childcare/caring/pensions	422	299
8	economics	economic development/developmental aid/industry/companies/labor force/taxes/income /finance	193	56
9	households/family	family system/family relations/household structure/singles/marriage/divorce/ housework/child-raising/domestic violence	224	104
10	life/environment	life/lifestyle/home management/consumer affairs/environmental problems	186	45
11	sciences/technology	science/ life science/ biotechnology/ reproductive technology	32	20
12	language/information/media	language/communication/information/ICT/mass media/mini media/publishing/journalism/media literacy	133	48
13	culture/arts/sports	expression/freedom of expression/arts/entertainment/literature/fashion/sports/ leisure/play/recreation	158	52
14	general	terms which are used commonly throughout all categories e.g.effect/activities/participation/action/diversity/evaluation/problem	71	8
		total	3070	1308

(March 2002)

3. Selection of the terms

With a framework comprising the 14 new categories, the second year was devoted to the selection of the terms and the stratification of the terminology using the editing system on the Internet, which will be explained later. Table 1 illustrates the names of each category, their main contents, and the number of terms they carry.

Regarding the number of terms, considering the analysis result on the frequency of usage, which proved there were many terms that were not very often used as keywords, and also considering the decreasing number

of terms in the overseas women's thesauri in recent years (for instance, there are 2,087 terms in *EWT*, and approximately 2,800 terms including those that are double-listed in more than one category), the terms in the new thesaurus have been narrowed down from the approximately 6,000 compiled in the *Thesaurus on Women's Education, 2nd Edition*, and those that were too technical have been removed. The thesaurus has added new terms that have been carefully selected from dictionaries and references on women's studies and gender researches published since 1990 and contains approximately 4,400 terms in total, including the indexed terms and synonyms.

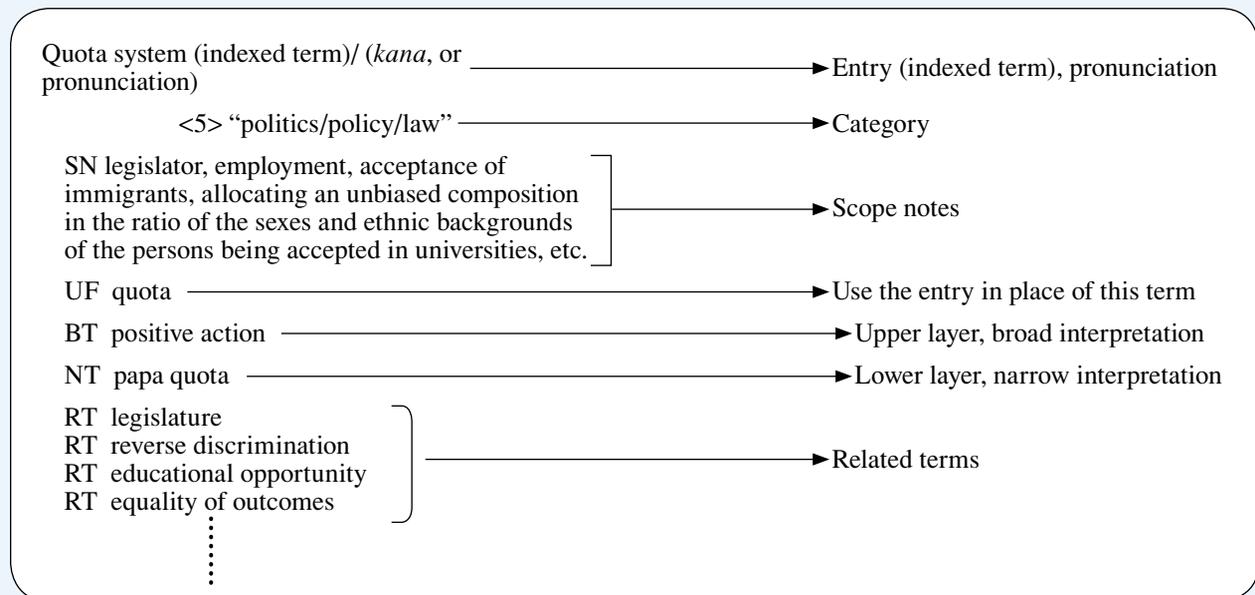
4. Stratification of the indexed terms and a sample of the listing in Japanese-syllabary order

Since the clarification of the terms' associative structure and the stratification process represent the construction of the conceptual system of the *Women's Information Thesaurus*, the research project spent the most amount of labor on those tasks during its second year. The 11 team members, who were at times joined by specialists from the outside, formed a working group by category that consisted of a few members. The groups first stratified and associated the terms in their respective category, and subsequently, the group leaders

were mainly responsible for aligning their categories to one another.

The completed *Women's Information Thesaurus* is composed of two sections: a list of entries (comprising indexed terms and synonyms) in Japanese-syllabary order, and a list of categories that shows the terms belonging in each category. On the Japanese-syllabary list, the indexed terms of the entry are displayed in their stratified format, as illustrated in Chart 1. The synonyms are listed after the name of the category to which the entry belongs, and the indexed words with which it can be replaced are listed after the heading "USE" (use in place of).

Chart 1. Sample listing of an entry (indexed term) in the list in Japanese-syllabary order



As it will be mentioned below, the new thesaurus has been made into a database and is available on the Web. On the *Women's Information Thesaurus* terminology database screen on the NWEC homepage, for example, the aforementioned entry of "quota system" is displayed so that the stratified relationship is clear, as shown in Chart 2 (Display screen of the *Women's Information Thesaurus* terminology database).

Chart 2



WOMEN'S CENTER IN JAPAN

Kyoto City Women's Center - Wings Kyoto

Kyoto City Women's Center - Wings Kyoto was founded on April 1st, 1994. The Center was established by Kyoto City as a facility to accommodate activities to promote women's independence and widespread participation in society, and other activities, as a means of contributing toward the formation of a society in which women and men can participate as equal partners in any and every field.

The name "Wings Kyoto" derives from a suggestion solicited from the public likening the Center's goal of realizing a balance between women and men that will enable society to thrive, to the balance realized between a bird's wings enabling it to fly.

Outline of Programs

1) Information Programs

Collection and provision of books and government publications, information provision via information systems, and publication of the newsletter "E \flat (E flat : E for Equal and \flat signifying half a tone lower)".

2) Study Programs

- Kyoto City Women's University (commonly known as Wings G-Step) offers courses that start with the basics of women's issues, with the aim of supporting women's social participation. (The Basic Course comprises 12 sessions, and the Theme-oriented Course comprises 3 sessions)
- A Computer Course, a Seminar on Preparing for Reemployment and a Seminar on Support for the Harmonization of Work, Nursing and Childcare are offered as a means of supporting women's desire to work.
- A Lifestyle Expert Course, comprising a cooking course and a partnership course, is offered as a means of supporting men's participation in the family and the community.
- An Introduction to the Internet Course and "Wings Theater (screening of productions depicting women's ways of living)" are offered as a means of improving women's abilities to collect information, judge and comment on media.
- A training course for nursery volunteers is offered to foster human resources.

3) Health Improvement Programs

Aerobics and "Kikou" (deep breathing and exercise) classes are offered to maintain and improve women's spiritual and physical health.

4) Counseling Program

Wings offers comprehensive counseling on various problems women confront in their daily lives. Special days are allocated for professional counseling on legal issues, labor issues and violence against women. Group counseling on themes such as child raising and divorce is also provided.

5) Exchange Programs

The Wings Festa and the Wings Women's Film Festival are held to promote exchange and the formation of networks among women's groups and individuals active in various fields.

6) Provision of Facilities

The Wings Building accommodates meeting rooms (12~48 persons), seminar rooms (36~117 persons), an event hall (240 persons), a cooking corner (10 persons), a sports room; a fitness room, a music room, a video studio, a video editing suite, and a video theatre, all of which are available for use by women's groups and members of the public.

Wings also co-sponsors events, and undertakes support and nursery services.

The Center aims to free women from socially- and culturally-based gender discrimination, to build up their interest in learning, and support their active participation in society. The Women's University recommends individuals meeting certain requirements for admission as an adult student into private universities in Kyoto. Moreover, it provides daycare services during class hours to facilitate the participation of individuals with children.

We would be delighted if you would take a look at the Center's homepage.

URL: <http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/wings262>

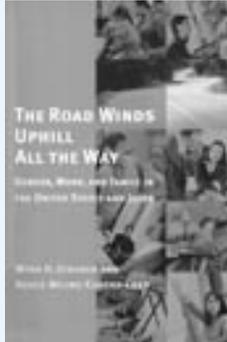
E-mail: wings262@mbox.kyoto-inet.or.jp



PUBLICATIONS

The road winds uphill all the way : gender, work, and family in the United States and Japan

(By Myra H. Strober and Agnes Miling Kaneko Chan. Published by the MIT Press in 2001. 276 pages. ISBN 0262692635)



In a time of societal transition, women and men around the globe struggle to combine careers and family in new ways. However, conventional work and family structures and power imbalances between women and men often reinforce traditional gender stereotypes in both home and office.

In an effort to understand the roots of gender inequality, Myra Strober and Agnes Miling Kaneko Chan conducted an extensive survey of the 1981 graduates of Stanford and Tokyo Universities –parallel populations in historically very different cultures. Firsthand comments from the graduates are combined with quantitative analyses for a lively examination of the career and family choices of these highly educated women and men. Contrasting the realities of household responsibilities, child care, and discrimination in the workplace with graduates’ original expectations, the authors find that the road to more egalitarian work and family arrangements winds uphill all the way.

The authors take a fresh look at the widespread belief that U.S. gender equity is light years ahead of Japan’s. The elite group of Japanese and Americans in their study describe surprisingly similar experiences as they faced the job market and began raising families. In both countries, more balanced gender roles will require improved public and business policies, individual strategies, and collective action.

1. Introduction
2. The women and men of Stanford and Todai : survey procedures, demographics, educational attainment, occupations, and employment
3. What influences the earnings of the graduates?
4. How did the graduates combine career and marriage?
5. How did the graduates care for their children?
6. Looking to the future
7. Major findings and policy recommendations

<Extract from the bookcover>

‘Special report : working women’ in *Pacific Friend*, Vol.29, No.05, pp.18-27, 2001



The phrase “career woman” used to carry a certain stigma in Japan, but times have changed. Today, people are less resistant to the idea of women pursuing a career side by side with men. However, this concept has only gained acceptance in the past 20 years. The introduction of the Equal Employment

Opportunity Law in 1986 was a major impetus for this change. Until then, there had been an established practice of placing men and women into different job categories. The Equal Employment Opportunity Law has helped usher in a new era, and we interviewed six women who have plunged into the world of male-centered jobs and corporations. (p.18)

15 years ago, Japanese-corporations believed that uniformity among workers led to greater efficiency. Women, who did not conform to the male-employee model, were seen as inefficient. Now, however, it is becoming a more widely accepted notion that setting up an employment system that fully incorporates women translates into better business management. The reason is that, due to economic globalization and the emergence of the information age, it has become more advantageous for companies to incorporate diverse, rather than uniform, human resources working under diverse conditions to maintain competitiveness.

Furthermore, Japanese society is expected to experience a record population low in the year 2007. The childbirth rate already is declining, and it undeniably will become necessary in the future to make full use of a diverse workforce that includes women.

Although the original social basis underlying the enforcement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law involved issues regarding discrimination against women, today the reasons for making use of female employee have expanded to include business administration and sustainable development. The status of women in Japan is changing significantly from “workplace liability” to “social asset”.(p.27)

Introducing NWEC

Forum on Women's and Gender Studies 2002

A Forum on Women's and Gender Studies was held over the three-day period, August 23rd~25th, 2002. Notwithstanding rainy weather on the first day, this fiscal year's forum, the seventh of its kind, was attended by approximately 1,800 individuals from throughout Japan.

"Gender Equality, Development and Peace toward the 21st Century" comprises the theme adopted for forums to be held over the three-year period beginning fiscal 2001. This year's forum, held around the sub-theme "Participation in Society", comprised the sponsor's program of a panel discussion and eight workshops, and 123 workshops solicited nationwide.

The panel discussion on "My Social Participation" welcomed Ms. Ryoko Akamatsu, Ms. Yuko Abe, Ms. Kiyoko Ikegami and Ms. Tetsuko Teramoto as speakers and Mr. Tadashi Nakamura, a member of the Forum's Planning Committee, as coordinator. Each of the speakers shared their personal histories and exchanged concrete views on social participation.

These forums aims to pool and exchange information on issues and achievements emerging from various research, educational and practical activities concerned with women's and gender studies and women's empowerment, and to build networks. The sub-theme for fiscal 2003 will be "My Rights".

Japan-Korea Joint Research Conferences in FY2002

– Research on Policies to Expand and Enrich Lifelong Learning for Women's Empowerment –

This year comprises the third year of a joint research NWEC is conducting with the Korean Women's Development Institute, and conferences were held on

September 13th in Seoul and November 30th at NWEC with a view to collating the results. Discussions focused on comparisons of the way women's learning and cultural activities are conducted in each country.

A public symposium will be held at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center on June 27th, 2003 to present the results of this research.



Publication of the Journal of the National Women's Education Center of Japan, Vol. 6

Volume 6 of this journal (Theme: Toward the creation of education for a gender-equal society) has been published. This volume contains four papers entitled "Learning to build a gender equal society", "An essay on stream of learning community: crossroads with feminism", "EDUCATION FOR ALL: UNESCO's policy and strategies towards gender equality in education" and "Sweden as a model for knowledge-led society", selected by screening twenty-one papers submitted for consideration. It also contains three papers on NWEC's research programs and four book reviews. The theme of Volume 7 will be "Employment, welfare and gender".

EDITOR'S NOTE

The NWEC Newsletter is published twice a year (September and March) by the National Women's Education Center to introduce the activities of NWEC, including study, exchange, research, and information dissemination, as well as provide information on women in Japan to persons abroad. It also provides information on women's education and home education to promote international network building.

As of March 2003, the newsletter is sent to free of charge to approx. 1500 organizations (including individuals) in 178 countries around the world. Anyone

knowing of other individuals or groups who might like to receive this newsletter is asked to have them contact us at the following address.

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