

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

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

OUTLINE OF ON-LINE INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SERVICE (INFORMATION CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION OF NWEC)



Computer room of NWEC

1. Women's Information Network and On-line Information Retrieval

It has been some time since establishment of global information network concerning women was emphasized as an important infrastructure supporting movements for improving women's status. This results from the recognition that mutual exchange of information and support activities are essential as women's issues have common features across national boundaries.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is promoting the systematization of women's information in advance of other regions. The scheme of this WINAP (Women's Information Network for Asia and the Pacific) project carried out by ESCAP is to first have each country establish women's information base providing complete information of the country, and then to build an Asia-Pacific Information System centered around the ESCAP region.

Here in Japan, with the establishment of "Study Group on Women's Information" by the Office for Women's Affairs, Prime Minister's Office in 1989 and the consequent basic research on information and networking, it may be said that the foundation of information distribution is being gradually developed. There is, however, no national computerized network formation realized at present.

The Information Centre for Women's Education of the National Women's Education Centre will be starting an on-line information retrieval service on women and the family as of July, 1991. This

information centre will be connected with women's centre and administrative organs in charge of women's issues through telephone lines and aims to provide nationwide the data stored at the information centre. This system will mark the beginning of Japan's Women's Information Network.

This report briefly introduces the outline and purpose of this on-line information retrieval service.

2. History of the Information Centre for Women's Education

The Information Centre for Women's Education, in charge of the on-line information retrieval service, was established in 1979 as a special library for women and family affairs to serve as the information arm of the National Women's Education Centre. Since then, as part of a social education facility, it has functioned as a data centre supporting women's lifelong learning.

It has also collected and provided Japanese and foreign books and other materials emphasizing its importance as a research library in this area.

In 1985, the Centre announced an initiative entitled, "Fundamental Planning on Information Centre for Women's Education", calling to strengthen and combine the two functions. Furthermore, a national network initiative was adopted, reorganizing the library into Information Centre for Women's Education so that it will be strategically situated to serve as the centre of national information on women and family.

Since then, the National Women's Education Centre has invested in office computers and developed Thesaurus on Women and the Family and women related bibliographic database. In January 1991, medium scale mainframe computer was purchased to offer on-line information retrieval service from July 1991.

3. The Purpose of Information System for Women's Education

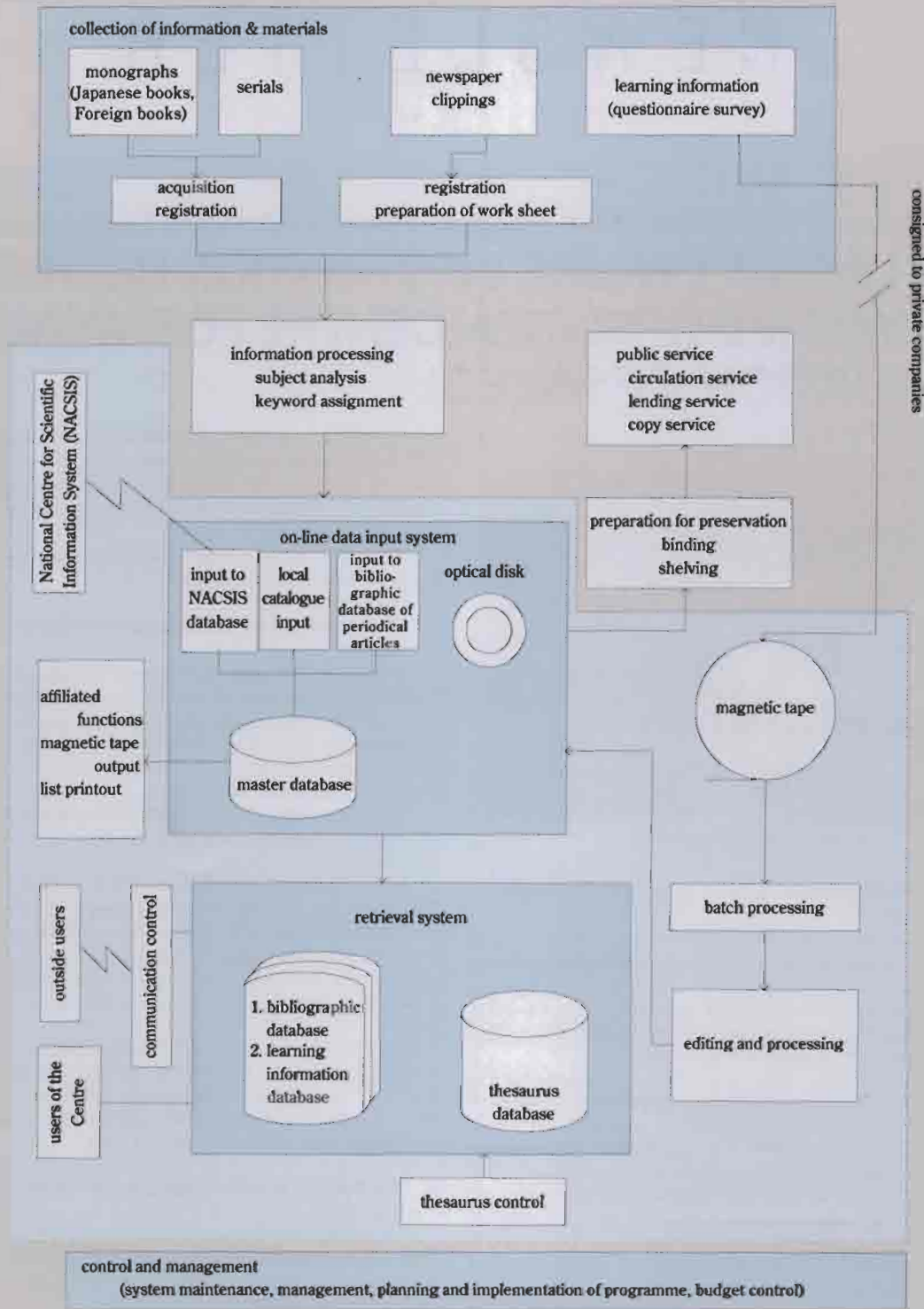
The Information System for Women's Education is based on the "Fundamental Planning on Information Centre for Women's Education" mentioned above with the objective of establishing "National On-line Network for Women's Information".

Specific goals of the system are as follows:

(1) Construction of a national on-line information retrieval system on women's information

The objective is to build a system which enables each facility to retrieve database prepared and stored at the Centre by connecting it with women's education facilities and women's administrative organs via public telephone network. This aims not only to support

Chart 1 Concept Diagram of the Information System for Women's Education



operations within the dotted line are computerized

information activities at women related facilities, but also to strengthen and promote their information function and provide basis for network formation.

(2) Construction of various databases on women and family

The database scheduled for public access in July, 1991 is mainly composed of bibliographic database of books, magazines, newspapers owned by the Information Centre. The database was built on the office computer introduced to the Centre in 1987 and has 44,000 records stored to date.

Meanwhile women's studies have become increasingly sophisticated and diversified indicating a need for developing new databases. In order to cope with the new demands, we are planning to successively develop new databases including one on learning opportunities, women's centres and statistics in the future.



Computer room of NWE C

(3) Improvement of quality of data and research function by close contact with National Centre for Science Information System and other organs

Cataloging Information Service of the National Centre for Science

Information System (NACSIS-CAT) will be used when building bibliographic database. NACSIS-CAT system is used to build national union catalog database by connecting on-line with various university libraries. This improves the quality of the Centre's database and its research function by benefiting from closer relationships with universities.

As mentioned above, the main objective of this system is to build database and to construct a nationwide on-line retrieval system. For the purpose of ensuring rapid operation of these functions, processing of routine work such as circulation and book payment are not included in the computerized database.

4. Type of Machines

Computer at the Centre is Hitachi's HITAC M640/20E, Main Memory 32MB, disk capacity of 10GB. Public telephone network used has 4 lines of 1200BPS and 5 lines of 2400BPS.

5. Data Collection and Processing

The Information Centre for Women's Education has been acquiring, on yearly basis more than 3,500 to 4,000 books and other monographs, 1,100 kinds of serial publications such as magazines and newspapers and has been compiling about 1,000 pieces of magazine article indexes.

In addition, the Centre has accumulated approximately 6,000 clippings of 60 national and local newspapers. In processing these materials, the staff manually analyzes each content and then classifies and attaches keywords to it.

These efforts that go into collecting and processing the materials are the key in maintaining the quality of the database. An important feature of the database is that all work is done from the standpoint of being useful in improving women's status.

In addition to the bibliographic database explained above, information on learning opportunities and status of database on women's centres will be collected based on national surveys conducted by distributing questionnaires.

The process diagram of data collection, processing and dissemination is shown in Chart 1:

Table 1 Type of Database and its Content

Name of Database	Number of Data	Content
Bibliographic database of monographs on women and the family	about 7,000 records	Title and name of author, classification, and keyword are main entries for published monographs, corporate research materials and materials published by women's organization and groups on women and the family. Database is available for Japanese and foreign books acquired after 1987.
Bibliographic database of local government publications on women and family education	about 10,000 records	Titles, authors, year of publication, classification, and keyword of materials published by local governments (board of education, office of women's affairs). Database is available for those acquired after 1978.
Bibliographic database of periodical articles on women and the family	about 12,000 records	Title, name of author and magazine, volume number, keyword of articles and monographs from about 200 periodical articles on women and the family from 1978 are available.
Bibliographic database of newspaper articles on women and the family	about 15,000 records	Name of newspaper, date, headline, keywords of articles on women and the family reported in about 60 national and local newspapers are available. All articles on women in news from newspapers acquired after 1978 and articles referring generally to women and the family after 1990 are available.

6. On-line Information Retrieval System

(1) Outline of the Information Retrieval System

Bibliographic Information Retrieval System modelled after Hitachi's Database Management System "ORION", is the system which receives and transmits data through lines. Data may be retrieved by indicating author, title, publisher, classification or keyword. The characteristics of this system are as follows:

- 1) A full duplex and non-procedural system has been adopted in the data communication control procedure in order to reduce the burden of equipment investment of connecting facilities. Most personal computers, modem, and communication software may be used, therefore, enabling connection at a relatively low cost.
- 2) With the integration of Thesaurus on Women and the Family developed by our centre in the information retrieval system and the Thesaurus descriptors assigned as the database keyword, controlled retrieval of special subjects on women and the family is possible.

3) Relatively simple and standard retrieval system is adopted assuming that users have little experience working with the system.

User accessing this Information Retrieval System must choose the required file and identify data which will be retrieved by inputting command. The retrieval keys are generally in Katakana or Roman letters, but the author, title, keyword can be retrieved by indicating Chinese characters. When no appropriate keyword is found, user may choose one by merely displaying part of the Thesaurus on the screen.

(2) Type of Database and its content

The details of the database scheduled to be opened to the public in July, 1991 are given in Table 1.

7. Future Plans

(1) Schedule of Database Development

Database development scheduled after 1991 is shown in Table 2:

Table 2 Schedule of Database Development

Name of Database		Scheduled amount of Data	Contents
1	<i>Statistical database on women's issues</i> ① statistical data	1,000,000 records	Collection, processing and analysis of important statistics on women and the family. The result will be displayed as on-line diagram for the Centre and exhibited as printed information for outside users.
2	<i>Database on learning information</i> ② Database of non-formal education programme for women	3,000 records	Name of project, conducting organizations, content, lecturer, classification (theme), etc. of supplementary projects on women's education and home education conducted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, featuring distinctive study cases.
	③ Database on women's study programmes in Japan,	1,000 records	Database of women's study programmes and courses offered at institutions of higher education conducted by the National Women's Education Center since 1983. Data items include names of universities, persons in charge, lecture title, content, number of students attended by sex.
3	<i>Database on women's centers and organizations</i> ④ Database on women's centers	800 records	Address, size, opening hours, conditions for use, etc. of women's centers and organizations in Japan.
	⑤ Database on newsletters of women's organizations	1,000 records	Directory of Japanese and foreign institutions related to women and bulletin and mini-communication magazines published by women's organizations. Data includes names of publishing organization, magazine, frequency of publication and conditions for access, etc.

(2) Future Tasks

As mentioned above, the system is designed to construct domestic network and, by implication, database is mainly in Japanese. For the purpose of providing an international network, it is important to remove language barriers.

The National Women's Education Centre is studying following points for the future:

1) Collection of foreign documents.

While efforts are being made to collect foreign documents, through human contacts and network developed by the Centre greater efforts will be made in the future to collect documents which are difficult to acquire including United Nations documents

and materials from Asian countries.

2) Assignment of English keywords to foreign documents

Unfortunately the Thesaurus on Women and the Family developed by the Centre is in Japanese and assignment of English keywords to foreign documents is desirable. Possibility of translating the thesaurus into English and ways of doing so will be investigated by the Centre.

Off-line data exchange is considered as a preliminary step to forming future regional and global online network.

(Nanako Aoshima, Information Specialist, NWEC)

SUMMARY OF NWEC EXTENSION PROGRAMME



Audience of the NWEC Extension Programme

As a new project for this year, National Women's Education Centre started "NWEC Extension Programme". The programme is conducted under the joint auspices of the boards of education of the prefectures and designated cities in response to requests from persons who are not able to participate in NWEC projects. The objectives are to disseminate information on women's education accumulated from previous projects sponsored by the Centre by making visits to local areas.

Programmes were held twice this fiscal year, in November, 1990 in Aomori prefecture with about 530 participants attending, and then in February, 1991 in Kyoto prefecture with about 150 taking part.

Themes of the programmes were: "Towards creating a society in which men and women participate as partners". The day began by showing a video film introducing the Centre with Programme and Information specialists explaining the outline of the Centre's projects.

In the afternoon, a symposium was held with four lecturers who have been cooperating and advising the Centre's projects. Symposium addressed the pertinent question of new life-style for men and women towards the 21st century. Many questions were raised from the floor and the panelists enjoyed active exchanges of views.

Responses in both prefectures were positive. In fact results of the questionnaire indicated that participants found the event satisfying. Women's leaders particularly found information useful for their educational activities. The Centre was able to conclude that the programme accomplished its initial objectives by greatly contributing to women's education and family education in both Aomori and Kyoto prefectures.

In view of the favourable outcome the Centre will continue this programme next year making visits to various regions in Japan.



Lecturers of the NWEC Extension Programme

JAPANESE WOMEN TODAY

WOMEN'S GROUPS IN JAPAN

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

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S CONSULTANTS

Main work of women consultants is to provide protection for present and potential prostitutes at welfare centres and offices. These consulting officers are appointed by administrative organs and city authorities.

The Council is organized by women consultants in Japan to promote friendship and to improve the quality of consultation by mutual cooperation. It aims to enhance its position and thereby to promote smooth implementation of the Prostitution Prevention Law.

The Prostitution Prevention Law was enacted in May, 1956 after many years of struggle by pioneering anti-prostitution movements. The law is based on the concept of "respect for human rights".

In accordance with the law, women's

consultant offices, consultants, and women's welfare centres were set up in each administrative district as operating facilities for the purpose of protection and rehabilitation of women.

The project named, Women's Protection Program is designed to conduct educational activities with a view to improving social environment, including early detection of girls needing protection (including present and potential prostitutes), consultation, guidance, survey, providing accommodation and protection. Each project covers a specific area and is carried out with the cooperation of related organs.

National Council of Women's Consult-

ants was established in November, 1960 when it was found that there was a need for collaboration and information exchange. The need was acute as there were frequent changes in the target girls and some prefectures had only two consultants against greater demand.

Current membership is 427. Main activities of the Council consist of research on the protection of prostitutes, public relations work concerning women's protection, communication and cooperation with related organs, studies on education and technical skills of women's consultants.

The Council has nine sub-regional blocks covering the whole country with each group carrying out individual activities in accordance with its respective policy. National meeting is held once a year.

For further inquiries, please contact:

Promotion Office for Prostitution Measures,
Ministry of Health and Welfare
1-2-2, Kasumigaseki,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100



National congress at Ehime Prefecture

JAPAN WOMEN'S PHARMACIST ASSOCIATION

Japan Women's Pharmacist Association was inaugurated in 1966 based on the resolution adopted at Japan Pharmaceutical Congress. The first local organization established in 1918 was Tokyo Women's Pharmacist Association. Since then, such organizations were set up in various places throughout Japan. With increasing desire on the part of the community to form a unified national association, it culminated in the establishment of the national organization.

Objectives: Objectives of the Association include among others, enhancement of friendship among members, improvement and development of their social status and establishment of professional recognition by accumulating knowledge and experience. Activities include lectures, training, publication of bulletin, organizing inspection tours to various countries where pharmacological dispensary is independent from medical practice.

Organization: Branch is located in each prefecture with controlled membership. Congresses are held each year in ten blocks for the purpose of strengthening solidarity of local areas. Representative meetings are held once a year by elected representatives from each prefecture.

Important current issues are as follows;

(1) Promotion of Life-long Education

The number of pharmacists registered in Japan is 143,429 (as of 1988), of which 42.6 percent are men and 57.4 percent are women. According to the statistics, the number of women is increasing at a rate of 3 percent a year and this trend is considered to continue in the future.

It is no exaggeration to say that provision of effective and sufficient medical care depends on women pharmacists. The motto of the Association, therefore, is to stress the importance of life-long education.

(2) Creating favourable environment for Women Pharmacists

With the formulation of Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1985, equality in employment was secured when midnight work was approved for female pharmacists. In 1977, a research was conducted using questionnaires at 88 Japanese hospitals with more than 300 beds focusing on conditions of day and night work for women. In 1979, the problems of wage and working hours were identified by a similar research by the same organization. These important but unglamorous efforts have won this right for women. We are currently working to ensure implementation and full realization of the law.

For the future, emphasis should be placed on ensuring child-rearing leave and day nursery centers to support working women. Operating hours of nursery centers for the benefit of working mothers as well as improvement of tax system for part-time workers should be reviewed.

The average age of women's pharmacists working at pharmacies and medical facilities is 39.6 while it is 30.0 for those employed at business enterprises. Women university graduates work for an average of four to five years before they quit temporarily. It is usually ten years later that they return to work.

This leave of an aver-

age of ten years is assumed to be due to maternity and child-care. This is a loss of human resources especially when there is a shortage of pharmacists from the point of view of promoting separation of dispensary function from medical practice.

By arranging a workable environment, women's length of service can be lengthened to the benefit of the women themselves and improvement of medical care and welfare of the people at large.

In order to accomplish this, it is essential that an appeal is made to politicians and policy authorities. A woman has been elected to the House of Councillors and it is hoped that she will represent interests of those whom she represents.

(3) Promotion of the Separation of Dispensary from Medical Practice and Cooperation to Local Community.

In cooperation with "Ten Year Welfare Gold Plan for the Aged" conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare services will be provided to local communities.

For further inquiries, please contact:
Japan Women's Pharmacist Association

Chairperson: Miyo Akishima
Sunny Heim 702, 1-47-2, Higashi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 170
Tel: 03-3987-5078



Members of the Japan Women's Pharmacist Association

THE FIRST WOMAN TO CLIMB THE HIGHEST PEAKS ON SIX CONTINENTS



Ms. Junko Tabei

In January, 1991, Mrs. Junko Tabei, 51-year-old alpinist, with four-person party, successfully reached the summit of *Vinson Massif* (4,897 m), the highest mountain in the Antarctica. The group flew to the Antarctica by a light airplane to install a base camp at 2,400 meters above sea level. On their final leg, they left the camp at 4,000 meters eleven days later. All the members of her party reached the summit after climbing for 9 hours in fog and severe cold at minus 25 degrees.

Junko Tabei climbed *Mt. Everest* (8,848 m), the highest peak in the world, in May, 1975 as the first woman alpinist. Thereafter, she continued her pursuit at *Mont Blanc* (4,807 m in Europe), *Kilimanjaro* (5,895 m in Africa), *Aconcagua* (6,960 m in South America) and *McKinley* (6,194 m in North America). She became the first woman alpinist in the world to successfully reach the summits of the highest mountains on six continents.

Junko Tabei manages a private English school, while she pursues her favorite hobby of mountain climbing. She is a mother of a university freshman and a 12-year-old son. Mountaineering clubs identify seven continents in the world. For Junko Tabei the only untried continent is Australia. There, the highest range is 2,000 meters above sea. She and her alpinist husband hope that the whole family may enjoy the climb there.

'NON-FAMILY' WOMEN ARE ON THE INCREASE:

— report on the 'Opinion Survey on Women' —

Masako Amano
Professor
Department of Literature
Chiba University

1. Traditional view of marriage is crumbling

According to the Opinion Survey on Women released by the Prime Minister's Office on January 13, 1991, increasing number of women participating in social activities are dramatically changing the way people think about the lives of women. Such changes are led by women rather than men.

The Survey is conducted every three to five years and the last was made in September 1990. Five thousand adults were interviewed across the nation, yielding a valid response ratio of 75 percent. Focusing on changes in consciousness over the past three years since the previous survey (1987), it is possible to predict, to a certain extent, a trend regarding the popular desired types of women or relations between the sexes.

In the present survey, greatest change in consciousness observed was the view regarding marriage as the first step to forming a family.

Marriage of women

Asked about whether women should marry, 46 percent of all respondents (men=49% > 44%=women) answered positively. This is a sharp drop compared to 74 percent in the previous survey (men=79%

> 70%=women).

By contrast, those who said "it did not matter" whether women should or not marry, amounted to 52 percent (women=55% > 49%=men). Interestingly there was a considerable age dependent difference here. In particular, three out of four women in their twenties (75%) have negative attitude toward marriage.

Women in their twenties say "it is up to the individual" (35%), and point out that "one does not necessarily have to if there is no one she wishes to marry" (37%), etc. (Table 1). This shows that a growing number of young women question the traditional view of Japanese society which claims that "marriage is happiness for women".

In the past most women married at least once. The very existence of expressions such as 'oorudo-misu' or 'hai-misu' (old maid and spinster) suggests that women who do not marry are exceptions. It has been taken for granted that women married at marriageable age and raised children. Since mid eighties, however, this attitude started to change.

The most salient change was in the average age of marriage. In 1974 women married at around the age of 24.5. In 1985, only a decade later, women were marrying at the age of 25.5 ('1986 Vital Statistics', Ministry of Health and Welfare). The average age of women's marriage tends to be higher in the urban areas, where employment opportunities are greater.

For instance, according to the 1985 statistics for the City of Tokyo, the ratio of unmarried women in the 25-29 age group has reached an all-time high of 43.4 percent ('1985 Vital Statistics', City of Tokyo).

These women do not remain single by chance or simply because they had missed the chance. For increasing number of women marriage and family is becoming a matter of choice.

In the urban areas the definition of 'marriageable age' is shifting; from 'Christmas Eve' (24 years) to 'New Year's Eve' (31 years). These are some of the facts reflecting young women's changing views on marriage.

Fig. 1 Do you think it is better to enact an elective system which gives a married couple choice between taking the same surname and keeping separate surnames?

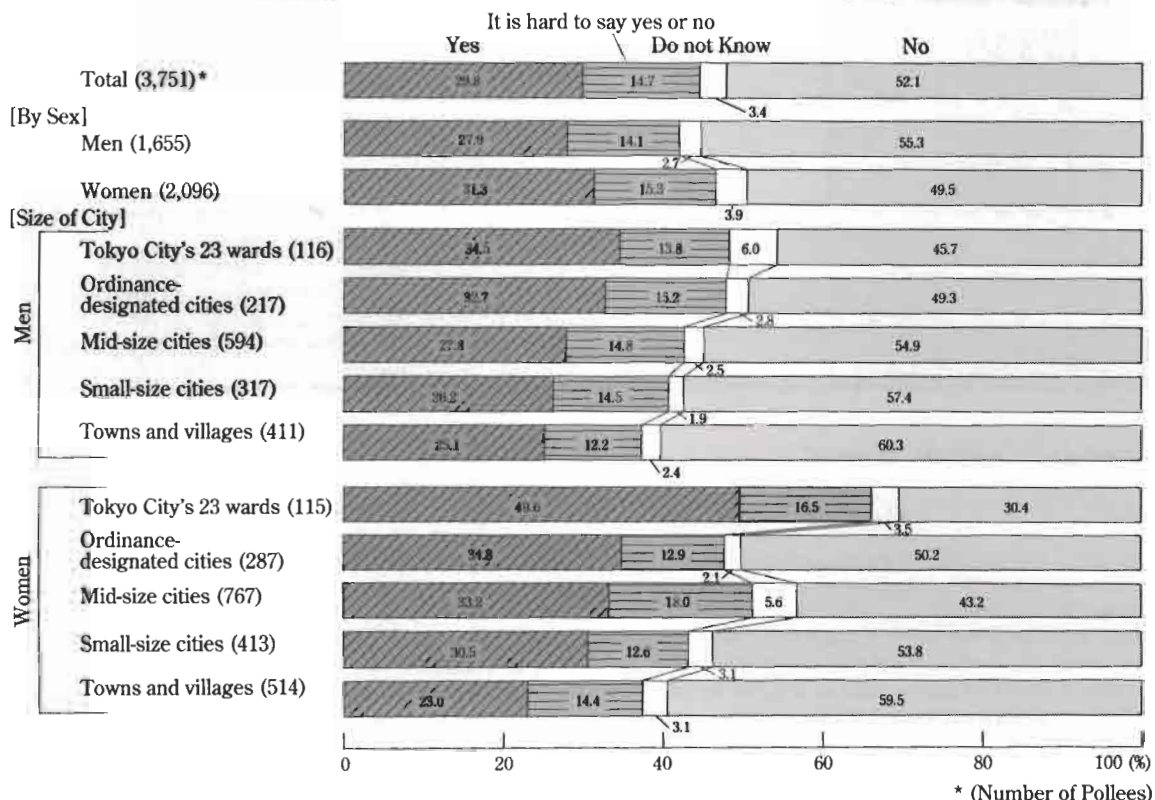


Table 1 Women's Marriage

	Number of pollees	Women should be happily married (Subtotal)	Women's happiness lies above all in marriage	Marriage provides mental and economic stability	It is natural for women to raise family	Marriage is not necessarily a sacred vocation or non-marriage (Subtotal)	Individuals are free to decide marriage or non-marriage	Marriage indicated only when she finds a partner	Independence gives choice	Non-marriage as marriage is restrictive	Others	Do not know
By Sex												
Total	3,751	45.9%	14.8%	9.1%	22.0%	52.0%	25.7%	21.3%	5.0%	0.3%	0.1%	1.8%
men	1,655	48.7%	16.1%	9.7%	22.9%	48.6%	25.0%	19.9%	3.7%	0.3%	0.2%	2.2%
women	2,096	43.7%	13.8%	8.5%	21.4%	54.6%	26.2%	22.3%	6.1%	0.2%	-	1.4%
Size of City												
Tokyo City's 23 wards	231	36.4%	13.0%	10.8%	12.6%	62.3%	26.4%	25.5%	10.4%	0.4%	-	0.9%
Ordinance designated cities	504	39.1%	12.3%	7.5%	19.2%	59.5%	27.0%	26.0%	6.5%	0.2%	0.2%	1.0%
Mid-size cities	1,361	44.0%	12.0%	8.2%	23.8%	53.2%	27.7%	21.6%	3.9%	0.4%	-	2.4%
Small-size cities	730	47.7%	15.9%	9.0%	22.7%	50.3%	22.7%	22.2%	5.3%	0.1%	0.1%	1.8%
Towns and villages	925	53.4%	19.9%	10.7%	22.8%	44.9%	24.2%	16.4%	4.2%	0.2%	0.1%	1.4%
Age												
20 to 29	204	33.3%	6.9%	11.3%	15.2%	65.2%	33.8%	27.5%	3.9%	-	-	1.5%
30 to 39	303	33.7%	8.9%	6.6%	18.2%	63.4%	34.3%	25.1%	4.0%	0.3%	0.7%	2.0%
40 to 49	397	42.1%	10.8%	8.6%	22.7%	55.9%	28.0%	24.2%	3.8%	0.3%	0.3%	1.5%
50 to 59	346	56.6%	22.0%	9.2%	25.4%	41.3%	22.0%	16.2%	3.2%	0.3%	-	1.7%
60 and over	405	67.4%	26.2%	12.8%	28.4%	28.4%	13.3%	11.4%	3.7%	0.5%	-	3.7%
Gender												
20 to 29	259	24.3%	4.2%	5.8%	14.3%	75.3%	34.7%	36.7%	3.9%	0.4%	-	-
30 to 39	463	30.5%	7.8%	6.5%	16.2%	68.5%	36.7%	27.4%	4.3%	0.2%	-	0.9%
40 to 49	542	39.7%	11.1%	8.9%	19.7%	58.7%	27.3%	22.9%	8.5%	0.2%	-	1.5%
50 to 59	463	52.9%	17.9%	9.7%	25.3%	44.9%	21.8%	16.8%	6.3%	0.2%	-	1.9%
60 and over	369	68.3%	26.8%	11.1%	30.4%	29.0%	11.1%	11.9%	6.0%	0.3%	-	2.4%

Married couples with 'separate surnames'

There is also a change concerning which surname to use after marriage.

Japanese civil law requires that married couple share the same surname by stipulating that they "adopt either the husband's or the wife's surname." The Japanese system which requires adopting 'the same surname' without any alternative is a rare one in the world.

The last survey asked whether the law should allow married couple to choose between taking the same or separate surnames. Thirty percent (women=31% > 28%=men) supported an elective system. While the majority did not support it (men=55% > 50%=women), supporters of the elective system showed a solid increase, considering they accounted for only 13 percent (as many men as women) in

the previous survey.

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the elective system supporters by gender and geographic area. There is higher ratio of people demanding the elective system in urban areas. In particular, it is as high as 50 percent among women living in the twenty-three wards of Tokyo.

Breakdown by age group showed that for both men and women, the younger the respondents, the higher the ratio of supporters of the elective arrangement. Those who favored the elective system were then asked, if given choice, would they prefer to adopt separate surnames after marriage. One in four persons (women=27% > 21%=men) were positive. Women were particularly disposed in favor of separate surnames.

In principle, under the current provision of the civil law which obliges married couple to adopt the same surname, there is a choice for the couple to choose between husband's name or the wife's. In practice, however, few couples discuss the matter between themselves, as it is considered natural for the wife to change her surname to the husband's. In fact, only 2 to 3 percent of married couples have chosen the wife's surname.

This is probably due to the deep-rooted concept of family which historically forced women to accept the surname of the family into which she marries and becomes its complete member. In recent years women have been outspokenly critical of this. Underlying these changes is the increase in the number of women with professional careers who wish to continue their activities after marriage and without changing their names. They do not see any reason to be subordinated to their husbands. Another aspect of this tendency is a reflection of our times. There is greater reluctance to change one's name when one is the only child of the family.

There are also deep-seated negative opinions on the matter. According to this argument, sharing the same surname is more convenient for the identification of couples and strengthens the sense of oneness between husband and wife. Children of couples with separate surnames may suffer disadvantages because of the inconsis-

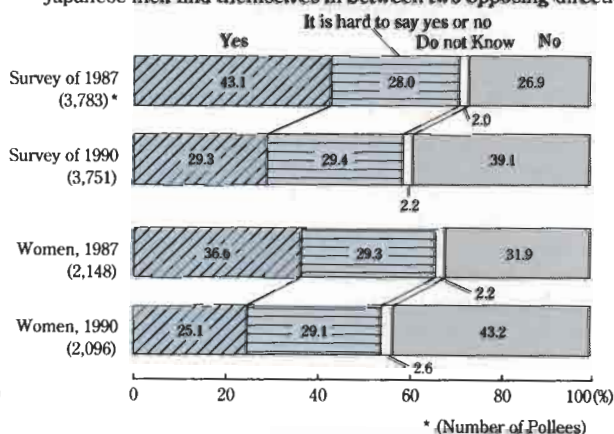
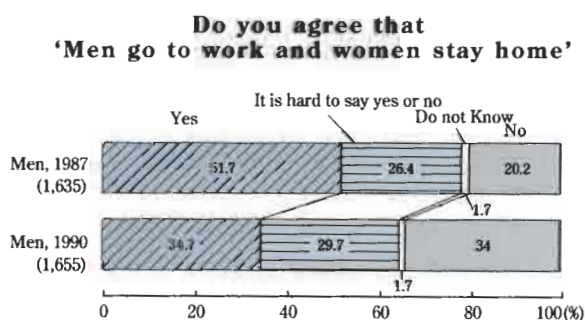
tency of parents' names. The survey suggests, however, that increasing number of people will continue to demand the law to be changed to give couples an opportunity to choose which names to adopt together or separately.

"Men go to work, women stay home"

In summarizing the changes on views regarding marriage and adoption of separate names, it is important to consider how the notion of sex roles is seen. Thirty-five percent of men and 25 percent of women surveyed agreed to biological division of labour as expressed by a phrase: "men go to work, and women stay home." By contrast 34 percent of the men and 43 percent of women disagreed. In the previous survey, 20 percent of the men and 32 percent of women were disagreeable. This means that between the two surveys, there was a 14-point and 11-point increase among men and women respectively (Figure 2).

International comparative studies in the past showed that Japanese men have a particularly strong sense of sex roles. Today, however, there is a bipolarization between those men who cling to a system by which men and women live in separate worlds, as it were (35%), and those who hope to be liberated from it (34%). Today Japanese men find themselves in between two opposing directions.

Fig. 2



2. Society is still 'male-predominant'

Changing views on marriage and sex roles show that there is a growing trend among women to expand lives beyond their homes and to aim at self-realization. This is the so-called 'non-family' option. The important question is to what extent is the change in women's consciousness matched by realities surrounding them. The latest survey revealed that while women's participation in society is growing at a rapid pace, a big gap remains between consciousness and reality.

The status of women

Fifty percent of respondents agreed that Japanese women did not

enjoy equal status at work and in generally accepted norms of society. Opinion was largely divided, however, in legal and institutional areas and at home. (Figure 3). Compared with the previous survey, there was an increase of 9 points for equality at home (33% to 42%), but with no substantial increase in work nor accepted norms.

The perception of male/female status showed a large discrepancy according to the gender of respondent. In all four areas described, more men than women considered women enjoyed equal status. Interestingly 27 percent of men considered women were given equal status at work while only about half the women (13%) agreed. By occupation, perceived inequality was as high as 65% in managerial/ specialized technical / clerical jobs and equally for general workers (65%).

Fig. 3 On equality of status between men and women

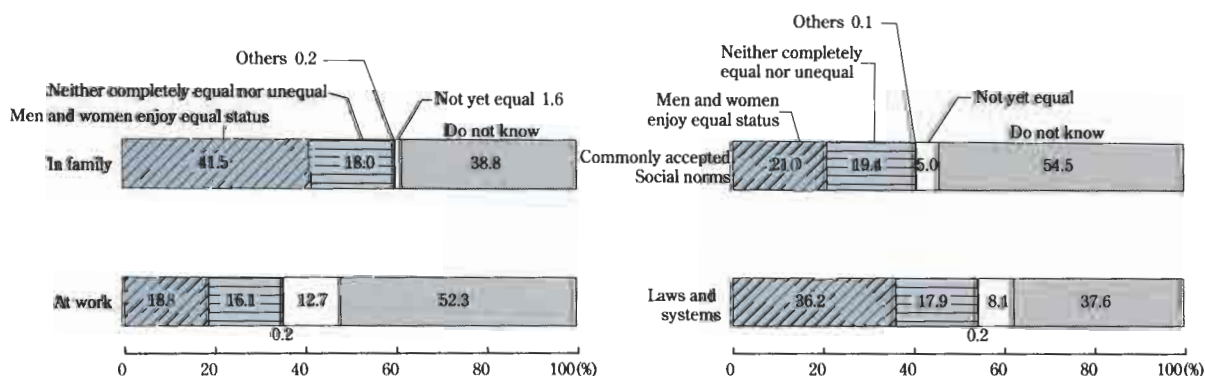
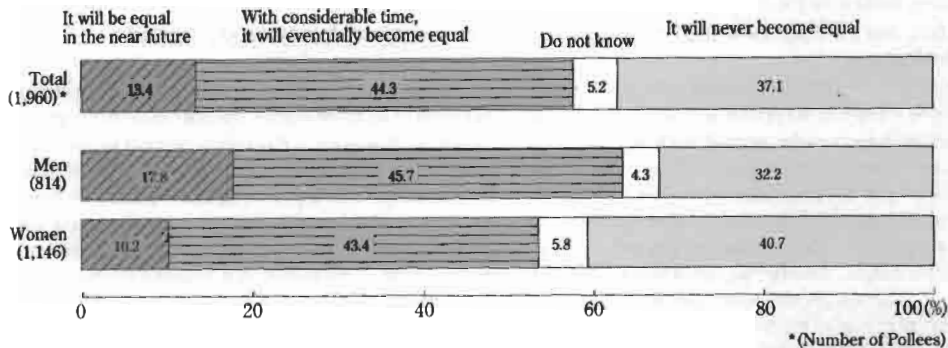


Fig. 4 Status of men and women at work in future
(Asked of those who answered 'Not yet equal')



Those who replied that there was no equality at work were asked about the prospects for the future. Thirteen percent (men=18% > 10%=women) were optimistic that equality will be attained in the near future while 44 percent (men=46% > 43%=women) was cautiously optimistic. They agreed that equality will be eventually reached but that it will take considerable time. Thirty-seven percent (women=41% > 32%=men) was more pessimistic. They did not believe equality will ever come. Here, too, women's reactions were more pessimistic (Figure 4).

It is difficult to evaluate the singular significance of the differences seen between men and women with regard to perceived reality and prospects for the future. Generally, however, we may say that the survey result reflects 1) the difference in the level of expectation or level of demand for the equality of sexes, and 2) the degree of satisfaction at present. In considering the status of men and women, it appears that men tend to stress those aspects which have already become equal, while women tend to look at those areas which have not yet attained it.

All in all it may be pointed out that work place has shown most resistance to giving women equal status. It is feared that it may continue to resist change in the future. Productivity and efficiency sought by business corporations make the challenge perhaps more difficult. Women's pessimistic outlook on the status of women at work points to the adamant refusal of many businesses to change.

Opportunity to demonstrate ability

Women feel that their status continue to be unequal in many areas of Japanese society. Where, then, does women's sense of inequality come from? Simplistically speaking, it arises from the fact that Japanese society has not sufficiently created a 'structure of open opportunities' allowing woman to demonstrate her abilities.

This is also supported by the answers to the question "In today's Japanese society, who has more opportunity to demonstrate their ability, men or women?" Overwhelming majority, in fact over 80

percent (women=84% > 82%=men) answered that men had, while only 2 percent thought women enjoyed it more. Thirteen percent (men=14% > 12%=women) did not see much difference. Regardless of sex or age of the respondents, it is clear that the Japanese society is generally perceived as a male-predominant society (Table 2).

3. More public offices to women, more family responsibilities to men

The existence of a gap between what women aspires as a way of life and the reality has been brought to light. This gap will expand further as more women choose the 'non-family' option.

There must be more participation of women in society if the reality is to change and greater opportunities are to be opened. In turn, certain adjustments must be made and social measures put in place. The survey inquired into the necessity of women's social participation and the measures needed to promote it.

Need for women's participation and measures to be taken

In the society of the future, is it necessary to further promote women's social participation? Absolute majority, i.e., 78 percent (women=78% > 77%=men) supported such a view. There was very little difference in the respondents group by sex or age.

Those who considered it necessary to promote women's social participation were then asked what steps might be taken to that end. Measures suggested include "opportunities for education and training for women's social participation" (38%), "establishing support system for men and women who have both family and professional responsibilities" (36%), and "giving men more family responsibilities" (25%) (Answers to the question do not add up to 100 as multiple answers were permitted).

More women (30%) than men (19%) supported the idea that men should have more family responsibilities. In a sense this underlines women's realistic perception that women's social participation is not reciprocated by men's participation in family responsibilities.

Table 2 Who have more opportunity to demonstrate ability, men or women?

	Number of pollees	Men			Men and women have almost equal opportunities	Women			Do not know
		Men (Subtotal)	Men	Men's chances are better than women's		Women (Subtotal)	Women's chances are better than men's	Women	
Total	3,751	82.9%	51.0%	31.9%	12.8%	2.2%	1.5%	0.6%	2.2%
By Sex									
Male	1,655	82.0	49.8	32.2	13.8	2.4	1.5	0.9	1.8
Female	2,096	83.5	52.0	31.6	11.9	2.0	1.6	0.4	2.5

Need for men's participation at home and community, and measures required

A large majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that men should participate more in home and community activities. The demand is stronger in women (72%) than in men (68%) and more particularly among women in their thirties (78%) and forties (76%) whose husbands are at the prime of their lives.

In order to encourage men's participation at home and community, shorter working hours (38%) and establishing support system for couples who maintain both professional and family responsibilities (35%) were cited by many. Of these two measures, men favor the former (42% > 38%—women), and women the latter (41% > 35%—men).

It is common knowledge that the working hours of Japanese male workers are considerably longer than in other countries. For instance, male workers living in metropolitan Tokyo spend nearly eleven hours a day for work, including commuting time. Needless to say, the long working hours of men effect women, too. Both men and women hope that the social system will be reorganized, including setting up of social support system, so that their working and family/community lives can be more balanced.

Women in public offices

If it is right for more men to be involved in home and community

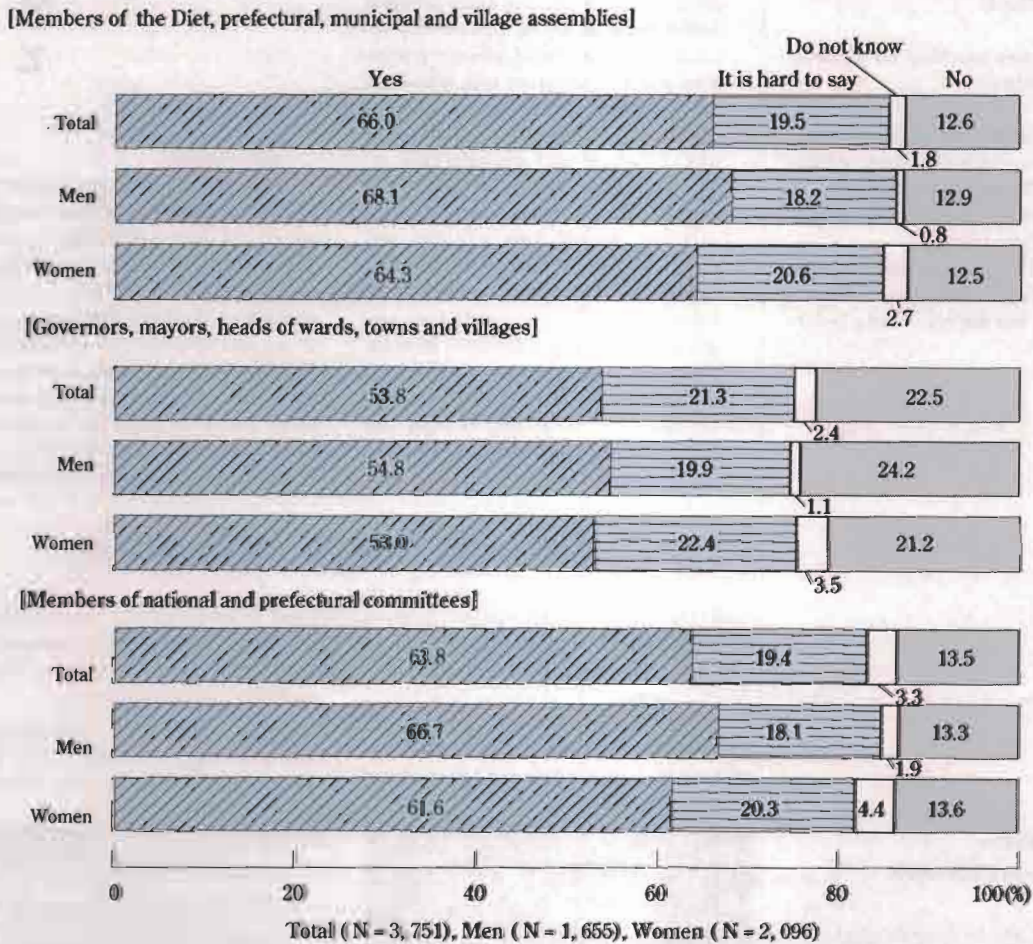
affairs, it is right for more women to find their ways into public offices. Following the adoption of 1975 World Plan of Action encouraging women's participation in the spheres of policy making, more women have assumed executive positions in the national and local governments, political parties and other organizations. Consequently there are more women today in public offices.

Should women assume positions as members of the Diet, local assemblies and committees, or heads of the central and local governments? This question was answered in the positive by a majority of the pollees, both men and women (Figure 5). But it is worth noting that more people have negative attitudes about women becoming 'heads of local governments' than their assuming the posts of 'assemblywomen' or 'committee members'.

At any rate, these survey results suggest the gradual realization of the importance of women's direct participation in the decision-making processes. There appears to be a consensus that women should take an active part rather than a passive role as in the past.

In summary, this survey demonstrated that people are being liberated from their traditional image of women. What should be done to support those who have begun to search ways for fulfilling themselves as humans? The survey results contain valuable clues for answers to this question.

Fig. 5 Should more women take public offices?



INTRODUCING NWEC

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

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

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

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

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

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

To use our facilities, please complete and submit a NWEC application form at least 10 days in advance but not six months before intended use.

NWEC Newsletter

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PUBLICATION

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE OFFERING ON JAPANESE WOMEN

WOMEN IN THE JAPANESE WORK- PLACE

(by Mary Saso, Hilary Shipman Limited, 19 Framfield Road, Highbury, London N5 1UU, 289 pages, £20.00 ISBN 0-948096-18-7, Publication has been assisted by a grant from the Japan Foundation)

This book is thoroughly and succinctly reviewed by Dr. Ronald Dore, Director of Japan-Europe Industry Research Centre, Imperial College, London, as follows:

As Japanese companies extend their operations over-seas, Mary Saso, an economist who has lived in Japan since 1978, examines the treatment and experiences of women working under Japanese management in Japan, Britain and Ireland. In her study-based both on statistical data and her interviews with women on the shop floor - she compares wages and conditions, training, union involvement and attitudes to work and child care.

While drawing a vivid picture of women's place in Japanese businesses - self employed, in family firms or in large companies - she also considers the wider issues of Japanese investment abroad, and the reasons why in Britain and Ireland men are less happy under Japanese management than are women. She discusses how the treatment of working women is changing, their response to those changes, and looks at the ways in which women and men could integrate their working lives with

child-rearing.

The author points out that there is a strong tendency in Western countries to regard the Japanese society as eccentric and quaint; many of their observers analyze the situation particularly of Japanese working women from such a perspective. In an attempt to avoid this stereotyped conclusion, the author focuses on the actual conditions of today's working women in Japan based on latest survey as well as views of middle-aged women who now form a large part of the Japanese work force.



日本の経営と
女性

FOREIGN VISITORS TO NEWC

As of 31 March 1991, the NWEC has received 8025 visitors from 121 countries. Followings are some of the recent visitors of the Centre.

22 - 25 October 1990: 25 African ambassadors to Japan to participate in the exchanging meeting between Japanese and African peoples.



African Ambassadors to Japan

16 and 30 January 1991: Two study groups from the Republic of China, comprising 25 members each, to observe the education system and facilities in Japan.

27 March - 1 April 1991: 23 foreign participants from eight countries in the Second Conference of the Pacific Rim Consortium on Women's Studies.



Conference of the Pacific Rim Consortium on Women's Studies