CHAPTER 2

The Role of Women in the Japanese Cultural Context

Jane Horan and Mayuko Horimoto

For the past decade, Japan has struggled with economic stagnation, an aging population, and strict immigration policies. In late 2012, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe put in place a robust economic stimulus plan, *Abenomics*, to re-invigorate the economy and move Japan forward. An essential element focused on women joining, returning to, and remaining in the workforce. This would not only add significantly to the economy, but also it would increase women's participation to offset the aging demographic shifts. While economic data supported the plan, Japan is starting with a deficit for women; fewer are in the workforce, a higher concentration in lower-paying jobs, and a small percentage in leadership. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Japan ranks 79th in the world for labor force

J. Horan (✉)
The Horan Group, Singapore, Singapore
e-mail: jane@thehorangroup.com

M. Horimoto
Toyo University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: horimoto@toyo.jp

© The Author(s) 2021

Y. T. Nakamura et al. (eds.), *Japanese Women in Leadership*,
Current Perspectives on Asian Women in Leadership,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36304-8_2

participation, with 63% of women and 85% of men in the labor force. This figure drops significantly after childbirth, with 70% of women leaving the workforce for decades (Avery & Nelson, 2014).

Women globally grapple with career and family issues, but Japanese women encounter both social obligations and identity, embedded within the family structure. These elements are firmly woven together and reinforced through traditions, public policy, and family and institutional values (Aronsson, 2012; Hasanuma, 2016; Kondo, 1990; Lebra, 1984). With careers constructed around family and social structures, women are caught in a double bind upon re-entering the workforce, first, after their children reach school age, only to drop out again to look after aging parents (Aronsson, 2012). Japanese women navigate through these ongoing career interruptions through a delicate balancing act of on and off ramps. Taking time off for family results in a greater percentage of women falling off the career path (Hewlett, 2007).

Unlike in many other cultures, Japan's family structure is inextricably linked in shaping roles and responsibilities at work and at home. Instead of policy reform, Japan's economic transformation may require a social revolution inside organizations and across people's mindsets to enable career and leadership paths for women. To understand the plight of women in leadership, a historical review of the role of women at work and in society is required. In this chapter, we present historical and contemporary research on women at work, looking back on the state of women in leadership across organizations and within Japanese social constructs. We start by reviewing the rise of feminist consciousness during the Meiji Period (1868–1912 CE). We then offer a multi-perspective review of factors helping and hindering women and suggest strategies, practices, and developments to advance women into leadership. We end with recommendations for future research.

Historical Underpinnings in Gender Equality

Abenomics is not the first time the Japanese government has ventured down a path of equality. The end of the Tokugawa Era (1867 CE) gave rise to the Meiji Revolution. Ending warrior fiefdom, the Meiji Period (1868–1912 CE) produced social change, industrial development, emergence of capitalism, and changes to the household structure under a renewed Civil Code (Kondo, 1990). The Charter Oath established a direction toward inclusion and consensus, stating that "the common

people, no less than the civil and military officials, shall each be allowed to pursue his own calling so that there may be no discontent" (Jansen, 2000, p. 338). While this focus on equality started to drive change within the Japanese family, the Meiji Period was fraught with contradictions. While the Charter Oath sought significant change, this policy did not necessarily encourage women to define their own rules. While the Meiji Civil Code offered some flexibility in household succession, the eldest son remained in charge of the household and family business and responsible for the welfare of aging parents. Women managed the household chores, children, and aging parents. In reality women's rights were only fractionally improved under the household changes in the Civil Code.

Meiji Six Society and Feminist Consciousness

With a focus on equality, the issues of women's rights created a rise in feminist consciousness. The government's reaction to women's participation in social change contradicted the philosophy underpinning the Meiji Reforms. In 1871, the government encouraged cropped haircuts as this style was linked to progressive attitudes and willingness to embrace change for the sake of the country. This same decree of hair styles and removal of swords did not apply to women. In 1872, a ruling banning women from cutting their hair became one of the most important issues for women's empowerment. While the literature does not offer a clear reason for the ban, it can be attributed to a division along gender lines wherein men have a public face role, and women were relegated to positions inside the home. This ban became synonymous with denying women's participation in society. "To the extent that women cutting their hair can be viewed as a real, if spontaneous, attempt to join the progressive forces trying to create the new Japan, the governments denial of their right to do so was a denial of their right to participate and contribute to society" (Sievers, 1983, p. 15). It is unclear how long the ban lasted or the reason for the strong opposition from both the public and the government. At the same time, men were encouraged to cut their hair (as this demonstrated a willingness to join the progressive forces for change), but women were punished for doing so. Women interpreted the ban as a fear of change and a mandate by the government to return to traditional values. These fears were manifested in ambiguous rulings preventing women from full participation in society. During the transition through the mid-1870s, while rural communities resisted, the state

instituted primary education for all children regardless of status. However, attendance for girls dwindled in comparison to boys until the turn of the century (Anderson, 2010, 2013). This decline can be attributed to the government's inefficiency to encourage girls participation and the parents' inability to pay for their daughters' education (Sievers, 1983). Behind the scenes, government officials overseeing the reforms would pass over, ignore, or forget policies elevating the status of women.

Influenced by western thinking, a group of intellectuals named *Meirokusha*, or the Meiji Six Society, believed that the "low regard for women in Japan was a major contributor to its backwardness" (Sievers, 1983, p. 18). The Meiji Six thinkers—Nakamura Masanao, Fukuzawa Yukichi, and Mori Arinori—were men and became one of the more influential groups writing and researching women's issues. Convinced that women were the central figure behind the reforms, they "made a valiant attempt to raise the intellectual level of the debate over the status of women" (Sievers, 1983, p. 25), asserting that change begins with the basic foundation of the old family systems, the notion of loyalty and filial piety, and the concept of house/family with ties to a patriarchal system. Yet, their notion of reform concluded that women were best suited for raising children and were not ready for roles outside of the family. Nakamura coined the phrase, "*ryosai kenbo*, good wife; wise mother" (Sievers, 1983, p. 22), seeing women's role as the moral foundation for the home. While women assumed greater power in terms of lineage, they remained caregivers, becoming a "well-qualified mother" (Lebra, 1984, p. 36) responsible for the education and moral development of the next generation.

The Meiji Six raised awareness of the principles of equality but not much changed. Dissatisfied Japanese women began to advocate for themselves. In late 1882, Kishida Toshiko, age 20, presented a series of lectures across southern Japan, *The Way for Women*, to standing-room-only crowds. Similar to the Meiji Six, Kishida believed that moving the country forward required equality for both men and women. She challenged the patriarchal system, believing that the failure in education was the result of the family system rather than government policy. Around the same time, Fukuda Hideko criticized the lack of public education and opened private schools for women from six to sixty. Hatoyama Haruko, an important Meiji educator, encouraged education and supported role revisions in the family, but she is more widely known for advancing the

political career of her husband and son, the former Prime Minister, Ichiro Hatoyama (1954–1956).

Role of Education and Family

During the Meiji period, three women—Kishida Toshiko, Fukuda Hideko, Hatoyama Haruko—influenced and advocated for women's rights starting with equal education. Compulsory education had been established in 1872, but fewer than 50% of young women were in school. The reluctance (or perhaps fear) in educating women circled back to the family structure.

The family structure shifted slightly during the Meiji Period, but women were still viewed as educated taskmasters and efficient managers of the home. Their identity continued to be defined by a multiplicity of social relationships constructed around social obligations (Kondo, 1990). Viewed as the root of the nation, the family system was steeped in generational continuity, rigid ranking, maintaining harmony, and defined roles. Acting outside of prescribed norms would result in consequences for everyone (Sugimoto, 2010). Kondo (1990) described women's lives as "a single thread in a richly textured fabric of relationships. Japanese women portray themselves as accommodating to duties and to the needs of others, rather than independent decision makers" (p. 33).

Some Meiji feminists believed in a balance of power inside and outside of the home, rejecting the positioning of women only as effective home managers. The resilience and persistence of the Meiji feminists fighting for social change made a significant difference in the lives of all Japanese women (Sievers, 1983). By the late 1900s, the concept of *good wife/wise mother* transitioned into educating women for equality for the economy and the nation. Instead of teaching about tea ceremonies and flower arranging, raising educational standards became the focus. Attendance in primary schools reached 69%, and a network of both girls' schools and girls' vocational schools prepared everyone for employment in the new society (Jansen, 2000).

Meiji culture was marked by discrepancies; borrowing from the west, Japan's industrial competencies forged ahead, while "bolstering the authority of the emperor" (Jansen, 2000, p. 233), reinforcing hierarchy and conformity. At the same time, from a period of 1894–1912, women represented 60% of factory workers, a figure unmatched by any other nation during this timeframe (Sievers, 1983). The Meiji government objective to strengthen the country through heavy industry encouraged

young women to participate in the labor force for the "good of the country" (Sievers, 1983, p. 56). Through this dedicated, highly skilled workforce, Japan was recognized as a world leader in silk exports (Sievers, 1983).

Despite Efforts, Not Much Changed for Women

In the ensuing years, prior to World War I, a renewed sense of freedom permeated the middle class, including the women's movement. However, substantial change was realized only after World War II with the relinquishing of the Meiji Civil Code that did not achieve full equality for women. To some, the code was the remaining repressive social factor in terms of patriarchal authority perpetuating the household system. Revoking the Meiji Code made equal inheritance the law. The head of the household no longer held authority, and women were given the right to initiate divorce (Kondo, 1999). In 1947, Japan's Constitution created a Civil Code specifying gender equality and ending the samurai-style pattern of family or house control. "A special division of SCAP [Supreme Commander, Allied Powers], headed by a woman, took the liberation of Japanese women as its task" (Jansen, 2000, p. 680).

Women remained responsible for their children, but many joined the workforce, rapidly increasing the ranks of working women. Young women from remote villages joined the workforce "for the good of the country. Working in a textile mill was patriotic; short hair and involvement in politics was not" (Sievers, 1983, p. 56).

The 1947 Civil Code introduced gender equality, replacing the patriarchal family system, though there are women heads of households even today. Although rules were put in place for gender equality, this family system, with its hierarchical pecking order, is replicated across organizations. As of 2016, only 7% of senior roles in business were held by women (Catalyst, 2017). In business gender demarcations are "played out in spatial symbolism, the payment of wages, the accordance of respect and deference and working conditions" (Kondo, 1990, p. 177). Family, identity, and women's roles have and continue to pervade organizational thinking, with the company as family, and the emergence of the *salaryman* contributing to gender-based divisions of labor in the household (Sugimoto, 2014):

> a "salaryman," a white-collar, male company employee in the private sector. He embodies all the stereotypical images associated with the Japanese corporate employee: loyalty to his company, subservience to the hierarchical order of his enterprise, devotion to his work, a long and industrious working life, and job security in his career. (p. 43)

This definition sheds light on the organizational mindset and the challenges for women in the workforce or advancing into leadership.

Japan's recovery in the 1950s once again created divisions, with a focus on rebuilding the country overshadowing all else. Contrasted with previous decades, the economic development of the 1960s through the late 1980s, rural-to-urban migration provided stability and wealth. Japan has gone through tremendous social change and is a very different country today from the Meiji period, but gender relations remain complicated in the family structure, overarching all aspects of everyone's lives. Women entering the job market navigate life cycle complexities centered around family responsibilities and society constructs that differ from men's workforce entry.

State of Women's Leadership in Modern Japan

Today, the number of women entering the workforce increases at age 24–25, shrinks at ages 30–33, and spikes again in the late 40s before tapering off at ages 55–60. While these peaks and valleys, known as the M-curve (Japan International Labour Federation, 2014; Sugimoto, 2014) have waned over time, Japanese women's participation in the workforce by comparison trails other developed nations (Sugimoto, 2014). Given the aging population and chronic shortage of labor (Aronsson, 2012; Hasanuma, 2016), Japan has benefitted from women who can work on a part-time or short-term project basis. Similar to the 1880s' textile mills and World War II's high growth markets, working women have been the backbone of the economy. Throughout the 1970s and '80s, employment data indicate that 50% of working women were married. However, this trend did not see an increase in the percentage of women in leadership or produce "high flying career women" (Aronsson, 2012, p. 12). Most women were in part-time positions. As demonstrated in terms of government representation, "women control only 10% of the represented seats in the lower house compared to the global average of 23%" (Hasanuma, 2016, p. 1).

Part-Time Work Enables Gender Inequality

The stark reality of gender inequality can be seen in the percentages of women in positions of power in Japan; women members of parliament, 11.4%; women union leaders, 6.9%; women judges, 15.4%; women lawyers, 14.4%; women presidents of universities, 7.1%; women journalists in newspapers, 14.8%; and women board members, 3.1% (Catalyst, 2017; Sugimoto, 2014).

This can be partially attributed to women temporarily leaving the workforce to raise children or take care of elderly parents: "74% of female university graduates in Japan have experienced periods away from work" (Zhou, 2015, p. 1). Returning to work after an extended leave, women miss out on career opportunities, as most Japanese businesses invest heavily in on-the-job training and socializing, starting on the first day of work. To optimize their return on investment, firms typically focus development and career planning on men employees, placing women at a disadvantage from a compensation perspective and for promotional opportunities. "While advocating the *tatemae* of gender equality, the *honne* of many employers appear to be that women should remain in subordinate positions in the workforce" (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 167).

Often women return to work part-time or as a supplementary workforce. Paying significantly less, these roles create a two-tiered structure of gender-based employment. Notably, the first tier of permanent employees will have career paths and are typically reserved for men, whereas the second tier of supplementary or seasonal employees are reserved for busy periods. Employers rationalize that such a developmental and investment-based decision is economic, not realizing the systematic discrimination against women. Using such justification, the workplace becomes the biggest obstacle in career advancement and leadership for women. The cycle of pay inequality and lack of advancement stems from life cycle events. With traditional beliefs and a strong sense of family, women, more often than men, are faced with an impasse to choose between career and family.

Family Remains Critical

This never-ending cycle of on and off ramps hinders Abenomics goal for women staying at work, advancing their careers, and moving into leadership roles. Sugimoto (2014) wrote, "The Child-care Leave Law requires

Table 2.1 Who nurses bed-ridden senior citizens at home [Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (2007), as cited in Sugimoto (2010, p. 170)]

Family relationship	*Percent*
Husband	13.3
Wife	28.4
Son	13.3
Daughter	16.6
Daughter-in-law	23.6
Other	4.7

all companies to allow female or male employees to take parental leave without pay for up to one year to enable them to care for a newborn child" (p. 170). The World Economic Forum (2017) data indicate that approximately 1.9% of Japanese fathers utilized paternity leave, increasing to 3% in 2015, and 7% in 2017, compared with 53.1% of women taking maternity leave and returning to work (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2017a, b).

In addition, Japan's return-to-work policy allows employees to resume work in the same job or a position of equivalent standing (Sugimoto, 2014). Oddly, there does not seem to be a leave policy to take care of aging parents or relatives. Based on data from Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (2007), when a parent falls ill, more women than men become responsible for their care (Table 2.1).

Thus far, it appears that economic and policy changes have not necessarily benefitted the role of women. "The changing economic and social patterns in Japan have created areas of tension between traditional and modern lifestyles, customs of education for women and employment options" (Aronsson, 2012, p. 88). Looking at the state of women in leadership also requires a look at the convoluted mix of relationships and socially assigned roles rather than government intervention. Driving sustainable change requires understanding the family system, not as individuals but as a household (Kondo, 1990; Sugimoto, 2014).

State of Women's Leadership from the Perspectives of Organizational Cultural Factors

Organizational culture is important for women's leadership development as it impacts women's access to leadership positions (Takeishi, 2014a). According to Yamaguchi (2014), companies with organizational initiatives to achieve work-life balance show fewer disparities between men

and women. In particular, the workplace culture, created by supervisors who are usually men, is said to impact the desire for advancement among women (Nakamura & Horimoto, 2017). Takeishi (2014a) found that, for the purpose of increasing the willingness for advancement among women, the effects of policy implementation for workplace participation and advancement of women or for supporting work-life balance at the corporate level, are limited, emphasizing the importance of the organizational culture in which women work. Takeishi suggested that their supervisors' awareness of the initiatives for participation and advancement of women and the support they receive for work-life balance, are important. While management tends to differ by the gender of subordinates, corporate-level initiatives for the advancement of women impact the way supervisors develop their subordinates. Takeishi concluded that it is important for corporations to implement policies that address the supervisors' efforts to develop women subordinates.

However, Japanese workplace norms create an organizational culture that discourages women from utilizing their work-family balance policies (Nakamura & Horimoto, 2017). For instance, nearly 50% of Japanese women choose not to utilize parental leave and exit the labor force when they have their first child (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2017). The expectations for women of working long hours and demonstrating commitment to their work over family responsibilities make it difficult for them to take care of their family as they have pressure to prove themselves (Nakamura & Horimoto, 2017; Takahashi, Kamano, Matsuda, Onode, & Yoshizumi, 2014). Also, given the lack of psychological management support for women's work motivation, women might consider that using the policies will damage their career (Yasuda, 2013).

State of Women's Leadership from the Perspectives of Social Cultural Factors

Leadership development of Japanese women requires an awareness of the division of labor according to gender roles that still exerts even in the twenty-first century. Since Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714 CE), a Confucian scholar in the Edo period (1603–1867 CE), published *Joshiwo oshiyuru hou* [How to Educate Women], Japan's awareness of the division of labor by gender has taken strong root, and postwar economic and educational policies have remained unchanged until today, obstructing women's

participation in politics and the economy, as well as men's raising of children, according to Makino (2014). In addition, Yamaguchi (2014), in discussing the impact of enforcing this awareness by corporations at the time of promotion to managerial positions, noted that the corporate push for gender-based divisions of labor for husbands and wives is reflected in the men–women ratios in their managerial positions.

Further, this awareness of gender roles in the division of labor continues to impact women's motivations for working and their career selections. There have been three types of "compromise behaviors" (Kanda, Hirano, Kimura, & Kiyohara, 1990, p. 22) from which women have to choose in the course of developing their professional careers. Women in the first type actively take on traditional women's roles, such as housework and childcare. The social norms around gender roles create barriers that may cause women to face dilemmas, fears, and anxieties in pursuing a professional career. In the second type, women take on men's behavior patterns. They value focusing on work and spending less time engaging in household duties and child-rearing as do typical Japanese men (Kanda et al., 1990). The third type is adopting a role in which they avoid marriage and childbirth to continue their profession. Although these three types have recently been changing, the related values have influence on women's work motivation. Moreover, women often lack women leadership role models in the Japanese workplace. Leadership role models have been men, which may be a hindrance in women's leadership development (Hadano, 2008). If the optimal model for leadership is envisioned as held by a man, the methods used for leadership development are in line with men's working style, not women's.

In summary, the state of women's leadership in Japan from the perspectives of organizational and social cultures still shows the influence on preconceptions about the division of roles between men and women. While there are generous work–family policies, social norms and an organizational environments obstruct their use. When it comes to individual work choice, women's motivation for promotion and continuing work has been still influenced by organizational and social cultural factors.

Leadership in the Twenty-First Century: Shifting Demographics Driving Change?

The social impact of gender-based division of labor and organizational culture created by managers have influenced both the lack of leadership development of women and the lack of increase in the number of women in management positions. Is leadership development for women in the twenty-first century causing change? How do the women think and behave regarding women's work and leadership?

Government initiatives since 1985 and some forward-thinking companies trying to promote women's participation and involvement have steadily increased the number of women in management roles, which has created signs of organizational and societal changes. Government policies for women that began with the Equal Employment Opportunity Act executed in 1986 have gradually increased the number of women in management roles, and empirical studies on this subject have also shown progress. Through these studies, it has been found that society at large does not reflect an awareness of the increasing numbers of women in management roles or their impact on organizations, and thus no visible impact has been seen. According to Ohzono (2010), women managers show a significantly higher level of satisfaction versus their men counterparts in regard to "overall work," and four categories of "wages," "work hours," "welfare," and "skills development" (p. 202). Moreover, it was found that, in "women overall," women managers have a higher level of satisfaction than women non-managers in "work overall" and "wages" (p. 202). At the same time, many women are hesitant to take on management roles. Takeishi (2014b) reported, regarding whether they wanted to have a management role, that 58% of women employees noted that they "did not want a management role" (p. 22). Only a few women wished to have a management role. Reasons given for not wanting a management role were "because of the heavier responsibilities (30.8%)," "uncertainty as to whether a work-life balance could be achieved (36.5%)," and "a management role would seem to be no merit (25.4%)" (p. 22). This shows that women anticipate greater responsibility leading to a decline in work and home balance, and thus they avoid management positions. It is assumed that the burden of housework is still handled mainly by women, which men spend only 45 minutes per a day and women spend 3 hours 38 minutes per a day for housework (Statistics Bureau of Japan, 2016), and thus many women avoid taking on greater responsibility through

a management role. In other words, the risk and compensation associated with being promoted to a management role are perceived to differ between men and women (Kawaguchi, 2012).

Based on an examination of gender stereotypes, Sakata (2014) noted that one reason for women not opting for types of work that are regarded as more masculine or for management positions is that these jobs are dominated by men, and, thus, women have no sense of belonging to them. In addition, the achievement of mutuality in goals that many women feel to be important is recognized as more difficult in certain fields with men professionals. In order to create environments where women strive harder for management roles, Sakata (2014) said that it will be valuable to mitigate gender stereotypes by eliminating gender-based segregation of jobs and by increasing the number of women in management roles, particularly in upper management.

Strategies and Conclusion

For the past 100 years, Japanese government-initiated policies have been put in place to stabilize the country during turbulent economic periods. Each time, these policies called on women to support both country and family. Based on a multi-perspective analysis examining historical practices and present working environments, it appears that policies, whether government or organizational, both helped and hindered women's advancement. There is no doubt that Abenomics launched a much-needed discussion on women in the workforce. While economic growth and optimism have returned, the verdict is still out on the benefits for women's careers and economic progress. Despite an increase in older women returning to work, Japan lags behind other developed countries in gender equality. While Japan has instituted gender equality laws and reforms providing equal rights, economic opportunities for women have not been balanced.

Based on this research, policies may help, but truly to revolutionize the workforce and the economy, Japan needs a radical mindset shift. Policies are needed, but Japan now needs a collective discussion to raise awareness and reframe thinking on the roles of men and women at work, in the household, and in society. The first mindset shift is eliminating the segregation of gender roles in the workplace and at home. To do so, Japanese firms should consider bias training. While this is a common practice across multinational organizations, this type of training

and other diversity initiatives need to be tailored to the organization. Bias training brings awareness to the forefront, placing responsibility on Japanese management for the status of women. It will also help them to recognize the capabilities women bring to work. Historically, Japanese women with aspirations for upward mobility and economic independence have been derailed by the men-dominated culture. If a firm wants to promote women into leadership positions, then desegregation and building an inclusive work environment requires a shift in perspectives across the existing leadership team (Nemeto, 2016) and across society. This begins with a discussion and definition on what type of organization the leaders want to have, and ends by communicating the firm's purpose, reaffirming values, and guiding principles on gender inclusion.

The second shift is moving away from rewarding long hours at work, especially when there is evidence that long work hours actually reduce productivity (Ono, 2018). Despite legislation, policies, and workplace modifications, long working hours have remained since the 1990s (Ono, 2018). This culture of overworking impedes diversity efforts by reinforcing masculine norms, while maintaining gender exclusion, in both the workplace and the home. Unless women mimic this style, they're left with two choices—follow the same pattern of prioritizing work over personal life and family or opt out. Women's advancement is not only impacted by long working hours, compensation and promotion practices based on age and seniority play a role. The lack of women at the top requires a wholesale change in culture and business practices (Nemoto, 2016). Shifting working hours will relieve women of the double career overload of navigating long hours at work and at home. In addition, moving away from rewarding long hours at work will allow time for fathers to participate in childcare, eldercare, and household chores. Women unconsciously sign up for childcare and eldercare roles, leaving little time or support to think about careers or consider leadership positions. In navigating these double careers, they remain partially connected to work but do not receive the same recognition, development, or career path as men counterparts. Legislation offers a partial solution for gender equity, but the real impact starts by removing the social and emotional strain for both men and women. Along with a shift in thinking, Japan needs to invest in the expansion of quality child and elder care facilities.

Finally, Japanese organizations and society need to continue the effort to remove gender bias for both men and women. This can be achieved through education and national curriculum highlighting feminist history

beginning with the Meiji period, underscoring women's participation in the workforce and educational reform, to the current roles of women in leadership in government and organizations. Education and media have a significant role in mitigating bias and reframing the role of women in society.

As the goal of Abenomics is increasing women's participation in the workforce to drive the economy, as Japan moves forward, research should focus on ethnography, following up on Aronsson's study (2012) to understand leadership and strategies for advancement from Japanese women's perspectives. Gender equality can be achieved through a comprehensive change in gendered customs and practices across organizations and within society (Nemoto, 2016).

References

Anderson, M. (2010). *A place in public: Women's rights in Meiji Japan*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1x07w48.

Anderson, M. S. (2013). Women and political life in early Meiji Japan: The case of the Okayama Joshi Konshinkai (Okayama Women's Friendship Society). *U.S.–Japan Women's Journal, 44*(1), 43–66. http://scholarworks.smith.edu/hst_facpubs/1/.

Aronsson, A. S. (2012). *Career women in contemporary Japan: Pursuing identities, fashioning lives* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/8211.

Avery, E., & Nelson, R. (2014). Womenomics in Japan: In brief. *Congressional Research Service*, 1–9. Retrieved from https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc462468/.

Catalyst Research: Catalyst. (2017, February 7). *Women in management*. Retrieved from http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-management#Japan.

Hadano, K. (2008). 女性のリーダーシップに何が求められているのか [What is needed for women's leadership]. 有馬真喜子、原ひろ子編 [In M. Arima & H. Hara (Eds.)], *時代を拓く女性リーダー 行政・大学・企業・団体での人材育成支援* [Creating a future of women leaders: Leadership development in government, universities, corporations, and other organizations] (pp. 202–204). Tokyo, Japan: 明石書店 [Akashi Publishing]. Retrieved from http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA8786092X?l=en.

Hasanuma, L. (December 2016). Japan tries to promote women but cultural norms get in the way. *World Politics Review*, 1–5. Retrieved from https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/.

Hewlett, S. A. (2007). *Off-ramps and on-ramps, keeping talented women on the road to success*. Harvard Business School Press.
Jansen, M. B. (2000). *The making of modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Japan International Labour Federation. (2014). *JILAF 日本におけるジェンダー・ギャップの現状と課題* [The gender gap in Japan: Present situation and issues]. Retrieved from https://www.jilaf.or.jp/eng/mbn/2014/149.html.
Kanda, M., Hirano, T., Kimura, K., & Kiyohara, K. (1990). 性役割の変動過程を説明する『折り合い行動』概念 [The conception of "compromise behavior" which explains the transformational process of female role]. *女性学研究* [Japanese Journal of Women's Studies], *1,* 22–41. Retrieved from https://ndlopac.ndl.go.jp/F/?func=full-set-set&set_number=106054&set_entry=000011&format=999.
Kawaguchi, A. (2012). 昇進意欲の男女比較 [Gender difference in ambition for promotion]. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies, 620,* 43–57. Retrieved from http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/10179975.
Kondo, D. K. (1990). *Crafting selves: Power, gender, and discourses of identity in a Japanese workplace*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Lebra, T. S. (1984). *Japanese women: Constraint and fulfillment*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
Makino, K. (2014). 性別役割分業意識は変えられるか?—国際比較に見る日本・韓国 [Can we change our understanding of role division between men and women? Comparing Japan and Korea]. *Peace and Culture, 6*(1), 25–37. Retrieved from http://www.jripec.aoyama.ac.jp/publication/journal/jnl006_04.pdf.
Mouer, R., & Kawanishi, H. (2009). *A sociology of work in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Nakamura, Y. T., & Horimoto, M. (2017). Women's leadership development in Japan. In Y. Cho, R. Ghosh, J. Yi Sun, & G. L. McLean (Eds.), *Current perspectives on Asian women in leadership* (pp. 71–86). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
National Institute of Population and Social Security Research. (2017a). *15th national fertility survey of Japan*. Tokyo, Japan: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research Team. Retrieved from http://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/e/doukou15/Nfs15R_points_eng.pdf.
National Institute of Population and Social Security Research. (2017b). *Populations and Security in Japan*. Retrieved from http://www.ipss.go.jp/site-ad/index_english/publication-e.html.
Nemoto, K. (2016). *Too few women at the top: The persistence of inequality in Japan*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt1d2dn1q.

Ohzono, Y. (2010). Do female managers have high job satisfaction? *Journal of Behavioral Economics and Finance, 3,* 199–203. https://doi.org/10.11167/jbef.3.199.

Ono, H. (February–March 2018). Why do the Japanese work long hours? Sociological perspectives on long working hours in Japan. *Japan Labor Issues, 2*(5), 35–49. Retrieved February 1, 2019, from https://www.jil.go.jp/english/jli/documents/2018/005-03.pdf.

Sakata, K. (2014). How the gender differences in preference and behavior caused? An explanation of gender segregation of occupation from the perspective of social psychology. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies, 56,* 94–104. Retrieved from http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/10180377.

Sievers, S. L. (1983). *Flowers in salt: The beginnings of feminist consciousness in modern Japan*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Statistics Bureau of Japan. (2016/10). *Outline of the 2016 survey on time use and leisure activities*. Retrieved from https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/shakai/2016/gaiyo.html.

Steeger, I. (2017, September 26). New fathers can take a year of paternity leave in Japan. This is why most men take none. *World Economic Forum*. Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/09/new-fathers-can-take-a-year-of-paternity-leave-in-japan-this-is-why-most-men-take-none/.

Sugimoto, Y. (2010). *An introduction to Japanese society* (3rd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press.

Sugimoto, Y. (2014). *An introduction to Japanese society*. Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press.

Takahashi, M., Kamano, S., Matsuda, T., Onode, S., & Yoshizumi, K. (2014). Worklife balance in Japan: New policies, old practices. In H. Barbara (Ed.), *Worklife balance: The agency and capabilities gap* (pp. 92–125). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Takeishi, E. (2014a). 女性の昇進意欲を高める職場の要因 [An analysis of workplace factors in women's ambition for promotion]. *日本労働研究雑誌* [The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies], 33–47. Retrieved from http://www.jil.go.jp/english/ejournal/abstracts/2014.html.

Takeishi, E. (2014b). 女性の仕事意欲を高める取り組み [Initiatives of companies to increase women's motivation to work]. 佐藤博樹、武石恵美子編 [In H. Sato & E. Takeishi (Eds.)], *ワーク・ライフ・バランス支援の課題: 人材多様化時代における企業の対応* [Challenges to work-life balance: Human resource strategies for managing a diverse workforce]. 東京大学出版会 [University of Tokyo Press].

World Economic Forum: Written by Svati Narula. (n.d.). *Why did only 2% of new fathers in Japan take paternity leave last year?* Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/why-did-only-2-of-new-fathers-in-japan-take-paternity-leave-last-year/.

Yamaguchi, K. (2014). ホワイトカラー正社員の管理職割合の男女格差の決定要因 [Determinants of gender inequality in the proportion of managers]. *日本労働研究雑誌* [The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies], 17–32. Retrieved from http://www.jil.go.jp/english/ejournal/abstracts/2014.html.

Yasuda, H. (2013). 雇用主の性別役割意識が企業の女性割合に与える影響 [The impact of employers' gender role attitudes on the proportion of women]. *日本労働研究雑誌* [The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies], 89–107. Retrieved from http://www.jil.go.jp/english/ejournal/abstracts/2013.html.

Zhou, Y. (Spring 2015). Career interruption of Japanese women: Why is it so hard to balance work and childcare? *Japan Labor Review, 12*(2), 106–123. Retrieved from http://www.accj.or.jp/wib-resource-library-content/career-interruption-of-japanese-women-why-is-it-so-hard-to-balance-work-and-childcare.