

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

Seminar for the Promotion of Education for Girls and Women

Introduction

The Seminar for Promotion of Education for Girls and Women was held over the one-month period Wednesday, February 11th through Thursday, March 11th, 2004. Under commission from the Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA), NWEC



has held this seminar, which targets individuals involved in women's education in developing countries in Asia and Africa, annually since FY2001. Eleven trainees from nine countries in Africa, the Middle and Near East, and South and Central America (Burkina Faso, Haiti, Iran, Mali, Mauritania, Peru, Senegal, Yemen and Zimbabwe) attended this year's seminar.

Program Contents

Four goals are set in line with the seminar's objective: "to gain an understanding of the current status of girls' and women's education and issues involved therein, study policies to promote girls and women's education, and acquire the information and perspectives needed to formulate and implement policies to correct gender disparities in access to education and the level of educational achievements in developing countries". The results achieved towards each of these goals are described below.

[1] To acquire knowledge of Japan's educational administration and its historical development

Understanding of Japan's educational administration in general was deepened through a



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lecture entitled “The Japanese Education System and Education Administration” given by a researcher of pedagogy, a lecture entitled “Functions and Roles of the National Machinery” given by a member of staff from the Gender Equality Bureau in the Cabinet Office, and discussion. A lecture on the NWEC-sponsored Seminar on Promotion of Gender Equality for Teachers taught trainees about the historical development of measures for gender equal education in Japan. A lecture and workshop on another NWEC-sponsored program, the Seminar on Support for Women’s Empowerment, introduced trainees to a training program to support empowerment in developing countries that was developed based on the Center’s achievements.

Visits to elementary schools and full-time junior high schools in Tokyo and other urban areas provided trainees with firsthand knowledge of the situation in schools. In particular, it was wonderful that trainees were able to talk with students directly, without an interpreter, at Meguro Municipal Higashiyama Elementary School, where education in international understanding is a primary focus. As a result, we were able to improve to seminar to reflect the wishes of last year’s trainees’: “it would be great if we could talk with students directly”. Engaging in exchange with the Parents Association at Kashiihama Elementary School in Fukuoka City enabled trainees to learn about cooperation between parents and schools.

Discussion with staff from the School Education Division of the Nagasaki City Board of Education and participation in a presentation of teachers’ research enabled trainees to learn about measures being taken by Nagasaki City towards peace education. A lecture entitled “JICA Projects and Measures to Incorporate Gender” which talked about the focus placed on gender and education in numerous JICA projects met the objectives of this seminar perfectly and captured the trainees’ interest.

[2] To improve the knowledge and skills needed to formulate education policies to promote girls’ and women’s education

A lecture on “Presentation Methods” taught trainees how to give good presentations. During group work, trainees considered and exchanged opinions on ways of conveying the importance of girls’ education to 10-year old children.

Following a video and presentation introducing reproductive health/rights given

as part of a lecture and workshop entitled “Women and Health” (Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning), trainees divided women’s lives into four life stages, engaged in group discussions and gave presentations on the kinds of gender problems encountered at each stage.

As part of a lecture and workshop entitled “Women and Literacy” (Asia/Pacific Culture Center for UNESCO), trainees considered whether they worked at a national/regional or community level and the kind of problems encountered at each level, and presented poster sessions. In the latter half, trainees looked at a video about the importance of literacy education and discussed how they could use this video to change the current situation. Trainees were very interested in literacy education and everyone participated actively in discussion.

The first part of a lecture and workshop entitled “On the Activities of the NGO Network for Cooperation in Education” comprised a report on how NGOs involved in education conducted the “Girls’ Education and Education for all Campaign”. Trainees were then divided into two groups where they discussed and presented poster sessions on the reasons behind and the results of the issue “Why is girls’ school enrollment rate low?”

In a series of lectures with titles such as “Girls’ Education and Economic Development”, views on education and development from an economic standpoint were followed by an introduction to “Observations on obstructions to, and measures for the promotion of girls’ education in developing countries”.

Through these lectures and workshops, trainees became familiar with various gender issues and acquired the knowledge and skills needed to formulate policies to promote girls’ and women’s education.



[3] To exchange information on the current status of education systems and education administration in each country and issues involved therein

Trainees gained in-depth knowledge of trends in gender issues not only in their own countries but worldwide from reports on an “International Comparative Research of Women’s Learning Needs and Practices” and “Measures towards a Global Network of Women’s Information ~ Looking back on the International Forum on Women’s Information” and a lecture entitled “Gender Statistics” presented by researchers and visiting researchers at NWEC, a social education institution.



“Country reports were only presented by trainees and other individuals involved; given that this seminar comprises a precious opportunity to hear reports on gender issues and the current status of education in developing countries, it would be great if an opportunity for opinion exchange among a larger number of people could be created by inviting that individuals involved in JICA, researchers and graduate students to participate.” was raised as an issue at last fiscal year’s seminar. This fiscal year, JICA employees and graduate students and staff engaged in research in developing education at Ochanomizu University were invited to participate, and the ensuing questions and lively opinion exchange proved to be one of the highlights.

The lecture entitled “On the Current Status of Girls’ Education in Afghanistan” enabled trainees to listen to a report on the current situation illustrated with slides and a description of measures that need to be taken to promote education.

Participation in the Japan Education Forum enabled trainees to hear firsthand the opinions and analyses of experts on “The Current Status of Education Development in Afghanistan and Issues Therein”, “International Cooperation towards

Independent Education Development” and “The Role of Universities in Developing Basic Education in Developing Countries”. Moreover, given the positive exchange of business cards among panelists and participants, we have great expectations of networks emerging hereafter.

In “Formulation of an Action Plan”, trainees worked with the coordinator to bring together what they had learned so far and what they had acquired during workshops into an action plan.

On the afternoon of the second day, trainees on a JICA training course joined the trainees, thereby providing a great opportunity for opinion exchange on issues concerning Ghana, which they had recently visited, and the situation in terms of education in each country. This type of exchange was held during the morning of the first day last fiscal year, but holding it during the afternoon of the second day as we did this year provided a rewarding conclusion as Japanese specialists were able to listen to the trainees’ presentation of their action plan and a lot of questions ensued.

These lectures and workshops enabled trainees to take a new look at issues concerning girls’ and women’s education from an international perspective, and taught them how to link the knowledge they acquired to education administration.

[4] To deepen awareness and understanding of Japanese culture and society

Trainees gained general knowledge about Japanese society and culture through the general orientation program. Moreover, trainees had several opportunities to experience Japanese culture firsthand by attending a tea ceremony, dressing in a kimono, making temari ornamental balls, visiting the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum and making home visits to NWEC volunteer families.



Conclusions

Trainees gained an understanding of the current status of girls' education and issues involved therein and the information and perspectives needed to formulate and implement policies to promote girls' education by listening attentively to a variety of lectures on women's education provided by specialists in international cooperation in education, observing elementary and junior high schools, engaging in exchange with NGOs involved in education, and participating in an education forum held at the United Nations University. Moreover, the cooperation of NWEC volunteers enabled trainees to experience the tea ceremony, dressing in kimono and a home visit, all of which afforded them excellent opportunities to experience traditional Japanese culture firsthand.



I hope these trainees will make use of what they learned at this seminar in Japan in their local environments, and make significant contributions to the promotion of girls' and women's education in their respective countries.

(Yasuko CHIKA, Chief of International Affairs Unit, NWEC)

Participants' Comments

1) OUEDRAOGO K.I Josiane (Burkina Faso)



I think that the seminar for promotion of education for girls and women was very useful for us because we have gone training about the Japanese economical, social, educational, cultural, political system in general and in the education of girls and women in particular. During the training, we have followed many lectures who give us knowledge and experiences about gender and women development. The discussion was very profitable. The schools visit allowed us to exchange information about students and educational staff management.

We will return to our country very happy because Japanese people are very kind and also we have acquired more system and policies to promote education for girls and women. So, we thank very much JICA, NWEC and all the Japanese people for allowed us to participate to that seminar.

2) Maguy DURCE (Haiti)

I'm very happy to participate at this seminar about the promotion of girls and women's education. I want to thank every one who made this extraordinary seminar possible. I encourage this activity, because, when we educate a goal today, we also help to create a leader for tomorrow, a leader written the family and community.

So, I'm going to be more creative and innovative in thinking about how I overcome the obstacles to producing for girls and women's education after this seminar, because I learned very much of all subject and workshop.

3) Maryam SAHRANAVARD (Iran)

It was very useful for me because I use in my country



all of the lectures and activities in NWEC especially about gender equality and promotion for girls and women education.

NWEC is center working for promotion gender equality. It's a kind of reference for me in order to plan and strategies in my country in the promotion of gender equality and women literacy.

4) Aicha Walet MOHAMED (Mari)



I was very happy to attend that seminar about promotion for girls and women education because I came from a named area where people are no linked to their cultures and traditions that even boys don't go to school. They move from place where we don't have schools.

The seminar was very useful, interesting for me because it helped for improving strategies about gender equality, peace education in my country. I met so nice people, visited tourist nights and also gave me the opportunity to exchange experiences about Japanese culture, history, economy and education. It gave also the opportunity to attend Japanese tea ceremony, Temari making and to visit some families, who are very kind.

I never forget about the Japanese hospitality, kindness and thanks NWEC, JICA, our program officer and coordinator. Arigato Gozaimashita.

5) Aissata BOCOUM (Mari)

I'm very happy and pleased to attend the seminar about the promotion of education of girls and women.

This journey in Japan is a very exchanging of ideas and experiences between the participants and the



lectures. In return in my country; I will apply my knowledge in my organization.

I hope that a kind of partnership will be seated between the participants and the JICA-NWEC staff for the promotion of education of girls and women.

6) Mohamed OULD BABA (Mauritania)

We send our thanks to NWEC for the days we have spent with him. During that days, we have – visited primary school in Ranzan city

- visited the Japanese families
- assisted to Japanese tea ceremony
- Temari ball



We have taken many lectures, various and rich, animated by distinguished professors, that lectures have made turn around on problem “Promotion of Education for Girls and Women”.



7) Luz Maria Figueroa ARIAS (Peru)

This is my last day with as participant of the seminar “Promotion of girls and women education”, and many feelings and thoughts come to my heart and my mind...

The first thing I tell thank you to JICA and NWEC for the opportunity you have given my country - Peru - and me to be part of this training. Because that all the knowledge and experiences learned here, will be used in the important of my job with poor people, women and children in my country.

Thanks again to all the Japanese people of the schools, and institutions we have visited, you are the best “anfitrions” of the world... and fully thanks to my friend of Senegal, Yemen, Mauritania, Mali, Zimbabwe, Haiti, Burkina Faso, and Iran for showing their experiences with me.

I will remember all of you always, and will have Japan and their nice people and culture forever in my heart.



8) Fatou Sall CAMARA (Senegal)

The new woman education center requires a very important place in the Japanese education. Do where else in the world I have seen a woman center so big.

The seminars we have participated permit was to be understand gender equality. I met the most important thing about NWEC is that we have been in touch with Japanese people through this culture and traditions: Tamari -making- Japanese traditional house ceremony of tea and kimono-making. I will keep a good remember from NWEC in Ranzan town. The lectures gave us much information about school girls’ education and women literacy.

9) Fatou Lo (Senegal)

The seminar on the “Promotion of Education for girls and women” was for us a great opportunity to share experiences, to learn from each other.



Of course we have experimented some strategies to improve women and girls education but, some this training seminar will be very helpful in improving them.

While being in Japan we had a chance to get in touch with the local culture, the administration and the school system. Moreover we were very impressed by the national machinery developed by the government to promote gender equality. Through that machinery we realized that gender problems are not easy to be solved as they are sometimes deeply rooted to the cultural background. That certainly justifies Japanese government’s political will to reach gender well balanced society through better participation of women in political and decision making fields.

Another thing we liked very well is the variety of activities which allows pupils to express themselves. According to them abilities, the way parents, especially mothers are involved and collaborate with the staff to deal with school problems, but also with those of their communities: case of foreign children and returnees.

The experience of the National Women’s Education Center is a model for us and we wish to have a similar organization in our country to reinforce women’s abilities in order to reduce gender inequalities.

10) Fatehia Qasem Ali AL-SHAEBI (Yemen)



The 11th Feb 2004 it will be a historical day for me, because I would be one of the participants in this seminar for promotion of Education for girls and women. Through this all this seminar I feel that developing countries are needs to share their experience Yemen is suffering a lot from girls’ education especially in the rural area and there is a big gap between boys and girls. In the New Strategy of the Ministry of Education in 2003 the most important component is girls Education.

So, I will not forget all this experience from this seminar as well as to promote girls and women education in my country.

Finally, with my pleasure and great thanks to all groups of JICA for sharing experience and for all their kindness, and all the participants from other countries I met them in this seminar.

11) Todini MARECHA (Zimbabwe)

The Newsletter is very informative and world form a basis for women’s international community.

In Zimbabwe we have Women’s National Resource Centre. It would be to Zimbabwean women to have access to this News letter. The letter is very important in aggressive women’s concerns worldwide.

Thank you.



SURVEY REPORT

International Comparative Research on Women’s Learning Needs and Practices

The National Women’s Education Center conducted a study entitled “International Comparative Research on Women’s Learning Needs and Practices” from FY2001~FY2004. Conducted in collaboration with researchers in Norway, Korea and America, the study involved questionnaires and interviews. A total of approximately 4300 valid questionnaires were collected in the four countries and approximately 80 learners and administrators were interviewed, making this the largest international comparative study of lifelong learning to date.

Comparative analysis of the results obtained in each of these four countries identified the following main trends: (1) the content of courses attended by men and women in Japan and Korea differ, with men attending work- and qualification-related courses and women engaging in leisure-related or cultural enrichment courses; (2) in all four countries, women feel more need for emotional support and appear to experience more difficulties continuing their studies than men; (3) in Japan, there is a tendency for study to result in no more than self-development; (4) gender equality education brings about a change in awareness of gender-based role sharing in cases where the significance of gender equality has yet to pervade society; and (5) a system that facilitates evaluation of learning within society is important.

I would like to explain a little about the second point “in all four countries, women feel more need for emotional support and appear to experience more difficulties continuing their studies than men”, the third point “in Japan, there is a tendency for self-development to be the overriding reason for study” and the fourth point “in cases where the significance of gender equality has yet to pervade society, gender equality education brings about a change in awareness of gender-based role sharing”.

(1) Awareness of emotional support in terms of support for learning was high among women

With regard to support for study activities, factors such as “Emotional support from family/partner”, “Emotional support from friends” and “Support or assistance from family with household chores and/or care of children, elderly, etc.” are fairly common to all countries. The percentage of women responding that factors related to emotional support provided support was relatively high compared to that of men (Table 2). We are not saying that these forms of support are “necessary” simply because some individuals responded that they provided “a lot of support” in terms of engaging in study activities, but it does suggest that women overcome a certain amount of difficulty when engaging in learning and enhancement of support for women’s learning practices is desirable for various reasons.

(2) In Japan, reason for study tends to be limited to ‘self-development’

Then we selected a number of aspects common to question groups concerning respondents’ “reasons and motives for enrolling on a study program”, “the outcome of their current activities”, and “goals for future study”, and Table 2 shows compares the percentages of people responding “Very...”, signifying the highest level of concordance in each aspect (Table 2).

In Japan, a high percentage of respondents identified “Improve my critical thinking skills” as their reason and motive for enrolling, and claimed the program had been effective. In Norway, a high percentage of respondents identified reasons and motives related to “Beneficial for my work life”, and claimed that the program had been effective. In Korea, the percentage of respondents identifying “Gain greater self-confidence” and “Improve my critical thinking skills” as their reason and motive for

Table 1: Support for study activities (%)
(Percentage of people responding “Very” with regard to the significance of support factors when they existed)

| | Japan | | | Korea | | | Norway | | | America | | |
|---|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|
| | F | M | Total | F | M | Total | F | M | Total | F | M | Total |
| Emotional support from family/partner | 50.9 | 46.6 | 49.1 | 38.8 | 21.2 | 31.2 | 46.0 | 23.0 | 38.2 | 60.1 | 48.1 | 55.8 |
| Emotional support from friends | 33.1 | 22.9 | 29.0 | 19.4 | 6.3 | 13.7 | 30.4 | 12.8 | 24.4 | 40.4 | 26.1 | 35.4 |
| Support or assistance from family with household chores and/or care of children, elderly, etc | 18.7 | 10.4 | 15.3 | 12.8 | 5.8 | 9.8 | 12.2 | 4.5 | 9.6 | 26.6 | 15.4 | 22.7 |
| Support from other students in the program | 53.3 | 42.3 | 48.8 | 19.4 | 11.4 | 16.0 | 20.3 | 11.1 | 17.2 | 24.8 | 24.6 | 24.7 |

Table 2: Reasons and motives for enrolling in your current study program x outcome from your current study activities (results) x goals for future study (%)

| | | Japan | | | Korea | | | Norway | | | America | | |
|---|------------------|-------|------|------------|-------|------|------------|--------|------|------------|---------|------|------------|
| | | F | M | Total (N) | F | M | Total (N) | F | M | Total (N) | F | M | Total (N) |
| Gaining greater self-confidence | Reasons/ Motives | 49.7 | 45.8 | 48.1 (608) | 38.1 | 32.0 | 35.4 (380) | 23.8 | 15.1 | 20.8 (215) | 52.0 | 52.5 | 52.2 (500) |
| | Outcome | 16.9 | 20.4 | 18.3 (231) | 12.5 | 12.3 | 12.4 (133) | 15.0 | 10.8 | 13.6 (140) | 51.9 | 51.9 | 51.9 (497) |
| | Future Goals | 63.2 | 56.2 | 60.4 (763) | 55.2 | 48.6 | 52.3 (561) | 25.6 | 17.9 | 23.0 (237) | 43.5 | 49.9 | 45.7 (438) |
| Improving my critical thinking skills | Reasons/ Motives | 47.7 | 50.5 | 48.8 (617) | 33.5 | 30.2 | 32.1 (344) | 18.4 | 11.6 | 16.1 (166) | 65.7 | 71.5 | 67.7 (649) |
| | Outcome | 32.5 | 29.4 | 31.3 (395) | 7.2 | 6.5 | 6.9 (74) | 16.2 | 11.9 | 14.7 (152) | 66.7 | 65.0 | 66.1 (633) |
| | Future Goals | 61.6 | 56.0 | 59.3 (750) | 32.8 | 26.1 | 29.9 (321) | 26.3 | 20.2 | 24.2 (250) | 59.3 | 65.6 | 61.5 (589) |
| Acquiring knowledge and skills to improve my work performance | Reasons/ Motives | 34.7 | 39.5 | 36.6 (463) | 28.4 | 42.1 | 34.4 (368) | 51.8 | 42.9 | 48.7 (503) | 50.4 | 54.9 | 52.0 (498) |
| | Outcome | 9.0 | 10.0 | 9.4 (119) | 6.6 | 10.8 | 8.4 (90) | 42.1 | 32.1 | 38.7 (399) | 46.4 | 46.9 | 46.6 (446) |
| | Future Goals | 48.3 | 51.3 | 49.5 (626) | 56.7 | 59.2 | 57.7 (619) | 47.5 | 38.1 | 44.3 (457) | 56.2 | 58.2 | 56.9 (545) |
| Increase my income | Reasons/ Motives | 21.4 | 27.0 | 23.7 (299) | 13.5 | 27.9 | 19.7 (211) | 26.3 | 21.9 | 24.8 (256) | 67.8 | 70.3 | 68.7 (658) |
| | Outcome | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 (10) | 2.6 | 4.3 | 3.4 (36) | 5.3 | 4.5 | 5.0 (52) | 52.5 | 56.1 | 53.8 (515) |
| | Future Goals | 48.6 | 51.1 | 49.6 (627) | 44.8 | 53.6 | 48.6 (521) | 44.9 | 35.8 | 41.8 (431) | 65.2 | 70.3 | 67.0 (642) |

Interpretation of the table: Using the top left-hand cell as an example, we see that 49.7% of Japanese women identified “Gain greater self-confidence” as their reason and motive for enrolling on a study program, 16.9% of Japanese women identified “Gain greater self-confidence” as an outcome of the study program, and 63.2% of Japanese women identified “Gaining greater self-confidence” as their goal for future study.

enrolling was high. In America, a high percentage of respondents identified all four aspects, but “Increasing my income” garnered the highest percentage of responses to the question concerning reasons and motives for enrolling, and goals for future study.

In terms of overall trends, the trend in Japan and Korea was for the percentage of responses to questions about reasons and motives for enrolling on their current study program and their goals for future study to be high, but for the percentage of respondents claiming an outcome from their study activities (to have had results) to be low. No significant differences were observed among these aspects in America. Although the percentage of respondents identifying “Gain greater self-confidence” and “Improve my critical thinking skills” as reasons or motives was relatively low in Norway, with the exception of “Increasing my income”, differences in responses received for the three questions were small, as they were in America.

Table 3 compares the results obtained from universities and job training centers by type of study institution in each country.

The trend was for the percentages to be high for all aspects at relevant institutions in America, and although the percentage was fairly high for “Improve my work-related knowledge and skills” at vocational colleges in Japan, percentages for “Got a better job or promotion” and “Increased my income” were very low. Compared to these aspects, the percentages for “Improved my critical thinking skills” and “Gained greater self-confidence” were relatively high. In Norway, with the exception of schools offering basic adult education, although the percentage for “Improve my work-related knowledge and skills” was high, percentages for “Got a better job or promotion” and “Increased my income” were low, and percentages for “Improved my critical thinking skills” and “Gained greater self-confidence” were higher than these. In other words, whereas a high percentage of people in America responded that study activities not only upgrade knowledge and skills related to jobs, but also lead to furthering one’s career, such as “Got a better job or promotion” and “Increased my income”, people in Norway said that study activities were useful in terms of upgrading knowledge and skills related to

Table 3: Percentage of those responding “Very much” to questions concerning the outcome of study activities (%)

| | | Improved my work-related knowledge and skills | | Got a better job or promotion | | Increased my income | | Improved my critical thinking skills | | Gained greater self-confidence | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------|-------------------------------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
| | | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M |
| Educational institutions in Norway | Vocational training centers | 71.4 | 53.7 | 0.0 | 7.3 | 0.0 | 9.8 | 9.5 | 9.8 | 33.3 | 14.6 |
| | Universities | 68.5 | 46.9 | 11.2 | 7.1 | 10.3 | 7.1 | 22.8 | 19.4 | 10.8 | 10.2 |
| | Adult basic education schools | 13.5 | 16.2 | 0.8 | 4.1 | 1.5 | 4.1 | 15.0 | 13.5 | 18.8 | 17.6 |
| Educational institutions in America | School of New Resources | 58.8 | 56.6 | 72.2 | 63.9 | 80.1 | 72.1 | 77.8 | 81.1 | 67.1 | 66.4 |
| | University of Wisconsin Madison | 36.0 | 25.0 | 23.6 | 22.4 | 27.1 | 23.7 | 60.5 | 46.1 | 36.8 | 19.7 |
| | Cerritos College | 46.3 | 50.4 | 50.3 | 48.9 | 56.5 | 59.7 | 61.2 | 61.2 | 55.8 | 56.8 |
| Educational institutions in Japan | University of the Air | 9.3 | 9.6 | 1.9 | 3.8 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 27.8 | 36.5 | 14.8 | 23.1 |
| | National/public/private universities | 5.0 | 10.8 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 38.6 | 39.6 | 14.9 | 22.5 |
| | Professional training colleges | 22.0 | 18.3 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 30.0 | 26.9 | 15.0 | 23.1 |
| | Vocational training centers | 9.9 | 6.7 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 28.9 | 24.7 | 16.2 | 16.0 |

work but did not lead to better jobs and promotions or increases in income. Responses in Japan were characterized by a relatively high percentage of responses related to oneself, such as “Improved my critical thinking skills” and “Gained greater self-confidence”.

Identifying characteristics for each country from the above suggests that lifelong learning in America is “career-development oriented”, or geared towards gaining a better position; lifelong learning in Norway is “skills-development oriented”, or designed to provide the skills needed to engage in current positions; and lifelong learning in Japan and Korea is often “mind-development oriented”, including human education in a wide sense such as self-enlightenment and human relationships.

However, although these are only trends observed from data collected during this research, they are thought to reflect the situation in terms of lifelong learning in each country to some extent.

(3) Gender equality education brings about a change in awareness of gender-based role sharing in cases where the significance of gender equality has yet to pervade society

Table 4 contains the results of responses to a question regarding agreement/disagreement with the concept “men should go out and work, and women should stay at home”. The percentage of responses disagreeing with this concept was very high in Norway, with a total of 83.8% men and women disagreeing, but low in Japan, with a total of 35.7% disagreeing (Table 4). This suggests that the concept of gender equality has become entrenched in Norwegian society.

Next, looking at the percentage of people responding “Disagree” with regard to their agreement/disagreement with the concept “Men should go out and work, and women should stay at home” in relation to gender disaggregated data on past experience of studying women’s/men studies, gender or gender equality (Table 5) reveals that in Japan, women with some study experience tend to “disagree”, but a large percentage of women in Norway, some 80~100%, do so irrespective of their extent of study. Although differences in perspectives on gender-based role sharing due to past study experience were not observed in Norway, this analysis revealed that in Japan, individuals with study experience were more aware of gender equality.

These results suggest that in Norway, which rated second worldwide on the FY2003 GEM, study experience of gender equality did not have much effect on perspectives on gender-based role sharing because awareness of gender equality is already firmly entrenched in society as a whole. On the other hand, in Japan, where awareness of gender equality is not shared by society as a whole, study related to gender equality comprises a very effective means of changing perspectives on gender-based role sharing.

For analyses of individual countries and detailed content of analyses, please read the survey report “Women’s Lifelong Learning and Empowerment ~ an international comparative study of Japan, Korea, Norway and America” (available in Japanese and English).

(Nami Otsuki, Researcher, office of Research and International Affairs, NWEC)

Table 4: Agreement and disagreement with the concept “Men should go out and work, and women should stay at home” (%)

| | Japan | | | | Korea | | | | Norway | | | | America | | | |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|------|-------|-------|---------|------|-------|-------|
| | F | M | Total | (N) | F | M | Total | (N) | F | M | Total | (N) | F | M | Total | (N) |
| Agree | 0.4 | 5.9 | 2.6 | (33) | 2.8 | 5.8 | 4.1 | (44) | 1.5 | 5.7 | 2.9 | (30) | 2.9 | 5.6 | 3.9 | (37) |
| Somewhat agree | 11.3 | 16.6 | 13.4 | (170) | 12.2 | 18.8 | 15.0 | (161) | 3.2 | 8.5 | 5.0 | (52) | 6.8 | 13.9 | 9.3 | (89) |
| Somewhat disagree | 24.4 | 20.2 | 22.7 | (287) | 15.6 | 19.0 | 17.1 | (183) | 4.7 | 8.8 | 6.1 | (63) | 9.0 | 11.6 | 9.9 | (95) |
| Disagree | 41.8 | 26.6 | 35.7 | (451) | 65.5 | 49.2 | 58.5 | (627) | 88.7 | 74.4 | 83.8 | (865) | 77.5 | 62.9 | 72.3 | (693) |
| Cannot say | 21.6 | 30.3 | 25.2 | (318) | 2.5 | 5.0 | 3.5 | (38) | 1.3 | 2.0 | 1.6 | (16) | 2.9 | 4.7 | 3.5 | (34) |
| No answer | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | (5) | 1.5 | 2.2 | 1.8 | (19) | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | (6) | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.0 | (10) |

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of past experience of studying women’s/men’s studies, gender or gender equality and agreement/disagreement with the concept “Men should go out and work, and women should stay at home” (%) (Percentage of people responding “disagree”)

| | Japan | | Korea | | Norway | | America | |
|------------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|---------|------|
| | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| Yes, many | 67.9 | 48.3 | 73.7 | 28.6 | 98.1 | 90.9 | 82.6 | 72.0 |
| Some | 45.0 | 28.2 | 63.3 | 51.6 | 90.2 | 78.8 | 74.8 | 64.4 |
| Only a few | 40.0 | 19.6 | 71.4 | 53.7 | 86.2 | 72.7 | 80.4 | 55.1 |
| Not at all | 34.4 | 26.8 | 65.0 | 51.8 | 89.3 | 72.0 | 76.0 | 62.9 |

WOMEN'S CENTER IN JAPAN

The Aomori Gender Equality Center and The Child and Family Support Center (Apio Aomori)

Apio Aomori opened in Aomori City on June 1st, 2001 as a complex under direct prefectural management that would function as both a gender equality center and a child and family support center.

The nickname "Apio", a Latin word meaning "link, tie and meet", embodies the hope that the complex will be widely used as a place where prefectural citizens can interact with each other.

Both centers were established as hub facilities to support citizens' various activities towards the realization of a gender-equal society and a society that supports child-raising in which all people, men, women, senior citizens and children, are respected as individuals.

The 1st Floor accommodates an information library where various kind of information pertaining to gender equality and support for child-raising is collected and made available to the public; an area for telephone counseling and specialized counseling; a playroom and a cooking/woodwork room, both of which are free of charge. The 2nd Floor was carefully designed to be it versatile and adaptable, and comprises a hall for lectures and events; large and small seminar rooms; meeting rooms for various groups and organizations; and an area for work rooms.

Both centers offer the following types of programs.



The Gender Equality Center

Programs are developed based upon seven functions: information; exchange; support for independent activities; education and enlightenment; counseling; cultural activities; and surveys and research

- (1) Information Programs: Widespread collection and collation of books, government publications and other materials pertaining to gender equality, and

their provision to users.

- (2) Education and Enlightenment Programs: Open college classes designed to raise awareness among prefectural citizens and seminars for women's empowerment. Of these, Women's University offers a 2-year course that nurtures women capable of actively participating in policy decision-making. Sixty-five women had graduated as of 2003, many of whom have been appointed members of sixty-six prefectural and municipal deliberative committees (some may be on more than one committee).
- (3) Exchange Programs: Organization of a Gender Equality Festival by the Steering Committee.
- (4) Support Programs for Independent Activities: Dispatch of lecturers to invigorate groups and organizations endeavoring towards the formation of a gender-equal society and to support the nurturing of leaders.
- (5) Lifestyle/Cultural Activity Programs: Courses that are free from gender-based stereotypical images, and solicitation of *senryu*, seventeen-syllable poems which are often satirical of the times
- (6) Counseling Programs: Provision of general counseling by professional counselors and specialized counseling by lawyers and doctors. The Center also functions as a support center for counseling on domestic violence.
- (7) Survey and Research Programs: Commissioning of surveys and researches on themes concerned with the formation of a gender-equal society.

The Child and Family Support Center

Programs are developed based upon six functions: information provision; support for activities; general counseling; study and hands-on experience; dissemination and learning; and surveys and research.

Efforts are made to enhance these centers with the aim of making them popular among prefectural citizens and encouraging numerous people to use them as a base for activities pertaining to "gender equality and support for child-raising". Please refer to Apio Aomori's homepage for details.

PUBLICATIONS

Perfectly Japanese Making Families in an Era of Upheaval

(By Merry Issacs White. Published by the University of California Press)

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Newspaper headlines in Japan report families divided by divorce, absenteeism, and abandonment. Official rhetoric denounces irregular lifestyles, selfish mothers, absent fathers, careless children, and neglected grandparents. Can such families be “perfectly Japanese”? White argues that the model Japanese family never existed, but that today’s fractured, problematic family is an exaggeration created by media, market, and officialdom. The reality is that Japanese families have always been as complex and individual as their American counterparts. Looking back at two key moments of “family making”—the Meiji era and postwar period—White examines how models for the Japanese family were constructed, deftly illuminating the gap between official norms and the complicated lives that people actually live.

<Extract from the back cover>

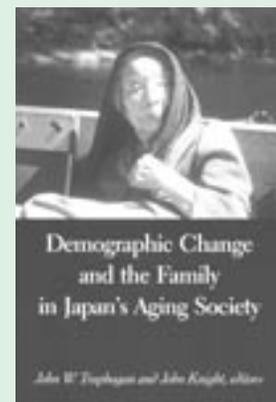
Demographic Change and the Family in Japan’s Aging Society

(Edited by John W. Traphagan and John Knight. Published by State University of New York Press)

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Incorporating qualitative and quantitative data and research methods from both demography and social anthropology, this book explores demographic trends in contemporary Japan’s rapidly aging society. The contributors describe and analyze trends by addressing the ways in which demographic change is experienced in the context of family. The book considers the social effects, welfare issues, and private and public responses to demographic change and how this change has influenced the experiences of family caregivers and the elderly themselves. It offers both a specific regional contribution to the emerging field of demographic anthropology and an anthropological contribution to cross-disciplinary research on aging.



<Extract from the book cover>

Introducing NWEC

Presidential Appointment

In the midst of an era of unprecedented and radical changes such as the aging of society, the declining birthrate and changes in economic structure, creation of new values, lifestyles and a society based on respect for the individual is regarded as necessary. Consequently, it is essential that we create a gender-equal society in which all individuals are able to participate in the building of society and fully demonstrate their respective abilities and individuality irrespective of gender. The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society was promulgated and enacted in Japan in June 1999, and the State, local governments and the private sectors of Japan have been striving towards realization of this goal.

As a national institution, the National Women's Education Center bears responsibility for promoting gender equality in study and education around the four pillars of study, research, information and exchange, and the formation of a gender equal society, and is highly regarded not only in Japan but overseas as well.

I was appointed president as of April 1st, and I am keenly aware of the importance of this role and the weight of my responsibilities in terms of managing the Center's operations.

The Center became an independent administrative institution in April 2001, and is currently implementing programs in line with a medium-term plan and medium-term goals for the five year period ending March 2006. Independent administrative institutions independently and autonomously engage in duties necessary for the good of the public with as little State participation and control as possible, and are expected to enhance administrative efficacy in terms of the quality, efficiency and transparency. Consequently, independent administrative institutions are obliged to submit to evaluation by an independent administrative institution evaluation committee which evaluates their performance each fiscal year as a means of evaluating their achievements in terms of their 5-year medium-term goals.

In summer 2005, the Center will be subjected to a provisional evaluation of duties performed during its medium-term goal period. This is expected to wield a significant influence over operation management in the next period (April 2006 - March 2011). We need to continue keeping a close eye on future directions and engage in more substantial operation management in line with the medium-term plan currently underway.

The first area I would like to put special effort into in order to fulfill our role as a national center for women's education is the sharing of responsibilities and

deepening of collaboration with other national institutions, local government and private women's centers, gender equality promotion centers and so forth. This will involve clarifying and strengthening concrete means for doing this so that the Center can assume the role of a leading and central hub.



The second area I would like to tackle is expansion of the range of people using the Center. I would like the Center to become a place of learning for people young, middle-aged and elderly, people working in all tiers of employment, people working for NPOs, people challenging new fields, people striving for new lifestyles and people endeavoring to participate in society.

The third area I would like to address is effective educational practices geared towards the realization of a gender-equal society, and domestic and international dissemination of research and information that will become the foundation for this.

The fourth area is formulation of a future vision. We have already begun to tackle this but I would like to hear a wide range of opinions and formulate a vision that allows the Center to develop in a manner that enables it to fulfill the social role expected of it by responding to demands from a perspective of gender equality and the formation of a gender-equal society.

With regard to operation management, I would like to take advantage of the merits of being a small scale institution to conduct operations in a manner that encourages each and every member of staff to demonstrate their abilities and participate.

I look forward to your cooperation and support.

(Michiko Kanda, President of NWEC)

Introduction to Foreign Trainees

The National Women's Education Center hosted a trainee from Gambia, Mr. Jerreh Soli SANNEH, on March 30th, 2004. Following an explanatory overview of the Center, Ms. Yuki TAKAHASHI, a researcher in the Office of Research and International Affairs, presented a lecture entitled "Rural Development and Gender".

Mr. Sanneh came to Japan on a development planning course entitled, "Survey of Development in Agricultural Villages in the Upper Reaches of the Gambia River", a JICA trainee program that trains human resources needed for economic and social development in developing countries. He participated

in training programs involving lectures and visits to agricultural villages from March 19th through April 13th, one of which was assigned to NWEC.

Following the lecture, Mr. Sanneh engaged in discussion with NWEC staff, during which he provided them with basic information on Gambia and other precious information from his position as an expert on agriculture in Gambia.



In addition to hosting more international programs, the National Women's Education Center looks forward to hosting more trainees and programs that will contribute to international cooperation.

(Yasuko CHIKA, Chief of International Affairs Unit, NWEC)

The FY2004 Conference for Exchanging Research among Child Raising Networks

Conferences for Exchanging Research among Child Raising Networks will be held in five venues nationwide to study and discuss the roles and significance of child raising networks that play a role in linking parents engaged in child raising, child raising circles, organizations, the government and other institutions that support child raising, and topic involved therein, with the aim of enhancing the support they provide.

Attendance at the first of these conferences, "Child Raising Network in NWEC", held on the weekend of May 29th and 30th, 2004, far exceeded the prescribed number with 199 individuals (148 women, 22 men and 29

children) from 27 prefectures nationwide. In workshops and theme-based discussions, participants engaged in lively information and opinion exchange from the standpoint of raising the next generation. Discussions were based on case studies of advanced measures in a variety of fields, such as cooperation with companies and fathers' groups, and the promotion of measures that consider ties up until puberty.

(Toshiyuki YAMAKAWA, Specialist, Program Division, NWEC)

The FY2004 Seminar for Staff of Women's Facilities (for managerial staff)

A Seminar for Staff of Women's Facilities (for managerial staff) was held over the two-night/three-day period Tuesday, June 15th, 2004- Thursday, June 17th, 2004. Newly established this fiscal year to replace the abolished Seminar on Staff at Women's Facilities, which had been held 27 times between the Center's inauguration and FY2003, this Seminar was attended by 50 managerial-level staff such as directors and director-generals of women's facilities.

Although administrative reforms are being pushed forward and new expectations in terms of the promotion of gender equality are growing, the situation is such that programs are being downsized in line with budget cuts. Positioned as a practical training program that addresses themes such as "Formation of a Gender-equal Society and the Roles of Women's Facilities", "Gender-equal Perspectives", "Use of Women's Information", "Management, Administration and Evaluation", "Cooperation between Counseling Services and Management Divisions", "Use of NWEC's Research Results" and "Top Management", this seminar supports learners, users and activists and enables women to better exhibit their abilities in society.

(Chieko KOBAYASHI, Senior Specialist, Program Division, NWEC)

EDITOR'S NOTE

The NWEC Newsletter is published twice a year 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 September 2004, the newsletter is sent to free of charge to approx. 1500 organizations (including individuals) in 193 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.

National Women's Education Center (NWEC)
728 Sugaya Ranzan-machi
Hiki-gun, Saitama-ken
355-0292, Japan
Tel: +81-493-62-6711
Fax: +81-493-62-9034
E-mail: webmaster@nwec.jp
URL: <http://www.nwec.jp>