CO-OPTATION FOR THE COMMON GOOD? A CASE STUDY OF JAPAN'S NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DV	Domestic Violence
EEOL	Equal Employment Opportunity Law
GEB	Gender Equality Bureau (内閣府男女共同参画局)
IWYLG	International Women's Year Liaison Group
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MHLW	Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOL	Ministry of Labor
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
RNGS	Research Network on Gender, Politics, and the State
UN	United Nations
WPA	Women's Policy Agency

INTRODUCTION

In December of 2019, the World Economic Forum released its annual Global Gender Gap report for 2020. In addition to a sobering and disheartening assessment that the world would not achieve gender parity for another 100 years, it also indicated a disappointing and embarrassing outcome for Japan, which was ranked at an all-time low of 121st place out of 153 countries (World Economic Forum, 2019, p.9). Yet, this placement was despite the fact that Japan has appeared to make greater efforts to improve gender equality in Japanese society over the past 20 years. In 1999, the Japanese Diet passed the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society (hereafter "Basic Law"), which established a vision for a gender equal society "in which men and women respect each other's human rights and share responsibilities, and every citizen is able to fully display their individuality and ability regardless of gender," and outlined the provisions and responsibilities necessary to carry it out (Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, 1999). Furthermore, the Basic Law formally established the national machinery for Japan in the form of a Council for Gender Equality and the Gender Equality Bureau in the Cabinet Office. The Gender Equality Bureau (GEB) was tasked with the planning and coordination of Japanese government policies regarding gender equality in order to carry out the vision enshrined in the Basic Law. However, despite the presence and the activities of the GEB over the past 19 years, Japan's ranking for gender equality has fallen from 79th place out of 115 countries in 2006, the first year the Global Gender Gap report was published, to its current 121st—with an improvement of only 0.007 points in its score over that timeframe (Hausmann et al., 2006, p.9).

Moreover, in 2012, Prime Minster Shinzo Abe launched his new initiative styled "Womenomics" (borrowing the term from chief Japan strategist at Goldman Sachs, Kathy Matsui) that intended to boost the Japanese economy and address the pressing labor shortage brought on by a declining birthrate by encouraging Japanese women to be active in the labor market. The initiative included seemingly pro-women's empowerment goals that had been carried over from previous administrations for almost a decade, as they were initially launched in 2003 by the Koizumi administration in response to recommendations by the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. These goals, which received renewed vigor under "Womenomics," committed Japan to aiming for a 30% target of female representation in leadership positions by 2020, placing special emphasis on these targets in the government's Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality. Yet, while the GEB has continued to promote these targets for several years,

as they have received mention in all basic plans dating back to the original 1996 Vision of Gender Equality, it is clear that most of them are projected to fall well short of the 30%, with many targets being adjusted to significantly lower numbers to reflect more realistic goals (such as a new target of 7% for female directors in the national civil service and 15% for female directors in private corporations) (Gender Equality Bureau, 2015a). What's more, the strategy has also not succeeded in boosting the fertility rate, with the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) announcing at the end of 2019 that Japan had recorded under 900,000 births, a record low, while retaining its stubbornly low fertility rate of 1.369 (Kurabe, 2019). Therefore, despite these efforts, Japan has yet to substantially move the needle on gender equality outcomes. While multiple factors are responsible for Japan's low rankings and lack of advancement for women, in particular the poor results with regards to economic and political opportunities for women, it begs the question as to the effectiveness and impact of the GEB regarding gender equality policy and outcomes in Japan. Why has the national machinery for gender equality been unable to achieve significant progress in realizing a gender equal society? It is the intention of this paper to analyze the efficacy and impact of the GEB and related national machinery bodies, from their primary upgrade in 2001 until the present day, as an in-depth case study, taking into consideration factors such as agency structure and resources, agency activities, the greater policy environment of Japan, the nature of the Japanese bureaucracy, and other structural characteristics of Japanese society—most importantly the relatively weaker women's movement and its relationship with the state.

It is important to note that the establishment of national machinery in Japan did not occur in a vacuum. A precursor to the modern GEB was the Women's Affairs Office, which appeared inside the Prime Minister's Office in 1975 as a response to calls from the United Nations (UN) during International Women's Year for countries to establish their own women's policy agencies (WPAs) (Iwamoto, 2007, p.4). The UN declared these bodies to be the "main engines for achieving gender equality for women" (McBride & Mazur, 2010, p.101). The importance of national machinery was emphasized again in 1985 at the Third United Nations World Conference held in Nairobi; thus, over the 1970s and 1980s, many postindustrial democracies heeded this advice and over 100 countries established their own machinery (McBride & Mazur, 2010). Initially, the Women's Affairs Office lacked any authority or legal standing, and its upgrade in 2001 to an official bureau with legal backing was long advocated for by women's movement actors in Japan who were able to utilize political opportunities to see it through (Iwamoto, 2007). With the existence and proliferation of such state institutions, naturally what would follow is an academic imperative to study

these agencies to determine their ability to act as "main engines" for gender equality by assessing their effectiveness and impact for both the women's movement and state-society relations—which include conceptions of the state itself.

Indeed, with this need for study came the development of State Feminism, an area of academic inquiry that aims to show "to what extent and why women's policy agencies bring about positive state responses to movement claims that expand women's representation" (McBride & Mazur, 2010, p.ix). The results of the first study of WPAs, *Comparative State Feminism*, also established an important network of over 40 researchers in 13 countries: the Research Network on Gender, Politics, and the State (RNGS) (McBride & Mazur, 2010). The more recent and most definitive study of State Feminism in the literature, *The Politics of State Feminism*, utilized the methods employed by the RNGS, which treated WPAs as the unit of analysis, and combined quantitative approaches to establish possible patterns with qualitative in-depth cases, enhancing the literature by testing case study results against a more robust theoretical framework of State Feminism (McBride & Mazur, 2010). The new study demonstrated that the project of State Feminism is not merely a descriptive study of WPAs, but rather a theoretical model that is "explicitly about the movement-agency nexus" (McBride & Mazur, 2010, p.x).

Thus, studies of State Feminism have important implications for political theory as well as feminist and women's movements. They provide opportunities to assess theories of change related to both policy and institutionalism. Moreover, State Feminism, through the lenses of such theories, aims to understand how state institutions can also become political actors. This carries valuable lessons for feminist movements as well, as movement actors determine how they may choose to interact with the state and which strategies would best forward their goals for gender equality and expand their abilities to impact society. However, State Feminism may have more relevance for certain schools of feminist thought than others. While radical feminists typically eschew interaction with the state and aim to undermine its patriarchal oppression through cultural change and transformation, studies of State Feminism align more with liberal feminist approaches, which pursue change through legal systems and assume that institutionalization is desirable as "being part of the 'establishment' in the policy arena pays off; it leads to more success" (Outshoorn, 2010, p.160). Nevertheless, while the approaches may differ, the goals coalesce in their efforts to improve the status of women in society. State Feminism believes this can be achieved through greater women's representation in policy and decision-making bodies, hence at the heart of the project is making "democracies more democratic" (McBride & Mazur, 2010, p.3). The implications of

this are no less important for Japan, which, as a democracy, has principles of gender equality enshrined in its own constitution via Articles 14[1] and 24[2], has ratified multiple international treaties regarding the rights of women, and has publicly committed itself to goals of gender equality through its own laws.

Yet, a study of the Japanese case does not simply illuminate the particular workings of Japanese policy machinery, but it also has great utility as a deviant case when compared to the predominant State Feminism theoretical framework. The cases in the RNGS project all came from Western postindustrial democracies, which McBride and Mazur (2010) define as nations with high levels of wealth, service-based economies, stable governments, and well-established democratic institutions (p.4). While the form and structure of agencies among countries differed, and the study found "no one single form that is consistently more effective generally than others," in many cases, depending on the policy debate in question, some of these agencies did at times act as effective allies and bring about policy responses for women that improved gender equality measures (McBride & Mazur, 2011, p.4). While the policy debates in the study ranged from the early 1970s to the early 2000s (thus generally all took place prior to the establishment of the Japanese GEB), looking at improvements in the overall scores of the 13 RNGS countries in the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report between the years 2006 and 2020 can illuminate the deviant nature of the Japanese case in terms of outcomes (see Figure 1.1). Each of the 13 RNGS countries showed improvements in their overall score during that timeframe, with an average improvement of .046 points. The country with the lowest level of improvement, with just 0.007 points (same as that of Japan), was, in fact, Sweden, which presumably only demonstrated such a small increase as they were already ranked 1st in the 2006 report. Even looking at rankings, which have fluctuated as more and more countries were added to the list, in 2006 the difference between Japan and the lowest country in the RNGS study, Italy, was only 2 places with Italy in 77th place. In 2020, the difference between Japan and the lowest country in the RNGS study, still Italy, had ballooned to 45 places.

[1] Article 14 states: "All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin" (Constitution of Japan, 1947).

[2] Article 24 states: "Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis. With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes" (Constitution of Japan, 1947).

Figure 1.1 Gender Gap Index Scores of RNGS Countries: 2006, 2020

Country	2006 Rank	2006 Score	2020 Rank	2020 Score	Score Difference
Austria	27	0.699	34	0.744	0.045
Belgium	20	0.708	27	0.75	0.042
Canada	14	0.717	19	0.772	0.055
Finland	3	0.796	3	0.832	0.036
France	70	0.652	15	0.781	0.129
Germany	5	0.752	10	0.787	0.035
UK	9	0.737	21	0.767	0.03
Ireland	10	0.736	7	0.798	0.062
Italy	77	0.646	76	0.707	0.061
Netherlands	12	0.725	38	0.736	0.011
Spain	11	0.732	8	0.795	0.063
Sweden	1	0.813	4	0.82	0.007
United States	23	0.704	53	0.724	0.02
					Average: 0.458

This index captures the economic and political situation in Japan in comparison to RNGS countries, yet one policy area that remains unaddressed by this index is violence against women. This particular measure is much harder to address, given that underreporting and non-reporting is quite prevalent, and according to the UN Women Global Database on Violence Against Women (2016), Japan does not keep official national statistics and the last national survey on file was in 2008. This is in contrast to other RNGS countries where, with the exception of the US, all have some national statistic on violence against women and even in the US there are reports filed up to 2014. McBride and Mazur (2010) note that in RNGS countries violence against women remained a large priority issue for women's movements, even through the 1980s and 1990s, as numerous policy proposals were put forward (p.154). In Japan, statistics on violence against women appear to be less visible and the lack of national record keeping is noticeable, making this issue more difficult to assess. A recent article in the Mainichi newspaper acknowledged, especially in light of the international attention on the Shiori Ito rape case, that Japan "lags behind other countries in sex education" as well as concrete measures to prevent sexual violence (Mainichi Shinbun, 2020).

Figure 1.2 LoVI & WPS Index Scores of RNGS Countries, 2019/2020

Country	LoVI Score	LoVI Rank	WPS Score	WPS Rank
Austria	0.24	12	0.884	6
Belgium	0.24	12	0.827	27
Canada	0.48	8	0.876	11
Finland	0.35	9	0.891	3
France	0.48	8	0.847	20
Germany	0.24	12	0.856	17
UK	0.35	9	0.883	7
Ireland	0.35	9	0.858	16
Italy	0.76	2	0.826	28
Netherlands	0.35	9	0.879	9
Spain	0.35	9	0.860	15
Sweden	0.56	4	0.879	9
United States	0.35	9	0.851	19
Japan	0.24	12	0.823	29

However, certain indices have tried to go about rating nations on their advances in this policy arena. One is a more recent Laws on Violence Against Women and Girls Index (LoVI) that used primarily World Bank data to rank and assess countries based on the presence of comprehensive national legislation regarding: child marriage, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and marital rape (Yount et al., 2020). In this index, Japan ranks 12th out of a possible 15 ranks (as scores were scaled to a 0 – 1 range), or in the 4th quintile—only Germany, Belgium, and Austria had a similar low score (.24), which was .26 points lower than the OECD average score (.50)—a majority of RNGS countries were in the .48 - .35 score range (Yount et al., 2020, Appendix, pp.6-10) (see Figure 1.2). Yet, a global review of national prevention policies for sexual violence, which looked at UN, NGO, and government databases, found that both Germany and Belgium still had official policies (concerned with rape specifically) while Japan did not have any official legislation on record (Loots, Dartnall, and Jewkes, 2011, p.7). Additionally, the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) index, which measures and ranks "women's well being" across three dimensions: inclusion (economic, social, and political), justice, and security, gave Japan a rank below all other RNGS countries (Klugman, 2019). Five of the 10 RNGS countries were among top 10 performers while Japan had the lowest rank of 29th—just below Italy and Belgium. They were given a particularly

low rating for legal discrimination in the justice category, with obvious gaps in political and economic performance as well (Klugman, 2020, p.64) (see Figure 1.2). While their score for intimate partner violence was not particularly low in this category, the data was based on the same UN Women database for which Japan lacks updated national statistics, hence making the quality of this assessment more dubious. Violence against women remains a global problem, and while Japan faces a smaller gap between their scores and those of RNGS countries on this issue, they still consistently rank lower than all RNGS countries on both indices—namely due to their comparative lack of robust legal statutes concerning violence against women on issues such as rape and sexual harassment, which still makes Japan's outcomes more deviant overall than those of RNGS countries in this policy area.

While many factors influence the placement of a country on such lists, not just national machinery, the fact remains that these 13 postindustrial democracies with WPAs were able to demonstrate some improvement in gender equality measures over time with better present outcomes. On the other hand, Japan, as a postindustrial democracy that utilizes Western institutions and has adopted national policy machinery for gender equality, continues to demonstrate very little improvement in outcomes for women. Why such a difference? Indeed, McBride and Mazur (2010) encouraged further case study as a method of research to "build upon and refine the theory of State Feminism" by completing such "theory-driven case studies that systematically use such logic to locate and map the combinations of conditions that explain agency activities and women's movement success in policy debates" (p.265). Thus, it is within the existing theoretical framework of State Feminism, positioning Japan as a deviant case, that this paper will test existing assumptions of the movement-agency nexus that forms the bedrock of the theoretical model, aim to assess the mechanisms that create such a diverging outcome in Japan, and in doing so, try to answer the question as to why Japan's national machinery for gender equality has been unable to achieve significant progress in realizing a gender equal society.

Chapter 1 will explicate further the theoretical framework of State Feminism and address important underlying assumptions, in particular the nature of interaction between WPAs and movement actors—or the movement-agency nexus. Given the lack of regional diversity in the original RNGS cases, the chapter will address the initial conclusions of the research and justify the use and contributions of the Japanese case to the overall framework—especially given that literature and studies on Japan's national machinery are sparse and generally out of date as they occurred primarily in the early 2000s. The chapter will also highlight the gaps in the few extant studies, noting how one chose to focus on a

different policy agency within the Japanese bureaucracy while adopting a problematic interpretation of State Feminism, while the other chose to focus on the historical and contextual factors surrounding the modern GEB but did not give attention to its relationship with women's movement actors. It will also address literature on the history of Japan's women's movement and their relationship with the Japanese state and bureaucracy, noting how the conclusions may or may not be applicable to the modern GEB. Given that no existing study has provided an in-depth explanation and assessment of the national policy machinery structure, this will be addressed in Chapter 2. The chapter will not only outline the national machinery bodies in Japan, including their form, powers, and resources, it will aim to asses this structure, as well as other contextual factors, against the general patterns found in the RNGS cases. It will discuss not only consistencies but also important differences of the Japanese case, which may have implications for assumptions in the State Feminism model about how "success" in terms of agency effectiveness may actually translate into improvement of outcomes or impact. Chapter 3 will address the foundation of the State Feminism framework, the movement-agency nexus, and will test the assumptions of the model against the Japanese case and highlight the peculiarities of Japan's state-civil society relationship; in particular, it will address an element not incorporated into the State Feminism framework—international influence. The chapter will focus on the access aspect of the movement-agency nexus in State Feminism, comparing the RNGS countries to the Japanese case and discussing the implications of such assessment. Chapter 4 will then assess the current activities of the GEB in regards to four specific policy debates that have taken place primarily within the Abe administration (2012 – present), giving consideration to the relevant structural and contextual realities highlighted in Chapters 2 and 3 and in doing so categorize agency type and response outcomes of the national machinery. It will also focus on the framing aspect of the movement-agency nexus with regards to the policies of "Womenomics," and discuss the implications of such framing trends while referring to the conclusions of the State Feminism literature. Utilizing the results of Chapter 2, 3, and 4, the paper will conclude with a discussion of the implications of the Japanese case both in relation to the stated assumptions and conclusions of the current State Feminism theoretical framework as well as the ability of the national policy machinery to achieve measurable improvement in gender equality outcomes. Ultimately, this paper hopes to understand why Japan's national policy machinery has not been as effective in achieving gender equality, offer a more in-depth explanation for its poorer outcomes, and in doing so help illuminate new considerations for other national policy machinery while also offering insight into how Japan's Gender Equality

Bureau and related machinery bodies could improve. Indeed, a key question for McBride and Mazur (2010) that drives the study of State Feminism is "what are the lessons for practitioners who seek to pursue gender equality and social change through the state?" (p.265). This paper hopes to contribute to the answer to this question, and by adding to the conversation on State Feminism and national gender machineries from a new perspective, it aspires to serve as a useful point of comparison for future research on the development of gender machineries in other areas of the world, including Asia.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a watershed moment for the global feminist movement in their aims to achieve gender equality. Current trends, such as the rise of #MeToo, indicate that this international movement shows no signs of slowing, having been one of the most enduring social movements throughout history. Yet, in light of the most recent World Economic Forum Gender Gap report, with its pessimist outlook regarding the achievement of gender parity, studies of the ability of state institutions to act as effective allies for the women's movement will continue to have important implications—not only for questions of democratic development but also for human rights and justice. Therefore, research on State Feminism can offer lessons for both the women's movement itself and for societies as a whole.

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF STATE FEMINISM

Section 1: Literature Review

1.1 State Feminism Framework

The pioneering work on State Feminism (1995) by Stetson and Mazur, *Comparative State Feminism*, arose as a response to previous assumptions of feminist scholarship, which posited that the state could never further a feminist agenda. Historically, certain schools of feminist thought, especially radicals, viewed the state as a monolithic "thing" that perpetuated structures of oppression and subordination of women. These studies asserted that modern welfare states, whether socialist or capitalist, institutionalized the roles of women as mothers and workers and further disadvantaged the status of women in the public sphere—thus, no amount of policies or laws would change the patriarchal orientation of the state (Stetson and Mazur, 1995, pp.5-9). However, Stetson and Mazur (1995) took a different view of the state, whose meaning varied across political cultures, seeing it instead as "a site of a variety of internally differentiated structures and processes" (p.273). In this way, they aimed to determine the existence of State Feminism, which they defined as the activities of state structures that "are formally charged with furthering women's status and rights" (Stetson and Mazur, 1995, pp.1-2). Their theory centered on two main outcomes related to state capacity and state-society relations—questioning how much WPAs could influence policy and provide access to society-based actors. They focused on four main factors: patterns of politics, organizational form, cultural beliefs, and politics of the women's movement, concluding that the absence of ideal conditions in any of the four areas would reduce the incidence of State Feminism (Stetson and Mazur, 1995). Yet, their study only focused on times when the WPAs in the selected countries were most active, and they only focused on one policy area—equal opportunity employment. While they bolstered the claims of liberal feminists in finding evidence of State Feminism, their study presented a mere snapshot of agencies and activities and lacked rigorous quantitative testing that could establish a more solid theory.

The follow-up work and capstone to the RNGS project, *The Politics of State Feminism,* was able to address such shortcomings by utilizing ordinal regression methods to more concretely determine any potential correlational patterns among different factors, such as structures and resources, national or political contexts, and policy areas (McBride and Mazur, 2010). They also incorporated aspects of institutionalism into a larger theoretical framework to discern how machinery are utilized over time and how they have evolved to

respond to actors in certain societal, political, and structural contexts As a result, they amended the original theory after discovering that it was not just agency activities but also the nature of their interaction with societal groups that was the key determinant of State Feminism. Moreover, they found that the influence of structural and contextual features "depends on the relation . . . to the arenas where debates occur . . . characteristics of previous debates . . . and previous coalitions with women's movement actors" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.246). Therefore, this justified a focus on the centrality of the movement-agency nexus across time and different policy debates in determining success of State Feminism.

It is with this understanding that McBride and Mazur (2010) came to redefine State Feminism as the study of "how and to what extent state-based institutions established to promote women's rights and gender equality—women's policy agencies—can bring about the success of women's movements originating outside the state" (p.37). Their framework treats framing and access as essential components of study and treats policy debates as the primary unit of analysis. This focus makes sense given the strength of liberal feminism in Western democracies where women have advocated for equality through legal reforms. Yet, contrary to previous assumptions, they find that policy issue is the most salient lens for determining movement success in the state, as opposed to any overarching structural or national trends. The logic is that framing of issues is "an important source of power" and women are able to achieve success when they can enter the policy arena and influence the framing and outcome of debates in alignment with their ideas (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.193, 250). Thus, it is with these two key components, framing and access, through the lens of policy debates, that McBride and Mazur (2010) construct their paradigm for assessing the effectiveness and impact of WPAs in relation to the goals of women's movements. Each assessment is categorized into four possible outcomes. The first assessment categorizes the types of WPAs, which determines their effectiveness as allies of the women's movement. "Insider" agencies are the most effective, as they both adopt the framing of the women's movement and are able to successfully gender the framing of a policy debate. The next kind is "Marginal" in that they adopt the framing of the women's movement but are not able to successfully gender the debate. The less desirable kinds of agencies are "Symbolic," which do not adopt any position on issues nor aim to influence the debate, and "Anti-Movement," which are able to gender policy debates but adopt a frame that does not agree with the frame of movement activists. Additionally, agency responses to policy debates are also assessed as a matter of impact. "Dual Response" is most desirable, in which agencies provide policy access to movement actors and allow them to successfully influence policy outcomes. "No

Response" occurs when agencies provide neither access nor influence. "Co-optation" happens when agencies provide access but not influence in policy. Finally, "Pre-emption" is when agencies restrict access to actors but allow them some influence in policy (McBride and Mazur, 2010, pp.18-19). Thus, with each policy debate WPAs are categorized according to these criteria.

The characterization of WPAs is also considered within broader theories of policy and institutional change. McBride and Mazur (2010) highlight the applicability of theories such as "policy windows" or "punctuated equilibrium" to the events of WPAs and their interactions with women's movement actors, adding to the discussion of whether policy changes may occur as a result of shifts in the political context or rather a change in the patterns of actors within a policy subsystem (p.222). Furthermore, McBride and Mazur (2010) refer to two primary theories in historical institutionalism that attempt to explain institutional dynamics: path dependency and constant cause (p.221). These theories aim to determine, respectively, whether "critical junctures" help explain the evolution of institutional dynamics over time or whether the conditions and factors that led to the establishment of institutions are more relevant for explaining institutional change or consistency (McBride and Mazur, 2010, pp.221-222). By linking such theories with the formation of agencies and how women's movement actors were able to penetrate or create "patterns of interaction" with the state, this can help "explain when, how, and why institutional dynamics pertaining to the state and its policies change, or, in many cases, stay the same" (McBride & Mazur, 2010, p.221). Such factors are important to gain a more holistic picture of State Feminism by placing the activities of WPAs within context and comparing the nature of their activities over time.

Yet, McBride and Mazur are also cognizant of the distinction between "women's movement" and "feminist movement," as the former may refer to issues of gender consciousness, women's solidarity, and importance of issues that affect women while the later refers more specifically to issues of patriarchy and oppression while advocating for gender equality. Thus, for them, State Feminism is most fully developed when WPAs have a case of "acting as an Insider agency and gaining a Dual Response," which is an outcome that helps to overturn structural inequality (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.97). With this is in mind, a more complex definition of State Feminism emerges that brings these different elements together. In its ideal form, "State Feminism pertains to activities of women's policy agencies as allies of women's movement actors and their effectiveness in bringing about state responses that give these actors access to policy subsystems and policies that are matching or

compatible with the women's movement's own definitions and policy goals" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.122).

In applying these criteria to the policy debates in the RNGS countries, McBride and Mazur (2010) discovered some interesting conclusions that would have important implications for future case studies in other countries, including Japan. The first conclusion was that there was no discernable pattern or model of successful national machinery for gender equality. While certain combinations of factors coalesced to produce the best outcome (Insider agency with Dual Response), the pattern for this success differed both within countries and within regions. This implied that there was no one set style or pathway for WPAs to successfully function within the state—in fact, no agency in the study had a single type of agency performance (McBride and Mazur, 2010, pp.241-242). While they found certain traits that were more likely to lead to success, "agencies, usually ministries, headed by leaders with feminist experience, holding policy proposal power and close proximity to the center of power," there were many exceptions to this (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.139). Moreover, they found no consistent patterns or causal combinations that could explain agency failure. The different outcomes depended on the policy debate and suggested that openness of policy subsystems and framing were important considerations as well (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.244). The second surprising conclusion of the study was that WPAs were not a necessary condition for women's movement success, as actors could utilize other pathways, such as relationships with influential politicians, to achieve success without forming alliances with agencies. Instead, WPAs could act as useful backups in cases where the policy environment was not favorable to women's movement actors (for example closed policy arenas or unsupportive governing majorities) (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.243). Therefore, contrary to their previous work, the primary conclusion of *The Politics of State Feminism* is that success is "complex, context specific, and conditional" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.242).

This then begs the question—if there are no consistent patterns, why continue to study WPAs? One potential answer is that, despite their conclusion, WPAs are not useless. They can, in fact, be helpful and "increase the likelihood that the state will respond to movement demands for access and policy change" (McBride and Mazur, 2011, p.6). Another important reason is that, as noted by the authors, their study only applied to 13 Western democracies. While this was a deliberate choice, as they needed to be able to control for certain characteristics such as level of development and cultural foundations, the fact remains that over 100 countries established national machinery in response to calls from the UN. Hence,

the RNGS study represents an important but small fraction of all national machinery cases, and there is still a significant gap in the overall gender machinery literature. While the applicability of the framework outside the context of the RNGS cases is uncertain, their study alone may not provide the full picture of the potential for gender machinery. Indeed, if an important purpose of the study of State Feminism is to help guide practitioners who seek gender equality and social change through the state and public policy in their own societies, then further research must proceed in order to test these assumptions. In a follow-up paper, *Gender Machineries Worldwide*, McBride and Mazur (2011) acknowledge this need for further examination, and in the preface to their original work they call upon other researchers to "put these conclusions to the test, and to determine whether State Feminism even makes sense in other cultural, economic, and political settings" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.xi). Thus, this justifies utilizing Japan as a case study, but how to determine how well these concepts travel to contexts outside the RNGS cases?

This issue was acknowledged and expanded upon in the follow-up paper, where McBride and Mazur (2011) addressed the literature gap and focused on the dichotomy between gender machineries in postindustrial democracies and the developing world; in particular, they argued that one must consider the "deep and inherent differences in the political, social, and economic dynamics that swirl around gender machineries in developing countries" (p. 21). However, this clear dichotomy does not apply to Japan or to many other Asian societies, which have achieved democratization and industrialization, albeit at a later date. In fact, the criteria for selected countries in the RNGS study generally align with features of Japan—especially with regards to political and economic considerations. McBride and Mazur (2011) note that their analysis is limited to agencies that are involved in influencing a wide range of policies, rather than focusing on a specific issue. This is clearly true for the GEB, which was specifically established to better plan and coordinate across a range of policies in Japan. Furthermore, the RNGS approach is based on these assumptions: "political systems have stable democratic institutions, the policy making process is a conflict of ideas expressed through framing, there is a variety of women's movement actors attentive to policy issues, policy actors and social actors make explicit statements that are accessible through media…and agencies have an opportunity to participate in policy debates" (McBride and Mazur, 2011, p.13). This paper intends to demonstrate that Japan, while historically grounded in different cultural norms, satisfies all these criteria of postindustrial democracies and has also adopted "Western" institutions into its own state. Moreover, the adoption of these institutions can been seen as an indication that Japan aims to position itself as a

legitimate player among Western democracies, or at least demonstrates a "desire to be considered a 'modern' nation, worthy of prestige and acceptance" (Gelb, 2015, p.217). This is further evidenced by Japan's ratification of important international treaties related to gender equality, such as the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). For these reasons, comparisons of the Japanese case to the current framework of State Feminism, while originating in the West, is still a legitimate exercise to assess the efficacy and impact of Japan's WPAs—and Japan's machinery presents itself as a useful next step in assessment of such a framework due to its position as a deviant case.

1.2 State Feminism in Japan

Examination of extant (albeit sparse) literature on aspects of State Feminism in Japan further emphasize the legitimacy of this tendency to compare Japan with Western democratic societies when discussing issues of gender inequality and WPAs—but the assessment remains incomplete as important gaps remain. Miriam Murase (2003), in her study of women's movement actors and their interactions with the state, *Cooperation over Conflict: The Women's Movement and the State in Contemporary Japan*, attempted to understand the persistence of gender inequality in Japanese society. In this endeavor she, too, demonstrated that Japan fulfills the criteria of a postindustrial democracy and emphasized the deviant nature of the Japanese case via a comparison with its Western counterparts. She notes that Japan is also "a large, wealthy country with a service-based economy" in which "people enjoy a high standard of living," a long life expectancy, high levels of overall health, access to quality education, "mass communication is widespread," and society expresses evidence of post-materialist values—such as concerns with environmentalism, nuclear energy, and equality (Murase, 2003, p.17). However, she also finds a puzzle in the fact that, despite these similarities, Japan remains significantly far behind the rest of the post-industrialized world in terms of gender equality. This is not, however, the result of a lack of a feminist movement. In collecting data on 889 women's organizations, Murase (2003) found a "vibrant and diverse," though generally localized, movement that focuses on and articulates opinions on women's issues (p.2). Her primary conclusion was that "progress on women's equality in Japan is . . .constrained by state intervention in the women's movement" (p. 2). She categorized this intervention as co-optation, by which the state offers certain women's groups (namely larger, nationally-based and longer-established umbrella organizations) monetary resources and

access to policy processes in exchange for cooperation and a reduction of their autonomy. This reduces conflict but also dilutes the influence of such groups, as they are not able to set the agenda. While this notion and process of co-optation is important, it is not framed within a specific policy debate nor is it certain how the state responds to the demands or frames of this group—or even what those frames might be. In fact, while Murase (2003) expresses some admiration at the breadth of national machinery bodies focusing on women's policy, the primary state institution that is the target of her research is not the GEB but rather state funded and run women's centers. Therefore, while Murase (2003) offers important insights into the process of co-optation, her study, which was conducted while the agency was still in its infancy, did not apply a holistic concept of State Feminism to ascertain the nature of such co-optation within a larger assessment of agency-movement interaction via policy debates. Determining whether the GEB continues this pattern of co-optation and how it may affect the pace of progress today requires a more in-depth assessment of the activities of the GEB, which this paper aims to carry out.

Meanwhile, Iwamoto (2007), in her paper on the history of the GEB, *Analysis of Women's Policy National Machinery in Japan*, did indeed devote her whole attention to the bureau itself and made references to the *Comparative State Feminism* literature. She acknowledged the fact that implementation of national policy machinery was also fundamentally a function of the state-civil society relationship, however her assessment did not engage in this notion of the movement-agency nexus. Rather, she focused on the history and contextual factors surrounding the establishment of the GEB, including its structural evolution within the bureaucracy (Iwamoto, 2007). This assessment has important implications for the institutionalism elements of analysis within State Feminism, particularly in reference to questions of constant-cause or path dependency, which is carried out in Chapter 2. Yet, Iwamoto (2007) does not extend her analysis to further issues of policy and instead focuses her critique on the internal structure of the bureau—in particular the vertical walls between ministries as well as the culture among bureaucrats who believe they are virtuous, impartial agents who act on behalf of the good of the state (p.32). She had little to say on how the machinery specifically interacts with civil society and women's movement actors, and she did not take a closer look at actual activities of the GEB—other than to remark that the predecessor to the modern bureau had little to say on gender policy debates within the Diet in the past (Iwamoto, 2007, pp.19, 24). Therefore, her analysis is still limited in terms of the State Feminism framework, which is natural considering it, too, was conducted before the publication of *The Politics of State Feminism*. Yet, she did emphasize

the need to understand the given political and cultural context of machinery and aimed to clarify this context at the GEB's founding, but this does little to tell us what the context is under the current Abe administration (Iwamoto, 2007). Thus, this paper aims to ascertain the particular political and social circumstances of the modern GEB and understand how this impacts the functioning and activities of the bureau as well as the implications for its efficacy and impact.

Referring back to the particularities discussed in *Gender Machineries Worldwide*, while the similarities regarding postindustrial economies and democratic processes between Japan and its Western counterparts is more established, this notion of social differences could perhaps have implications for the deviant nature of the Japanese case—but in what way or to what extent? A comparative case study could illuminate such relevant differences, as this paper aims to do. Kobayashi (2004) claimed to do this in her work, *A Path Toward Gender Equality: State Feminism in Japan*, yet there are two primary issues with her approach. The first is that she limited her case study to the Women's Bureau of the Ministry of Labor (now the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare) and focused on the policy debate surrounding the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL). While this is a WPA, it focuses most solely on labor issues (even if it was initially given the mandate to represent women's issues prior to the upgrade of the GEB). Moreover, as this was a single policy debate, it is not enough to trace any possible change or transformation over time—as the State Feminism framework relies on an assessment of various policy arenas. However, the second key issue is that Kobayashi (2004) took a problematic interpretation of the State Feminism framework as she applied it to Japan—namely upending the logic of feminism and State Feminism itself.

Kobayashi (2004) attempted to claim a new theoretical branch of feminism, which she also called "State Feminism," and asserted that such a new theoretical approach relied on certain assumptions: that co-optation is a normal state of affairs and the state is responsible for setting the agenda and framing, which the female bureaucrats borrow from so-called "international standard" frames, and aims to co-opt women's groups to advance the state's progressive goals—even despite potential differing preferences and frames from the weaker women's movement (pp.23, 31). The official State Feminism framework considers this kind of behavior "Anti-movement" regardless of the intentions of the bureaucrats. Thus, trying to justify such a practice as "State Feminism" is incredibly problematic for fundamental assumptions of feminism, as feminist theory presupposes women possessing agency—being able to express their political demands as agents of their own empowerment. Her idea that her theory examines how the "state makes the society more democratic" is also concerning from

the point of view of democratization, in which it is fundamentally the people who exercise the authority of government (Kobayashi, 2004, p.153).

Moreover, Kobayashi's theory is based on assumptions that are contradicted by the conclusions of *The Politics of State Feminism*. She believed the traditional State Feminism theory presupposed the existence of a large and powerful liberal women's movement, hence was not as applicable to Japan, which has a strong state and weak civil society (Kobayashi, 2004, p.154). Yet, McBride and Mazur (2010) made no such assertion and instead found that size, cohesiveness, and strength or activity of the movement were not singular predictors of success—more important was institutionalization and access (pp.163, 244). Finally, regarding the consideration of societal differences, this paper will also take a different position on the Japanese state-civil society relationship from Kobayashi's characterization. Her analysis is that a strong state-weak civil society is an a priori condition given a Confucian heritage in which individuals in such states are indifferent to taking the initiative to solve societal problems, leading to inactive social movements and the state taking on the active role (Kobayashi, 2004, p.166). However, this contradicts actual history and cannot explain either the vibrant but brief environmental movement in Japan in the 1960s or the development of a strong democratization and women's movement in neighboring Confucian Korea. Thus, this paper will take a more constructivist approach, which sees the state-civil society relationship as mutually constituted and changeable, and it will attempt to examine this relationship in greater detail by understanding the history of patterns of Japanese state interaction with the women's movement and how this societal factor impacts policy formation today—all the while adopting the State Feminism framework assumption that the movement-agency nexus is critical and the bottom-up process of influence is a fundamental component in democratic societies.

Finally, a survey of the remaining literature highlights the fact that studies of the GEB remain outdated. Gelb (2003), in her work, *Gender Policies in Japan and the United States*, adopts the same position of this paper regarding cultural explanations by noting how "institutions structure the political environment to their own advantage," and that "in Japan, 'culture' is invoked to rationalize efforts to limited change-oriented policy' (p.6). However, the focus of her assessment is on policy debates all prior to the establishment of the current GEB, and her comparison applies to only the United States as opposed to the State Feminism approach to Western democracies in general. In her work, she too references the past actions of MOL female bureaucrats, though, like Murase, she also warns of the dangers of co-optation (Gelb, 2003, p.135). This notion of co-optation also appears in the most recent

English literature work on the topic, *State Feminism in Japan?,* by Patricia Boling (2008), in which she states that "cooptation of women's groups is also a common strategy of the national government" (p.82). Yet, while she gives greater attention to the GEB, her conclusions are more descriptive rather than analytical by pointing out that the GEB is "weak," the women's movement is divided, and that policy outcomes are symbolic and poor (Boiling, 2008, pp.71, 78). However, this tendency, which also appears in other mentions of the GEB in literature, to declare the bureau marginal or ineffective because it is weak is mere tautology. It does not answer the question: why? Moreover, Boiling (2008) provides no original evidence for GEB activities, primarily referring to the works of Murase and the activities of the MOL Women's Bureau over the EEOL and subsequent revisions. Consequently, a more thorough overview of the current GEB and national policy machinery, its activities and engagement with policy debates, and its current interactions with women's movement actors are necessary to understand very important questions regarding the GEB and outcomes for gender equality policy in Japan.

These important gaps and problematic interpretations in the literature, as well as the untested assumptions in the State Feminism framework, justify utilizing the framework as it is given and applying it to the case of Japan, given the overlapping similarities of Japan and other postindustrial democracies, in order to thoroughly analyze: GEB structure and current day activities, how it engages in modern policy debates, and in particular its patterns of interactions with women's movements actors in order to ascertain why it demonstrates such deviant and poorer outcomes for measures of gender equality—as no literature has yet to do so. While previous English literature has laid important foundations for understanding, the work remains outdated and none have explored in-depth the structure and activities of the GEB in the Abe administration nor investigated whether and to what extent co-optation is still standard operating procedure for the modern GEB (and what this may imply). This is a significant oversight given the increased attention to "Womenomics" and women's issues within Japan since 2012, as well as the fact that the bureau is now no longer in its infancy but has a 19-year history. Therefore, this paper aspires to fill in such gaps by aiming to provide a more rigorous and complete analysis through the State Feminism framework, which will better integrate the Japan case into existing scholarship and perhaps offer more explanatory power for outcomes—providing greater utility for future comparative case studies of other policy machinery outside RNGS countries, especially in East Asia.

Section 2: Methods

The unit of analysis for this case study is primarily the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office, with some attention paid to the other elements of national policy machinery, namely the Council for Gender Equality and the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality—for both of which the GEB serves as coordinator and secretariat. The founding of the GEB, in 2001, up until the present day binds the timeline of the research. A history of state-civil society relations is also considered prior to this lower bound as a means of understanding patterns of interactions, and certain historical events relevant to the foundation of the GEB will also be considered in the analyzation process, but research regarding the activities of the bureau mainly focuses on those in the Abe administration, which began in 2012.

The approach utilized to research GEB structure, resources, context, and activities is primarily textual analysis of materials and information published by the GEB that is available on its website, triangulated through published news materials, academic resources, or other media in addition to interviews and surveys. Explanations of structure are more straightforward, utilizing the documents provided by the GEB explaining the different sections and functions of the national machinery as well as the stipulations set forth in the Basic Act for Gender Equal Society. Resources focus on the budget of the GEB. This includes a textual analysis of the annual budget for the GEB published by the Ministry of Finance as well as the breakdown of the budget for all-government activities in pursuit of the policy goals outlined in the Basic Plan as published by the GEB. Public access online to both of these materials extends back to 2008, but analysis will focus on quantitative and qualitative trends since 2012. For contextual analysis, gathered data on leadership extends back to 2001, utilizing the names of GEB directors and division directors as published in the annual staff record book (職員録 *shokuinroku).* These names are entered into a public online search to gather information primarily from news articles, event brochures in which directors were invited guests or speakers, organization websites, and faculty catalogues that publish information about biographical data, academic backgrounds, career history, activities, and published works. Analysis will note any changes in patterns of leadership since 2001 and scrutinize public statements and other activities to determine whether leaders have demonstrated any connection to or solidarity with the women's movement.

Data regarding activities of the GEB primarily utilize textual analysis of basic plans, press releases (since 2013), and PR brochures, as well as other documents such as meeting

minutes and the annual "Women and Men in Japan" publication in order to understand the GEB's framing of issues, targeted policies, specific campaigns, stated goals, and language that reveals more about their approach. In particular, White Papers will be useful to analyze or measure progress or change related to the GEB's stated mission since their founding as they are published annually. Analysis of the GEB's own magazine, "Joint Participation," will highlight public activities of the bureau since 2008 that can be cross referenced with a database of news articles that reference bureau activity in order to understand whether any policy issues or activities by the GEB receive greater prominence or attention (these activities will be catalogued according to their relevance to a respective topic, titled "main policies," on the GEB website). These main policies are: Women's Active Participation, Women Who Shine, Gender Equality in the Political Field, Work-Life Balance, Eradication of Violence Against Women, Gender Equality for Men, Cooperation with Local Areas, and Gendering Disaster Response. Moreover, with regards to specific policy debates, published materials and statements on the GEB website about the following specific legislation will be analyzed and triangulated against available news sources and academic articles which covered these policy debates since 2001: Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (2001) (focusing on subsequent revisions in 2007 and 2013), Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (2015), Penal Code Amendment Pertaining to Sexual Offenses (2017), and Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field (2018).

In addition to textual analysis, interviews and surveys add to better understanding of approaches, attitudes, internal processes, the relationship with civil society of the GEB, as well as the perspectives of women's groups. This paper will analyze content of an interview conducted on March 26, 2020 with a GEB divisional Deputy Director as well as a bureau staff member who focuses on outreach to NGOs and private groups. This is in addition to a written survey sent to 23 women's organizations in Japan to understand attitudes and engagement with the bureau and other national machinery (a list of organizations, response status, and survey questions are found in Appendix A). The survey list was derived from the list of national organizations collected and published by the Ichikawa Fusae Center for Women and Governance, last published in 2018. The targeted groups were those that were active women's empowerment or feminist groups, thus the survey excluded the following entries: labor and professional unions, political parties, individual groups that had overlapping membership with IWYLG as they were contacted as a single umbrella organization, groups whose websites were no longer accessible, and groups whose websites

had no activity or updates within the last 6 months. The survey list includes both groups who have participated in the Liaison Conference and groups that have not to control for any potential influence of opinion due to GEB affiliation.

Finally, textual analysis is also utilized for the two other national machinery bodies, the Council for Gender Equality ("Council") and the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality ("Liaison Conference"), in order to determine the nature of the relationship between these bodies and women's groups and assess evidence of co-optation. Textual analysis of Council documents since 2001 includes published meeting minutes that outline Council membership and agenda items in order to determine: any repeated patterns of membership among select organizations or groups, the proportion of women's groups out of total membership, particular policy approaches of the Council—categorized according to the GEB's "main policy" themes, and the nature of Council member contributions to policy discussions. It will also include analysis of special investigation committees, working groups, and study groups that have been established by the Council, focusing on the patterns of membership since 2011—with some attention paid to the fewer earlier committees to determine any long-term trends or changes. Liaison Conference textual analysis follows the same system, focusing on activities and membership since 2012, including membership on their "expert" committee, but also comparing present activities to years prior to the Abe administration in order to assess any contributions as well as potential patterns of change over time. However, one must note that documentation for Liaison Conference membership for 2013-2015 is missing due to an archiving error on the website, and the earliest documentation for the Liaison Conference that has been published begins in 2005 (although the organization has posted its general agenda since its beginnings in 1996). Membership in the Liaison Conference is also cross-referenced with Council membership as well as membership on the special committees in order to determine any patterns of preferential access.

Thus, this paper will utilize insights from previous literature to place the activities of the current GEB and machinery bodies within a historical, social, and political context and will utilize original research to understand any patterns related to: what the GEB and other national machinery bodies are doing, who is doing it, and why or what they hope to achieve. By connecting this insight with observed outcomes and placing it within the framework of State Feminism theory, this paper hopes to understand the mechanisms that explain why the national machinery has not achieved significant progress for gender equality in Japan.

CHAPTER II: UNDERSTANDING JAPAN'S NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Introduction

In order to study WPAs and their effectiveness, agencies must first be mapped in order to understand their particular structural characteristics. In doing so, one can determine the authority and autonomy of the agency as well as what it is they are tasked to do. McBride and Mazur (2010) used this assessment of structure as a starting point for information gathering, noting that information related to form, mandate, powers, and resources would be considered along with context and considerations of alliances with women's movements and participation in policy debates. Hence, this paper will begin the analysis by considering important structural factors for policy machinery, namely: type, appointment and leadership of agency head, policy mission, proximity to decision-making power, policy-making powers, and administrative resources (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.51).

An overview of these structural traits of Japan's national machinery bodies demonstrates that they do not deviate much from the diversity of agency traits exhibited by the WPAs found across the 13 countries in the RNGS studies, hence they cannot be solely relied upon to explain the sluggish nature of progress. Moreover, a review of contextual factors in Japan, such as patterns of agency leadership and political will, indicates that these may exert some influence on outcomes, but such factors alone are not determinative of success nor are they particularly striking outliers given other cases examined in the RNGS study. Rather, one of the more deviant aspects of the Japan case that deserves attention is in regards to the policy subsystem and policy-making process as well as their legal system—primarily the level of closure or restricted access to a wide array of policy arenas, which McBride and Mazur (2010) highlight as an important consideration, and the comparatively weaker or non-binding effects of policy in Japan's particular civil law-based system. These traits or deviations alone would be insufficient to fully explain outcomes of GEB activities across all policy areas, but they will help place analysis of policy activities by the national machinery within a certain Japanese context. Thus, such an assessment and understanding of the particularities of the Japanese case may lend itself to explaining certain specific weaknesses of the GEB and policy machinery and how these weaknesses can contribute to the generally slow and delayed progress of Japan regarding overall gender equality measures when compared to other developed nations.

Section 1: Structural Traits

1.1 Mandate, Form, and Power

Looking at the scope of Japan's national machinery, it is not merely a single agency, but four separate, yet interconnected, bodies—each with its own specific construction and responsibilities that it pursues in the overall broader mandate to promote the formation of a gender equal society in Japan as defined in the Basic Law.[3] Most of these bodies had a predecessor in the 1975 Office for the Promotion of Women's Affairs that was established in the Prime Minister's Office in response to pressure from the 1975 UN International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City. The office included a liaison meeting of the prime minister with his chief cabinet secretary and relevant ministry heads, a small planning and promotion meeting headed by experts commissioned by the prime minister, and a small secretariat inside the Prime Minister's Office. This body was upgraded by a cabinet decision in 1994, just prior to the Beijing Conference, to the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Iwamoto, 2007, pp.7-10). In addition, the civil society liaison group, originally called "Egalite" (as in the French égalité or "equality") was set up in 1996 after Beijing, and a more official Gender Equality Council was set up in 1997. As a result of the 2001 administrative reforms of the government that took place around the same time as the Basic Law, this Headquarters in the Prime Minister's Office was upgraded and re-established in the Cabinet Office as four separate bodies within the structure of national machinery in Japan, and they were imbued with legal mandates: Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (which has since been renamed "Headquarters for Creating A Society in which All Women Shine"), Council for Gender Equality, Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office, and the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality. A separate look at the four bodies reveals important considerations for the authority and autonomy of the national machinery, the logic of policy making in Japan, and how this may influence success.

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereafter "Headquarters"), situated in the Prime Minister's Office, may be considered the most authoritative body, as it is led by the prime minister, the chief cabinet secretary, and the minister of state for gender equality; hence it has the final say in the content of the Basic Plan and the greatest power over agenda setting for gender-related policy since the body also includes all cabinet

[3] As previously mentioned, the Basic Law (1999) defines this mission as a society in which "men and women respect each other's human rights and share responsibilities, and every citizen is able to fully display their individuality and ability regardless of gender."

ministers for each bureaucratic agency—which is where policy is usually formed. Such an auspicious and powerful body, closest in form to what McBride and Mazur (2010) define as an "executive commission," would seem to be an ideal for national machinery, yet evidence from the activities of this body, including changes in the Abe administration, suggests it is less active than the other bodies and less concerned with gender equality per se (p.53). While the original model included participation by other relevant ministry and agency heads, who were "coordinators for gender equality," the most recent model presented in published (English) materials by the GEB removes these individuals. Moreover, while the original Headquarters was responsible for "smooth and effective" implementation of policy measures, the most recent description changes to that of promoting "flexible coordination among related government bodies," which suggests effective implementation will be up to the individual ministries and related bodies (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020a, p.3). In 2014, Abe reconfigured this body by moving it back to the Prime Minister's Office and also changing the name, which is notable for its removal (in English) of the term "gender equality" and changing it to that of the more diluted, Abe-led policy slogan "creating a society in which all women shine."[4] It is also notable that, according to the Cabinet Office website, there are 256 active headquarters or official meetings on a huge variety of topics, thus being established as a "headquarters" does not appear to hold substantial importance for Prime Minister Abe. According to materials published by the Prime Minister's Office, the Headquarters has met eight times since its founding in 2014 (generally once a year) and focuses on two activities: choosing priority policy areas for the Basic Plan and what is deemed "Intensive Policy to Accelerate Women's Participation," which aims to incorporate these priority areas into the annual fiscal budget (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2019). Since the publication of the Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality in 2015, these priority areas center on three key themes: "Realization of Safe and Secure Living," which includes policies related to women's health and violence against women; "Women's Active Participation in All Fields," which includes policies such as work-style reform, changing men's attitudes, and the 30% leadership targets; and "Establishing a Foundation for Women to Be Active," which primarily involves policies related to child and nursing care (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2019). While it seems the Headquarters is less concerned with policy implementation (instead focusing on fiscal measures), these broader policy measures help define the current policy

[4] However, it is important to note that the original Japanese phrase for the machinery "男女共同参画" actually translates literally in English to "men and women joint participation" rather than "gender equality," although this exact phrase is used in English materials and the presumption is that the two phrases have the same meaning. For further discussion on the reasoning behind such linguistic choices, see (Kano, 2011; Osawa, 2000).

mission of national machinery in Japan, and thus will serve as a reference point for later analysis of specific policy debates. The top-down nature of such agenda setting will be assessed in conjunction with discussion of the movement-agency nexus in Chapters 3 and 4.

The next most authoritative body in terms of agenda setting and recommendation for gender policy in the machinery is the Council for Gender equality (hereafter "Council"), as established in the Basic Law, led by the chief cabinet secretary and comprised of 12 cabinet ministers and 12 "intellectuals" appointed by the prime minister. By law, neither male nor female leadership of the Council can fall below 40% of the total, thus suggesting it could represent an important source of access for female voices within the state.[5] Yet, like most advisory councils in State Feminism literature, it does not have policy formation power. Instead, the body engages in policy deliberation through study of important matters as well as monitoring the implementation and impact of policy initiatives. It also provides advice and recommendations to the prime minister when "deemed necessary," which suggests high proximity to decision-making power, but a survey of activities shows that it seems to be underutilized in this manner—as the topic of consultation is generally limited to content of the Basic Plan, although the Council is empowered to study and deliberate other "basic principles, basic policies, and important matters" beyond those in the Basic Plan (Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, 1999). Indeed, as the Basic Law requires the prime minister to consult with the Council in the formation of the Basic Plan, it appears this has been one of the only situations in which current Prime Minister Abe has done so. According to press releases by the Prime Minister's Office, Abe has attended just two meetings of the Council over the last five years—one in 2015 to discuss the formation of the Fourth Basic Plan and another in 2018 in which he gave a short address regarding women as consumers and a key strategy for Japanese growth (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2015, 2018). Meanwhile, the Council generally meets two to three times per year and publishes the agenda of their meetings as well as meeting minutes. They also release what could be considered policy statements ("meeting decisions") and opinions on specific policy measures. This is evidence that the Council has the opportunity to participate in policy debates via framing and some agenda setting (though not policy formation), and thus what it lacks in authority it can make up for in some autonomy. On the other hand, participation is not merely reserved for women's groups or female voices. An overview of overall trends of participation since 2001, categorizing the background of all 54 participants to date, reveals that the Council is a mix of interests from

[5] Such considerations of representativeness are discussed in the following section 2.2 and issues of access are assessed in Chapters 3 and 4.

civil society: academia (34%), corporate (22%), government (18%), NPO (18%), labor (5%), and media (3%).[6] Councils under the Abe administration have demonstrated this same proportional trend overall, with the exception of a lack of representation from media. The current 2020 Council, however, skews heavily toward academia (55%), with corporate and NGO representation seeing significant reduction (9% each).[7] Yet, with an overall trend aiming for a balance of representation and an average of 4.3 years of service for each individual, it suggests opportunities for civil society actors, and especially academics who are experts in gender issues, to participate in the policy process.

The Gender Equality Bureau (GEB) serves as the secretariat for the Council and Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality, in that they draft and publish the statements and documents from these bodies, and they are also the primary agency responsible for coordination across the national machinery (although it is not clear how much coordination the GEB has with the Headquarters)—hence they are treated as the primary unit of analysis. According to the agency definitions by McBride and Mazur (2010), the GEB fits the criteria of an administrative office (p.53). The GEB, too, lacks policy proposal powers, although in theory it is allowed to propose policies that fall outside the jurisdiction of the other relevant ministries, though such criteria remains undefined and it does not appear the GEB has tried to engage in this area. Rather, its primary functions are planning, coordination, and monitoring of policy as well as research and promotional activities—including "publicity activities and awareness-raising efforts" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016a). Yet, it performs an important role as the staff is expected to coordinate and cooperate with other ministries, local governments, private groups, and international organizations. It is in this coordination role that the GEB has the greatest potential influence, though not in coordination with other ministries, as an interview with GEB officials revealed that such "coordination" primarily involves sending e-mails asking about activities and receiving annual reports about achievements within the relevant ministry that year—guidance, advice, or in-person consultation does not generally take place (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). However, the GEB has some power in that they are responsible for researching and compiling an initial list of qualified candidates for appointment to the Council. In an interview with GEB officials, the specific criteria for selection were "confidential" but they generally selected individuals with significant achievements as well as a record of statements or published works that support the efforts for gender equality. A longer list is compiled,

[6] For a complete list of individuals and represented organizations, see Appendix B.
[7] For a complete list of current members, see: http://www.gender.go.jp/kaigi/danjo_kaigi/meibo1.html

which is subsequently shortened and finalized by the director, then submitted to the chief cabinet secretary and prime minister for approval (Suzuki, personal communication, March 26, 2020). Additionally, the GEB has dispatched staff to the biannual meetings of a large group of civil society representatives, and they also meet with other NPOs and other private groups when requested. Therefore, assessment of the GEB and its activities in determining national machinery success will focus on its position as the key link or point of access between civil society actors or women's organizations and the policy deliberation bodies within the government.

The final national machinery body, a civil society group called the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereafter "Liaison Conference") is described as "a network of collaboration and coordination comprised of intellectuals from all levels of society" that includes: women's groups, other NPOs, media organizations, corporate bodies, educational and academia-based groups, national and professional associations, as well as public interest and social welfare corporations (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020a). The Liaison Conference has no formal authority over agenda setting, but has significant autonomy, as their primary purpose is "to cooperate with the Council for Gender Equality" by meeting twice a year in order to facilitate information exchange, build a national network of NPOs working on the issues of gender equality, and "promote national activities to create a gender-equal society" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016a). This group by far is the most promising point of access for women's groups to reflect their voices in government, yet the criteria for selection into the Liaison Conference still runs through the state, as the minister for gender equality selects the (currently 16) experts who will lead the group for a period of two years. However, the group exerts considerable autonomy in their activities. The Liaison Conference predates the upgrading of the GEB, as the first meeting was held in 1996. At that time, a committee of 11 "experts" and a group of 58 "recommended organizations" was established by the then chief cabinet secretary/minister for gender equality. Since then, the experts have been able to nominate amongst themselves a chairman of the Liaison Conference, who selects an internal planning committee among the experts to plan and oversee the annual plenary meetings and other activities of the body. They are also allowed to nominate other groups for inclusion in the recommended organizations, which has since grown to 96 organizations from the original 58. Liaison Conference members also form their own "teams" organized around certain themes, such as "Working on the Next Generation" and "Women's Career Promotion in the Economic Field," where they independently carry out promotional activities. Members also create co-sponsored projects, attend international conferences (such

as the UN Commission on the Status of Women), and conduct listening tours with the general public (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016b). This breadth of activity is matched by an equal breadth of civil society groups. While national and professional associations and councils comprise the largest percent of current membership (65%), public interest corporations (22%), grassroots groups and individual NPOs (9%), and social welfare corporations (3%) also take part.[8] Moreover, out of all the participating groups, 30% are specifically women's organizations. However, the impressive activity of this body does not illuminate the nature of their "cooperation" with the GEB and Council for Gender Equality, nor the level and direction of influence. Such assessments are carried out in Chapter 3.

1.2 Resources

Clearly, the national policy machinery has an impressive reach, despite its lack of policy formation powers and the dwindling authority as each body decreases its proximity to the Headquarters. However, one must also consider what kinds of resources the GEB, as the secretariat and primary coordinating agency, has to work with. In terms of administrative capacity to carry out all these tasks, the GEB has a small staff of around 40 people. This core number has not fluctuated much since the GEB's founding, despite an expansion and diversification of responsibilities over time. Initially, the GEB started off with two main divisions: general affairs, which serves as the secretariat and carries out coordination activities; and gender equality promotion, which drafts the Basic Plan and positive action measures. In 2006, a third division was added, research, which handles the research and analysis functions, monitoring, handling of complaints, and publication of the White Paper. In 2011, responsibilities were further expanded to include a small office that focused on work-life balance issues—although this did not parallel an increase in staff but merely led to an overlap of duties for about 20 individuals. In 2012, a separate office for domestic violence was also established, with these staff being relocated from other duties. Thus, while the GEB is expected to handle many different functions, a subsequent expansion of staff has not accompanied this, and it remains at a modest size.

The budget of the GEB is also quite small in comparison to other ministries. An analysis of the budget since 2008 shows a general increase over time, though this has not always been consistent. While the GEB received a huge boost from 2009-2010 (a 300% year-on-year increase), this most likely reflected support by the left-leaning Democratic Party of

[8] For the list of current members, see the GEB website: http://www.gender.go.jp/kaigi/renkei/member.html

Japan (DPJ), who briefly took power and were charged with drafting the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality at that time. However, the DPJ quickly fell out of power, and since then the budget has never yet reached the same level, although the 2020 budget represents the second-highest proposed budget for the GEB at 976,810,000 yen (Ministry of Finance, 2020). This is still a miniscule amount compared to the overall government budget, and it has also remained a consistently small (0.01%) portion of the overall budget for all-government ministry activities related to the realization of a gender equal society as outlined in the Basic Plan.[9] In fact, the largest amount of spending for Fourth Basic Plan activities since 2016 has been on payments for various childcare services from the Cabinet Office as well as payments by the Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare for elderly care ("long-term care expenses"). Together, these account for 69% of all-government spending for measures in the Basic Plan for a Gender Equal Society (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016c). Such spending, although it is related to goals in the Basic Plan, clearly reflects government concerns with the low birthrate and aging society and less with gender equality.

1.3 Implications

In sum, the structure of the national policy machinery in Japan primarily takes the form of a bureau (or administrative office) that also includes an advisory council with closer proximity to power, but neither of which possesses policy-making capacity. Generally their authority is not so strong compared to the Headquarters (an executive commission), which remains less active regarding gender equality policy except for matters of general agenda setting and government budgets. However, the main bodies can exercise some autonomy over activities while being bound by the general mandate set forth in the Basic Law. There is also an institutionalized group comprised of more autonomous civil society actors, but they lack any authority and their level of influence is yet uncertain. The GEB has generally limited resources with a small staff and miniscule budget, but an increase in duties and responsibilities, which would stretch resources even thinner. Such an overview does not paint an optimistic picture, however one must note that these attributes are not dissimilar to those found across the 13 RNGS studies, and hence one cannot conclude that such factors alone play a significant role in policy outcomes in Japan. Indeed, many of the RNGS WPAs, too, were administrative agencies that were not close to central authority and had no policy

[9] For a year by year accounting of GEB budget versus all-government spending for the Basic Plan, see Appendix C.

proposal powers. Those that were advisory councils also were limited to review and recommend functions, and their usefulness relied on their placement in the machinery hierarchy (McBride and Mazur, 2010, pp.53-54) Generally, overall patterns in RNGS machinery noted the same trends as those found in Japan in that "staffs remained small; budgets were a tiny proportion of overall government spending; many offices had no budgets for women's groups…and agencies with very low levels of administrative capacity were still quite numerous" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.66). It was such conclusions that led McBride and Mazur (2010) to determine that structural attributes alone are not indicative of the ability for WPAs to be successful allies of the women's movement and achieve policy outcomes; indeed, their assessment was blunt in that "structure, administrative resources, and policy capacity do not portend agency effectiveness" (p.242). Therefore, one must consider the other attributes of the WPAs and their activities in relation to other political factors and especially the policy environment in which policy debates are to take place.

Section 2: Contextual Traits

2.1 Leadership

In considerations of agency effectiveness, leadership is believed to play a key factor as leaders often determine the direction or approach of an agency. For WPAs, the idea is that leaders who have some connection or experience with women's movements are more likely to advocate for women's movement interests or incorporate their voices into the agency. McBride and Mazur (2010) found that WPA leaders with some feminist experience appeared in all RNGS countries, with the exception of Germany, and that 65% of all agencies had had a leader with women's movement experience (pp.63, 65). In most of these countries, these leaders were political appointments, while some agencies included feminist activists among the staff, or "femocrats," the popular term coined by Australian feminists. While in some countries bureaucratic recruitment followed civil service procedures, in Japan the situation is slightly different in that ministries and bureaus are staffed by general bureaucrats who rotate positions every two to three years on average. The director is also nominated from within the bureaucracy, as opposed to being a political appointment. One may conclude that such a system prevents the proliferation of women's activism within the Japanese bureaucracy, but a closer examination of agency leadership shows more mixed results.

While Japan exhibits a slightly different system in that leaders of the women's movement and other feminist activists are not appointed from the outside to staff the GEB,

but rather female bureaucrats must work their way up the bureaucracy, some of these women have shown a more feminist consciousness during their careers, and some leaders developed connections with the women's movement either before or after serving as director. Weathers (2005) noted that the former Women's Affairs Office "included women who had been active feminist leaders" and an examination of GEB directors shows some had links with the women's movement while others did not (p.75). The first two directors, Mariko Bando and Haniwa Natori, demonstrated experience advocating for women's issues. For instance, Bando also worked in the original Women's Affairs Office and served as director when it was upgraded in 1994. She also helped to write the first White Paper on gender equality in Japan and also wrote extensively about women's issues, especially working women, starting in the late 1970s. The second director, Haniwa Natori, originally joined the Ministry of Justice but also served in the earlier Women's Affairs Office and attended the 1995 conference in Beijing. She currently serves as chairman of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Japan and continues to advocate for causes like equal pay. Others, like Kumiko Bando, Atsuko Okajima, and Tomoko Samura have no obvious feminist backgrounds, yet as directors they actively supported the gender-related policy goals of the government. Later directors, namely Keiko Takegawa and the current director, Toshie Ikenaga, demonstrate a long history with the bureau as both women worked in the former Women's Affairs Office. Takegawa, who also attended the 1995 Beijing Conference, helped establish the modern GEB and served as director for five years. Ikenaga, who also worked in the MHLW, worked in the promotion division of the GEB in 2001, was chief of the research division in 2007, and was chief of the general affairs division in 2015—the first woman in the history of the modern GEB to hold the post. While feminist experience was not consistent among all GEB leaders, the one common factor found was elite status—all were graduates of the University of Tokyo, primarily from the law faculty, while a few were from arts and sciences and one from psychology. While this is also the standard pattern among the elite men who fill the upper echelons of the Japanese bureaucracy, no such pattern of high pedigree could be detected among the male section chiefs in the GEB. As the University of Tokyo is also a male-dominated institution, one could surmise that while not all of the female leaders demonstrated explicit feminist connections, they all have learned to navigate successfully through patriarchal environments.

Moreover, a survey of the longest-serving members (at least eight years or more) of the Council for Gender Equality shows that this body, too, has included some feminist activists—a more important consideration given this body is slightly more powerful and

closer in proximity to decision-making than the GEB. One such individual is Miyoko Tsujimura, a former professor at Meiji University Graduate School of Law. Tsujimura went to Hitosubashi University in the Faculty of Law, but she was only one of ten female students out of the 800 in her year (and just one of two in the law faculty). She became the first female professor of law at Tohoku University and continues to write about gender and law, human rights, and gender equality. Another member, Takashi Kashima, is a professor at Jissen Women's University. He is also head of Japan Women's Labor Association, was chairman of Tokyo Metropolitan Women's Promotion Council, and specializes in writing about women's labor, gender equality and gender theory, and family sociology. Kimie Iwata, who served as director of both the Women's Bureau in the former Ministry of Labor and the Equal Employment, Children and Families Bureau of the current MHLW, was also a long-serving member of the Council. She was also the first female vice president of Shiseido. Of course, there is also the occasional outlier. In 2012, Abe appointed scholar Shiro Takahashi to the Council, where he continues to serve to this day. Takahashi is a noted anti-feminist, promoting traditional views of the family and gender roles, criticizing so-called "radical" gender policies, and serving as a founding member of the ultra-nationalist New Textbook History Association. Feminist activists filed a protest with Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga upon Takahashi's appointment to the Council due to his extreme ineligibility (Tokyo Shinbun, 2013). As one of 24 members, his potential for damage may be blunted, but his presence calls into doubt the reputation of the Council as a sincere effort to promote gender equality. However, his appointment notwithstanding, Abe generally shows disinterest toward the activities of the Council since he rarely attends the meetings, a departure from the behavior of previous prime ministers indicated in earlier meeting minutes who tried to attend more regularly. Nonetheless, the service of other activist individuals on the Council is indicative of the presence of some civil-society based feminist leadership within the national machinery.

Yet, overall, feminist representation is mixed within the GEB as a whole. According to an interview with GEB officials, some staff lack any feminist knowledge at all, some may gradually gain awareness of the importance of gender equality before being relocated (such as 2018 Promotion Division Chief, Kouji Tabira, who was the first male in the post and touted the importance of men's awareness of gender equality), while others may not care about the cause much at all (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). On the upside, many GEB staff come from within the Cabinet Office and can place requests at the time of relocation. The officials who were interviewed both expressed interest in gender issues and had requested the GEB, while the male official had even read the works of famous

feminists, such as Japanese feminist sociologist Chizuko Ueno (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020).

Thus, while current leadership and agency composition denotes some consistency and experience with women's movement and feminist ideas, it does not necessarily characterize the majority of bureaucrats in the GEB. However, again this is not unusual when compared to RNGS cases. The study noted a sharp "decline in feminist leadership…[and] a decline in the proportion of agency heads with movement experience" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, pp.63, 66). Indeed, they also found that many agencies with feminist leaders ended up being more Symbolic, rather than the ideal Insider. Therefore, the success of feminist leadership in overall agency success must also be considered, as the trend has demonstrated, within the context of the policy arena where debates on issues take place.

2.2 Political Will

Another contextual factor that often receives consideration is political will. Literature on feminist movements has established that left-wing governments are generally more sympathetic and conducive to women's movement goals, thus are "likely to foster gender equality" (McBride and Mazur, 2011, p.16). In Japan, by contrast, a common suggestion is that the historical dominance of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has been an unfriendly environment for the promotion of women's movement goals—especially given that the leftist parties, which promote more women in politics, are generally weak. However, a review of RNGS countries found that WPAs and women's movements were still able to achieve success in the administrations of right-wing governments. This is also true in Japan, where Iwamoto (2007) found that key women activists in Japan were able to take advantage of and achieve success during times of LDP electoral instability, scandals, and coalition governments (which has characterized LDP rule since 1993). For example, the original Women's Affairs Office was established in the administration of LDP Prime Minister Miki, successful pressure for Japan to sign the CEDAW treaty was achieved in a year of double elections following the death of LDP Prime Minister Ohira, and the Basic Law was pushed through during the administrations of Hashimoto and Obuchi, also LDP (Iwamoto, 2007, pp.8, 12-13, 23).

Even under the general long-term stability of the Abe administration, one must note that he has picked up several gender-related policies that had long been advocated by more moderate LDP prime ministers before him. Much of his "Womenomics" agenda is a

continuation of the policies from Hashimoto, who first proposed the elimination of child-care waiting lists, and Koizumi, who first proposed the 30% leadership targets (Hasunuma, 2015, pp.18-19). What's more, a DPJ policy document published in 2012 called "Operation Working Nadeshiko" contained a policy called "Action Plan for Economic Revitalization through Women's Active Labor Participation," which was subsequently picked up by the Abe administration when he came to power (Takeda, 2018, p.58). Moreover, even in times of left-wing coalition rule in Japan, this has not always spelled success for the women's movement. Iwamoto (2007) notes that the non-LDP coalition did not dismiss any ministry heads when they took power in 2003, and in 1996, with a Socialist-LDP coalition led by socialist Prime Minister Murayama, a proposal by the Ministry of Justice to amend the civil code regarding separate surnames was unable to push through backlash (pp.7-8, 19). This occurred again in 2010, when the left-leaning DPJ tried to pass another bill on selective surnames, but it failed when the Minister of Finance from the coalition New People's Party objected and threatened to retract his party from the coalition if the bill passed (Gelb, 2015, p.220). Noble (2019) also notes that the DPJ generally did not do much to actually promote more women in decision-making during their three years of rule (p.242). Thus, in Japan, the women's movement has been able to achieve success even under right-wing governments and has sometimes struggled even when the left was (briefly) in power.

This trend of varying success throughout different political administrations highlights the importance of historical institutionalism theories when trying to determine how political events affect institutions and policy outcomes. The Japan case presents evidence of path dependency, in that regardless of the party in power, WPAs have engaged with women's movement actors along certain policy issues when they became prominent on the agenda—namely policies related to labor and workplace reform and childcare issues. Iwamoto (2007) also highlighted the "critical junctures" when further establishment of the GEB and policy related to gender equality was able to make progress. This was namely during what she classified as "troubled times" for the ruling LDP, whether as a result of scandals, factional conflicts, or electoral losses that forced them into coalition governments (p.25). These breaks in status quo also created opportunities for women's movement activists to exploit in order to achieve their goals. Yet, constant cause may also be present in that the shock of the low birthrate and pressing issue of an aging society was a large contextual factor at the establishment of the national machinery for gender equality; thus, these trends have continued to keep these issues on the policy agenda, and the more conservative politicians have realized that promoting "gender equality is good for business" (Osawa, 2000, p.4).

However, these trends, such as debates over selective surnames, highlight the need to consider the specific policy debates in question—as Japan has also passed legislation regarding other feminist issues such as domestic violence and rape. These particular policy debates receive attention in Chapter 4. Indeed, regarding political will itself, McBride and Mazur (2010) also found that "studies that have insisted on the importance of left-wing governments…seem to be flawed" (p.261). This remains true for Japan, where these political and institutional trends demonstrate that presence of left-wing governments is insufficient to determine the level of success achievable by the women's movement and WPAs.

Section 3: Distinctive Traits

Thus far, the case of Japan has shown no obvious deviations from the conclusions found among the RNGS countries regarding structure, resources, leadership, or political will. This is contradictory to the conventional wisdom of previous scholarship on the GEB that highlighted its structural weaknesses and determined this to be the reason it is less effective in furthering gender equality in Japan. While Iwamoto (2007) tried to make the point that other WPAs in the West had more authority than the Japanese version, case studies among RNGS countries show that this is an oversimplification and is not necessarily the case—some do and some don't—and moreover this was not always determinative of success (p.1). Instead, as McBride and Mazur (2010) emphasize, the unit of analysis then must focus on the specific policy arenas and debates in question, in conjunction with the combination of other structural and contextual factors. Therefore, one must hone in on the policy environment and the policy-making process to truly understand the success or failure of WPAs as allies with the women's movement, which is an area where scholarship on the GEB has yet to really venture. While the RNGS cases often showed that, in these democracies, "'strategic partnerships' of women's movements, female politicians and governmental women's offices have generally constituted the most effective means of advancing equal opportunity and other feminist agendas," a look at how policy is formed and operationalized in Japan demonstrates the most deviant aspect of the case (Weathers, 2005, p.70).

3.1 Policy Subsystems and Policy-Making Process

Openness of policy subsystems was an important consideration for the RNGS cases; in fact it showed "significant and independent influence…on the degree of state response" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.244). In defining subsystem, it usually refers to the institutions

in a given political system that make "the most important and binding decisions about the [policy] issue" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.46). While these can include WPAs, in RNGS countries the policy process primarily went through more rigorous debate within legislative bodies or, sometimes, political parties. Policy making in Japan differs from the traditions present in many other Western postindustrial democracies in that, first, most legislation is not introduced in the legislature (although the Diet still possesses the constitutional authority to introduce bills)[10], but rather legislation tends to be sponsored by the government in which the bureaucracy handles policy formation and the ministry with the relevant jurisdiction drafts the bills. Second, and more critically, legislation introduced by the bureaucracy is not really subject to the same amount of rigorous debate, as it tends to be primarily subject to the approval of the majority LDP—with more limited influence by opposition parties. A typical view is that the Diet is more of a "rubber stamp" for passing legislation that has already been approved by the bureaucracy and LDP. As a byproduct of this, ministries have used their own processes for debates over policy formation, primarily in the form of "deliberative councils," over which the elite bureaucrats control access since they are able to select and vet members and draft most of the bills (Noble, 2019, p.236). While transparency over the process has increased, this still leaves a policy subsystem that is more closed, as access is restricted to those groups who have established connections. This can make it harder for women's groups to enter the subsystem. The first EEOL is a case in point, as the deliberative council was a mix of labor, business, and public interest representatives, but women's organizations were not included (Kobayashi, 2004, p.162). Indeed, Weathers (2005) asserts that at the time women's groups faced a chilly relationship with MOL bureaucrats and had few informal or close ties (pp.70, 72). Thus, in Japan, bureaucratic dominance has created a restricted policy subsystem that women's groups have historically had trouble accessing.

However, there has been a loosening of this dominance over time, especially with dwindling public trust in the bureaucracy, though this has not necessarily led to stronger policies for women. While one reason for administrative reforms in the late 1990s was related to budget, another was the declining popular opinion of bureaucrats following public scandal—especially in the MHLW and Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Iwamoto, 2007, p.22). A public opinion poll showed that confidence in the Japanese bureaucracy had fallen to 8% in 2001 (Schwartz, 2003, p.14). At the same time as bureaucratic reforms, which were spearheaded by Hashimoto, there was also a desire to

[10] Article 41 states: "The Diet shall be the highest organ of state power, and shall be the sole law-making organ of the State" (Constitution of Japan, 1947).

strengthen the prime minister position to allow the government greater flexibility and influence in setting the policy agenda and responding to pressing issues internationally as well as domestic ones that required coordinated all-of-government efforts and reform (Hasunuma, 2015; Kensuke, 2014). Since Abe took office, with an aim to amend Article 9 of the Constitution, he has tried to further strengthen his position over the bureaucracy by exerting more political control and influence over policies formed by the ministries. For example, he set up a Bureau of Personnel Affairs in the Cabinet Office to oversee senior personnel changes (Momoi, 2018). Yet, despite efforts for bureaucratic reform, it still remains LDP connections with big business federations, such as Keidanren, rather than civil society or other interest groups and community activists, who have the most influence in policy (Hasunuma, 2015, p.22). Although the government put greater pressure on the bureaucracy itself to increase the hiring of women within its ranks and within deliberative councils (and most have succeeded in reaching 30% targets), and even when federations such as Keidanren support policies to promote women in business, this has not led to stronger outcomes in legislation, which still display weak language and a lack of enforcement. The biggest complaint of the EEOL was that it lacked enforcement, yet this is also true of the most current 2015 law to advance women in the workplace—in which no punitive measures exist to punish companies that don't comply in their mandate to create their own plans for women's advancement. Even the recent 2018 law to promote gender parity on party candidate lists for elections merely requires parties to "endeavor to voluntarily work" to do so and also contains no punishment for non-compliance (Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field, 2018). While this weak language and lack of enforcement is a common (and legitimate) complaint of gender-related legislation, a deeper look shows it is not a quirk but a feature of the Japanese legal system.

3.2 Legal System

McBride and Mazur (2010) did not address features of the legal system in their State Feminism framework. Perhaps this was primarily due to their decision to focus on 13 countries with similar cultural backgrounds; hence it was taken as given that such democracies would similarly utilize successful policy outcomes in effective ways to bring about positive changes for the women's movement. Basically, in the vein of liberal feminism, they assumed policy outcomes have large impacts. Japan is especially deviant in that this is not always the case. Japan has taken an eclectic approach to the development of its legal

system over its history. While today it is primarily based in civil law, borrowing heavily from the German Civil Code, it also contains elements of common law due to the American occupation. Yet, it also maintains certain "traditional" elements that make it markedly different from all the other Western legal orders found among RNGS countries—even those that are also based in civil law traditions. The largest distinction is that "law in Japan plays a far less pervasive role in resolving disputes and creating and adjusting rules regulating conduct," as extralegal dispute methods are encouraged instead (Augustyn et al., 2017). While Japan adopted many elements of German law, "it did not adopt the Germans' strong consciousness of legal rights," as such consciousness did not really exist in pre-Meiji era Japan, which preferred to resolve disputes through extralegal methods such as conciliation, mediation, and social pressure (Carozza et al., 2019). Moreover, while American influence promoted human rights heavily in the Japanese constitution, the legal system generally lacks typical enforcement mechanisms: fewer lawyers, weak discovery laws that limit the ability of judges to call for discovery documents and witnesses, and a lack of power for judges to engage in judicial review or enforce judgements through direct measures such as jail sentences (Augustyn et al., 2017; Geraghty, 2008). Over time, other civil law systems in the EU gradually used statutory law to make changes in order to "regulate broad areas of social and economic life" especially in regards to principles of equal treatment (Carozza et al., 2019). Japan has yet to embrace such wide-ranging and robust measures.

Instead, in Japan, one finds a common trend of weak and vague or "symbolic" laws that lack strong enforcement mechanisms or punitive measures to ensure compliance—instead relying on "administrative guidance" and mediation from bureaucrats whose judgements are non-binding. This is especially true in labor policy where big business has been able to dominate and weaken any final legislation that they find undesirable to their interests—and instead have been treated to "symbolic awards and smallish subsidies" by bureaucrats as a means to secure compliance (Weathers, 2005, p.72). On top of this is a preference in Japan against litigation, as the process is long, arduous and expensive; the standards of proof are high, and compensation for successful cases is small; and lawsuits are treated in a case-by-case fashion such that rulings in one case are not binding and do not need to be treated as precedent in another (Geraghty, 2008; Steel, 2019a; Weathers, 2005). As a result, this makes the advancement of gender-equality and anti-discrimination policies particularly difficult for women's groups—although some groups, especially Women's Working Network, in conjunction with lawyer advocates, have tried and succeeded in bringing discrimination cases before the court in order to keep issues of gender equality in the

public consciousness. However, in general, there is "no 'powerful legal framework' through which to successfully prosecute outcomes and even so called favorable decisions fall short of providing meaningful remedies" (Gelb, 2003, p.57). The conclusions of a 2009 report commissioned by the GEB to a third party organization and academic researchers on foreign political systems highlighted the utility of oversight and enforcement mechanisms as well as the efficacy of "judicial relief" in countries such as the US for the promotion of gender equality, noting the lack of such systems in Japan (Tsujimura et al., 2009). Thus, this lack of enforcement means is especially damaging for the cause of gender equality in Japan.

By contrast, while all other RNGS Western democracies have also instituted anti-discrimination policies that advance equal opportunity and advocate for positive measures, their laws generally include much stronger language and they have established strong enforcement mechanisms through which complaints of violations can be investigated, litigated (without fear of reprisal), and courts are able to apply heavier penalties (usually monetary) against violators of the law. In the US, this takes the form of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which has jurisdiction for labor complaints against companies with 15 or more employees, labor unions, and employment agencies. Also in the US, individuals can utilize class action lawsuits, which allow multiple plaintiffs who have suffered the same damages to jointly sue for compensation from defendants (usually corporations). In the EU, anti-discrimination directives by EU institutions are legally binding, and the EU Commission has the right of enforcement. They can investigate claims brought by individuals or initiate claims on their own. The Commission can bring these cases to the European Union Court of Justice, which can levy financial penalties. The EU also has their own Ombudsman, which is empowered to investigate claims from individuals and bring legal action on their behalf. In Canada, the Human Rights Commission accepts complaints from individuals, investigates, mediates when necessary, and when appropriate refers the case to the Human Rights Tribunal, which can enforce changes in policies or practices as well as monetary compensation. Additionally, five out of the 13 RNGS countries have legislated parliamentary quotas, six have voluntary quotas within political parties, and only two (US and Finland) have none (International IDEA, 2020). Thus, when policies related to gender equality are passed in RNGS countries, these are accompanied my mechanisms which provide such policies the backing of the full force of the law to ensure citizens and businesses comply and change practices.

3.3 Implications

The limitations of Japanese policy making, which are structural features of the state, make change through legislation more difficult in Japan compared to other postindustrial democracies and blunt the potential for the current women's movement and WPAs to use policy to affect substantive change. This can help explain the slow pace of change in Japan compared to their Western counterparts—especially in the areas of employment and political advancement, which are the two measures on the Global Gender Gap Index where Japan is most lacking. While various government and civil society actors in Japan have been able to pass certain laws intended to address these economic and political gaps, unlike other nations that use stronger means (like commissions and quotas), Japan's policies remain more symbolic and lack punitive or enforcement measures, thus delaying progress in these areas even when "efforts" are made—especially as anti-discrimination legislation is inherently about regulating conduct. Even the strongest measure of the Basic Law was merely to compel prefectural and municipal governments to draft their own plans for gender equality.

When viewed in this way, the particular weaknesses of the Japanese national policy machinery, as well as the GEB, come to light. Considering the structural, contextual, and distinctive traits discussed thus far, the GEB is currently weak because it collectively: does not have policy proposal power, has less autonomy from the policy preferences of a non-feminist prime minister, has limited influence over the policy-making process due to the long-term nature of bureaucratic policy making within a legal structure that is less conducive to legislation that aims to alter discriminatory behavior, and lacks any oversight of its own in the form of a commission or ombudsman—as it is currently severely under-resourced and lacks authority to be able to carry out such functions. However, some of these flaws are embedded in the Japanese system and are beyond the ability of the GEB to correct, and the fact is that even if the GEB could somehow make policy, there is no guarantee that outcomes would be different from the previous efforts of other ministries (such as MOJ or MHLW) that have also struggled to successfully advance gender equality in Japan. As Murase (2003) argued, the institutions of Japan currently promote cooperation among various interests as a matter of logical orientation, but cooperation is not always conducive to social change. Even more, Japan has a history of making policies that rely on voluntary compliance. From the EEOL up until the present day, with current discussions about laws that would "request" people to follow certain rules during a national emergency, the Japanese government is both reluctant or perhaps unable to enforce punishment on people who violate regulations

regarding behavior that is not explicitly criminal in nature. Thus, from a macro perspective, structure, resources, and context provide some insight into the challenges that the cause of gender quality faces in Japan.

Yet, certain scholars have defended and indeed praised the Japanese system in the past for its bureaucratic control and lack of litigiousness. Johnson (1982) attributed the Japanese growth "miracle" in the 1960s to 1980s to this bureaucratic system—which he qualified as a "plan-rational" system that, through bureaucratic management (mainly by MITI), could more effectively deal with more "routine" problems and implement policies that corresponded to nationally agreed-upon political goals such as economic growth and development (p.22). Meanwhile, other authors such as Brinton (1993) came along and highlighted the fact the much of the post-war growth was also attributable to the, relatively invisible, female workers who occupied 43% of the more precarious part-time workforce in 1960 and 70% by 1986—in addition to all the free labor that women continued to do in the home to support the long hours and lifetime employment of men upon which the entire system relied (p.10). It was a system worthy of praise as it served their purposes well—until it didn't. The economic crises of the 1990s in Japan that slowed growth considerably were coupled with a secondary surprise—the shock that despite this miraculous growth women had stopped having babies, leading to an unsustainable inverted pyramid of population distribution. This would certainly count as a development outside the "routine" problems that the bureaucracy was prepared to manage.

Similar praise was also given to the legal system, including the bureaucratic preference for "administrative guidance," which implied a certain amount of bureaucratic discretion in interpretation of law rather than citizen-based participation in its creation, including through litigation in the courts. Scholars like Kagan (1991) highlighted the perceived flaws of the American-style "adversarial legalism" with its "costly, time consuming, and erratic policy making and dispute resolution," which he attributed to the rising political power of "egalitarians" who tried to use the system to implement "ambitious, transformative policies of active government" due to their own suspicion with government and preference for decentralized authority (pp.370-371). While Kagan (1991) even acknowledged the fact that such a system allows for greater contestation of authority, openness to differing opinions, and sensitivity of individual rights, he reserved praise for the European-style elite bureaucracies with their "fidelity to official norms and policies . . . insulated from the potentially corrupting influence of local politicians and citizens" and their creation of social insurance systems to aid "victims of misfortune" (pp.391, 393). Such

characterizations demonstrate an ignorance of structural inequality and power hierarchies present in societies. In the United States (and elsewhere), racial minorities and women are not merely "victims of misfortune," they are survivors of white power and patriarchy, and Kagan (1991) underplays the value of adversarial legalism in advancing the causes of groups who had very valid reasons to be suspicious of authority as they were systemically shut out from the policy process, faced hostility and pushback from existing institutions, and would find their legitimate demands under-represented in these so-called "professional" civil service systems and "official norms"—as is the case in Japan. Success of the civil rights movement owes much to adversarial legalism, and feminist gains related to issues such as divorce, property, abortion, employment, and education have been achieved thanks to adversarial tactics in both the US and Europe—and the EU today, even with an elite bureaucracy, still maintains legal channels through which women can contest and seek damages from those who don't follow the bureaucratic regulations against harassment and discrimination. Thus, from a feminist perspective, the obvious hole in both of these praises of the Japanese system, which are more or less in tact today with some changes, is that they ignore women.

However, the lack of consideration in such praises cannot be attributed to mere oversight. Women are half the world's population and half of most societies—it is an egregious omission. One of the most important claims of feminist theory and literature is to overcome this notion that feminist ideas or goals are somehow a subset of larger political, legal, and economic considerations. Gender mainstreaming, while it struggles to find success in practical application, has a more potentially powerful theoretical one to offer: the ideas and worldviews of men are neither universal nor neutral—rather, like all other humans, they are biased and excessively narrow. This is true regardless of the position of power they occupy, no matter what "expertise" they might possess, and no matter how much they claim to work on behalf of the "common good" of citizens. As a result, marginalized and oppressed groups—women, racial and ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, disabled, and so on—form social movements because they understand implicitly how much of their lived experiences and truths and human rights are not adequately recognized in the powerful and dominant narratives, concerns, and structures of their societies. Yet none of them are fringe—they are all, in fact, worthy of the mainstream. This is why so many social movements are concerned with policy and ideas of substantive representation and participative democracy, as calls for a "search for shared values" are fundamentally hollow if they are made within structures that systematically pit the values and perspectives of certain groups over others while claiming "objectivity" and avoiding the "corrupting influence" of citizens (Kagan, 1991, pp. 393, 398).

Subsequently, the cause of gender equality struggles to find secure footing globally, including in the ideas of bureaucratically laden and male-dominated Japan. Despite previous successes of the bureaucracy to orient Japan toward a political goal of national economic development, and despite a legal system that is praised for its lack of litigiousness, gender equality is an entirely different matter. It is not simply a new national goal to aspire to—to bring everyone on board so that more women can "participate" and grow the economy and have more babies. Nor is it a goal that can be adequately achieved through cooperation and without adversity. Feminist ideas themselves are full of diversity and intersectionality, but ultimately they seek to fundamentally alter the status quo and power balance of modern societies—upending not just what kinds of decisions are made but who makes them, and epistemologically questioning and challenging what we "know" to be true, and right, and just.

McBride and Mazur (2010) find that this gender-ignorant logic is inherent in the power structures of the state in most societies, yet they specifically did not view the state as a site of monolithic oppression; hence the hope of the establishment of WPAs was to help overturn this logic by bringing these feminist ideas and voices closer to the policies of the state. Most still struggle to do so, and the WPAs of Japan seem to be no exception to this—although perhaps they find themselves in a more formidable legal and bureaucratic environment than most Western democracies. Hence, if the GEB functions as just a regular bureaucratic agency, instead of a potentially transformative one in the Japanese system, this could create an even larger obstacle for gender equality and the women's movement.

However, this broader context is only half the picture. While this can help explain weaker overall outcomes in comparison to countries in the RNGS studies, this does not tell us about how the GEB does function, their activities, and how these activities may or may not contribute to the development of State Feminism in Japan. Structural limitations help explain the particular activities the GEB has been tasked with—such as research, publicity, coordination with NGOs and private groups, and awareness raising. In fact, a common refrain heard among activists and found in gender equality literature is, "the law is not enough, we need to change also people's consciousness" (Chan-Tiberghien, 2004, p.148). It is probably true that both are needed, along with strong enforcement mechanisms; but as the law may be lacking, this awareness-based focus still allows the GEB the power to frame issues and aim to gender policy debates—a major component of the State Feminism framework. In fact, the symbolic laws could have the unintended effect of creating new levels of awareness and demands for further change, such demands a WPA could harness (Gelb, 2003, p.146). Indeed, not all agencies in RNGS could draft policy, thus policy access does not always equate to

policy formation. Instead, through coordination with women's movements, WPAs can strengthen these voices to apply greater pressure and necessary framing to help women's movement actors achieve their goals. Gelb (2003) emphasized this fact when she noted, "advocacy coalitions or policy subsystems, however differently structured in each nation, may play a key role in bringing new political values based in new conceptualizations and policies to the policy agenda" (p.11). Therefore, the activities of the GEB, especially within certain policy debates, still remain an important area of focus to fully understand the nature of GEB influence on gender equality in Japan—as McBride and Mazur (2010), too, found that agency activity played a significant role in "favorable state responses to movement demands" (p.242).

This justifies turning attention towards a more micro-level analysis of agency activities, as the confluence of subsystem openness, agency activity, and alliance with the women's movement all work together to achieve successful State Feminism. Yet, the cornerstone of success, as noted in the framework, remains the movement-agency nexus, which has yet to be assessed in consideration of structural and contextual factors. Although the greater policy environment and structures seem disadvantageous in Japan, it was exactly in such circumstances that an Insider agency could significantly aid women's movement actors (McBride and Mazur, 2010). Therefore, does the GEB, in its position as the link between the government and civil society, have the potential to be an Insider agency on certain issues? An examination of the state-civil society relationship in Japan is necessary to begin to answer such a question.

CHAPTER III: EXAMINING THE STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP IN JAPAN

Introduction

For State Feminism theory, the relationship between the state and civil society forms the bedrock of analysis. McBride and Mazur (2010) underscored this importance when they incorporated this movement-agency nexus into their definition of successful State Feminism, noting that the study focused on how WPAs could "bring about the success of women's movements, originating outside the state" (p.37). Indeed, their two matrices for categorization of agency effectiveness and impact hinge on this relationship, which presumes a bottom-up process of influence and is centered around two key issues: access and framing. In the Japan case, one must look at both of these factors in depth to understand these dynamics and what they imply for successful State Feminism and movement progress. This chapter will focus mainly on the aspect of access in the state-civil society relationship, especially at the subsystem level—which is primarily the deliberative councils where discussions over policy issues take place, as the dynamics here "may be important explanatory factors in understanding why agencies continue to have difficulty in achieving success for movement actors," while in-depth considerations of framing across different policy debates will be addressed in Chapter 4 (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.237).

Unlike Kobayashi's assertion, the phrase "outside the state" emphasizes that the roots of the feminist movement for successful State Feminism must be planted among the (generally) women in civil society. Looking at the Japan case, there is evidence of such roots among key Japanese women who were even advocating for women's suffrage in Imperial Japan prior to World War II (Mackie, 1988, p.57-58). Yet, what has differed in Japan compared to RNGS countries is the overall pattern of interaction between state and society, which literature suggests has historically demonstrated a tendency of state co-optation and active engagement in civil society rather than autonomy and separation. In RNGS cases, co-optation, meaning providing access but not influence, was an outcome some of the time, in certain policy debates, but not a consistent feature of WPAs across all sectors or countries (McBride and Mazur, 2010). In contrast, Japanese society is built on strong presumptions of hierarchy and this often leads to a top-down structure and flow of influence, making co-optation a common strategy. Schwartz (2003) notes this "powerful pattern of governance in which the state has historically intervened to shape how ordinary Japanese thought and behaved" and utilized civil society groups only to the extent they would cooperate with

government initiatives (p.5). Such characterizations are typically reduced to cultural differences, but this does not fully illuminate the extent to which choice is involved. Gelb (2003) remarks that institutions commonly "structure the political environment to their own advantage" and such references to culture are often "invoked to rationalize efforts to limit change-oriented policy" that would allow civil society greater power or influence (p.6). Therefore, when assessing patterns of the state-civil society relationship in Japan, one must not presume that co-optation is inevitable even if it is prevalent, as the desires to form associations and engage in activism in a society are always predicated on a multitude of factors beyond state behavior, such as education, economics, technology, and globalization/internationalization, which are constantly in flux (Pharr, 2003, p.335).

Moreover, the implications of historical patterns of co-optation for the success of State Feminism in Japan must be considered and assessed along with the current nature of activities in the national machinery—as such a relationship, if it remains unchanged, can negatively impact the formation of the ideal functioning of the movement-agency nexus (Insider agencies with Dual Response). A survey of the present relationship between the GEB and civil society suggests that this presence of co-optation and bureaucratic primacy in policy subsystems remains, though not entirely in the same manner as before, as there are hints of change in that the GEB is more likely than other ministries to expand access to include a wider array of civil society groups, such as NPOs and women's organizations, when creating their own deliberative councils (Weathers, 2005, p.78). Yet, the access enjoyed by women's groups and NPOs in particular remains limited and controlled by bureaucratic discretion, and this did not change even after a period of backlash in the early 2000s. This prevalent pattern of interaction can further explain the deviancy of the Japanese case and may illuminate compounding factors that further limit the comparative effectiveness and impact of the GEB, which is already less powerful and isolated from the center of policy making. On the other hand, McBride and Mazur (2010) warn against extending such implications to the level of a national theory, thus the current nature and history of state-civil society interaction, along with the issue of framing, will ultimately need to be tested through the lens of specific policy arenas and debates in Chapter 4 to fully understand State Feminism in Japan.

Section 1: History of the Bureaucracy and the Women's Movement

A look at the modern history of state interaction with the women's movement, from the time of World War II until the present, shows a persistent effort to mobilize women's

groups for certain state causes—even as Japan transitioned to a democracy after the war. The state was able to successfully co-opt women's movement actors into the nationalist war effort, and despite efforts by the US occupation to sever such links and encourage independent organization of women's groups, the pattern of co-optation remained in the post-war period. Groups like the National Federation of Regional Women's Organizations and the Housewives Federation were willing to cooperate with the state over initiatives like social and moral education and campaigns to economize water and energy usage as the country rebuilt (Kawato et al., 2015, p.413; Garon, 2003, pp.58-59). Other notable feminist activists, such as the famed Fusae Ichikawa who served in the Diet after the war, also cooperated with state initiatives, as she believed such a pragmatic approach would allow women to trade cooperation in exchange for legitimacy of their feminist demands (Mackie, 1988, p.58). However, for other more left-wing groups, this pattern of interaction and the necessary conservative shift in ideology it required left a lingering distrust of collaboration with government. Even today, groups led by women such as famous sociologist Chizuko Ueno prefer to maintain their distance from the state.

Nevertheless, patterns of cooperation and co-optation have continued, though as the Murase (2003) study noted, this initially took the form of engagement in women's education and the construction of hundreds of local women's centers—including the National Women's Education Center in Saitama that was completed in 1977, just after the start of the UN Decade for Women in 1975. The government revised the Social Education Law of 1959 to subsidize such centers so that they could contribute to "social education," but they also came with oversight and staffing by the state, which reduced their autonomy (Schwartz, 2003, p.59). Murase (2003) found that the activities at these centers tended to focus more on the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, as the gendered division of labor was heavily promoted by the state during this time in order to modernize and grow Japan's economy, and also included more innocuous cultural activities such as tea ceremony and flower arranging. Some may argue this kind of co-optation weakens the women's movement. While this weakness may be true in a sense, it is not because of Kobayashi's (2004) assertion that groups in Japan are not interested in social change (p.166). Murase (2003) found over 800 registered women's groups that focused on issue areas related to women's advancement and empowerment (as opposed to more traditional issues such as family and childcare), demonstrating a disconnect between the activist agenda of these groups and that of the state. Moreover, what is also noteworthy is that, by the 1970s, Fusae Ichikawa and other women's organizations were opposed to the state's management of women's education; indeed, the

first director of the national center, feminist activist Yoko Nuita, was initially reluctant to take on the helm because of this, though both women would later push the government for more progressive goals (Suzuki et al., 2014, p.128). This serves as evidence that patterns of co-optation in Japan are not consistently effective over time and women's groups have been able to develop their own agency as well.

Yet, what has remained consistent over time is the fact that it is difficult for large and strong organizations to develop outside of the state. While Murase (2003) found a plentiful amount of women's groups, they were generally smaller, localized, and weakly linked to each other. This is in line with civil society groups in Japan as a whole. Historically, strict laws related to the formation of NPOs coupled with bureaucratic interference have made it harder for strong, autonomous groups to grow and mobilize. While the US occupation wanted to eliminate government interference in society groups, Article 89 of the Japanese Constitution was subsequently reinterpreted to allow the state to grant special status to and support for organizations that served the public interest (so-called "public interest corporations")—although the process for recognition is cumbersome with high hurdles such as troublesome paperwork and large monetary endowments (Schwartz, 2003, pp.12-13).[11] However, even then, many of these public interest corporations become "quasi-government" agencies, as they are primarily funded by the state and staffed by rotating government officials (often in a practice called "amakudari," which means "descent from heaven," by which retired elite bureaucrats are gifted with comfortable and lucrative positions in the public and private sector) and remain subject to intense oversight (Murase, 2003, p.71; Pekkanen, 2003, p.128). Treating these semi-public organizations as an arm of the bureaucracy is common in Japan, as the country has a lower ratio of public servants to population and also a lower ratio of government spending to GDP among OECD countries (as well as the highest government debt-to-GDP ratio), and hence they rely on the functioning of these organizations to compensate for the lack of flexibility and resources within the state (Iwamoto, 2007; OECD, 2015; Schwartz, 2003). As a result of these hurdles, most voluntary groups remain unregistered, especially in the advocacy field, and even those organizations that are able to gain registered status do not benefit from the same generous tax deductions and incentives that NPOs in other countries enjoy; they are also subject to strict supervision by the bureaucracy (Garon, 2003, p.114; Pekkanen, 2003, pp.120, 128). Therefore, while

[11] Article 89 states: "No public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority."

smaller, local women's groups have been able to form independently of the state, this is largely a result of state preferences as well as laws and regulations that aim to strategically shape civil society (and suppress larger, professional groups that could develop policy expertise) rather than help it flourish, as the bureaucracy sets "exceedingly high hurdles for civic groups that hope to reach out to gain public support for their cause" (Schwartz, 2003; Pekkanen, 2003; Pharr, 2003, p.335).

In response to this difficulty, Murase (2003) found that certain umbrella organizations were able to form, namely the International Women's Year Liaison Group (IWYLG), in order to generate strength in numbers. However, due to bureaucratic preference for co-optation and cooperation (as opposed to conflict) with society groups, the IWYLG was granted preferential access to resources (including funds) as well as the policy subsystem, thus allowing it "representational monopoly over women's interests in the national policy making process" despite its more conservative and incremental approach to policy change and the fact that the price of access was its autonomy (p. 156). The monopoly was indicated by the fact that among the 28 women's groups that were represented on the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the "largely symbolic" civil society group established as part of the national machinery, 23 groups were also members of IWYLG (Murase, 2003, pp. 140, 156). Such practices are problematic from the perspective of the women's movement, as it cuts out the potential for other grassroots organizations, which may have different opinions and focus areas, to coalesce and influence policy. Yet, it remains questionable whether the IWYLG was allowed to help set the agenda or whether they merely participated in an agenda determined by the state. Moreover, the status of the IWYLG in the Abe administration has yet to be studied, thus the extent to which preferential access to umbrella groups continues to shape the movement-agency nexus in modern Japan has yet to be ascertained and will be addressed in Section 3.

Finally, much literature has been written about the early history of the GEB and civil society, especially during the time of the passage of the Basic Law, which saw a severe grassroots-based conservative backlash that many believe stalled the initial efforts for the gender equality movement and the national machinery, thus calling for a "revisiting of fundamental questions about the goals and methods of Japanese State Feminism" (Kano, 2011, p.43). Much of the literature focused on the issue of using the term "gender free," which generated much controversy and included a LDP-led political campaign investigating the perceived pernicious effects of "gender free" on "radical" sex education that was headed by Abe himself (Yamaguchi, 2014, p.563). Yet, while the debate against "gender free" turned

into a straw man argument that many feminist scholars believed was concocted to push back against ideas of gender equality, Yamaguchi's (2018) interviews with leaders of that backlash revealed that they were primarily concerned with top-down state relations and resented being forced to copy the "model ordinance" for gender equality with little local input; another was more upset over the language of "gender free" and the implications for ideas about sexual orientation rather than gender equality itself (pp.74, 77). This once again highlights the centrality of the state-civil society relationship and direction of influence for success of State Feminism. While the GEB eventually recommended, in a top-down fashion, the cessation of using the term "gender free" due to the confusion it caused, and indeed the term was not used in the Second Basic Plan, the extent to which this backlash may have actually impacted the movement-agency nexus for the GEB in the following years has yet to be deeply investigated in terms of policy, access, and framing and will be carried out in Section 3.3 (Kano, 2011, p.55).

Section 2: International Influence and Civil Society

However, before turning to an assessment of the current nature of GEB interaction with the women's movement, one other key factor that has historically shaped the state-civil society relationship must be considered—that of international influence. McBride and Mazur (2010) admitted to excluding assessments of international influence on the women's movement and their ability to gain positive state responses in their State Feminism framework, which limits any comparative analysis, and they further noted that international norms such as ratification of the CEDAW did not appear as important in their regression analysis. However, to exclude such considerations in the Japan case would be remiss, as international influence has had great relevance for women's movement actors since Japan has always been more susceptible to outside pressure ("gaiatsu" in Japanese) (Iwamoto, 2007, p.4). Historically, this international pressure has played an important role as a resource and strengthening mechanism for women's movement actors in Japan in order to avoid straight co-optation and frame issues in accordance with their demands. Yet, notably it has not been straight "gaiatsu" alone that has led to success for the women's movement, rather a form of indirect pressure has been utilized such that international norms and frames have been repurposed by domestic actors. Thus, pressure for policy change has come from above as well as below. In particular, Chan-Tiberghien (2004) cites the "global discourses of women's and children's human rights" that were sufficiently powerful to be utilized by networks of

human rights organizations in Japan to lobby for change (p.139). These norms and discourses were especially important for women's movement actors, as they helped grant them greater legitimacy and a "new source of access to the policy-making process" (Reimann, 2003, p.305). Thus, an overall assessment of the state-civil society relationship in Japan must also consider when and how women's movement actors were able to make sufficient use of international influence to gain greater access and reflect their demands within the state.

Prior to the official upgrade of the GEB, women both inside and outside the government were able to strategically use participation in international conferences as well as the frames of burgeoning international norms related to gender equality in order to pressure or shame the government into making certain policy reforms. The ratification of the CEDAW was a major event in Japan that demonstrates how women's movement actors were able to utilize international pressure in their interaction with the state. In 1980, the ratification of the CEDAW treaty by Japan was in doubt, thus the International Women's Year Liaison Committee, created by Fusae Ichikawa, put pressure on the government, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the prime minister, to sign the treaty—warning that failure to do so could be an international embarrassment for Japan. Their efforts were reinforced by the then Women's Affairs Planning and Promotion Council within the Prime Minister's Office who also submitted their own request. The Ministry of Justice indicated a willingness to change the nationality law in compliance with the requirements for CEDAW ratification, which soon brought the other ministries in line—leading the Cabinet to sign the treaty that year with eventual ratification in 1985 (Iwamoto, 2007, pp.12-13). This ratification led to the reforms of three key policies: national citizenship law, which now allowed citizenship to pass through the matrilineal line; education reform, which required the desegregation by gender of home economics education; and employment, which required the removal of discrimination in employment practices. This requirement for a change in the labor law is what sparked the passage of the 1985 EEOL. Although, as Kobayashi (2004) noted, the government bureaucrats were not in agreement with the women's movement's position in this policy debate and did not include them in the deliberative council for the law, as many women's groups opposed the removal of labor protections for women over fears of exploitation and instead had been campaigning for better working conditions for both men and women (Dalton, 2017, p.98). In the end, the compromise law that was passed removed certain protections but was also weak and lacking enforcement mechanisms—a great disappointment to women's groups. Moreover, in response, companies developed the "two-track" system by which most female workers were shuffled into secretarial positions in a separate "general

track" that offered lower pay and no chance for promotion, furthering the discrimination between them and their male counterparts as very few women were selected for the more lucrative and prestigious "career track"—a practice which was not prohibited by the MOL until later (but in reality remains in practice still today) (Weathers, 2005, p.74). Thus, while international pressure was able to assist the women's movement in ratification of an international treaty, the international framing of equal opportunity employment used by bureaucrats in the EEOL was less effective because the process was not inclusive and it was not adequately adapted by domestic actors to address the actual wants and needs of the women's movement regarding labor practices.

However, Iwamoto (2007) underscores the fact that the actual foundation of the GEB and national policy machinery itself was also due in large part to this interaction between civil society, the state, and international pressure, as both domestic political instability within the LDP as well as important international conferences and institutions came together fortuitously to help women's movement actors advance their demands for national machinery. After the 1975 International Women's Year, pressure from the UN helped women's actors push for the establishment of national machinery bodies; the upgrade of the GEB to an office with legal backing took place during the time of the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing (Iwamoto, 2007, p.18). Even the First Basic Plan, formed in 2000, acknowledged the importance of international influence when it stated, "based on international instruments adopted at world conferences on women and other fora, Japan formulated a national plan of action and promoted comprehensive and systematic measures based thereon" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2000). Among these international instruments is the 30% leadership target, which remains a centerpiece of Japanese gender equality policy, as it was adopted in response to recommendations in the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies that were subsequently officially ratified in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action.

What all of these examples exemplify are the strengths and limits of international influence, but they also highlight the importance of access in the movement-agency nexus as they demonstrate the possibilities when government insiders and movement actors can collaborate, with sufficient pressure, to achieve a common goal. Yet, these examples are only part of the story, as one must also be weary of the fact that "international norms may represent purely symbolic adaptation that produces little actual policy change" (Gelb, 2003, p.5). This further underscores the need to look at actual policy debates as well—to understand how this international pressure and framing may or may not be transformed by

WPAs and domestic actors into measureable progress for the women's movement in Japan. This will be carried out in Chapter 4.

On the other hand, it is important to note that potential limitations of the GEB and other WPAs in the state don't necessarily spell doom for the women's movement. Like other countries mentioned in the RNGS study, it is also true in Japan that WPAs have not always been necessary for advancement, and historically women's movement actors have been able to use international pressure and norms along with partnerships with key female allies in the Diet to get legislation passed. Between 1997 and 2001, which was in the glow of the Beijing Conference and a growing global narrative around human rights, there were eight important legal changes regarding issues of gender equality in Japan: sexual harassment, birth control pill, the Basic Law, child exploitation, child abuse, stalking, human rights education, and domestic violence—all of which could be achieved through a combination of "reframing global norms, advocacy education, and leverage politics" (Chan-Tiberghien, 2004, p.5). The Child Pornography and Prostitution Law of 1999 was advocated for by domestic networks like the Child Assault Prevention Network and the Federation for the Protection of Children's Human Rights, while the 2001 Domestic Violence Prevention Law was fought for by groups like the DV Survey Research Network and National Shelter Network (Gelb, 2003). Legalization of the birth control pill in 1999 took place after years of advocacy among women's groups, who utilized the ridicule aimed at Japan at the 1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development for being one of the only countries in the developed world to not legalize the pill (Hasunuma, 2015, p.12). Even prior to this era, an anti-prostitution law was passed in 1956 through the combination of efforts among disparate women's groups, less than 10 years after the passage of the UN Declaration of Human Rights (Garon, 2003, p.58). This trend suggests that women's groups have historically been able to circumvent the co-opting nature of the state by combining forces with international norms and domestic politicians in order to achieve their policy goals—though the caveat is that all of these activities occurred prior to the establishment of a strong dedicated agency in the form of the GEB, which was also fought for by the women's movement. Therefore, an assessment of the current GEB's interactions with civil society groups and how they grant access to them is an important missing element that will help clarify the picture of the movement-agency nexus in Japan and determine whether this has changed in the Abe administration.

Section 3: National Machinery and the Women's Movement

As the State Feminism framework suggests, WPAs can be helpful in instances of difficult policy or political environments. As the bulk of policy making in Japan is done in the government, the activities of the WPAs are still important, especially as it regards their interactions with women's movement actors. Access is a key issue, as Outshoorn (2010) found that "if one wants to be effective, the strategy for success is to go inside state institutions and gain access into conventional political arenas" (p.161). Looking at the agendas and level of women's movement participation in the national machinery for gender equality in Japan, a pattern of co-optation still exists, mainly through preferential access, but the characterization of this access is not necessarily the same as before as there are signs of a small shift to greater representation. Yet, overall, a top-down logic of state influence over agenda and policy remains, which was also the case during and after the backlash in the early 2000s. Consequently, this could hinder significant progress of the women's movement to have their ideas and voices heard in government, thereby slowing advancement of gender equality.

For example, the top-down orientation of the state in attempting to create a gender equal society is still present in the basic plans and in fact has become more pronounced over time. The First Basic Plan for Gender Equality contained progressive language such as "mutual provision of information" and establishing "equal cooperative relations among the national government, local governments, and NGOs" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2000). Even the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality kept this language of "equal cooperative relations" and mentioned the need to reflect the broad opinions of "the public, such as highly educated academics and women's organizations," although it mentioned centering a network on the domestic Headquarters (Gender Equality Bureau, 2005a). This later phrase was also kept in the Third and Fourth Basic Plan, but the word "equal" in terms of relations was lost and replaced with the more subdued "organic cooperation" or just "cooperation" alone (Gender Equality Bureau, 2010a, 2015a). Moreover, the third and fourth plans incorporated a greater number of civil society actors beyond NGOs or women's groups, including the business world, gender equality centers, local community groups, economic groups, and labor unions—diluting a focus on the women's movement. The role of the government in the language has shifted from "exchange of information and views" in the First Basic Plan to "sharing awareness" or "providing necessary information," suggesting a top-down flow of influence by the Fourth Basic Plan (Gender Equality Bureau, 2000, 2015a). This should come

as no surprise, since the Abe administration has been characterized by a greater effort to concentrate power over the policy agenda under the prime minister, but from the perspective of the women's movement it is a worrying trend. Thus, the basic plans themselves show a greater dilution for the voices of the women's movement specifically and a greater tendency to view them as agents of the state's gender equality efforts rather than agents of their own empowerment.

3.1 Conference, Council, and Committee Participation

In terms of the points of access for women's movement actors to enter the policy subsystem and interact with the WPAs, the Liaison Conference, the Council for Gender Equality, and special committees and study groups remain the key spaces for them to do so. As previously mentioned, the Liaison Conference presents the best opportunity for women's movement membership; indeed it aspires to become the "body of the national movement and play the role of a channel between the government and the people" and primarily classifies its activities as opinion and information exchange (Gender Equality Bureau, 2009a). Yet, just who these "people" are is illuminated by the breakdown of membership among the "expert" committee—an average of 16 to 18 individuals who are selected by the minister of gender equality (who is not always a progressive in terms of women's empowerment, especially under Abe) to lead and make decisions for the Liaison Conference, including expanding membership to other groups (as access to the Liaison Conference is not open to all but must be earned through invitation). Since 2005, about 33% of these experts have come from academia, 31% from the corporate sector, 18% from NPOs, and the remaining 18% from a mix of media, law, and government.[12] Among the NPO experts, who have increased their representation since 2016 with an average of 30% representation over the past four years, only a handful have been from groups specifically related to women or gender equality—and only two of these, Gender Action Platform and Fathering Japan, have sent a representative to a special committee of the Council. Additionally, in the past, Murase (2003) found that representation from the IWYLG dominated the representation of women's groups in this body (p.156). However, this is no longer the case. While 47% of members of the IWYLG are also members of the Liaison Conference, they represent 45% of all women's groups and only 17% of all members.[13] Moreover, among the expert committees since 2005, only one

[12] For a complete list of individuals and organizations, see Appendix D
[13] See the IWYLG website for a list of current member organizations: http://iwylg-jp.com/member

IWYLG member has participated—the National Women's Committee of the United Nations NGOs, and their representation ended by 2008.

While this pattern suggests a greater opening for newer women's organizations to participate, the reality is that despite being billed as a "channel," an interview with GEB officials revealed that the contact between the Liaison Conference and more authoritative bodies like the Council for Gender Equality is mostly indirect—most contact occurs between the Liaison Conference and the GEB, and these ideas or communication are not usually passed to the Council (Suzuki, personal communication, March 26, 2020). In the history of the Liaison Conference since 2005, only four expert members have ever become Council members and only four separate member organizations have ever been represented on the Council. Additionally, in response to a written survey, the IWYLG said "many NGOs seem to believe that they are in a position to provide policy ideas that support the Gender Equality Bureau," yet the GEB officials indicated that they see the goals of the Council and Liaison Conference as separate—the Council decides policy recommendations, sends these to the prime minister and also GEB for drafting, and the purpose of the Liaison Conference is to diffuse these ideas rather than contribute new policy ideas themselves (Hasegawa, personal communication, March 30, 2020; Suzuki, personal communication, March 26, 2020). This was the case even during the period of backlash against the term "gender free" in the early 2000s. The GEB and Council began to take up the issue in 2004, with the GEB producing its own document titled "For an accurate understanding of a gender equal society" that discussed clarification on issues of biological sex differences, masculinity/femininity, and family (Gender Equality Bureau, 2004a). The Council decided that a "correct understanding" of gender, namely "socially and culturally informed gender," needed to be promoted to counteract the backlash, and the GEB saw it as their mission to develop these promotional efforts by providing commentary on the Basic Law, administrative training, and enhanced public relations (Gender Equality Bureau, 2004a, 2005b). In 2005, in a rare instance of interaction between the Council and the Liaison Conference, Takashi Kashima gave a lecture at one of the annual meetings of the Liaison Conference about the "basic idea of gender equality and the importance of diffusion and enlightenment" in which he clarified the meaning of "gender" as discussed by the Council and implored members of the Liaison Conference to "be a leader in the promotion and awareness of gender equality" according to this new definition, as he wanted to dispel the criticism that "gender equality is an elite idea," which was an opinion expressed in the public hearings for the Second Basic Plan (Gender Equality Bureau, 2005c). While he indicated a desire to seek the input of the Liaison

Conference about the matter, documentation of any subsequent discussions were not included among future agenda items of the Council.

However, this does not mean that the Liaison Conference only exists under the thumb of the other national machinery bodies. A survey of the agenda and activities of the Liaison Conference shows that they have grown slightly more independent of the government agenda. Meetings in earlier years (until 2008) were largely comprised of briefings from the GEB about changes in policy, budget, or the Basic Plan, and then discussions were held amongst the members regarding promotion. Yet, this began to change in 2009 when the Liaison Conference started creating their own subcommittees (later called "teams") to work on specific issues. While these were originally in line with government-made agendas like work-life balance, violence against women, 30% leadership by 2020, and positive action, (and although they also aimed in 2016 to create regional versions of "a group of male leaders who create a society where women shine"), the most recent teams have focused on different areas like women's entrepreneurship, women in legal careers, and gender equality for young people—not necessarily key focus areas of government policy (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016d). Ultimately, though, their activities remain largely disconnected from the major policy arenas, and it is presumed their goal is to influence civil society rather than the state.

What is more indicative of access to the policy arena is the Council for Gender Equality and the specialized committees and study groups that report to them—as their views and recommendations do trickle up the policy hierarchy. On the other hand, the Council, too, faces limitations to its ability to affect the policy agenda. Former long-term Council member, Takashi Kashima (2017), revealed in his book, *Has Gender Equality Evolved?,* that while Council members can discuss with one another during the formation process of the Basic Plan (and Kashima himself served as chair of the planning committee for the Fourth Basic Plan), they do not have a say once the draft by the expert subcommittee is submitted to the prime minister, they cannot guarantee everything they recommended will be included, and so the Fourth Basic Plan published under Abe held some changes that were surprising for the Council. Moreover, an assessment of Council meeting minutes shows that they are woefully short. While they historically met for an average of 45 minutes to one hour per meeting, in recent years the time has become shorter and shorter with average meeting times of 30 minutes and 25 minutes in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Each member has a short amount of time to make comments regarding the agenda items, but robust discussion does not usually take place. As a result, former Minister of Gender Equality Seiko Noda instituted two new "roundtable discussion" with Council members to facilitate freer deliberation on certain

themes during her tenure. While the new minister, Hashimoto, has also held one such discussion in March of this year, it also lasted only 35 minutes, and it remains to be seen whether they will continue. Instead, the bulk of discussions and work regarding policy recommendation is done in the special deliberation committees commissioned by the Council.

These special committees, which are not purely made of NPOs, but represent a similar mix of civil society from labor, media, academia, corporate, and professional association representatives, also demonstrate a similar pattern of controlled access.[14] In particular, there have been six special committees dedicated to the Basic Plan or deciding key policies since 2001. These six committees are heavily occupied by current and former members of the Council (especially notable members like Miyoko Tsujimura (five times), Takashi Kashima (four times), and the anti-feminist Shiro Takahashi (four times)); some expert members of the Liaison Conference; and others who have served on multiple committees in the past. While the representation of NPO groups on these six committees averages 24% and female representation averages 62% (well over the 30% target for deliberative councils in other ministries), they have contained very few "outside" or new members (see figure 3.1). This pattern remains the same for the most recent Fifth Basic Plan Special Committee. Out of the 18 members, while 30% come from NPOs and a notable 72% are women, 39% are past and current Council members, 17% are Liaison Conference experts, and 44% are repeat members (most of whom have served on three to five other committees). There are no new members on the Fifth Basic Plan committee.

Alternatively, smaller working group committees, which focus on specific issues or themes (like violence against women or work-life balance), are more likely to have newer or original membership. This trend extends even more when you look at the smaller and more niche-focused study group membership (see figure 3.1). Hence, as you move away from the more "important" and official groups that help determine the content and agenda of the Basic Plan, you see broader access for civil society to participate. Yet, as is clear by the lower percentages, among the more official body of the Liaison Conference, which is meant to be the "channel," only ten experts have ever served on a special committee or study group out of a possible 366 slots. Among Liaison Conference member organizations, apart from the four that served on special committees as members of the Council, only seven other groups have been able to participate in committees or study groups. Thus, the Liaison Conference has contributed just 6% of the total participation among these special deliberation committees.

[14] For complete lists of all past and present special committees/study groups and their membership, see: http://www.gender.go.jp/kaigi/senmon/index.html; http://www.gender.go.jp/kaigi/kento/index.html

Figure 3.1 Civil Society Participation Rates on Special Deliberation Committees

	Planning & Key Policies (6 Committees)	Theme Working Groups (17 Committees)	Theme Study Groups (10 Committees)
Past and Current Council Members	52%	24%	16%
Liaison Conference Experts	7%	5%	3%
Repeat Members and Organizations	35%	32%	28%
New Members and Organizations	6%	38%	53%

Moreover, the supposed privileged access granted to umbrella groups like the IWYLG is more complicated than initially proposed and has shown decline over time. Since 2001, the IWYLG has only sent two member groups to the Council for Gender Equality—the trade union RENGO, which is still there, and the National Federation of Regional Women's Associations ("Chifuren"), which is no longer on the Council after 12 years of service. Among the 23 main special committees, apart from RENGO and Chifuren who served on committees while on the Council (which is where the overwhelming majority of IWYLG representation comes from), IWYLG has only sent three other groups to serve on a special deliberation committee. Out of total participation on all 33 committees, IWYLG groups represent 4% of all spots, and they have no representation on the Fifth Basic Plan Special Committee or current theme working groups. Of course, this is still better than the zero times that many women's organizations have been able to formally participate in the policy arena, but it still suggests the GEB has moved away from such blatant monopolistic access.

Instead, other NPOs have had notable opportunities for participation. Although the majority of repeat members and organizations come from academia, recently there have been other NPOs that have enjoyed repeating membership across several special committees and are present on the ones currently active: Medical Corporation Toseikai Women's Clinic We! Toyama (five committees), Saga DV Comprehensive Countermeasures Center (five committees), NPO Fathering Japan (four committees), 21st Century Vocational Foundation (four committees), and National Council of Women's Centers (three committees). Yet, as previously stated, academia still dominates as the sector most prevalent among special deliberation committees (48% of total participation), and three universities stand out in this area as well as on the Council: University of Tokyo (14 committees, present on Council from 2008 to 2014), Chuo University (12 committees, present on Council since 2010), and Ochanomizu University (13 committees, present on Council 2001-2009 and 2016-present).

In addition, when reporting their "Comprehensive National-Level Review" to international conferences like the upcoming Beijing + 25, the government claims that it "gives weight to cooperation with representatives of civil society" and "intends to invite extensive inputs from civil society" in the Fifth Basic Plan (Government of Japan, 2020, pp.4, 6). While both statements are technically true, they do not clarify how much weight nor how they intend to utilize said "extensive inputs." For the Fourth Basic Plan, the GEB did announce six forums held around the country by members of the Council over a two-week period in order to solicit public comments on the draft plan—all in the early afternoon on weekdays. This is hardly an ideal time if the goal is to achieve "extensive input." While 900 citizens participated in these, there was also an online or mail-in option for people to contribute comments on specific sections of the draft Basic Plan in which approximately 3,000 people took part. These comments were summarized by the GEB into a 60-page document that was distributed to the special planning committee members at the next meeting. Yet, a read through the meeting minutes shows that the comments as a whole were not discussed or explained at length, were merely summarized by GEB officials, and the edits to the draft plan in response to public comments, indicated in red text, showed they were mostly cosmetic adjustments or technical corrections in wording; the subsequent comments by committee members were largely pedantic and unconcerned with more general content (Gender Equality Bureau, 2015b). Thus, such public input is more accurately described as public editing and does not indicate a general concern for the public's ideas regarding the content and approaches of the Basic Plan.

All of which suggests that the national machinery and the GEB, much like the other ministries, prefer to keep things "in house" when it comes to access to the policy arena—as for the most important committees for policy development they tend to choose the same individuals and organizations again and again, and they are not keen to include outsiders who are new or have never served. This represents a new kind of co-optation in that broader selective access is granted through bureaucratic discretion, but as always the narrative and agenda remain largely in control of the state. It is notable that this approach has not changed much over time—as it even existed in the committees prior to the Abe administration. Moreover, at a Council meeting in 2005, during the height of the backlash, the Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, who was also minister for gender equality, made a revealing remark about civil society relations when noted that he had requested the relevant four ministers to invite everyone from the business world and the labor world, including management and labor groups, to create a social movement that would change working

conditions in order to remove obstacles that were causing population decline (Gender Equality Bureau, 2005d). This indicates that a top-down logic, which also excludes robust women's movement participation, has been present within the national machinery for a long time. Such a bureaucratic approach may be great for cooperation, efficiency, and stability, but it is less so for democracy and transformative social change.

3.2 Attitudes of Women's Groups

Meanwhile, a key perspective missing in the movement-agency nexus that cannot be ascertained from a focus on Council or special committee participation is how women's groups view their relationship with the GEB and national machinery bodies. A written survey sent to 23 women's organizations showed mixed attitudes towards the GEB. One notable response came from a representative of the IWYLG. While they still continue to engage with GEB officials, including two exchange meetings with the director earlier this year, the content of these meetings centered on a review of the government reports for Beijing +25 as well as possible future ratification of the Optional Protocol for CEDAW—not on specific domestic policies. In fact, their response indicated a certain distance from the current GEB, as they felt the current administration was not a friend to the women's movement and felt the IWYLG's focus on issues of equality, peace, and development were "incompatible" with the recent focus on economic measures (Hasegawa, personal communication, March 30, 2020). Responses from other groups showed the potential for new organizations to take part, but the level of access and influence of these groups remains uncertain. While many had interacted with the GEB, this mostly took the form of either lectures or panel discussions attended by the GEB director or officials. Some groups had also been able to participate in study groups or listening parties—but they expressed uncertainty about whether their opinions would be reflected in the actual policy recommendations. Some viewed the GEB favorably and saw it as a useful ally, particularly in the vein of information exchange and education. Others were less satisfied with the GEB's approaches and were dismayed by their organization's inability to see a positive attitude from the bureau or frustrated by the GEB's lack of consideration for diversity, including women with disabilities and minority women. Other groups also mentioned their belief that a continued alliance with female legislators in the Diet and an increase in women's presence there would do more to help the women's movement than the current efforts of the GEB. Thus, the extent to which the GEB is seen as a sufficient ally for the women's movement in Japan varies among organizations.

However, many of these women's groups remain determined in their efforts to advocate for gender equality by continuing to utilize international norms and treaties as important resources to help convey their demands. Many have taken part in the listening parties conducted by the Liaison Conference on the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the CEDAW and the Optional Protocol, APEC conferences for the Women's Leadership Network, and the ILO Convention on the Prohibition of Violence and Sexual Harassment. Groups likes Japan Women's Watch (JAWW) have even collaborated with other women's groups and academics to compile and submit their own Beijing + 25 report, covering an extensive array of policy areas and highlighting key points for change (JAWW, 2019). Their efforts in the face of considerable barriers is admirable, and their continued persistence will play a key role in whether Japan is able to successfully demonstrate State Feminism and advance gender equality.

3.3 Implications

In *The Politics of State Feminism*, McBride and Mazur (2010) considered co-optation a partially successful outcome of State Feminism, given that it provided descriptive representation to women in the policy process through access. Yet, they did not presume co-optation to be the desired outcome, because it ignored the other important element for true success—substantive representation. While earlier studies of the institutionalization of the women's movement focused on the importance of descriptive representation in order to generate a "critical mass" of women, a need for the substantive aspect has since been acknowledged as a necessity for the women's movement to advance social change in their societies—as it is substantive representation that can best undermine gender-biased logic in state institutions and policy. A key part of this representation is "the ability of the women's advocacy community to have access to policy-making as well as tactical options" to promote their views for social change (Gelb, 2003, p.7). When looking at the general picture in Japan, given the history and present actions of the national machinery for gender equality and its tendency for co-optation and domination in agenda setting and framing, this pattern of interaction serves as an additional factor to potentially explain the slow pace of progress for gender equality.

The GEB, in its position as the main gatekeeper or go-between for women's movement actors and the state, plays a pivotal role in the movement-agency nexus. Although it cannot draft policy, some women's groups indicated its utility as a way to bypass the

cumbersome vertical divisions of the bureaucracy to promote gender equality. However, the GEB further weakens itself as a potential ally through its preferential treatment and limited access to certain groups when it comes to the policy arena, as well as its presumption that the state should take control of the framing and narrative while receiving selected input from civil society. In the interview with GEB officials, they claimed they couldn't practice preferential treatment nor selectively interact with some NGOs over others, as "that will be unfair for other groups because the groups are not always in a good relationship" (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). While this seems to be their genuine intention, they perhaps failed to consider the fact that the process of selection for these special committees, which runs through the GEB as the secretariat, precisely implies that they must choose some groups over others. Although they actively aim to avoid prioritizing one view, the reality shows that they tend to keep choosing the same views over and over, and thus the deliberation over which groups should join the policy arena is never a neutral one—it is informed by various customs, habits, and interests of the bureaucracy and various actors in society. Indeed, while the selection of a variety of civil society groups appears to be more "fair," in consideration of the actual goal of creating a gender equal society, it also dilutes and crowds out the ability for women's movement actors, as major stakeholders, to have a voice. In addition, the process of selection for such special committees and the Council is considered "sensitive," but this lacks transparency and accountability, making it more problematic for groups seeking participation and policy change (Gelb, 2003, p.143). Even though the GEB says they never decline when an NGO or private group requests to speak or meet with them to exchange information, they clarify that such situations are not routine (Suzuki, personal communication, March 26, 2020).

Moreover, women's groups are mainly asked to spread the message of the national government, which is not the preferred or necessary flow of influence for a genuine commitment to creating a gender equal society. This top-down orientation persisted even when the GEB faced backlash early on. While many authors credited the conservative backlash with stalling progress, it appears both feminist scholars and the national machinery misdiagnosed the root problem. Yamaguchi's (2018) interviews revealed that the backlash, at its core, was not a gender-based revolt, but more of a populist one. Of course gender biases remain entrenched and played a role, but the bigger issue for the backlash leaders seemed to be how the Basic Law failed to address these biases in a way that would concretely demonstrate how citizens' lives could be enhanced through a gender equal society and allow them sufficient agency to contribute to its construction. While the national machinery

believed the issue was with public understanding of "gender" and a reaction against ideas of gender equality, Yamaguchi (2018) suggested the origin of the backlash was really a tactic to express resentment against elites and having vague gender equality ordinances enforced from above. While most prefectures did eventually create their own local ordinances, although certain areas like Chiba faced pushback, these local plans and the subsequent transformation of women's centers into gender equality promotion centers have not adequately solved the issue or advanced the cause. On the other hand, Abe, as an elite himself, may have genuinely been opposed to gender equality, as he became chief cabinet secretary in 2005 and hence attended two Council meetings where discussions over clarification of the term "gender" and "gender free" were held; yet he still went on to lead the investigation against "radical" sex education—perhaps knowing full well it was not the intent of the term or the law.

However, the misdiagnosis of the national machinery generally led to ineffective ways to address their issues with civil society. While Kashima was determined to dispel the idea of gender equality as an "elite idea," the tactics used suggest a certain amount of unfortunate cognitive dissonance coupled with bureaucratic inertia. Kashima was an elite, asking civil society to spread his message, and as Yamaguchi (2018) pointed out, "privileged, elite feminist leaders, such as feminist scholars who give lectures at the centers and become members of governmental committees…seem to be the only visible figures for conservatives and, likely, for many others too" (p.79). The Council believed they simply needed better public relations and more "enlightenment," which could be spread by members of the Liaison Conference. Unfortunately, the GEB adopted the same attitude—even in the Abe era. While successful State Feminism aims for WPAs to become agencies that counter gender-biased logic and actively advocate on behalf of the women's movement and their ideas, the GEB has appeared to function like a regular elite bureaucratic agency in Japan. They have not yet shifted the flow of influence in the way that State Feminism calls them to; instead they demonstrate a bureaucratic inertia that perpetuates ideas of bureaucratic control and administrative guidance to civil society. It is uncertain, but perhaps unlikely, that the functioning of the GEB would have been different without the backlash or even without Abe's ascent to power—as the top-down management logic appears to be inherent to the agency (as indicated in Council minutes and by the pattern of participation on their own special committees and study groups). Additionally, backlash against feminist gains is nothing new and perhaps should have been expected given the history of the feminist movement globally; but social movements—not those created at the instruction of government ministers but genuine social movements—have their own inertia to overcome

these setbacks as they can regain momentum with resources and public support. The GEB has yet to really embrace the idea of fully incorporating civil society and the women's movement into their activities and allowing them to influence the agenda, thus gender equality remains an "elite" idea. Therefore, in addition to the previously addressed structural and contextual factors that make the advancement of gender equality difficult in Japan, on the subsystem level the women's movement continues to face barriers to participation and the movement-agency nexus does not work well in their favor.

What the overall state-civil society relationship in Japan suggests is that, contrary to Kobayashi (2004) who thought there was potential in co-optation, the sluggish outcomes here for gender equality reinforce the results of the State Feminism literature, which hold that the ability for the women's movement to participate in the policy process and include their own framing is a key part of success. State Feminism cannot be a purely elite project, which means it cannot be implemented top-down, and the cultivation of civil society and the women's movement is an essential part that the Japanese bureaucracy and the GEB have yet to really embrace to generate the ideal movement-agency nexus that is important for success.

However, all the assessments carried out thus far have taken a more general or national view of the operation of national machinery bodies in Japan. This has been the general trend for most of the literature on the GEB, as most authors tend to overlook agency activities when it comes to policy debates since the bureau cannot draft bills. Yet, this is an oversight, as it does not acknowledge the power that the GEB still possesses to help the women's movement in the policy process beyond access and participation—that of framing. The State Feminism literature showed that "frames are the 'glue' to policy change, for the participation of women's movement actors, and for State Feminism" (Sauer, 2010, p.195). Moreover, the one underlying message of State Feminism was that one must not settle for broad, countrywide generalizations. Instead, "it is important to look for the nuanced and contextual effects of combinations of resources, political environments, policy arenas, and policy sectors instead of general theories" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p. 261). Therefore, the final piece of the puzzle for State Feminism in Japan and the success (or lack thereof) of gender equality initiatives must involve an in-depth look at the policy debates that have taken place since 2001 (but especially those within the Abe administration), the activity of the WPAs in those debates, their incorporation of women's movement actors, and the frames that have been utilized to promote the formation of a gender equal society.

CHAPTER IV: ASSESSING THE ACTIVITIES OF JAPAN'S NATIONAL MACHINERY

Introduction

Previous literature on Japan's national machinery and the GEB focused on policy debates in the 1980s and 1990s, earlier GEB activities regarding the backlash against notions of "gender free" that occurred after the Basic Law was passed, or structural factors in order to draw conclusions about agency impact and efficacy. So far, this paper has assessed the larger structural and contextual factors of the modern GEB in the era of the Abe administration against the conclusions of the framework of State Feminism theory in order to determine how Japan may be a deviant case in terms of its national machinery and gender equality outcomes and how it is not. Particular features that stand out are the influence of the legal system on policy outcomes and the tendency for state co-optation in a more closed policy subsystem. However, the most important finding of State Feminism literature was that it was not national or structural trends that determined success but the nuances and interrelations among the variables of structure, context, subsystem, and state-society relations within specific policy debates (McBride and Mazur, 2010). Moreover, they found that framing plays an important role in the success or failure of State Feminism, as the framing process also helps to understand the movement-agency nexus, the influence of agencies, and their ultimate impact and efficacy. The core assumption is that "if policy actors use a definition of the issue gendered in ways that coincide with women's movement goals, it will facilitate the entry of women's movement actors into the policy arena so that their ideas can become part of policy outcomes" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.251). Hence, in order to complete the assessment of State Feminism in Japan and the ability for the GEB and other policy machinery to further the cause of gender equality, one must look in-depth at these policy debates to determine how they were framed and how much women's movement actors were able to participate in the process.

Looking at four main policy debates since 2001 and analyzing meeting minutes of the Council as well as certain special committees regarding topics of domestic violence, sex crimes, political representation, and economic representation show that, contrary to claims by Boiling in 2008 that State Feminism did not exist in Japan, it has in fact occurred, albeit in a limited way, as the WPAs in Japan have had one successful case as an Insider agency with Dual Response in the revision of domestic violence policy. Moreover, assessment of the policy debates demonstrates that the small successes have relied upon the importance of

"critical acts" within the national machinery, which reinforces the finding of State Feminism literature that "it is critical acts and not critical mass that determine movement success" (Lovenduski and Guadagnini, 2010, p.191). Analysis of the various factors and events that have combined to achieve successful as well as unsuccessful outcomes shows that Japan has made more progress in policies related to violence against women, while it has struggled more with areas of political and economic representation. An examination of such outcomes reveals the particular ways that previously mentioned structural and contextual factors such as political will, closed subsystems, legal systems, international influence, and state-civil society relations impact or impede progress in these policy arenas. This has important implications for where the GEB may want to improve or focus on in the future. In particular, a greater look at how the GEB and other policy machinery have responded to the policies and frames of "Womenomics" in the Abe era demonstrates a worrying trend of being co-opted by and perpetuating a narrative that has less to do with gender equality and more to do with neoliberal ideas of women and the market and improving Japan's international reputation. This trend could further weaken and alienate the GEB and other policy machinery from the women's movement, with whom the GEB must remain allies if they hope to achieve other instances of State Feminism and advance gender equality in Japan.

Section 1: Four Policy Debates

1.1 Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims

The original Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (hereafter "DV law") was originally passed in 2001 through the great combination of efforts by a network of women's movement actors involved in domestic violence (DV) issues and their partnership with a key bipartisan alliance of female lawmakers in the Diet. Fortunately, the female lawmakers included in the bill an automatic revision after three years, at which time the DV network, which was now over 50 organizations strong and included scholars, survivors, shelters, and service providers, once again turned to female lawmakers and their expertise in turning movement demands into questions for bureaucratic officials of the MOJ and MHLW, whose compliance or support was necessary for Diet members to successfully pass the bill (Kamata, 2018, p.1). The lawmakers hosted six public hearings with bureaucrats on behalf of the network, which also attended the hearings and invited the press in order to put greater pressure on the bureaucracy to acquiesce to their demands. Thanks to these concerted efforts, the new bill contained some of the demands of the women's movement,

namely expanding the definition of DV to include psychological and sexual violence, expanding protection orders for children, mandating other areas of administration to form their own plans to combat DV, and explicitly including foreigners and the disabled as recipients of DV services (Kamata, 2018, p.5). At this time, neither the GEB nor the Council was involved much in the debate beyond the Special Investigation Committee on Violence Against Women (hereafter "Special Committee"), which was set up in 2001, publishing a report of their recommendations for the revised DV law in 2003. This Special Committee, which is still operating as one of three current special committees that has been commissioned by the Council, has seen several iterations in membership and leadership over the years, but as it is perhaps the longest-standing special committee that was set up underneath the Council, it has a longer and more established relationship with other bureaucratic agencies and has been able to develop a certain authority and expertise on matters related to violence against women.

However, the initial revisions to the DV law were still lacking, and the Special Committee, which included DV experts, became more involved in helping revise the DV law once again in 2006-2007. In July and September of 2006, the Special Committee held several hearings with private groups and other representatives from the DV network as well as local governments regarding enforcement status of the law and outstanding issues. Then, in November and December, the Special Committee submitted and discussed two opinion requests with MOJ and MHLW officials, using their report from 2003 as well as the interviews conducted with private groups from the network. The initial responses of MOJ officials, similar to that described by Kamata (2018) in the 2004 process, were evasive—using statements like "it requires careful consideration" or "there is little need for such a system" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006a). Yet, the committee did not let up on their insistence for certain reforms that had also been among the demands of the DV network, including: widening of the protection order to include mental violence, extension of the order to include relatives, creation of an emergency protection order, reducing petition costs, prohibition of phone calls during a protection order, and requirements for the courts to notify relevant spousal violence support consultation centers of orders. Moreover, in January 2007, the GEB solicited and published public commentary on these protection order changes, with the comments being overwhelmingly in favor of the changes and including others that suggested the law should extend protection to lovers as well as spouses (Gender Equality Bureau, 2007). In July of 2007, the MOJ and MHLW had acquiesced to most of these major

changes, and the Diet successfully passed the new bill that reflected most of the demands of the women's movement.

In this instance, the channel of access created by the formation of the Special Committee further opened up the policy subsystem for women's movement actors to reflect their demands within the state—in a policy area not dominated by other business or labor interests. Moreover, there was already political support within the Diet since they had shown willingness to the pass the previous revisions—as both 2004 and 2007 were also election years. It also helped that the particular issue of DV had already been sufficiently gendered at the beginning of the debate as a violation of a woman's human rights, as the initial efforts for legislation took place just five years after the Beijing Conference. Indeed, one cannot understate the importance of international pressure with the timing of these debates. Starting in the 1980s and culminating in the 1990s, the topic of violence against women became an issue drastically different in kind from other issues of the international feminist movement, because violence against women was able to achieve a certain transnational prominence and force as it could resonate "across significant cultural and experiential barriers" between the global North and South, as well as politically partisan ones within countries (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p.183). The CEDAW made no explicit mention of violence against women when it was ratified in the 1980s, and so human rights frames were first truly utilized at the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, and the issue of violence against women received special prominence at the 1995 World Conference in Beijing where Hilary Clinton made the famous declaration that "women's rights are human rights." Japan was particularly susceptible to influence on this issue due to the rising awareness and criticism at the time of the use of comfort women in World War II. By the time the issue reached the public agenda in Japan in the early 2000s, although the newly upgraded GEB was still in its infancy then, DV clearly fell under matters of gender equality, and due to the wide range of administrative issues involved for successful implementation it was put under the purview of the Cabinet Office. Thus, this external international momentum coupled with the investigation and reports by the Special Committee helped the GEB gain legitimacy as an actor in this policy debate and reinforced the demands of the women's movement. Moreover, as Kamata (2018) noted, the coalition of DV organizations also asserted their own level of expertise as representatives of the women's movement qualified to speak on these issues (p.9). In the end, this combination of factors allowed the GEB, and the Special Committee under the purview of the Council, to act as an Insider agency by successfully adopting the frames of the movement actors. Their actions led to Dual Response by involving the actors in

the activities of the Special Committee and in public commentary and helping get movement demands reflected in the state response.

In 2013, the DV law was revised once again, primarily by expanding the definition of DV to include violence by a partner, meaning a boyfriend or girlfriend, who shares the same living space with the victim and allowing such victims to file a petition for a protection order. It was also at this time that "and the protection of victims" was added to the name of the law to reflect the change. This issue had long been acknowledged as a problem among DV experts and the Third Basic Plan advised further revision of the DV law. Yet, revision in 2013 primarily came about as a response to media coverage of high profile murders of DV victims (Gilhooly, 2016). Even so, by 2011, the Special Committee was chaired by Miyoko Tsujimura, the legal scholar on the Council who specialized in gender and law, and she continued drawing attention to the issue of violence among dating partners in Council meetings as well as within the Special Committee—utilizing surveys conducted by the Cabinet Office which highlighted the growing concern of "date DV" and instances of domestic violence among young people. At the end of 2012, at the final meeting before publishing a report on sex crimes, the Special Committee also held discussions on the enforcement of the DV law and highlighted the fact that DV was not confined to spouses, and a special presenter at the meeting from Ochanomizu University concurred that the best way to deal with this issue would be to expand the protection order of the DV law (Gender Equality Bureau, 2012a). Finally, in June of 2013, one month before the revised law was passed, a MOJ official visited the Special Committee meeting to report on the new revisions of the law and accept questions from the committee—acknowledging that expansion of the definition of DV had been discussed since the initial law was passed in 2001, but revisions had been delayed due to concerns over how to legally define "dating." In this meeting, Tsujimura asked precise legal questions regarding the legal intent of the law, considerations of cohabitation for determining the definition of dating, and the possibility of the need to revise the preamble of the law to expand it beyond spouses (Gender Equality Bureau, 2013). All of this would later be reflected in the revised law. Since then, the committee has focused on enlightenment activities and improvements to the existing system. Thus, in this circumstance, while the Special Committee within the Council adopted the previous demands of the women's movement and advocated for them in this meeting, serving as an Insider agency, they were not able to bring in direct participation of women's movement actors beyond a few members of the Special Committee, which would classify the state response as Preemption.

1.2 Penal Code Amendment Pertaining to Sexual Offenses

In 2017, the Ministry of Justice amended the Penal Code regarding sexual offenses so that the crime of rape was de-gendered to include males as well as other sexual acts, the term "rape" was changed to "forced sexual intercourse," the minimum penalty for imprisonment was raised from three years to five, a new crime was established involving forced intercourse by a guardian or person in position of power, and sexual offenses were made a crime prosecutable without the victim filing a complaint (Kitagawa, 2018). While these changes finally occurred in 2017, they had, in fact, been several years in the making. The Third Basic Plan included language suggesting the need to revise sexual crime laws, as they were "not sufficient for the relief of damage" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2010b). In April and November 2012, the Special Committee, led by Tsujimura, interviewed various officials, including the MOJ, regarding the need to revise the Penal Code given concerns over violations of women's human rights. In July of that year, they published a report titled "Challenges and Countermeasures to Eradicate Violence Against Women" that addressed the need to raise the statutory minimum penalty, allow for prosecution without a formal complaint, raise the minimum age of consent, remove the "with assault or intimidation" requirement for sexual offenses, clarify the inclusion of spousal rape, review crimes committed by those in leadership positions/responsible for protection, and amend the language to make it gender neutral (Gender Equality Bureau, 2012b). The MOJ organized two study groups in 2014 and 2015 in order to investigate changes in the Penal Code; their progress was tracked by the Special Committee, who noted that the study groups took up the issues that the Special Committee report had presented. Public opinion on the formation of the Fourth Basic Plan showed support for revision of the criminal code, though it did not seek input on each of the specific changes the way it had done for the DV law. Moreover, as the MOJ committee was responsible for the draft changes, they held public hearings to solicit opinions from experts in civil society and women's movement actors involved in the issue, but the GEB or Special Committee did not. Yet, in October of 2015, the Special Committee once again met with MOJ officials to discuss the tentative outcomes of the study group and their reasoning. While some of the issues were incorporated into the draft legislation, others were not, and Tsujimura specifically questioned the MOJ on those issues—namely age of consent, spousal rape, and the statute of limitations. Furthermore, she pointed out the framing issues of Chapter 22 of the Penal Code, which frames issues of sexual crimes in terms of social

interests and public indecency rather than an understanding of individual rights and sexual freedom (Gender Equality Bureau, 2015c). At a final meeting in December 2016, before the amended law was passed, the MOJ once again met with the Special Committee to discuss the partial revisions. Tsujimura brought up the length of time it took between the Special Committee publishing the report in 2012, the inclusion of measures in the Third Basic Plan, and the issues that were excluded in the draft plan (such as raising the age of consent and removing "assault and intimidation" requirements from the definition of a sexual crime) and indicated her intention to continue studying them within the Special Committee (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016e).

Therefore, like the DV law, the amendment of the Penal Code took place within a policy system that had been opened to greater influence by the women's movement due to its connection with issues of gender equality and a lack of other dominating interests. Yet, unlike the DV law, the Penal Code revision took a significant amount of time as there was less momentum from civil or international society and no high-profile media case to instigate change—as although the #MeToo movement took off in 2017 and the high-profile rape case of Shiori Ito was also announced at a news conference in 2017, these external influences occurred after the MOJ had organized a deliberative council to amend the law. In this instance, the persistence of the Special Committee in bringing attention to the issue helped keep it on the agenda of the state. This could change in the future, as the Penal Code amendment is once again legally up for review in 2020, and it now occurs in the shadow of the #MeToo movement and international criticism of Japan's outdated rape laws after Ito's story gained prominence in international media—and especially as she won her landmark civil case, which is expected to influence the outcome of future Penal Code revisions (Aizawa, 2019). However, in this policy debate, because the jurisdiction was not under the GEB specifically, they were not able to more actively bring participation by the women's movement into the process beyond the few members of the Special Committee—instead the MOJ interviewed members of civil society and experts from the women's movement (from organizations like rape crisis centers and other crisis networks) through their own deliberative council. Thus, while the Special Committee tried to gender the issue in accordance with women's movement ideas of gender equality and individual rights, while also pressing for other changes that had also been among the demands, and although these were published by the GEB, the fact that only some of these issues were taken up in the debate and the framing was not changed categorizes the WPAs as more Marginal rather than Insider in this instance. Similarly, while the state included some representation through considering the views of the

Special Committee as well as the opinion of experts interviewed by the deliberative council, it did not fully adopt all the policy content and frames. So, the response is best categorized as closer to Co-Optation rather than full Dual Response.

1.3 Act on the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field

In May of 2018, the Diet passed the Act on the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field (2018), which called upon political parties to "endeavor to formulate necessary policies for the promotion of gender equality in the political field" and directed the state to "conduct research" as well as "take measures necessary for the promotion of gender equality in the political field, such as legislative or financial measures" when it was deemed "necessary." The bill was passed thanks to the efforts of women's movement actors and their partnership with a bipartisan parliamentary group that was established in 2015 to promote women's engagement and participation in politics. The GEB's efforts to promote political participation among women have primarily included: general statements in basic plans that advocate positive actions for increasing women's participation, requests to political parties to outline their activities regarding the promotion of women, and commissioning study reports. On their website, they state that their goal is to "conduct research and information gathering, and provide information, and encourage and collaborate with related organizations" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2016f). Yet, unlike other study groups that report to the Council, the GEB has only commissioned external third-party reports made in conjunction with academic researchers, and the contents of the reports have always been careful to note that the opinions reflect those of the study group and not the opinions of the Cabinet Office (Tsujimura et al., 2009).[15] This reflects a general concern expressed in an interview with GEB officials about the bureaucracy being necessarily separated from matters of politics, which officials described as a result of Japan's interpretation of the Montesquieu view of government in which the main branches are separate (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). This view persists despite the earlier administrative reforms, which were meant to allow the Cabinet greater influence over the ministries and the Diet. The two earliest reports, which were chaired by Miyoko Tsujimura, who was not yet on the Council, investigated the situation of gender equality in the politics of eight foreign countries.[16] These were some of the first official attempts, even academically, to investigate the political situation for women

[15] The two private secretariats for these reports were: Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting (2008) and NTT Data Management Laboratories (2009)

[16] Germany, France, South Korea, Philippines, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, and USA

outside of Japan, and the studies initially began with Tsujimura's research into gender quotas when she was a professor at Tohoku University in 2003. The reports found that in these other countries gender equality in politics was possible through efforts such as "active development and reform of the legal system," but they suggested other types of reforms such as voluntary quotas, political party subsidies for female candidates, and the use of an alternating roster system for PR candidate lists due to suspicions of constitutional violation for legally mandated quotas (Tsujimura et al., 2008). Yet, such studies were not conducted again until 2015, though at this time the GEB-commissioned document did not include the participation of academics, thus the tepid and milquetoast conclusions offered did not involve any concrete analysis or policy objectives (Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Risk Management Co. Ltd., 2015). However, Tsujimura has been pushing for the need to expand and improve women's participation in politics and emphasize parity and equal participation since she joined the Council in 2011, regularly submitting documents published by the International Parliamentary Union to highlight Japan's low rank—thereby trying to introduce some amount of international pressure into the policy subsystem. Moreover, wording such as efforts to "introduce effective positive actions in political parties" was included in the Fourth Basic Plan (Gender Equality Bureau, 2015a). Yet, during the debate in the Diet regarding the bill, there was no obvious effort or involvement of the WPAs in terms of support—as there was no specialized internal study group to help advocate for the issue from within the GEB or Council. Instead, the bipartisan parliamentary group that initiated the legislation was aided through the help of one of their academic advisors, Mari Miura, who originally researched the possibility of a legal quota system, but constitutional and political will concerns forced them to reconsider and go with voluntary quotas for parity on candidate lists—as emphasized previously by Tsujimura (Kotake, 2019). While the GEB has since continued to commission studies in 2019 and 2020 on the improvement of women's participation in politics, now chaired by professor Miura, these reports continue to assert the fact that the views expressed by committee members are individual views and not that of the Cabinet Office.

Therefore, in this instance, despite the fact that certain individuals within the WPAs were pushing for policies and framing that aligned with the women's movement, the GEB and Council's deliberate distance from the debate itself means that they did not aim to gender or participate in the debate at all, which categorizes them as a Symbolic agency. However, because the policy debate in the Diet included the participation of academics and women's movement actors, and they were able to pass a bill that aligned with their current demands, the policy outcome could be described as Dual Response. Yet, as McBride and Mazur (2010)

note, while this is an instance of success for the women's movement, it does not qualify as an instance of successful State Feminism.

1.4 Act on Promotion of Active Participation in Women's Professional Life

In September of 2015, the Diet passed the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (2015) (hereafter "Women's Active Promotion Act"), with the new law obliging local governments and businesses with more than 300 employees to form their own actions plans for the promotion of women within their firms so that "the personality and ability of a woman who wants to pursue a professional life can be sufficiently demonstrated." The plans were to include data collection and analysis of rates of female employees hired, gender gaps in years of employment, working hours, and rates of female managers; they also had to include concrete objectives and measures to improve the situation. It is important to note that while the Women's Active Promotion Act was passed in the Abe administration, the ideas in the law predate this time. As previously mentioned, the idea of targets for women in leadership positions came from the declarations of international UN conferences in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 2004 Koizumi administration, a MHLW official in a Council meeting outlined a policy that would oblige all local governments and employers with 300 people or more to create their own plans outlining measures for supporting the upbringing of the next generation (Gender Equality Bureau, 2004b). As early as 2009, in a special committee working group on women's active promotion under the Council that included members such as Tsujimura and Kashima, the committee proposed efforts such as disclosing company names with higher ratios of female board members and making lists (Gender Equality Bureau, 2009b). Additionally, the idea of "visualization" in which companies must disclose their activities regarding the recruitment and appointment of women, as well as detail future efforts to improve, was included in the 2012 DPJ policy document "Operation Working Nadeshiko," and such efforts were promoted within a working group on positive action in that year (Gender Equality Bureau, 2012c). It is also notable that when the DPJ was in power in 2010, they were scolded by the UN CEDAW Committee for the lack of Japanese women in leadership positions, hence the government responded by pledging to take more positive actions to promote women (Kano, 2018, p.4) These ideas were reflected again in Council meetings in 2014, where members encouraged greater efforts to promote women and evaluate progress; yet, they were also supported by the business representatives on the Council who promoted voluntary plans that took into account the specific situations of

businesses as well as smaller grants awarded to corporations for compliance (Gender Equality Bureau, 2014a).

Yet, the Council did not have a specific working group dedicated to studying and gathering expert opinions on the 2015 bill since the jurisdiction was under the MHLW, who used their own deliberative council composed of academic, business, and labor union representatives—among whom only one academic, Emiko Takeishi, had any research specialization in gender and women's labor (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, 2013). At a Council meeting in October 2014, a discussion was held on the draft bill and committee members made comments regarding the lack of consideration for issues of discriminatory bias and the moral hazard of promoting women to symbolic leadership positions without any substance (Gender Equality Bureau, 2014b). While the GEB invited public opinion on the Cabinet Office ordinance related to employer action plans, the contents of the bill were decided within the MHLW deliberative council. Women's movement organizations, which again were not included in the deliberations, noted their lack of satisfaction with the law. Groups like Japan Women's Watch (JAWW) noted in their Beijing +25 report issues like the persistence of placing women into the secretarial track upon hiring, a lack of disclosure on wages to highlight the gender wage gap, no addressing of the issue of sexual harassment, and a disagreement with the framing that continued to utilize women as economic resources rather than emphasizing equality and human rights (JAWW, 2019). A phrase regarding the importance of respecting human rights was only added to the bill during Diet deliberations, as opposition parties requested its inclusion (Takeda, 2018, p.63). Although the law was amended again in 2019 (with a MHLW deliberative council in which over half of the participants were repeat individuals or organizations from the original one) in order to address issues such as sexual harassment in the workplace and expanding the target of the law to include companies with over 100 employees, other groups in the women's movement, such as the labor union Zenroren, protested the passage of the revised law because it still failed to define sexual harassment as a violation of human rights and included no specific punitive actions (Zenroren, 2019). Although the Special Committee on Violence Against Women, which was still chaired by Tsujimura at the time (she is no longer on the Special Committee as of this year), published a report on sexual harassment in 2019 that defined it as a violation of human rights and called for legal clarification as well as expansion of the issue, these ideas have yet to find their way into policy.

Thus, in this instance, the policy subsystem, dominated by labor and business interests, was much more difficult for the women's movement to access and greater pressure from the

Special Committee within the Council regarding sexual harassment did not come until just before the second revision. For policies under the jurisdiction of the MHLW, which has had a longer history of dealing with women's labor issues, the ability of the GEB to influence the debate is significantly weaker in this area than in issues of violence against women—mainly due to the structural and vertical divisions of the bureaucracy. The Council, although they were invited by MHLW officials to make comments prior to the passage of the law, also did not apply sufficient pressure regarding the demands of the women's movement to address the framing issues of the law, which was not sufficiently gendered to consider ideas of human rights and instead focused on issues such as bias and moral hazard when promoting women in business. As a result, the incompatibility of framing defines the WPAs as Anti-Movement in this instance, although the input from the Special Committee helped them move to a Marginal position for the second revision. The lack of inclusion of women's movement actors and their framing in the subsystem leads to a classification of No Response from the state, while the second instance moves closer to Preemption for the inclusion of sexual harassment in the revision, but the lack of a human rights frame and participation of women's movement actors prevents the incidence of Dual Response.

1.5 Implications

The variety of WPA categorizations and state responses across the four policy debates since 2001 indicate that Japan is not so deviant in this aspect from the range of policy outcomes in RNGS cases. While Japan seems to have less success overall with measures of gender equality, this deeper look shows that it does not repeat the same pattern of the movement-agency nexus across all debates. Like other WPAs in the RNGS countries, Japan did not have many instances of an Insider agency, though it did have success in one policy area of violence against women, which demonstrates the conclusions of McBride and Mazur (2010) that "the power and capacity of agencies remains circumscribed and mixed" (p.252). Moreover, what these cases also show is the importance of "critical acts" that the State Feminism literature also found to be keys to success in certain policy debates—as they helped to link descriptive and substantial representation. The efforts and feminist activism of Miyoko Tsujimura cannot be understated when looking at policy debates related to gender equality in Japan. She has been able to leverage her position in the Council as well as the chairman of the Special Committee on Violence Against Women to apply greater pressure and influence within the state to consider the demands of the women's movement. Yet, a

uniqueness of the Japan case that was not addressed by the RNGS studies is the continued importance of indirect international pressure. In numerous policy studies released by the special committees under the Council and those commissioned by the GEB, references to the practices of other countries occur frequently in issues of political representation, harassment, DV and abuser rehabilitation, and affirmative or positive action, and these are utilized in order to help domestic actors frame their interests in terms of gender equality and grant them greater legitimacy. Indeed, women's groups, backed by parallel urging from members of the Council, are still using treaties like the CEDAW to pressure the state to make small changes in the Penal Code, such as the recent victory which reduced the waiting time for remarriage of divorced women from six months to 100 days (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). They also still press for reforms on selective surnames for marriage, and the recent policy to allow maiden names on public licenses represents a small victory in this area. However, Kano (2011) notes that compared to the 1990s, the momentum provided by the international-domestic confluence has waned (p.57). While some may point to the backlash experienced within Japan after the passage of the Basic Law as a source of the slowdown of progress since the early 2000s, the mixed success of State Feminism in policy debates since then suggests delayed overall progress is a result of a confluence of factors—some may be political or structural, while others are more contextual. Thus, on the policy level, Japan exhibits traits that are consistent with the conclusions of State Feminism literature, which state that the effectiveness and impact of WPAs varies based on the policy arena in question.

Moreover, even in the policy area where Japan has had the least success in terms of State Feminism, economic participation, this specific area of policy (coded as "job training" in the RNGS cases) had the lowest rates of success in the State Feminism literature as well, due to the high level of policy sectoralization of this arena in which a "specific lineup of state-and-society-based actors mobilize around" these issues and dominate the subsystem (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.222). Earlier studies by Mazur also found that, similar to Japan, areas of job training tend to be more rigidly structured; dominated by interests of the state, labor, and business; and generally more closed to women's groups. One case showed that, even in a more gender-equal society such as Canada, women's movement actors who were highly institutionalized were unable to achieve success there in a job training debate due to a confluence of factors that could also easily describe the situation in Japan: a closed arena dominated by business interests and a right-wing government (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.234). Thus, similar to other RNGS cases, subsystem dynamics in Japan can also influence the success or failure of State Feminism.

Considering these factors, why then has Japan and its national gender machinery fallen so far behind other countries on measures of gender equality? This more detailed picture shows that there are certain powers and weaknesses of the GEB, as well as greater institutional factors, that previous literature has overlooked. While the GEB has been more successful regarding issues of violence against women, as indicated by their relatively better status on indices that measure progress on legislation regarding violence against women, the two areas where the GEB and national machinery in general have had less success in bringing the women's movement and their frames into the debates are the two areas where Japan scores poorly on the Gender Gap Index—in political and economic representation. On issues of DV and sexual crimes, the women's movement, along with the assistance of the Diet and the Special Committee within the Council, have been able to achieve gradual progress in amending the laws to become more in line with their demands. Their success is thanks to the inclusion and efforts of a collaboration of women's movement actors and organizations as well as the individual "critical acts" of female Diet members and state insiders like Tsujimura, whose legal background has been invaluable in suggesting legal changes through reports and making cogent arguments to bureaucratic officials so as to apply pressure from within. In these instances, the state has allowed more influence from the perspectives and experiences of civil society, in conjunction with the expertise of academics, rather than trying to co-opt them for state-led purposes, and the issue has been framed as one of human rights and equality since the beginning. This was also thanks to strong momentum and clear framing from the transnational feminist movement focus on violence against women upon which domestic actors could capitalize—using the outside pressure to their advantage. Moreover, as noted by an MOJ official in documents from a Special Committee meeting in 2006, enforcement is more effective (though not perfect) as this policy area falls within "a special system under the current legal system of Japan that proactively limits individual freedom of action with punishment" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006a). On the other hand, a lack of budget given to combat violence and issues of coordination inhibit effective implementation, and current potential policies over the compulsory rehabilitation of perpetrators, a demand of the women's movement, has run into the recurrent issue of a legal inability to compel or punish certain behaviors. Yet overall, in this policy arena, the limiting influences of an unfriendly and weak legal system and co-optation within the state-civil society relationship have had less of an effect, and the typical partnership between the state, politicians, and civil society that Weathers (2005) described as particularly effective has been able to take shape (p.85).

However, is the legal system and the state's co-optation of a weaker feminist movement with limited policy subsystem access the only explanatory factors for Japan's lack of progress in the remaining issues—namely political and economic representation? In the political arena, RNGS cases showed more WPA success in this area because: the women's movement was more easily able to frame the debate in terms of fairness and representation, women's movement actors were included in the process, there has been a higher incidence of such debates overall, and there has been success among quasi-agencies within political parties (McBride and Mazur, 2010). Despite the increasing international focus on substantive and descriptive representation for women in politics and efforts by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to highlight the issue, there is no clear campaign within the transnational feminist movement, and in Japan the WPAs have specifically removed themselves from political debates, which limits subsystem access, even though it remains under their purview as a "main policy" and issues of political representation receive treatment in the Basic Plan—with the state empowered to make necessary legislative and policy changes. Instead, as they did in the 1990s, the fewer women's movement actors who pushed for the 2018 bill went around the bureaucracy and found sympathetic allies among female Diet members. Unlike RNGS countries, thus far the current bill on voluntary quotas has been the only political representation debate held in the Diet. This is despite periods in the past that saw an increase of women in politics, such as the "Madonna Boom" in the late 1980s and early 1990s or the prevalence of women among "Koizumi's Children" who won office in the early 2000s—as these periods were short lived, many of the women were not subsequently reelected, and these gains did not translate into policy outcomes. It is also despite the victory made by the left-leaning DPJ in 2009, who emphasized greater participation but actually did very little to promote more women in politics and decision making (Noble, 2019, p.242). Yet, overall, political will, especially LDP dominance, also plays a big role here—as any Diet bill must be acceptable to the majority LDP representatives who also field the lowest percentages of female candidates among the political parties (Steel, 2019b, p.13). Additionally, with the candidate selection process in Japan being so opaque and the domination by male incumbents, it is difficult to compel political parties to front more female candidates and it also reduces the potential of quasi-agencies that are party based. Although the GEB has requested reports from political parties about their efforts for parity, these efforts are voluntary and lack either carrots or sticks beyond the weak language of the current law. Moreover, issues of how to arrange PR lists for elections are also a potential debate topic, but any such bill must also

receive LDP approval. Hence, political will represents a significant barrier for political representation in Japan.

The lack of more explicit support from the WPAs, outside of blanket statements that support greater participation of women in politics and the GEB's creation of an online political participation visualization map in 2013, can be seen as an unfortunate byproduct of the perceived need for a division between the state and politics that was expressed by GEB bureaucrats. In recent Council minutes, there was also indication of a growing struggle to link other issues that limit women's political participation, such as the harassment experienced by female lawmakers as well as the monetary and work-life balance issues that Japanese women must overcome in order to run for office (Gender Equality Bureau, 2019a). Thus, the limitations of other policy areas, such as the lack of strong enforcement against sexual harassment (again a legal system issue) and economic issues also compound the lack of success of women in politics. Yet, internal pressure on the Council has still primarily come from Tsujimura, who has carried the torch for women's representation in politics by regularly submitting relevant documents to highlight the problem. Although she has the support of a few other Council members, she cannot be expected to succeed alone. Of course, there still remains the legal system and constitutional issues over legal quotas, which would certainly increase women's representation, and this plays a major role in the lack of progress as well. Therefore, other structural factors considered in Chapter 2 also have an influence on the outcomes in this particular policy arena of political representation.

On the other hand, what are the particular issues with debates over economic representation? If other RNGS WPAs have also struggled in this area, why are Japan's outcomes so poor when looking at rankings on the Gender Gap Index? To answer this final question, one must combine insights of State Feminism with existing literature on this policy area in Japan—namely understanding the overall policy environment styled "Womenomics" that has been prevalent in Japan since 2013.

Section 2: "Womenomics" Policies

2.1 Policies and Frames of "Womenomics"

In 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced in a speech to the UN General Assembly his intention to "create a society where women shine" and invoked the term "Womenomics," first used by Goldman Sachs executive Kathy Matsui in a 1999 report about how women could contribute to Japan's economic growth. Since this initial announcement,

conspicuously presented first to the international community rather than a domestic audience of Japanese women, feminist critique of the policy package has grown. The ideas enshrined in "Womenomics" are by no means uniquely credited to Abe, for as early as 1992 a policy document titled "Everyday Life Plan" advocated for "women's active social participation," although it defined the phrase as "a diverse society open to women" and "the promotion of gender equality (*danjo byōdō*) in employment and the workplace" (Takeda, 2019, p.180). This was reinforced by the 2012 DPJ policy document "Operation Working Nadeshiko," which also focused on the economic contributions of women. Nonetheless, the terms "Womenomics," "a society where women shine," and "active participation" have taken on a new popularity and vigor within the Abe administration, along with an intensity of focus on 30% targets in leadership positions. While this newfound focus could seem to be a positive development, given Abe's past as a leader of the backlash against gender equality efforts in the early 2000s, many feminists looked at such policy developments with suspicion. McBride and Mazur (2010) also warned that national machinery for gender equality could be utilized by political leaders "for their own purposes or as a way of co-opting women in politics to follow party goals" (p.116). Indeed, several academics have pointed out the blatant use of "Womenomics" as a tactic to invoke the ideas of feminism to achieve goals unrelated to gender equality—namely bolstering Japan's international image and mobilizing women to help reinvigorate Japan's sluggish economic growth since the 1990s (Coleman, 2019, p.198). In particular, the use of the phrase "women's empowerment" when referring to the ideas of "Womenomics" is misleading, as the emphasis here is on women in the labor market rather than women's individual rights and well-being.

Moreover, criticisms also highlight the shortcomings of policy tools prescribed by "Womenomics" that run counter to objectives to promote gender equality. The most common critique of "Womenomics" is that Abe disconnects policy tools from policy aims, trying to "promote" women but ignoring the structural problems with deregulation, the labor market, and work culture that he seems less keen to alter. Moreover, Takeda (2018) points out that, as evidenced by the change in the national machinery Headquarters and the creation of a "Group of Male Leaders Who Will Create a Society in Which Women Shine," policies are not merely tone deaf, but Abe removes expert knowledge from the policy formation process and places policy machineries more directly under his control—with the result that policies are incongruous with the lived realities of everyday Japanese women (p.61). Instead, perhaps intentionally, the policies of "Womenomics," which were re-packaged from previous administrations as stated before, focus on superficial fixes that do not alter the status quo for

women in Japan, but they allow Abe to trumpet his efforts on the promotion of women to the international community as several of the initiatives in the policy package have been promoted previously by the UN (Hasunuma, 2015, pp.14-15). As a consequence, policy approaches in "Womenomics" are inadequate if the goal is to achieve gender equality.

For example, despite mention in the Fourth Basic Plan as well as urging by various women's groups, including the IWYLG who noted this oversight in their survey response, there have yet to be any dedicated policies for overhauling the tax and social systems, which presently structure women to be dependent on male breadwinners in the household, into gender-neutral and individual-based systems (Hasegawa, personal communication, March 30, 2020). Additionally, while work-style reforms and a move away from "men-oriented working styles" are also acknowledged in the Fourth Basic Plan, policies have yet to seriously suggests how this may be achieved beyond GEB campaigns to encourage men to take child care leave or learn to cook—a great oversight considering many of the 30% targets are difficult to achieve when women are pressured to quit work due to marriage, child birth, difficulties with work-life balance, and the fact that many college-educated women also leave their jobs due to dissatisfaction with being given "dead-end" roles and facing harassment and discrimination (Steel, 2019a, p.32). The Fourth Basic Plan and "Womenomics" policies also do not address other structural factors that hold back women's advancement in society, which Estevez-Abe (2013) points out include: the ability to outsource childcare and housework, which is typically not done in Japan, although there are valid concerns over the exploitation of lower-wage women for the benefit of elite women; use of birth control as a more reliable means of family planning (as opposed to condom usage, which is more prevalent in Japan but often relies on compliance by male partners and has a lower success rate in typical use for preventing pregnancy); and education systems in conjunction with flexible labor markets that allow women who can achieve advanced and professional degrees to more easily build a successful career, as promotion is based more on skills rather than length of service in lifetime employment (p.82). Finally, while the GEB and Council members have addressed the issue in the past, there is an increasing concern over the feminization of poverty in Japan, which is exacerbated by the policies of "Womenomics" that don't do much to alleviate the status of women who remain overly represented in part-time and contract work that lacks benefits and security (nor do they do much to address the consequences of deregulation that are also pulling more men into part-time and contract work). In 2016, 60% of female workers and 20% of male workers were in non-regular positions—with both percentages increasing over time (Steel, 2019a, p.37). Rather than trying to assist all women, "Womenomics" has

increased the bifurcation of elite women, who are the primary targets of "Womenomics" policies, and the remaining majority of women who do not benefit much from the policies (Dalton, 2017, p.95). This is also indicated in the Women's Active Promotion Act (2015), which was clearly geared for elite women, yet simply called on companies to promote more women and strive to prevent sexual harassment of them, rather than focus on more meaningful structural changes. Additionally, pulling more of these women into the workforce without substantial changes to the double burden of housework and care work that women still overwhelmingly bear in Japan does little to improve the livelihoods and well-being of women overall (Kano, 2018; Steel, 2019a). Thus, there are significant holes in "Womenomics" policies in terms of gender equality that have yet to be adequately addressed.

As a result, outcomes generally remain poor in terms of economic and social participation. According to the report *Women and Men in Japan 2020* by the GEB, since 2010, the growth of leadership positions for women in the corporate sector has only reached as high as 5 percentage points across all potential management positions. Additionally, the gender wage gap between ordinary workers (majority men) and part-time workers (majority women) has declined only 2.5% since 2001. Meanwhile, political representation also remains stubbornly low at 10% and 23% respectively for the lower and upper house, and even today only 17% of all academic researchers are women (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020b). This demonstrates that Japanese women still have a long way to go to achieve true gender equality.

What is more, while women's economic empowerment and independence are an important factor for gender equality as it can also assist women in other areas—for example in the ability to more easily escape an abusive partner, finance educational opportunities, help them start a business, help them run for office, and so on—none of these potential aims of women's empowerment are reflected in the narratives of "Womenomics." Rather than focusing on the ways that women's economic empowerment actually helps *them*, narratives of "active participation" treat women as resources to be exploited by the state for the purpose of economic growth while maintaining the rigid gender roles that expect women to bear the double burden of working for lower wages while also taking on the brunt of work in the home (Steel, 2019a; Dalton, 2017). Thus, many academics view the long-term policies that are still present in "Womenomics" as examples of symbolic policy making, by which the government responds to the demands for change by the women's movement, yet has no intention of dismantling the structural inequalities and divisions of labor that perpetuate their oppression (Gelb, 2003; Huen, 2007). In addition, this heavy emphasis on economics portends a potentially "dangerous liaison" between feminism and capitalism, a trend that

feminist scholar Nancy Fraser has warned is also happening in the West, as ideas of women's advancement are being subsumed into "ideological support for exploitative economic systems" (Fraser, 2013, as cited in Schieder, 2014, pp.54, 56). This highlights the issue of framing that was underscored in the conclusions of State Feminism, and thus this calls for a closer scrutiny of the framing approaches adopted by the national machinery bodies—in particular the GEB.

McBride and Mazur (2010) found that framing issues could become barriers to successful State Feminism if agencies are reluctant "to adopt frames that challenge long-standing gender arrangements," or support preferences by governing majorities that "take more moderate and less threatening positions" (p.247). One finds concerning trends within the frames used by the national machinery in Japan, which currently focus on the more innocuous "shining women" or "active participation," while Abe himself explicitly avoids overtures to "gender equality" and one almost never sees phrases related to "social justice." Indeed, a survey of the frequency of mentions of their "main policies" in GEB press releases, their PR magazine "Joint Participation," as well as Council meeting minutes show that the policy machinery, even prior to the Abe administration, spends more time focusing on agenda issues of "active participation," "women who shine," or "work-life balance" (which also includes mentions of child care or work-style reform) over other more gender equality-focused issues such as political representation, women's perspectives in disaster response, or reforming the attitudes of men ("gender equality for men"); the area that receives the most attention outside of economic concerns is violence against women (see Figure 4.1). Even in the Fourth Basic Plan, which is currently divided into three policy areas, the results of the survey show that phrases related to issues in policy area three of the Basic Plan, such as education in the media and disaster risk management, show up much less. In particular, remaining issues that have been more explicitly connected to gender equality, which this paper defines as mentions of gender equality campaigns, selective surnames, tax and social system reform, the wage gap and non-regular employment, and issues of inequality highlighted by the CEDAW treaty, collectively still do not match the level of frequency for discussion of economic issues and concerns (see Figure 4.1).

These results demonstrate the extent to which economic concerns overshadow the framing of issues related to gender equality in Japan, as generally these patterns follow a similar trend in both Council materials as well as GEB materials—with a notable exception that the GEB spends more time advocating for Japan's international cooperation than the Council, as becoming "recognized internationally for gender equality" is among the "most

Figure 4.1 Frequencies of Main Policy Mentions in PR and Meeting Materials

Main Policies	Press Releases (since 2013)	PR Magazine (since 2013)	PR Magazine (2008 - 2012)	Council Meetings (since 2013)	Council Meetings (2001 - 2012)
Active Participation	27%	25%	20%	24%	17%
Work Life Balance	11%	6%	18%	18%	11%
Women Who Shine	19%	16%	N/A	5%	N/A
Violence Against Women	14%	6%	13%	14%	9%
Women in Politics	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%
Disaster Risk Reduction	3%	8%	5%	3%	5%
Local Areas	N/A	5%	5%	4%	5%
Gender Equality for Men	1%	3%	3%	6%	7%
Gender Equality Issues	6%	7%	12%	8%	14%

Figure 4.2 Frequencies of Other Issue Mentions in PR and Meeting Materials

Other Issues	Press Releases (since 2013)	PR Magazine (since 2013)	PR Magazine (2008 - 2012)	Council Meetings (since 2013)	Council Meetings (2001 - 2012)
Women in Science/Academia	1%	5%	6%	6%	4%
International Cooperation	12%	11%	10%	2%	3%
Women's Health	N/A	1%	N/A	2%	2%
Poverty	N/A	1%	1%	2%	8%
Challenge Support	2%	2%	3%	N/A	4%
Positive Action	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%

important issues" for Japan in the Fourth Basic Plan (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020a, p.4) (see Figure 4.2). While Japan may hope for international recognition, this preoccupation with international image cannot paper over a concerning shift away from gender equality within the domestic sphere, where issues like political participation and changing discriminatory attitudes and practices of men receive less relative attention than concerns over Japan's economic growth. Even a survey of mentions of GEB activities in the newspaper *Asahi Shinbun* since 2001 until today (a total of 140 unique articles) shows that prior to 2010 issues

related to gender equality (10%) received more mentions than active participation (8%), but this has significantly shifted since 2010 with active participation (20%) now receiving more attention in the press than other issues related to gender equality (2%). While coverage of violence against women has remained the same (13%), generally most other mentions of GEB activities are related to speeches, personnel changes, and meetings with the prime minister. With this more limited role by traditional media in the creation (and coverage) of narratives of gender equality in Japan, the policy machinery themselves are primarily responsible for the framing of issues, and the GEB has shown a tendency to participate in the top-down creation of economic framing in their own materials. They also use this framing in measures of success. The most recent *Women and Men in Japan 2020* report shows numerous charts and measures for tracking changes in outcomes of gender equality across a broad range of sectors, such as female leadership, societal biases and attitudes, and housework hours done by men. However, in the very next section dedicated to "Progress and Achievements," the page begins with the phrase "Women's Empowerment is Critical to Abenomics," cites the increase in participation of women in the labor force, and draws a diagram showing how "active participation of women" leads to "economic growth"—all of which is under the heading "necessity of women's empowerment" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020b, p.19). Such wording further conflates notions of economic progress with women's empowerment and leaves out the phrase of gender equality all together.

Various actors have acknowledged that this framing strategy is problematic. In an interview with GEB officials, they explained that they do not view "active participation" as synonymous with "gender equality" but rather active participation is a means or process to achieve gender equality (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). Former Council member, Takashi Kashima, also acknowledged the confusion and explained such a distinction at a lecture given at the Ichikawa Fusae Center for Women and Governance in 2019 (Kashima, 2019). However, the need to make such a clarification in and of itself should highlight the problematic nature of the language, especially as it was not crafted in conjunction with women's movement actors but came purely from within the bureaucracy dominated by men who work for a male, non-feminist prime minister. McBride and Mazur (2010) emphasized the fact that "outside actors must be able to gain access to discourse in arenas where decisions are made to be able to take control of issue definition," yet so far in Japan this has been very difficult for the women's movement to achieve (p.262).

In fact, in responses to the survey sent to women's organizations, several gave critical comments about this framing issue—in particular the IWYLG noted that the idea of gender

equality does not appear to be shared under the current administration and thought it necessary to adopt "gender equality as the philosophy in policy making rather than joint participation" (Hasegawa, personal communication, March 30, 2020). Yet, it was not just the older established groups. A newer NPO, Hana Lab, which has a representative on the expert committee of the Liaison Conference, also responded that they "worry that gender equality will be described using the keyword 'promoting women's participation' instead of 'gender equality'" and hoped for a more human rights-based initiative (Fujimoto, personal communication, March 24, 2020). Moreover, in many responses from women's groups, they were more likely to use the phrase "ジェンダー平等" (literally "gender equality") when talking about the issue as opposed to the Japanese "男女共同参画" ("joint participation and planning"). Even the labor union RENGO on the Council uses the former katakana expression as the heading on their Japanese page talking about gender equality. When Seiko Noda, the more moderate LDP politician, was briefly minister for gender equality, she noted in a Council meeting that there are many societal issues that "do not fit into the single keyword of women's active participation" and encouraged members to think more about the meaning of "fairness" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2018). Thus, while many measures of gender equality receive treatment in GEB materials, there is a disconnect between the narratives of "Womenomics" and "active participation" and the associated phrases and goals of the women's movement—who are more concerned with ideas of gender equality and human rights. If framing is the "glue" in State Feminism, then the GEB has not yet managed to successfully connect their efforts to that of the women's movement when it comes to economic policy and issues of gender equality as a whole. The same could be said for the name of the GEB itself, which actually translates to "men and women joint participation" in English—with the Japanese phrase of "男女共同参画" being a term chosen by elite feminist academics to deter any protest from the conservative male leaders at the time of the GEB's founding, but unfortunately they did so without much civil society input.

While the GEB may feel pressured to comply with the slogans and framing decided by the Headquarters, this potential lack of independence as a WPA could be a problem from the perspective of State Feminism, because it means the framing of issues for gender equality are primarily decided top-down by the state and in line with the state's interests and not women's interests. Yet, an interview with GEB officials suggests they still possess some influence, as the new slogan for the Fifth Basic Plan will be decided within the special planning committee set up under the Council, with the final decision determined by the

Cabinet (Suzuki, personal communication, April 22, 2020). Thus, the GEB must consider how it participates in this framing process and how it engages with the women's movement when doing so.

2.2 Implications

In terms of policy, the GEB is naturally very limited by what it can do to change the situation in Japan. It cannot alter the legal system nor draft bills. Yet, the power of narrative and framing is still a process that the GEB can influence, and according to the State Feminism literature this power should not be overlooked for its ability to strengthen the voices of the women's movement and their push for social change. If the women's movement and WPAs in Japan hope to have success in the area of economic policy and the movement for gender equality as a whole, the current framing of the debate is unlikely to get them there, as it too easily conflates ideas of economic participation with equality and has yet to re-frame the debate in ways that are more in-line with women's movement demands—which would be more conducive to movement success. Frames of justice, equality, and human rights are important to many women's movement groups, and if the GEB cannot align themselves more with them through framing they cannot hope to create greater alliances that will support the necessary societal pressure from the bottom up to advocate for social change. While some women's groups see the GEB as an ally, others are less enthusiastic or more skeptical of GEB activities, and they do not always feel their voices or ideas are included. This could further weaken the GEB's impact and efficacy if it cannot shift its top-down orientation.

Yet, the lack of success in reframing debates in terms of equality is not necessarily for a lack of trying among certain insiders within the state—as Council members such as Tsujimura continue to advocate for issues that are important to women while also framing them in terms that align more with women's movement demands. However, it appears such individuals do not dominate the discussion, even in the Council, and other important issues of gender equality still remain in the minority of topics mentioned and discussed within the national machinery—with most of these issues being addressed by "awareness raising" by the GEB and promotion through the basic plans rather than advocacy for certain legislation. In fact, on their website the GEB states that "although gender equality has more or less been achieved in Japan as far as laws and legislations are concerned, women's participation in the policy and decision-making processes remains insufficient . . . We, each and every one of us, need to rethink our prejudiced notions of gender-based roles" (Gender Equality Bureau,

2016g). This is an over-simplistic view of the picture, as there are certainly other laws and legislation that would help advance gender equality, and certain legal reforms would assist enforcement and oversight. While awareness raising or changing consciousness is also important, it is by no means sufficient on its own, and according to State Feminism it must be accompanied by a proper framing of the issues so that policies may actually have the intended effects of reducing gender inequality rather than perpetuating indirect discrimination or gender biases. While there have been active efforts by Tsujimura and others to promote the need for parity in politics and the fact that violence against women or sexual harassment is a violation of human rights, an overall agency-movement alignment of framing is not yet happening in Japan in cases related to economic participation, and instead the state's framing has tended to dominate. This is especially important given the fact that other scholars have argued that there is "ambivalence within society regarding gender equality coming from the 'top-down'" and that ideas of gender equality expressed through "active participation" by the Abe administration are "misguided—indeed Japanese working women seem acutely aware of this" (Macnaughtan, 2015, as cited in Dalton, 2017, p.102). There are, of course, other structural and contextual issues at play, and these are not the GEB's fault and neither are they within their power to directly fix. Yet, from the perspective of State Feminism, these framing issues, which are more within the purview of GEB activities, are a problem that needs to be acknowledged and addressed in order for progress to advance.

Moreover, considering this issue of framing and policy orientation through the lens of new institutionalism could help illuminate a further reason for lack of progress. McBride and Mazur (2010) note, "in constant cause arguments, institutions can change or stay the same and these dynamics can be traced to the moment of establishment" (p.223). In the case of Japan, this marriage between gender equality and economic concerns has been present for quite some time, even prior to the GEB upgrade in 2001, and the struggle to break free from this narrative could find some explanation in theories of constant cause. Ideas similar to active participation have been with the national machinery almost from the start, as the 1992 "Everyday Life Plan" suggests, and concerns over the aging society and declining birthrate have propelled some of the momentum of the national policy machinery from the beginning as they were even enshrined in the Basic Law[17]—hence these overarching concerns have remained significant in the subsequent policy debates and frames that followed. While the

[17] The preamble states: "Further, in order to respond to the rapid changes occurring in Japan's socioeconomic situations, such as the trend toward fewer children, the aging of the population, and the maturation of domestic economic activities, it has become a matter of urgent importance to realize Gender Equal society" (Basic Act for Gender Equal Society, 1999).

women's movement was able to achieve many policy successes in the 1990s, and although there were other contextual factors such as political environment and international pressure that helped them do so, it remains the fact that on a policy level there seems to be a slowdown, or at least a lack of uptick, in overall momentum of actual gains for gender equality since the GEB was established within the state—contrary to the hopes and aims of State Feminism and the establishment of WPAs. Looking at issues of framing, a jaded conclusion could be that the national machinery in Japan has not been able to advance the cause of gender equality overall because the political leaders within the state did not intend it to. While the efforts and framing of the feminist academics who pushed for the Basic Law and GEB upgrade were well-intentioned and honorable, as they genuinely wanted to achieve gender equality and saw to the inclusion of human rights in their Vision for a Gender Equal Society (1996), subsuming the issue within the context of Japan's demographic crisis in order to get the Basic Law passed may have also hobbled the cause of true gender equality from the start.

This is further evidenced by the fact that while the women's movement was able to institutionalize via the GEB and Council (and the Liaison Conference to some extent), they did so at a time when Japan's bureaucratic system was becoming even more top-down and trying to grant more influence and authority to the Cabinet Office, which meant the women's movement opened themselves up even more to co-optation, allowing their participation but inhibiting their ability to promote their own narratives. This was clear from the beginning in the debate over the issue of "gender free." While the initial debate over this term in the early 2000s tried to touch upon notions of discrimination and equality, even this framing did not come from the women's movement as a whole. In fact, the term was spread by a few publicly-funded women's organizations (which meant they had close ties with the state) and elite female academics, who borrowed the phrase from a group of Japanese psychologists who actually misappropriated the term and its intended meaning from a Western feminist scholar (Yamaguchi, 2014, pp.547-548). Both the proliferation of the term and its discontinuation occurred top-down without input from most women's movement groups in civil society. Additionally, over time, in the basic plans as well as in legislation, understanding and emphasis of gender equality as a human rights and justice issue has gradually faded from prominence—instead, ideas of equality, especially under the Abe administration, have been replaced by official notions that gender equality means women's greater participation in the labor market. In the Fourth Basic Plan, among the four goals listed, the first aim is to create a society that is made vibrant and rich in diversity—notions of

human rights are listed second (Gender Equality Bureau, 2015a). While the GEB officials expressed their understanding that gender inequality was unjust, the bureau's activities and published materials suggest that they too have been co-opted by this greater political momentum to focus on active participation and how women can help Japan's economic growth and contribute to society (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020).

Indeed, other scholars have pointed out the uneasy alliance within the state between feminism and capitalism, noting that Hashimoto placed gender equality within the framework of structural reforms of social security, Koizumi appropriated ideas of gender equality to suit his more neoliberal reforms, and now Abe has used the notion to bolster Japan's international image and help economic growth—and possibly use female support to help him amend the constitution (Hasunuma, 2015; Takeda, 2018). As previously mentioned, the result has been that many of the policies lack concrete measures for addressing gender inequality as well as other resources such as budget (Yamaguchi, 2018, p.79). This lack of budget was also a common remark in the survey of women's groups, as although the state gives grants to most prefectural and some local governments and coordinating bodies to promote women's active participation as part of the package for the Women's Active Promotion Act (2015), other areas of concern such as politics and violence against women struggle to get adequate funding to promote and improve their initiatives. Kano (2018) states it more bluntly that "rather than concern for gender equality, what is driving the policy-making is Japan's demographic crisis" (p.5). This is in contrast to social movements in other Western democracies where women's movements have been able to adopt a variety of framing techniques throughout different policy debates in order to gender them specifically with the goal of promoting equality, while also providing their own input based on grassroots experience and expertise (McBride and Mazur, 2010; Gelb, 2003). However, McBride and Mazur (2010) note that many of these WPAs in RNGS countries have yet to fully overturn the "gender-biased logic of appropriateness" in state institutions (p.236). What remains difficult in Japan, however, is not just the GEB's failure to overturn state and societal-wide gender bias, but that it has appeared to adopt this co-opted narrative of gender equality and actively promotes it—so that the state may continue to use these economic frames to serve their interests, and they make it much harder for women's groups to consolidate to challenge them. Additionally, when looking at the larger narratives of the debate regarding gender equality in Japan since 2001, what remains noticeably lacking are explicit references to power relations and the idea that men unjustifiably wield more of it in Japanese society (and in the government) at the expense of the well-being and rights of women. While radical

feminists such as Chizuko Ueno have addressed these issues, this particular debate remains something the state and GEB have yet to truly engage with. Thus, from the perspective of State Feminism, this is a problem because a state-based logic that uses ideas of gender equality to promote what looks more and more like propaganda to cajole women into becoming working mothers and bearing children is theoretically disjointed from fundamental notions of feminism, which assert the need for agency and free will of women—who may choose to become mothers or not, choose to work or not in an environment that aligns with their needs and values, and whose empowerment is important for their own sakes as human beings and not just for the state.

However, one must not also make this same mistake when assessing the GEB overall and conflating their activities with "Womenomics" policies, although they dominate, with their activities in pursuit of State Feminism as a whole. Economic participation is but one policy arena, and while it certainly has important implications for the success of the women's movement and State Feminism, it is not synonymous with it. Previous literature of the GEB wrote it off as weak without looking more deeply at where and why—perhaps influenced by the relative ineffectiveness of the GEB in areas of political and economic activity that are highlighted by the Gender Gap Index. Yet, this overlooked the contributions that members of the Council and Special Committee within the machinery have made in the arena of violence against women, which is not explicitly measured in that report, and the indices that do attempt to measure this tend to be less referenced in general literature. Actually, this result bolsters the findings of other research into gender machineries by McBride and Mazur (2011), who found in the case of Thailand that "gender machineries can achieve high levels of success in areas of sexual violence policy, even in settings where more established gender norms prevail," helping to counter more pessimistic narratives about the utility of gender machineries as a whole (p.36). Previous literature has overlooked the extent to which the GEB and policy machinery has taken on violence against women as one of their key pillars and helped to advance progress in this policy arena, even when it lacked a consistent linkage with international or external pressures. Thus, while the women's movement has made use of international pressure to place certain issues on the agenda at the start, the subsequent strategy of women's groups connecting with each other and then connecting with Diet members and the state WPAs represents a potential new avenue for women's movement and State Feminism success in future policy debates.

Moreover, these results highlight the shifting nature of indirect international pressure for women's movement actors in Japan. While Kano (2011) lamented what she found to be

"few remaining signs of the confluence of domestic and international feminism that had pushed the state towards feminist policy-making in the 1990s," this general declaration overlooks the nuances that international pressure continues to play in each policy arena (p.57). Women's organizations, individuals within the Council, and the GEB continue to make overtures to international norms and treaties to justify their policy demands—especially with regards to issues like discrimination and harassment in the workplace and political representation. They continue to use the required reports to the CEDAW commission and Beijing anniversaries to hold the state accountable for gender policies. Yet, political and economic issues have also never enjoyed the same level of coordinated transnational feminist momentum that violence against women benefited from, which helps explain why it was a policy arena that enjoyed a certain successful confluence of domestic and international pressure in Japan, although moving forward the medium and tactics for utilizing that pressure is shifting. The international conferences in the 1970s to 1990s that galvanized the transnational feminist movement, and to some extent the feminist movement in Japan, characterized the second wave of feminism and significantly helped strengthen policies related to violence against women, but in this era of the fourth wave these conferences no longer play the predominant networking role they once did (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p.184). What #MeToo has demonstrated is the rise of the Internet and social media in helping women's movement groups network with each other, as they no longer need to wait for conferences to connect and coordinate on issues. This carries lessons for the women's movement in Japan as they look toward the future. The #KuToo campaign in Japan, a grassroots-based effort, has actually seen some policy success, as large corporations such as ANA and Japan Airlines have recently announced that they will no longer require their female staff to wear high heels (Kyodo News, 2020). Clearly, technology has an important role to play in social movements of the future, yet a brief examination of the websites of several existing women's organizations as well as a 2019 OECD report on digital skills in Japan demonstrates that while the younger generation has better digital literacy, older generations, who form the bulk of membership in women's organizations, lack exposure to technology education in the workplace and display less digital sophistication that would actually aid them in taking advantage of the pressure provided by transnational feminist networks in the digital sphere (OECD, 2019). Thus, while international pressure remains an important resource for the women's movement in Japan, it is not a monolithic goldmine from which one can indiscriminately extract successful alliances—both the medium and policy in question must be taken into strategic consideration.

Therefore, State Feminism and its insistence on looking more closely at the various policy arenas has revealed a more nuanced and fairer assessment of GEB activities given its abilities and actions regarding the things over which it has influence while acknowledging the larger structural and contextual factors it cannot control—and which also remain common amongst WPAs in other Western democracies. Each part of this assessment, involving structural and contextual factors (including the legal system), the state-civil society relationship, international influence, and GEB/WPA activities and frames in certain policy areas contributes to understanding how this factor has impeded or promoted success for gender equality in their own way in Japan. This closer look demonstrates those few instances where the GEB has been able to contribute to examples of successful State Feminism—which illuminates where and why it is likely the GEB can have impact and move the cause of gender equality forward in Japan.

CONCLUSION

The national machinery for gender equality in Japan has been making efforts toward the realization of a gender equal society since as early as 1975 with the UN International Women's Year. Filling in the gaps in existing literature that focused on the early days of the GEB and its structural deficiencies, an assessment of the modern GEB and other national machinery bodies, especially under the Abe administration, shows that while it is not the strongest in terms of structure, as it lacks policy-making capacity and robust resources, this is not unusual for WPAs in other post-industrial democracies, and hence this does not really explain the deviance of the Japan case and its poor outcomes for gender equality. Moreover, as the State Feminism theory claims, this does not carry broad implications for the national machinery as a whole as Japan's WPAs have been able to demonstrate successful State Feminism in the policy arena of violence against women—although it still struggles in political and economic representation as well as in other "hot button" issues like selective surnames or revision of the tax and social welfare system. Claims that the GEB is weak and needs more structural or institutional strength are not incorrect, although this would help any policy agency anywhere as McBride and Mazur (2010) emphasized that the arrival of WPAs on the political scene has been able to help the women's movement challenge ideas that produce gender inequality but no society has yet to be able to completely overturn them.

In Japan, gender equality struggles in part due to aspects of the legal system, and the women's movement would benefit from revisions in this system that would take into consideration issues of diversity and inclusion as well as different lived experiences when considering theoretical concepts of justice that underpin their legal institutions, and the state also needs to establish oversight mechanisms that would aid enforcement of legislation through stronger means. These are things that the women's movement and other social movements globally continue to push for, but they are particularly difficult issues that lie outside the purview of the national machinery in Japan to change, even though it affects their outcomes. Change would require society-wide momentum, but Japan, in particular, is still "grappling with the rise of the individual, new salience of the law in solving conflicts, emergence of horizontal networks of cooperation, and practice of post-national citizenship" and this creates "serious constraints . . . which are relatively absent from other democracies" (Chan-Tiberghien, 2004, p.6). On the other hand, bureaucratic dominance in the movement-agency nexus and the continued tendency of state co-optation of the women's movement is another factor that slows progress for gender equality in Japan and is something that the

national machinery bodies could aim to correct. Yet, so far there is little indication that the WPAs in Japan have endeavored to take this on as the evidence still points toward a top-down orientation. Thus, this suggests that despite the progress made in areas such as violence against women, the slow and piecemeal process of legislative revisions due to bureaucratic and current LDP control over the debate, as well as the other legal, structural, and contextual factors that affect areas of political and economic participation will keep Japan at the lower end of the Gender Gap Index for the time being, though perhaps they will see more success in future LoVI or WPS measurements.

In response to the difficulties of the policy machinery, Iwamoto (2007) called for an overhaul of Japan's bureaucratic structure to make it more participative and cooperative (p.32). While this kind of structural reorganization would certainly be helpful, it remains unlikely for the moment, and it also doesn't seek to understand what the GEB and other machinery bodies can do right now to try to improve their efficacy and impact. State Feminism shows us that access and framing are the two key issues that WPAs should consider, as these two factors alone define impact and efficacy. Indeed, when the GEB has been able to bring in more civil society actors and their frames through special deliberation committees or the Council, populating them with more feminist individuals with long-term service to the cause of gender equality, they have been able to make a difference—as the DV law revisions indicated. In fact, when the GEB has not been able to increase participation and influence of women's movement actors, their lack of successes is mirrored by the outcomes of WPAs in other countries that had a similar confluence of traits. For instance, McBride and Mazur (2011) found that in an assessment of WPAs in Sub-Saharan Africa, the study concluded that "to be effective gender machineries must build support in government and civil society and must not be controlled by top-down processes . . . to avoid state-level co-optation" (p.34). Moreover, in South Africa in particular, they found that the WPA was not successful due to "uneven engagement with women and women's organizations in civil society; programs are oriented toward getting women involved with gender projects and mobilization, which can increase their work burdens rather than promote rights . . . and equality between men and women" (McBride and Mazur, 2011, p.35). The centrality of the movement-agency nexus as suggested by the State Feminism literature is bolstered by the findings of the Japanese case. These are important lessons for the GEB in Japan to keep in mind as they move forward and consider who is meant to work for whom in the cause of gender equality in democracies.

When considering what the GEB can do to improve outcomes, one must remember this fact that the key for successful State Feminism lies in the movement-agency nexus and thus adopt a more social constructivist view that state-civil society relations can evolve and change. With this in mind, one must also consider the important influence of "critical acts" by individuals like Tsujimura and the long-term advocacy by Kashima, which suggests that the activity of selecting individuals for these Council positions has been a crucial activity at the moment for helping to expand the influence of the GEB and policy machinery and promote ideas of gender equality within the state. The State Feminism literature highlighted the importance of these critical acts and also acknowledged that representation can take place in various institutions within the state—although McBride and Mazur (2010) focused primarily on agencies and legislatures and concentrated their case studies on the acts of agency officials, female legislators, and ministers in government. The case of Japan does not fit into any of these specifications as the critical acts were done by academic or civil society-based experts, who were well regarded and appointed by the bureaucracy (though officially were political appointees by the prime minister)—but they were neither bureaucrats nor elected officials. While McBride and Mazur (2010) called for greater research into the barriers and potentials for WPA effectiveness as well as greater attention on the role of female legislators, the case of Japan represents another gap in the literature worthy of further consideration, as it may have implications for the structure and function of gender machinery in other developing nations where a robust or strongly institutionalized women's movement has yet to develop—although an autonomous women's movement is still considered an important part of the recipe for overall women's movement success (McBride and Mazur, 2011, p.31). Yet, until such a movement can develop, these academics and civil society experts represent a certain level of institutionalization of feminist ideas in the state that can be important for achieving policy gains. While institutional configurations like the special committees under the Council may not exist in all countries, the incorporation of these slightly less "official" but knowledgeable individuals could represent an important first step where a weaker women's movement as a whole may struggle for access or where the civil service is not open to the recruitment or appointment of feminist movement actors to WPAs.

Thus, as a strategy for further institutionalization, the GEB would do well to seek out more of such individuals in the future. However, mere descriptive representation is not enough. The key is not simply choosing "token" women or individuals who may also be inclined to represent other interests (such as business or labor), but like Tsujimura and Kashima, they should be individuals who have knowledge and experience in ideas of gender

theory and a history of advocating for gender equality unbound from other concerns such as profit or pro-natalism. While the RNGS definition of a women's movement actor was confined to only women, the case of Kashima, although he is certainly an outlier among Japanese men for his level of dedication and activism for the cause of gender equality, represents the importance of male allies in the state and shows that one cannot discount such contributions, especially in other nations where the state (and hence power over decision-making) is heavily dominated by men (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.169). This represents another area where the literature may expand to determine who can do critical acts on behalf of the women's movement. Moreover, for issues like politics and women's leadership in business, academia, STEM, and so on, the creation of long-term special deliberation committees to investigate these issues, like the Special Committee on Violence Against Women, may prove to be helpful. The best strategy would be for the GEB to aim to include these smaller networks of voices within the policy process, help women's movement actors increase their institutionalization, and allow them greater say in framing the narratives regarding gender equality in Japan. In addition, within their own publications and campaigns, the GEB would do well to begin moving away from the increasingly unpalatable ideas of "active participation" and "shining women" and move back to an emphasis on "fairness" (which was removed from the language in the Priority Policy in 2019), "equality," and "human rights." Such adjustments would be a useful start.

Of course, overcoming the "iron triangle" of the LDP-bureaucracy-business relationship that dominates policy debates related to labor and economics will not happen overnight, and navigating through an LDP monopoly on governance in political representation issues is also a formidable challenge. However, the alternative is to keep relying on a strategy that currently does not appear to be working very well. In other democracies, women's movement actors have been able to consolidate around certain policy issues to lobby for and articulate their demands. This also happened in the past in Japan when women went to the Diet to advocate for issues on things like child abuse, stalking, and the birth control pill, but the approach by the GEB thus far has perhaps been less successful because women's movement actors have less incentive to participate in the activities of the state if they believe they will be subject to co-optation, their voices will not be heard, or their efforts will lead nowhere. Small reforms that indicate greater opportunities for women to participate and have influence in the policy process could very well encourage more women's organizations to do so—allowing them to coalesce over policy debates as well as help them grow and strengthen—something the GEB official said they believed was important

(Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). In addition, as the debate over parity in politics and the DV law showed, even smaller symbolic victories where women's groups have been able to ally with the state and successfully frame their demands has the ability to create a knock-on effect, also indicated by Gelb (2003), of a greater demand and growing momentum for policy change—so that women's groups continue to lobby to put more issues up for debate or to amend and improve the current laws—as what happened with the DV law (p.13). Indeed, although the Women's Active Promotion Act (2015) was not necessarily in line with women's movement frames, it led to greater discussion about workplace harassment, issues of diversity management, and working conditions—which galvanized new studies like the one on sexual harassment produced by the Special Committee (Gender Equality Bureau, 2019b). Moreover, the Act on the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field (2018), while lacking enforcement mechanisms, led to greater scrutiny of political parties and their activities surrounding candidate selection and lists, and GEB-commissioned studies have highlighted the numerous remaining improvements, including subsidies and PR list rules, that could be lobbied for (Itakura, 2019).

In fact, in the area of political representation, the GEB has acknowledged greater pressure from the Council to address this issue, although officials indicated a hesitancy to "interfere" with groups and cross the boundary between politics and government (Takahashi, personal communication, Marsh 26, 2020). However, in reality the boundary has already been blurred by the inclusion of the goal of greater political representation in state documents like the Basic Plan and by posting the commissioned studies on the GEB website—language that separates the conclusions of the studies from the opinions of the Cabinet thus appear to be more symbolic or semantic rather than a profound separation from engagement with political issues (and, after all, the issue of gender equality itself is inherently political). Moreover, even now the Fourth Basic Plan and Council discussions merely advocate for greater blanket participation and not specific party platforms; thus, interference is less of an issue as it is not partisan, and it becomes even less so if influence over ideas of greater participation are coming from the bottom up in the form of special deliberation committees. Interference becomes a problem if the state aims to craft the narrative or the desired policies and then co-opt women's groups into spreading those ideas (as they are currently wont to do). Therefore, a more careful cultivation of Council members and special committee participation remains one area within GEB control that they could employ to help improve outcomes for gender equality.

However, while Kobayashi (2004) believed the actions of bureaucrats or elites would be enough to open a "path" for gender equality, the results of this paper show that co-optation is a poor strategy—as successful State Feminism has only been achieved (in Japan and everywhere else) when these agents and agencies acted as allies of the women's movement. The State Feminism literature, while hailing "critical acts," also acknowledges that the representation of individual agents must be questioned: "how is representation done, who does it, in relation to which women, what policies, where, when, why, and to whom accountable, and how effective is the representation?" (Lovenduski and Guadagnini, 2010, p.168). They emphasize the importance of accountability, which is essential for democratic institutions and may not always be sufficient in the structure of WPAs—since unelected officials usually staff them. This is why the access and framing of civil society-based women's movements and their demands are so essential in the framework. In Japan, as a democracy, too great an emphasis on an elite selection process for participation risks forming a more oligarchical style of control over the movement for gender equality. This is echoed by Estevez-Abe (2003), who also found that too much government discretion, while understandably more efficient, is worrying for its "implications for democratic participation" (p.172). Instead, the GEB needs to embrace more democratic ideas of participation in the policy process. Hasunuma (2015) has noted the "growing diversity of groups and women's movements trying to connect with each other," and thus the state, and especially the GEB, needs to endeavor to bring more of these groups and actors into their institutions and policy machinery—especially in the Liaison Conference (p.29).

In response to suggestions of greater inclusion, a GEB official hedged against such an idea by invoking worries over "chaos" that would ensue if too many women's movement actors and groups were brought together (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). Yet, such an idea is not necessarily borne out by evidence, and it seems to be more the product of a desire to preserve bureaucratic processes rather than a legitimate point against democratic debate. The Liaison Conference has already expanded to 94 groups and has managed to conduct meetings and team activities despite the significant diversity that is represented among the organizations. The order by the Cabinet Office that established the Liaison Conference gave no indication as to the way of selection of group membership, only expert committee members. Thus, the current process seems to be a de facto decision and could be altered. The GEB could choose to open up this conference to all desired participants, rather than maintaining the current controlled access. This would be an important symbolic gesture given the "historical bias against the inclusion of strictly feminist women's

organizations" (Murase, 2003, p.188). In addition, the meeting formats could be altered to allow for more structured group discussion over certain topics, as opposed to one-sided presentations and briefings, which would allow for women's movement actors to have a greater voice and collaborate with each other on issues that matter to them. There is already some indication of this greater autonomy within the Liaison Conference, with their focus on issues such as increasing women's representation in the legal profession—a prescient concern given that more women in the legal field could help to challenge current male-centric notions of justice and fairness. Additionally, one conclusion in the GEB-commissioned report on political representation also encouraged more collaboration between the state, NGOs, and citizens, as they found that the policy machinery in France was much more effective due to a network of collaboration between lawmakers, government, bureaucracy, public interest groups, and citizens. Thus, they called for a "strengthening of mutual responsiveness between the 'Council for Gender Equality' and the 'Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality'" (Miura et al., 2019, pp.126-127). In the charter for the Liaison Conference, it calls for cooperation "with the Council for Gender Equality by exchanging information and opinions widely," so the current GEB preference for the separation of the purposes of these bodies is not an effective one if the desired goal is furthering gender equality (Gender Equality Bureau, 2006b). The opening up of this forum and the elimination of a need for an invitation is especially important given the fact that these are public bodies funded by tax payers, thus the insulated nature is worryingly undemocratic. Hence, they should be open to any women's movement group that wants to participate, thus eliminating worries over the "selection" of certain groups over others and democratizing the policy process.

Yet, the GEB official also indicated concerns over the lack of unity among women's groups and civil society, and a large amount of literature on the women's movement in Japan has highlighted the historical division between the housewives women's movement and others (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). While this is not incorrect, it overlooks the fact that "doctrinal division and a weak equal opportunity orientation are not uncommon among women's movements" (Weathers, 2005, p.72). Even in the United States, the campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s was defeated by the collective efforts of conservative women led by white, anti-feminist activist Phyllis Schlafly. Despite the setback, the feminist movement for gender equality has continued to press on, continuing to take on partisan issues such as abortion and other topics like sexual harassment, while beginning to acknowledge intersectionality. Additionally, one must consider the fact that demographically the division between housewives and the rest is becoming smaller in Japan;

in 2018 the number of dual-income households was double that of single-earner households with a male breadwinner, and the trend is increasing (Gender Equality Bureau, 2020b). Dales (2009) underscores the fact that many women today who still express a desire to become housewives do less so because of ideological notions that their proper place is in the home, but rather they acknowledge the grim bargain between choosing the life of a housewife that allows them some sense of agency and well-being in their life versus entering the labor market to subject themselves to masculinized notions of long working hours, exhaustion, and social isolation (p.21). It is very likely such women could find common ground with their working women opposites on issues such as transformation of the work culture away from lifetime, masculinized employment to one that reflects women's experiences, a diversity of leadership and communication styles, and other more feminine ideas such as flexibility and informal authority (Dales, 2009, p.25). Moreover, universal disagreements exist even among feminists, who have adopted a variety of perspectives within feminist theory, but these need not always be barriers to progress. The point of democratic participation is not that all parties must agree, but that all parties have a right to express their ideas. Thus, resistance to increased participation over concerns of unity could appear to be a self-defeating and undemocratic argument against trying. Women's movement actors may diverge over the issues they choose to focus on, but these divisions can create "policy communities" that could still "link women inside and outside of government in common efforts," as coordination or compromise is not impossible if groups can consolidate through a common point of access to the state via the GEB (Gelb, 2003, p.136). By allowing for greater interaction, this would allow these more disparate and localized groups to find some common ground. Survey responses from women's groups expressed support for a greater opportunity to interact with each other, combine the experiences of older and younger women's organizations, and discuss a greater variety of issues from more diverse perspectives (Fujimoto, Seyama, JAWW, personal communication, March 24, April 3, March 31, 2020). Therefore, rather than remaining firmly attached to their preference for co-optation and cooperation that Murase (2003) highlighted as an issue, the GEB needs to make an effort to include more of the voices from the women's movement, which will create "a more informed discourse, enhanced expectations, and new momentum for change, rather than limiting options and controlling dissent and discontent" (Gelb, 2003, p.146).

Currently, the efforts by the GEB to help implement top-down ideas of gender equality do not appear to be ill intentioned. In fact, in the interview with GEB officials, they genuinely expressed a desire to help realize a gender equal society (Takahashi and Suzuki,

personal communication, March 26, 2020). From the point of view of the bureaucracy, their efforts could be interpreted as a kind of co-optation for the common good. However, there are some major blind spots to this view. One is that, while the state can evolve and adapt, they tend to construct institutions for the sake of social stability not social change—as McBride and Mazur (2010) note the "critical junctures" that often occur to induce any change. Instead, as Murase (2003) has emphasized, sweeping social changes throughout history, whether for women, ethnic or racial minorities, or disadvantaged social classes, occur through political struggle; "economic and demographic forces may determine the timing of change, and culture may shape the nature and direction of change, but the collective action of individuals organized and mobilized to challenge the status quo is always an essential part of the story" (p.27). Yet, in modern Japan, which never experienced its own social justice movement akin to something on the level of the civil rights movement (as the environmental movement was different in kind), one finds a logic perpetuated by the state that places the national machinery at the center of the effort to promote gender equality. Although narratives from the UN may have encouraged this kind of behavior, and McBride and Mazur (2011) note that the Beijing Platform for Action gave national machineries the "primary responsibility…'to support government-wide mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all policy areas,'" the State Feminism literature revealed a flaw in this logic (p.21). They found that WPAs can be allies but are not necessary conditions to achieve women's movement success. While some may interpret this as a disappointing conclusion, perhaps this is the way it should be—WPAs are meant to help the women's movement and not to lead them. This is especially because it is a dangerous and erroneous assumption to presume that the state can know what is best for women without listening to the full variety of voices from the citizens they are meant to serve. Especially in Japan, there is "a long and unhealthy tradition of male policymakers and male politicians deciding what is best for women" (Dalton, 2017, p.103). However, men talking to other men, or even men talking with a few elite women, will not ultimately suffice if gender equality is to be achieved. Former Minister for Gender Equality Seiko Noda understood this when she told the Council, "we need the support of a wide range of people, and while diversity is required, the work of some prominent women alone cannot change the world" (Gender Equality Bureau, 2018).

Japan is by no means alone in their struggle to achieve gender equality, as the World Economic Forum report emphasized that true gender equality is still a distant dream most everywhere, but the national policy machinery in Japan must heed the warning of Iwamoto (2007) in that it is not enough to pay "'lip service' to feminism, offered as a bureaucratic fig

leaf from those trying to protect the stubborn hierarchy" nor can a state dictate "the way women live from above" (p.33). The structural, contextual, and legal factors that limit the efficacy and impact of the WPAs in Japan are formidable barriers, and without any major reforms one can expect to see progress remain slow in key areas. However, the GEB does have opportunities to improve, and these opportunities hinge on the movement-agency nexus and an effort to bring in more women's movement voices and ideas into the state, during and even between policy debates, through the few channels that they have available to them. The GEB officials indicated that they understood the need to strengthen the groups who form the women's movement in Japan, yet it seems they understandably struggle with a strategy for how to do so—bound by a logic of appropriateness among bureaucrats that policy should be made from the top down and that they should not intervene or interfere with the activities of these civil society groups (Takahashi, personal communication, March 26, 2020). Yet, this logic is flawed in how it perceives cooperation as potential "interference," and a purely top-down orientation is not inevitable nor is it legally prescribed. The progressive Vision of Gender Equality (1996) that saw an equal partnership between government and civil society in the formation of a gender equal society is still valid, and past practice need not be determinative of the future. The findings, implications, and subsequent strategies outlined in this paper are a starting point for the GEB to become true allies for the women's movement in Japan. This is their power and their potential strength, and the more the GEB can "take up the demands of women's movement actors, the greater likelihood that the state will expand to include representatives of women's interests" (McBride and Mazur, 2010, p.255). The result for Japan would not just be successful State Feminism, but a fairer democracy and a society that truly aims to enhance well-being for the benefit of all.

APPENDIX A: WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS SURVEY

Organization Name	**Response Result**
Alliance of Feminist Representatives (AFER) 全国フェミニスト議員連盟	Response
Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center アジア女性資料センター	No Response
Association for Promoting Quotas クオータ制を推進する会	Response
Beijing JAC 北京 JAC	No Response
DPI: Women with Disabilities Network DPI 女性障害者ネットワーク	Response
Gender Action Platform (GAP) 特定非営利活動法人 Gender Action Platform	No Response
Hana Lab NPO 法人ハナラボ	Response
Ichikawa Fusae Center for Women and Governance 公益財団法人市川房枝記念会女性と政治センター	No Response
International Women's Year Liaison Group (IWYLG) 国際婦人年連絡会	Response
Japan Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction 男女共同参画と災害・復興ネットワーク	No Response
Japan Women's Watch (JAWW) 日本女性監視機構	Response
Japanese Federation of Women's Organizations 日本婦人団体連合会	No Response
Japanese Institute for Women's Empowerment and Diversity Management 公益財団法人 21 世紀職業財団	Response
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Japan 日本 BPW 連合会	Response
Network to Create a Law Against Sexual Violence 性暴力禁止法をつくろうネットワーク	No Response
Project Japan Women's Network 女性と人権全国ネットワーク	No Response
UN Women Japan 国連女性機関日本事務所	No Response
Women in New World, International Network 一般財団法人 WIN WIN	Response
Women's Action Network ウィメンズ アクション ネットワーク	No Response
Women's Conference 女性会議	No Response

Working Women's Network (WWN) ワーキング・ウェメンズ・ネットワーク	Response
Yokonokai よこの会	No Response
National Council of Women's Centers 全国女性開館協議会	No Response

Survey Questions
1. Have you ever had any interaction with the Gender Equality Bureau? If so, can you describe it? 何らかの形で男女共同参画局と交流したことはありますか？「はい」の場合は、その内容を説明してください。
2. Have you ever received any kind of support from the Gender Equality Bureau? What kind of support? 男女共同参画局から何らかの支援を受けたことがありますか？ どのようなサポートでしたか？
3. Has anyone in your group ever been asked to participate in any policy-making opportunities for the Gender Equality Bureau? 団体の構成員の誰かが、男女共同参画局の政策立案の機会に参加するように誘われたことはありますか？
4. What is your general opinion of the Gender Equality Bureau? 男女共同参画局に対して、全体としてはどのような意見をお持ちですか？
5. Do you think the Gender Equality Bureau is helpful/is an ally for your group or the women's movement in Japan? Why? 男女共同参画局は、女性団体や女性運動の助けになる、あるいは味方であると思いますか？なぜ、そう考えるのでしょうか？
6. How can the Gender Equality Bureau improve to better promote a gender equal society? ジェンダー平等社会を促進するために、男女共同参画局にはどのような改善すべき点がありますか？

APPENDIX B: COUNCIL FOR GENDER EQUALITY MEMBERSHIP

In order of most recent membership:

Name	**Organization(s)**
Aoi Hiroshi 青井 浩	Marui Group Co., Ltd. 株式会社丸井グループ代表取締役社長
Konishi Seiko 小西 聖子	Musashino University 武蔵野大学人間科学部長・教授
Sasaki Norio 佐々木 則夫	Jumonji Gakuen Women's University 十文字学園女子大学副学長
Satō Hiroki 佐藤 博樹	Chuo University / The University of Tokyo 中央大学大学院戦略経営研究科教授 / 東京大学大学院教授
Takahashi Shirō 髙橋 史朗	Reitaku University 麗澤大学大学院特任教授・モラロジー研究所教授
Tsujimura Miyoko 辻村 みよ子	Meiji University / Tohoku University 明治大学専門職大学院法務研究科教授 / 東北大学大学部教授
Nōmai Emiko 納米 惠美子	National Council of Women's Centers 全国女性会館協議会代表理事
Matsuda Miyuki 松田 美幸	Fukutsu City 福津市副市長
Murofushi Kimiko 室伏 きみ子	Ochanomizu University お茶の水女子大学長
Yoshino Tomoko 芳野 友子	Japan Federation of Trade Unions 日本労働組合総連合会副会長
Yoshimura Mieko 吉村 美栄子	Yamagata Prefecture 山形県知事
Hayashi Fumiko 林 文子	Yokohama City 横浜市長
Ishikawa Yasuharu 石川 康晴	Stripe International Co., Ltd. 株式会社ストライプインターナショナル代表取締役
Kakinuma Tomiko 柿沼 トミ子	National Federation of Regional Women's Organizations 全国地域婦人団体連絡協議会理事
Iemoto Kentarō 家本 賢太郎	Clara Online Co., Ltd. 株式会社クララオンライン代表取締役社長
Shiga Toshiyuki 志賀 俊之	Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. 日産自動車株式会社取締役
Ōtsuka Riku 大塚 陸毅	East Japan Railway Company 東日本旅客鉄道株式会社相談役
Kashima Takashi 鹿嶋 敬	Japan Women's Labor Association / Jissen Women's University 一般財団法人女性労働協会会長 / 実践女子大学教授
Munakata Emiko 宗片 恵美子	Equity Net Sendai 特定非営利活動法人イコールネット仙台代表理事

Iwata Kimie 岩田 喜美枝	21st Century Vocational Foundation / Shiseido Co., Ltd. 公益財団法人 21 世紀職業財団会長 / 株式会社資生堂代表取締役執行役員副社長
Katsuma Kazuyo 勝間 和代	Chuo University / Certified Public Accountant 経済評論家・中央大学客員教授 ・公認会計士
Okamoto Naomi 岡本 直美	Japan Federation of Trade Unions 日本労働組合総連合会顧問
Takahashi Harumi 高橋 はるみ	Hokkaido Prefecture 北海道知事
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APPENDIX C: 2008 – 2020, BUDGET FOR GENDER EQUALITY BUREAU AND ALL-GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON THE BASIC PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Year	GEB Total (千円)	All-Government Basic Plan Spending Total (百万円)	GEB Budget % of All-Government Spending
2020	976,810	N/A	N/A
2019	850,352	8,992,309	0.01%
2018	840,883	8,339,264	0.01%
2017	909,245	8,004,105	0.01%
2016	727,978	7,805,068	0.01%
2015	664,587	7,904,376	0.01%
2014	721,442	7,731,067	0.01%
2013	386,867	6,510,211	0.006%
2012	245,456	6,327,174	0.004%
2011	281,812	6,732,473	0.004%
2010	1,399,403	5,780,728	0.02%
2009	349,879	4,271,448	0.01%
2008	357,182	4,569,932	0.01%

Source: Ministry of Finance, Budget and Financial Statements Database: https://www.bb.mof.go.jp/hdocs/bxsselect.html; Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office: http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/yosan/index.html

APPENDIX C1: 2012 – 2020, BASIC PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY SPENDING ON CHILD AND ELDERLY CARE

Year	All-Government Basic Plan Spending Total (百万円)	Child Care and Long-Term Care Expenses (百万円)	% of All-Government Spending for Basic Plan
2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019	8,992,309	6,168,386	69%
2018	8,339,264	5,756,714	69%
2017	8,004,105	5,530,990	69%
2016	7,805,068	5,180,861	66%
2015	7,904,376	3,659,074	46%
2014	7,731,067	3,621,803	57%
2013	6,510,211	3,406,940	52%
2012	6,327,174	3,188,870	50%

Source: Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office: http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/yosan/index.html

APPENDIX D: LIAISON CONFERENCE FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY EXPERT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

In order of most recent membership:

Name	**Organization(s)**
Izumi Akiko 和泉 昭子	Journalist / HR Consultant 生活経済ジャーナリスト／人財開発コンサルタント
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Inoue Takuma 井上 拓磨	Hatara Create Co., Ltd. 株式会社はたらクリエイト 代表取締役
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