Women’s Employment in Public Service in Japan

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Overview of Recruitment and Appointment of National Public Service in Japan

- Career-based System (Life-time employment)
- the Merit System

Japanese “Fast Streamers”; expected to be senior executives and promoted much faster than those who passed other exams

Reform of Public Service System in Japan

- Basic Policies for Appointment of Government Officials (Cabinet Decision, 2009)
  - Promoting personnel management based on competency and performance
  - Equal opportunity to participate in executive candidate training

Type of Examination

LEVEL Ⅰ
Higher Civil Service Exam

LEVEL Ⅱ

LEVEL Ⅲ
Social Needs

- Not much in favor of women in Japan’s employment environment.
  - GEM rank: 54th / 93 countries  
    source: UNDP, HDR 2007/2008

- Seeking gender equality in decision-making process
Recruitment and Appointment Policy for Women in Power and Decision-making

Legislative Background

- The Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality
  (Cabinet decision based on the provision of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, 2005)

  “To expand women’s participation in every field so that women will have at least 30% of the leadership positions in all fields of society by 2020” (following Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, 1985)
Existing Conditions (1): Recruitment

- Target: to increase the employment rate for females in social-science background divisions of the Level I Exam to approximately 30% by around FY2010.

The target figure was achieved in 2009. = 30.6%

* 6.4% point yoy increase
Trends in the Number of Recruited Females in Public Service

*in social-science background divisions (public administration/law/economy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Examination</th>
<th>FY2005</th>
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<td>LEVEL I</td>
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<td>In social-science</td>
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<td>22.4%</td>
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<td>35.0%</td>
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Existing Conditions (2): Appointment

- Given the necessity for further strategic efforts to expand women’s participation, increasing the numbers of female national public employees in positions at director-level and higher is the next stage.

- Ratio of females in such positions in 2008 = 2.0%
  *0.1% point yoy increase
  cf.) Assistant director 5.7%
  Section chief 17.4%
Existing Conditions (2): Appointment

- The number of females in positions at director-level and higher is to be increased by greater efforts government-wide to retain female public employees and to provide them with steady career-improving opportunities.

- The appointment of females to positions monopolised by males conventionally are to be expanded.
Challenges

- Reinforcement of legal measures and implementation strategies to balance professional work and private life, particularly childcare and family care
  - childcare leave
  - nursing leave system
  - system to limit late-night work
  (based on the Act on Child Care and Family Care Leave, 1991, etc.)
  - family care leave
  - system to limit out-of-hours work
  - shortened working hours, etc.

- Allocating enough human resources for diversity policies for women and in public service
  - Minister of State for Gender Equality
  - Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office
  - Pension Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
Concluding Remarks

- Participation of women in decision-making process as a strategic tool in public management
- Need to not only recruit but also retain high-performing female employees
- Improvement of the working environment for both of males and females