

Equality at Work and at Home: Married Female Teachers' Maternity Leave and Their Working Efficiency at the Elementary Schools in All Japanese Prefectures

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Abstract

In this paper I will explore how political each prefectural administration in Japan was in promoting equality at work and at home for female teachers. I have particularly explored the promotion of equality for married female teachers, focusing on the decade from 1917 to 1927. I have also examined when and how they discussed their condition and demanded equal rights, both at work and at home.

I was able to obtain materials with detailed descriptions of married female teachers in eight prefectures and two cities. As such, I will precisely analyze these materials by classifying them in differing Categories: 1) Child-Care Support 2) Equality at Work and at Home and 3) Raising the Status of Women.

Key words: Married Female Teacher, Maternity Leave, Working Efficiency, Motherhood

Introduction

The issue of how married female school teachers should best facilitate the coexistence of their responsibilities at work, and at home with the family¹ became a question of growing concern in the decades of the 1910s and 1920s. This 'coexistence issue,' which came to prominence in parallel with the increase² in the numbers of female school teachers, sought to strike a balance between the point of contention that centered on the protection and preservation of 'motherhood³,' and the argument for helping women to realize advancements in their social status. The ensuing debate, however, returned numerous times to iterations of this issue of 'motherhood⁴.'

In this paper, I would like to focus on the decade between 1917, when the first National Conference for Female Elementary School Teachers⁵ was held (this first conference was referred to as the National Conference for Female Elementary School Teachers, with subsequent meetings named the National Assembly for Female Elementary School Teachers; in this paper I shall use National Assembly to refer to both), and 1927, when the seventh National Assembly passed a movement on Flexible and Part Time Working System⁶. Firstly, I would like to clarify both 1) when and 2) in what way female elementary school teachers in each prefecture considered measures to promote or facilitate the coexistence of their roles both within work and the

home, what was discussed, and what surveys were carried out. To do this I will make use of the history of education for each prefecture, using journals produced by each prefectural Board of Education⁷.

Moreover, discussions on striking a balance between work and home considered the following points: (1) maternity leave, (2) suggestions for Flexible and Part Time Working Systems intended to make possible diverse work patterns and job sharing, such as employment as a teacher of a specific subject only, in accordance with lifestyle changes, such as raising children and taking care of family members, without having to lose accreditation as a teacher, (3) establishing nursing facilities within schools, (4) establishing creches within schools, (5) greater efficiency in housework, and (6) greater understanding from the schools, from society and from the family. With regard to (1) maternity leave, maternity leave periods were stipulated and extended in most prefectures around 1920, and in 1922 the Ministry of Education issued official instructions (*kunren daijūhachigō*) on maternity leave that implied the question had been settled. Despite these instructions, however, there the lack of any system for the provision of substitute teachers during maternity leave made it impossible to take maternity leave, and no solution was posited or implemented until after the end of World War Two. Moreover, (2) could only be made possible when the understanding and cooperation from wider social surroundings, and is still difficult in practical terms even now. The issues of facilities dealt with by (3)

Table 1 Proposals on Maternity Leave and on Flexible and Part-Time Working Systems for Married Female Teachers Submitted at the National Conferences for Female Elementary School Teachers

	Maternity Leave	Married Female Teachers & Part-time Working Systems
First 1917 20 th - 22 nd Oct	Proposal No. 6 : How many weeks is appropriate for pre- and post-childbirth maternity leave? Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association (Teikoku-kyoikukai) Proposal shelved	Proposal No. 2 : Possibilities in reducing the working hours of married female teachers in elementary schools, and reducing basis wages in accordance, whilst negotiating a system that allows a teacher an appropriate status according to the number of consecutive working years, through expedient discussion between the school and its needs and a female teacher and her wishes. Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association Rejected.
Second 1920 19 th - 23 rd Oct	Proposal No. 5 : How many weeks is appropriate for pre-and post-childbirth maternity leave, and how should the leave be implemented? Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association. Proposal passed for survey. Survey report: having consulted the opinion of doctors, and teachers with experience of maternity leave, it is determined that around 8 weeks both before and after childbirth is appropriate. an increase of one week from the leave length requested at the first conference. Method of implementation also specified. Also notes "the placement of an appropriate substitute teacher during the maternity leave period".	Proposal No. 3 : How married female teachers can best achieve a harmonization of their duties as a wife and a mother and their duties as a female teacher. Submitted by Yokohama Board of Education In the survey report, the following items referred to the awareness needed by female teachers : 1) awareness of professional duties, 2) the awareness of their's own predicament. The proposal was eventually passed, but without the contents that referred to a reduction in working hours.
Fourth 1924 28 th - 30 th May	Proposal No. 5 : How should arrangements best be made for substitute teachers during maternity leave? (Submitted by Kanagawa Prefecture Board of Education) Matters for resolution: 1) Employing one supplementary teacher per school, or one temporary substitute teacher. 2) Having one supplementary teacher for several schools, according to regional circumstances.	
Fifth 1925 21 st - 23 rd May		Proposal No. 4 : How to ease the responsibilities of female teachers in their family lives. Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association. Proposal for survey passed was influenced by the movement to improve lifestyle, such as clothing, food, housing improvements, daily events, exchange and free time. No items called for reductions in working hours, or for understanding from schools or their families. Only refers to the way in which female teachers spend time with their families.
Sixth 1926 5 th - 7 th June		Proposal No. 1 : The possibilities of Part Time Working System for female elementary school teachers, and its method of implementation. Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association Suspended.
Seventh 1927 22 nd - 25 th May		Proposal No. 2 : The possibilities of Part Time Working System for female elementary school teachers, and its method of implementation Submitted by the Japanese Imperial Education Association Suspended.

Informations on the first Conference through the Assemblies fourth was collated from Teikoku Kyoiku (Imperial Education), issues 425, 460, 466; information on the fifth through the Assemblies seventh were collected from Kagayaki.

and (4) were not realized in any meaningful terms at the time, despite the fact that these were issues raised and requested by female teachers in every prefecture across the country. Moreover, (5) was an issue that was ultimately of concern to individual female teachers, and as such was subject to little public objection. Consequently, it was often mentioned in final drafts of proposals.

Secondly, then, I would like to analyze whether or not issues such as the ones discussed above were present within the final drafts for measures drawn up as a result of discussions by 8 prefectures and 2 cities (out of the 20 prefectures and 2 cities for which the period of debate and the measures proposed were clarified at the first National Assembly), from the perspective of the following points: 1) childcare support, 2) balance between work and home (a) revisions of working patterns for female teachers, b) revisions of home life for female teachers, and (c) understanding and support from schools, the family, and wider society) and 3) the desire for advancements in the social position of women.

Previous researches⁸ on female elementary school teachers has viewed the coexistence issue between work and home as having been under continuous deliberation, from the first National Assembly through to the seventh National Assembly. However, if we look carefully at the contents of the proposals deliberated at the National Assemblies, and the contents of proposals for surveys also submitted, we can see that it might be more appropriate to consider that the coexistence between work and home was, in fact, debated only intermittently (See Table 1). This question of the coexistence of work and home was submitted to the first National Assembly as Proposal No. 2, but was voted down. After this, it was submitted to the second National Assembly as Proposal No. 3, under the title of “how married female teachers can best achieve a harmonization between their duties as a wife and mother and their duties as a female teacher.” This was hotly debated at the second National Assembly, and was eventually passed, with the exclusion of an agreement on reduced working hours. After this, the issue fell silent for a period, and considerations on the situation of married female teachers did not feature significantly in the third, fourth and fifth National Assemblies. Arai posits that Proposal No. 4 at the fifth National Assembly, namely “How to ease the responsibilities of female teachers in their family lives” was, in fact, a variation on this theme of work/home balance for married female teachers⁹, but the proposal on survey reporting that was passed at the Assembly was influenced rather by the movement seeking improvement in quality of life, and stopped of going any further than simply referring

to the lifestyle patterns of female teachers, without including any points demanding greater understanding from families and schools. As such, it is not perhaps really possible to consider this proposal as being in the same category as the married female teacher issue.

Can it be said, however, that the development of these debates, at the National Assemblies, on the coexistence of work and life were in accordance with general trends of debate amongst female teacher associations throughout all Japanese prefectures? Do the periods of debate on this issue amongst prefectural associations conform to the two significant periods of national debate that previous research in this area has pointed to, namely the period between the latter half of the 1910s until 1920, when the first and second National Assemblies were held, and the two years of 1926 and 1927, when the issue of a part time working system was debated at the sixth and seventh National Assemblies?

In this paper, I would like to attempt to gain an understanding of the periods in which measures towards this question of the coexistence of work and home were undertaken in prefectural associations of female teachers, and of the trends within these measures. Previous researches have thus far failed to clarify these two areas. The views expressed by female teachers within prefectural associations in each area will likely have been directly influenced by male teachers and by administrative policy on schools, in the sense that they will have been geographically closer to the schools in which they were working. It is also likely that these views would have easily been subject to criticism. This is, however, precisely the reason why it is meaningful to focus on regional activities. By doing so, we will be able to discover how this question of the coexistence of work and home, which would have been personally and emotionally relevant to these teachers, was positioned within the actual schools where these female teachers were working.

1. Periods and Trends of the Issue of Coexistence and Balance between Work and the Home

When did the Female Teacher Assemblies in each prefecture begin serious debate about this question of facilitating a balance between work and home? Looking at the ‘Periods of debate & surveys on the questions of the balance between work and home, and submitted proposals and drafts for deliberation’, as shown in Table 2, we can see that debate was conducted between 1917 and 1925. This debate seems to be concentrated particularly intensely in the period between 1917, when the first National Conference was held, and 1920, when

Table 2 Debate on the Work/Life Balance Issue & Dates of Surveys & Submissions (Note 1)

Region	Proposals, dates of surveys & overviews on the Work/Life Balance Issue	Submitted Proposals & Survey Outline	Supervisory/ Host institution
	Date		
Nagano Prefecture	1917/9/1	1 st Nagano Prefectural Female Teachers' Association, response to 2 nd item, the 1 st National Conference : "Propriety of creating special remuneration packages for married female teachers". Rejected.	Shinano BoE
Ehime Prefecture (1)	1917/9/1	Ehime Matsuyama Education Department Female Teachers' Research Conference : response to 2 nd item, the 1 st National Conference.	Ehime BoE
(Note 2)		Some in support (married female teachers), majority against (most of whom were single). Rejected. However, it was clear that some measures were needed for married female teachers, and further debate was called for.	
Ishikawa Prefecture	1917/10/1	Debate held in anticipation of the 1 st National Conference (item 2). Opinion of the prefecture made clear. Survey was also held on the propriety of holding a female teachers' meeting to be called by the Chief of the Board of Education in Ishikawa Prefecture.	Ishikawa Prefecture
Aichi Prefecture (1)	1918/6/1	The 1 st Aichi Prefectural Female Teachers' Association : Item no. 8 : What items in particular should be contained in the training for female teachers.	Female Teacher Training College
Fukuoka Prefecture (2)	1918/11/1	Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers' Association, questions from counties & municipalities : On the best ways to allow married female teachers to carry out both her professional and family duties.	Fukuoka BoE
Fukushima Prefecture (1)	1918/12/1	The 1 st Female Teachers' Conference: Section 2 : Requests on Working Hours Revisions.	Female Teacher Training College
Nagasaki Prefecture (1)	1919/6/1	The 1 st Nagasaki Female Teachers' Research Conference: Prefectural Submission : The most appropriate ways to improve the working capabilities of female elementary teachers.	Nagasaki BoE
Fukuoka Prefecture (2)	1919/11/1	Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers' Association. 1. Better facilities for the improvement of female teachers' capabilities.	Fukuoka BoE
Shizuoka Prefecture	1920/2/1	Shizuoka Female Teachers' Conference : (1) Methods with which to allow female elementary teachers to continue to work for as long as possible.	Female Teacher Training College
Tochigi Prefecture	1920/6/1	Tochigi Prefectural Board of Education Conference : on selecting representatives to attend the 2 nd National Assembly, debate was held about item 2 of the first National Conference.	
Gunma Prefecture (1)	1920/6/1	The 1 st Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers' Research Conference : Section 1 : Matters on Female Teachers' Duties, 3. On the Improvement of Female Teachers' Efficiency; 6. How best to ensure that Female Teachers are able to continue Working for Longer	Female Teacher Training College
Hokkaido	1920/10/1	The 1 st Hokkaido Female Teachers' Research Conference: Discussion item : "No. 3. Demands on System Reform and Related Matters".	Sapporo Teacher Training College
Kyoto Prefecture	1920/10/1	The 1 st Kyoto Prefectural Female Teachers' Research Conference, Agenda Item 1 : The most appropriate ways to improve the working capabilities of female teachers	Female Teacher Training College

Kyoto City	1920/10/1	The 1st Association of Female Elementary School Teachers held in order to discuss the following issue: There is a sense that female teachers are faced with a double burden, with both home and professional duties. Responses and desires on this situation?	Kyoto City
Fukuoka Prefecture (3)	1920/10/1	Fukuoka Prefectural Female Education Conference, items from each local authority: 5. How to be both a good teacher and a good wife (from Yawata City).	Fukuoka BoE
Fukuoka Prefecture (4)	1920/11/1	Fukuoka Prefectural Female Education Conference, items from each local authority: How to allow female elementary school teachers to perform their childcare tasks without being concerned about the effect upon work (from Kaho county). What points should be improved in order to improve both family and school lives of female teachers and thereby encourage greater teaching capabilities (Kaho county).	Fukuoka BoE
Nagasaki Prefecture (2)	1920/11/1	2nd Nagasaki Prefectural Female Teachers' Conference, items from each local authority. Points to improve the lives of female teachers, and how to go about such improvements. How to balance the social (professional) activities of women with their family duties'.	Nagasaki BoE
Ehime Prefecture (2)	1920/12/1	Ehime Prefecture Onsen Borough, the First Ward Female Teachers' Association: report heard from representatives attending 2nd National Assembly. Passed motion to make a request to the borough as follows: female teachers must be allowed to return home immediately upon the completion of classes in order not to damage family life	Ehime BoE
Gunma Prefecture (2)	1921/6/1	The 2nd Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers' Research Conference. Section 2: Matters on Female Teachers' Duties Class 2: Other, 15. On whether there are matters to be reflected on regarding pre- and post-childbirth maternity leave Class 1: On Balancing the Female Teachers' Duties at Work and at Home, 38. How should balance be achieved between work and home duties of married female teachers? 39. How should balance be achieved between work and home duties of married female teachers?	Female Teacher Training College
Mie Prefecture	1921/9/1	The 3rd Mie Prefectural Female Education Conference, Agenda Item: (4) The family and working life of female teachers (7) Improving the efficiency of female teachers	Female Teacher Training College
Fukushima Prefecture (2)	1921/10/1	The 2nd Fukushima Prefectural Female Teachers' Conference, question for debate: 1) Do married female teachers find their family relationships and responsibilities interfere with school duties, and if so, how can this situation be improved?	Female Teacher Training College
Kagawa Prefecture	1922/6/1	The 3rd Kagawa Prefectural Female Elementary School Teachers' Association, Item 12: Discussion on the reasons why sufficient leave is not given to teachers upon the occasion of their marriage Passed. Submitted to National Assembly.	Kagawa BoE
Kumamoto Prefecture	1922/6/1	The 3rd Kumamoto Female Teachers' Conference, Agenda Item: 4) Matters female teachers wish to be considered by male teachers (submission from Female Teachers' College)	Female Teacher Training College
Chiba Prefecture	1922/11/1	The 2nd Chiba Prefectural Female Elementary School Teachers' Association. Item for debate from female teachers': Request for post-class time hours to be limited	Female Teacher Training College

Oita Prefecture	1922/11/1	Oita Prefectural Board of Education Female Teachers' Conference : Agenda Item : How to best improve the capabilities of female teachers.	Female Teacher Training College
Saga Prefecture	1923/2/1	Saga Prefectural Female Teachers' Association, Agenda Item : (1) Greater respect for the capabilities of female teachers and improvements in remuneration packages (debate postponed); Agenda Item : (9) How to aid the obstacles to duties faced by female teachers (debate postponed). Debate Item: (1) Amendments to the law on providing nursing care to husbands (passed).	Saga BoE
Gifu Prefecture	1923/3/1	April 1922 - March 1923, survey conducted amongst 4000 male and female teachers in Gifu on the following points : 1) Absences from work, 2) Age, 3) Years of service, 4) Circumstances of leaving work, 5) Remuneration, 6) Pre- and post-childbirth maternity leave for female teachers.	Gifu Prefecture
Gunma Prefecture (3)	1923/6/1	The 4 th Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers' Research Conference : Section 4. Miscellaneous. 20. Measures to provide supply staff during maternity leave, 26. How can the position of professional women be made better understood.	Female Teacher Training College
Kofu City	1923/7/1	Kofu City Female Teachers' Volunteer Association : established in protest at the comments made by the principal of Kasuga Elementary School that the presence of married female teachers brought down the overall quality of teaching. At the Kofu City Elementary School Teachers' Research Conference, explained the following to the principal of Kasuga Elementary School : 1) the actuality of working conditions for married female teachers, 2) the daily routine of married female teachers. 3) pre- and post-childbirth maternity leave	Kofu City Female Teachers' Volunteer Association
Gifu Prefecture (2)	1925/7/1	Report on the working conditions of graduates from Female Teacher Training Colleges working at around 350 elementary schools throughout the prefecture. Points to the low efficiency of work by married female teachers.	Female Teacher Training College
Aichi Prefecture (2)	1925/11/1	The 8 th Aichi Prefectural Female Teachers' Conference Agenda Item : Suggestions for the best way to improve the capabilities of elementary female school teachers	Female Teacher Training College
Miyagi	1930/6/1	The 18 th Miyagi Prefecture Female Teachers' Research Conference : Survey of female elementary school teachers in the prefecture; only "years of service" noted. Central to debate on curriculum classes.	Female Teacher Training College

Note 1 : The sources for each region were as follows : 1) Data compiled from Prefectural Board of Education & Prefectural Histories: Fukushima Prefecture, Hokkaido, Kofu City; 2) Data compiled from prefectural board of education journals : Tochigi Prefecture

Chiba Prefecture, Saga Prefecture; 3) Data compiled from Prefecture Board of Education & Prefectural Histories, and Prefectural Board of Education Journals : Nagano Prefecture, Ishikawa Prefecture, Aichi Prefecture, Nagasaki Prefecture, Shizuoka Prefecture, Gunma Prefecture

Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Kagawa Prefecture, Kumamoto Prefecture, Oita Prefecture, Gifu Prefecture, Miyagi Prefecture; 4) For Ehime Prefecture, the source was The Ehime Labor Movement History, and for Nagano Prefecture the Shinano Mainichi Newspaper

For Gunma, *The Gunma Newspaper*, *The Minami Shinano Newspaper*; for Kyoto Prefecture and Kyoto City, *the Kyoto Hinode Newspaper* and *the Japan Labor Yearbook 1921*; for Gunma Prefecture, Gunma Female Teachers' Research Conferences: An Overview (Nos. 1, 2 and 4)

Note 2 : A number has been added to those regions where proposals were submitted multiple times

Note 3 : BoE = Board of Education

the second National Assembly took place. During this period, a total of 18 Prefectural Female Teacher Associations carried out discussions on this issue of work/home coexistence. After 1921, a total of 12 regions carried out debate on this issue. However, Aichi, Fukushima, Nagano and Gunma Prefectures all held discussion on the issue of the coexistence of work and home twice, with Fukuoka Prefecture holding discussion four times. As such, the actual numbers show that, until 1920, 12 prefectures and one city, and after 1920 seven prefectures and one city, held discussions. However, the five prefectures that are counted more than one all held debate on the issue either once or twice up until 1920. In other words, it seems reasonable to consider the period around 1920 as having been the peak of the period of debate amongst Prefectural Female Teachers Associations on the issue of the coexistence of work and home. The majority of debate on this work/home issue at the National Assemblies, however, was carried out between the later half of the 1910s and 1920, when the first National Conference and the second National Assembly were held, and between the sixth and seventh National Assemblies, in 1926 and 1927 respectively. As such, this latter spate of debate within National Assemblies at least does not seem to correlate with this prefectural peak.

Next, I shall examine the proposals and drafts submitted for deliberation to Prefectural Female Teachers Associations. Looking at the wording used in the various proposals, we can divide them into two broad categories, namely 1) those with a focus on the work of female teachers, such as ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service,’ and 2) those with a focus on considerations for married female teachers, such as “married female teachers” and “the balance between home and family life.”

Proposals and drafts for deliberation concerning ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service’ were submitted to the following prefectural associations: the 1st Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers’ Conference (December 1918), the 1st Nagasaki Female Teachers’ Conference (June 1919), the Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teacher’s Association (November 1919), the Shizuoka Female Teachers’ Association (February 1920), the 1st Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers’ Research Conference (June 1920), the 1st Kyoto City Female Teachers’ Research Conference (October 1920), the Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers’ Association (November 1920), the 3rd Mie Prefectural Female Teachers’ Conference Agenda (September 1921), the 4th Oita Prefectural Board of Education Female Teachers’ Agenda (November 1922), and the 8th Aichi Prefectural Female Teachers’ Assembly Agenda

(November 1925). This shows that wordings concerned with ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service’ were widely dealt with in debates up until 1920.

At the same time, the following submissions that clearly called for consideration for married female teachers, containing wording referred to “married female teachers” and “the balance between school and family life” were made as follows: Issue Agenda for the Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers’ Assembly (November 1918), the 1st Association of Female Elementary School Teachers in Kyoto City (October 1920), Submissions for Discussion at the Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers’ Assembly (October 1920), the Fukuoka Prefectural Female Teachers’ Panel (November 1920), the 2nd Nagasaki Prefectural Female Teachers’ Conference (November 1920), the Aichi Prefecture Onsen Borough First Ward Female Teachers’ Association (December 1920), the 2nd Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers’ Research Conference (June 1921), the 3rd Mie Prefectural Female Teachers’ Assembly (September 1921), the 2nd Fukushima Prefectural Female Teachers’ Conference (October 1921), and the 3rd Kagawa Prefectural Female Elementary School Teachers’ Conference (June 1922). Apart from the proposal submitted in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1920, all of these submissions are concentrated in the period after 1920.

By categorizing the submissions for proposals and drafts for deliberation in this way, namely by focusing on wordings mentioning ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service,’ or ‘female married teachers’ and ‘the balance between school and family life,’ we can see that these wordings began to appear in submissions and proposals at around the October 1920 mark. What significance does this date - October 1920 - have in terms of the shift away from mention of ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service,’ which are closely related to the administrative government’s speculative attempts to consider how best to employ female teachers - whose salaries at the time were extremely low - efficiently and over periods of time, towards a clear focus on married female teachers, with mention of ‘married female teachers’ and ‘the balance between school and family life.’

This date - October 1920 - when ‘working efficiency’ and ‘consecutive years of service’ began to be replaced by ‘female married teachers’ and ‘the balance between school and home’ in the wordings of proposals, corresponds almost exactly with the holding of the second National Assembly, between the 19th and the 23rd October 1920. At this second National Assembly, one measure, submitted as Proposal No. 2, dealing with the question of the balance between work and home, was

passed as survey proposal, with the exclusion of an agreement on reduced working hours. While it did not include the pending issue of a reduction in working hours, the fact that it was passed, at a National Assembly, in its guise as a proposal that demanded consideration for married female teachers, clearly shows that this question of work/home balance had considerable influence on the national debates. As such, it seems appropriate to view the trends indicated at this National Assemblies as reflecting the changes in the wordings of proposals and drafts for deliberation being submitted to the various regional associations.

This shift in the nature of wordings in proposals and drafts, which occurred around about 1920, when the second National Assembly was held, can also be said to show very plainly a certain relationship of influence between the National Assemblies and the regional associations. At the same time, however, during the period which previous research has suggested represents the peak of the debate on the question of the coexistence of work and home, namely 1926 and 1927, there appears to have been no particular movement within regional associations on this issue, and as such a directional relationship of influence cannot be confirmed. One of the reasons for this may well be that, around 1920, when debate was strongest amongst the regional associations, many prefectural and municipal authorities extended the period of maternity leave allowed by their school regulations. Moreover, on the 18th September 1922, the Ministry of Education requested, via Official Instruction No. 18, that pregnant teachers should be permitted two weeks leave before their expected delivery date, and six weeks leave after delivery. Equally, however, it seems that female teachers were more concerned with calling for advancements in their status, thus creating an environment in which married female teachers would find it easier to work, rather than needlessly pushing for support for this question of balance, which was unlikely to be resolved in any meaningful way in the conditions of the time. It is possible, therefore, that this deliberate shift in direction can explain why I have failed to find any evidence of strong debate on the coexistence question in regional associations between 1926 and 1927. Regional associations were more likely to be strongly influenced by male teachers and by the policies of the administrative government, and moreover were more likely to be the target of harsh criticism from these factions. It is not surprising, therefore, that different trends emerged than those debated in the National Assemblies. As such, I would now like to analyze the final drafts of proposals that reflect the conclusions drawn from the debate on the balance between work and home that took place at various regional associations, concentrating on eight prefectures

and one municipality.

2. Trends in the debate on balancing work and home - focusing on the analysis of final drafts

The results of my classification of the drafts brought about as a result of the debate on the balance between work and home, according to the following categories, 1) Childcare support, 2) Possibilities for balance between work and home (A: Revisions of working patterns for female teachers, B: Revisions of home life for female teachers, and C: Understanding and support from schools, the family and wider society) and 3) Raising the social position of women, have been collated in Table 3: 'The Outcomes of the Debate on Balancing Work and the Home and Raising the Status of Women in Regional Female Teachers Associations.'

The periods of debate for these eight prefectures and one municipality were all concurrent, falling in between 1918 and 1925, with many prefectures showing a concentration of debate around 1920. Moreover, looking at the wording used in the proposals considered by each region, we can divide these regions into those submitting proposals that advocate 'working efficiency' and 'consecutive years of service' (Shizuoka Prefecture, Aichi Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture and Oita Prefecture), those submitting proposals that advocate 'female married teachers' and 'the balance between school and family life' (Kyoto City, Nagasaki Prefecture), and those where proposals advocating both were submitted (Gunma Prefecture).

1) Childcare Support

5 regions were shown to have produced final drafts for proposals which were concerned primarily with childcare support, namely Hokkaido, Gunma Prefecture, Shizuoka Prefecture, Kyoto City and Kumamoto Prefecture. Of these, Hokkaido, Gunma Prefecture (the 2nd Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers Research Conference, 1921), Shizuoka Prefecture and Kumamoto Prefecture all demanded that measures be put in place that showed consideration for breast feeding needs. At the 1st Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers' Research Conference, a final draft on "Article 11. Establishing appropriate facilities at schools for childcare for those female teachers with children," demanding, in other words, that childcare facilities be established, was approved in 'Part One: Addressing the Work of Female Teachers: How Best to Ensure that Female Teachers are Able to Continue Working for Longer.' The Association of Female Elementary School Teachers in Kyoto City reported its proposal on "The Best Methods of Childcare for Female Teachers with Children" to the

Kyoto Municipal Government, and we can see from this a definite movement towards seeking concrete childcare support¹⁰. From the approach shown in Gunma Prefecture and Kyoto City in their demands for the establishment of appropriate childcare facilities, we can determine an attitude that sees childcare as “a social matter”¹¹ above all else.

Moreover, although the exact trends in debate have not been verified, at the 1923 meeting of the Saga Prefectural Female Teachers’ Association, the “Proposal on Amending the Law on the Provision of Nursing Care for Husbands” was submitted and passed. It is of note, therefore, that this period began to see the submission and approval of proposals concerned with family nursing care, in addition to childcare.

2) Possibilities for balance between work and home

A. Revisions of working patterns for female teachers

The following regions passed resolutions designed to explore the possibilities of creating a better balance between work and the home for female teachers, by revising working systems for female teachers, through the reduction of working hours and changes in role as teachers of specialist subjects: Gunma Prefecture, Shizuoka Prefecture, Kyoto City and Nagano Prefecture.

Moreover, the 2nd Female Elementary School Teachers’ Conference was held in Chiba Prefecture in 1922, and although I have only been able to establish the name, and not the outcome, of the proposal, one submission was entitled “The issue of working after school hours.”

Of these, the final draft presented in Nagano Prefecture had as its objective the “establishment of time for self-improvement for female teachers” through a revision of working hours. What this proposal was aiming for, therefore, was not to seek possibilities in creating a balance between work and the home, but rather the raising of the position and status of female teachers. The proposals submitted in Shizuoka Prefecture and Kyoto City were concerned simply with either calling for a reduction in, or rejecting any extensions of, working hours.

In Gunma Prefecture, however, in addition to calling for reductions in, and the rejection of any extensions to, working hours, the proposal submitted also called for greater freedom in reassignment and in making changes to the number of subjects taught by female teachers if their hours were reduced. For elementary school teachers, who would teach all of the subjects to the class they were supervising, it was difficult to

establish a shorter working pattern that was based on a timetable for different subjects. What this essentially meant was that it would only be possible to work shorted hours if one was working as a support teacher or as a teacher of a single subject. As a specialized teacher, it would be possible to teach one’s subject effectively, without requiring frequent and cumbersome communication with the other teachers. This would allow working hours to be shortened. Records from the 2nd Gunma Prefectural Female Teachers’ Research Conference held in 1921 show that a proposal was being drafted that called for measures to “allow those female school teachers with comparatively complicated family matters to become specialized teachers, and as such facilitate more flexible leaving times (with due consideration to the fact that this will inevitably result in a reduction of practical benefits)”, which we can consider as proposed legislation designed to actually implement measures that would allow decreased working hours. We can surmise that the wording of this draft came about mainly because of the close practical relationship that these regional associations had with their places of work, and thus it is a clear indication of just how close to home this issue of balancing work and home was to female teachers at the time.

B. Revisions of home life for female teachers

Final drafts that dealt with the possibilities of facilitating a balance between work and family life through the revision of the family life of female teachers were submitted in Gunma Prefecture, Aichi Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture and Oita Prefecture. All of these drafts were concerned with expectations that by improving and amending the home lives of these female teachers, and by making them simpler, their capability to perform their work tasks better would benefit.

However, at the first Aichi Prefectural Female Teachers’ Conference, held in 1918, Proposal No. 8, namely “Points on the specific training that should be undertaken by female teachers,” was submitted and passed as an argument for female teachers to “perform one’s duties as the wife and mother of the family, whilst being aware of one’s professional duties also.” The contents imply that by continuing one’s family life without ignoring “one’s duties as the wife and mother of the family” is directly related to one’s development and cultivation as a teacher, and further will develop the possibilities of achieving balance between work and the home. It is also possible to glimpse here the fact that these “duties as a wife and mother” are seen as underpinning the value of one’s existence as a “female” teacher.

C. Understanding and support from schools, the family, and wider society

Drafts and proposals calling for greater understanding and support from schools, the family and wider society were submitted in Gunma Prefecture, Aichi Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture, Nagasaki Prefecture and Kumamoto Prefecture. In Gunma Prefecture, Aichi Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture and Nagasaki Prefecture, the drafts called simply for greater understanding of and sympathy for those female teachers who were having to balance both their professional and family lives. In contrast, the proposal submitted in Kumamoto Prefecture called for “the avoidance of any binding matters, for example by shortening the time required by meetings and administration, and making working hours more flexible.” We can see, then, that the contents of this proposal did not just appeal for greater understanding, but also called for specific support in facilitating the work/home balance with the concrete example of shortening the time to be spent on administrative duties.

3) Raising the status of women

Proposals calling for a raising of the status of women can be broadly divided into those proposals that demanded greater opportunities for training and seminars, and those that sought to deal directly with questions of recruitment to principal and school inspector. The demands for more training and seminars sought to redress the gaps in treatment that existed between male and female teachers by improving the pedagogical capabilities of female teachers.

Proposals calling for better educational training were submitted in Gunma Prefecture (1920), in Kyoto City and in Kumamoto Prefecture. At the same time, in Hokkaido, Gunma Prefecture (1921), Shizuoka Prefecture and Kyoto Prefecture, proposals were passed that sought to raise the status of women, and improve the differences in treatment, such as wage gaps, between male and female teachers, by seeking their more ready appointment as school principals and inspectors. Both approaches share a common goal in having as one of their main objectives the redressing of the disparity between male and female teachers.

However, amongst these, one proposal in Kumamoto Prefecture, namely “No. 3 : Greater efforts for the betterment of female teachers...b) Female teachers are of a delicate constitution, easily tired, and thus we wish to see certain efforts made in order that female teachers do not become overworked.” The proposal specifically refers to the “delicate constitution” of female teachers, referring to a ‘weakness’ common to all female teachers, and calls thus for the cooperation of male teachers.

Whilst it is a demand for a redressing, therefore, of the disparities that exist between the treatment of male and female teachers, it contains specific reference to the very ‘weakness’ that was at the root of the disparity in the first place. This is a trend not seen in any other regions, and should be of interest.

Looking at the above analysis, then, we can divide the proposals passed in each region into two broad categories, namely those that were concerned with childcare support and revisions in the working patterns of female teachers, and those that sought review of the home life of female teachers, together with greater understanding and support from the family, schools and wider society. In particular, of those regions where proposals on the revision of the home life of female teachers were passed, namely Aichi Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture and Oita Prefecture, we can see that there were no parallel proposals passed that dealt with childcare support or working patterns for female teachers. The only exception to this is Gunma Prefecture, where proposals on all three areas were passed.

Moreover, of the regions where proposals were passed on the revision of the home life of female teachers, only Aichi Prefecture and Kyoto Prefecture also passed proposals which only called for greater understanding and support from the family, schools and wider society, with Oita Prefecture not passing any proposals other than that on home life. By contrast, in Gunma Prefecture, Shizuoka Prefecture, Kyoto City and Nagasaki Prefecture, which all passed proposals on the revision of working patterns for female teachers, only Gunma Prefecture also passed a proposal calling for the review of the home life of female teachers. As such, if we look at the examples of the 9 regions which have formed the basis of this case study, we can argue that within the proposals passed on this issue of the co-existence of work and the home, there seem to be two broad trends in regional approach. The first makes specific demands, such as opportunities to breast feed, childcare facilities, and reductions in working hours, with the second comprising of rather vague calls for improvements in the home life of female teachers, and greater understanding of the female teacher’s position, without suggesting any concrete measures to achieve these demands. Gunma Prefecture, which passed resolutions in all areas, should perhaps be considered a special case, but greater research is needed on this point in the future.

Conclusions

This paper has sought to analyze how the question of arriving at a balance between work and family life was taken up by regional associations of female teachers,

and looked at the proposals submitted at regional meetings. The results show that the period at which this issue was debated most intensely amongst regional associations was 1917 to 1925, with the peak of debate being around 1920. This shows a different perspective to that of previous research on National Assemblies, which has placed the peak at the period between 1926 and 1927. It further implies that trends in the National Assemblies were not necessarily immediately synchronized with those in regional associations. Moreover, my analysis showed a distinct change in the wordings used in these proposals, with a shift from such phrases as “working efficiency” and “consecutive years of service,” towards “married female teachers” and “the harmonization of family and school life” occurring around October 1920. In October 1920, the second National Assembly passed Proposal No. 2, with the exclusion of an agreement on reduced working hours. What this must show, therefore, is the direction of influence between regional associations and the National Assemblies. The influence of the National Assembly that can be perceived from these wordings, and the divergence in the peaks of debate between the National Assemblies and the regional associations, can perhaps be attributed to the effects of the particular circumstances in each region, as well as to the thinking of those times about how best to set a course for the practical resolution of this issues, whilst taking into account trends in the discussion of this issue of the co-existence of work and the family.

Furthermore, according to the results of the analysis of the eight prefectures and one municipality that had records of their regional female teachers’ associations having passed resolutions, we can see a broad divide between those regions that passed resolutions indicating specific measures to be implemented in respect of child-care support and the revision of working patterns for female teachers, and those regions whose resolutions on the review of the home life of female teachers and calls for greater understanding and support from the family, schools and wider society failed to go beyond vague demands. However, the resolutions passed by regional female teachers’ associations were, in general, more specific than those passed as National Assemblies, and this perhaps shows how close to home the issue of balancing work and family life was for female teachers.

In terms of what is needed in future research, Prefectural Board of Education journals for some of the regions considered in this paper were either not available, or were missing. As such, regional newspapers from the period should be analyzed for relevant information.

In addition, this question of the balance between home and family life was influenced in no small part by a deliberate policy by the relevant administrative bodies of mitigating financial costs by employing large numbers of qualified female teachers on low salaries. Within the proposals and drafts submitted to female teachers’ associations, it is easy to detect the interference of ‘guidance’ from prefectural and borough inspectors and education officials. Moreover, these female teachers’ associations cannot necessarily be described as completely autonomous self-governing bodies, and diverse bodies were responsible for arranging and hosting the associations, such as schools for female teachers, prefectural Boards of Education, and local government. What could the influence of these variant organizing bodies have been? Do the trends in approach to this question of balancing work and family life vary accordingly¹²? Further research into movements and trends within regional female teachers’ associations should thus be carried out from a broader perspective in the future, taking into account the new perspectives raised above.

(Notes)

- 1 The issue of striking a workable balance between work and the home was called the “Married Female Teacher Problem” at the first and second National Assemblies (in 1917 and 1920 respectively), and as the “Part-time Work System Problem” at the sixth and seventh National Assemblies (in 1926 and 1927 respectively) of the Female Elementary School Teacher Association (*shōgakkō jokyōin kaigi*), showing how, over time, its name changed, and the points of contention contained within the issue were refined. In order to avoid confusion, I will use the term ‘the coexistence issue’ to refer to both of these issues.
- 2 In accordance with growing numbers in school attendance amongst children, and the lack of appropriate teaching staff caused by the increase in school grades brought about by the extension of compulsory education to six years in 1908, momentum gained for the idea of correcting this deficit by employing female teachers, particularly after the end of the Russo-Japanese war. As such, the ratio of female teachers rose from just 5% at around 1890 to over 25% in 1910, gradually accounting for 30% of all teaching staff. See Ishidoya, Tetsuo, *The History of the Teachers in Japan*, Kodansha, 1971 : p. 257, Ichibangase, Yasuko, ‘The Female School Teacher Problem in the Taishō Era’ in *Female Teachers in the Taishō Era* (ed. Japan Women’s University Research Center on Education), Kokudoshā, 1975 : pp. 328-333.
- 3 In this paper, ‘motherhood’ is taken to refer to those actions which are “natural” to all women, such as giving birth to children, raising children, and having “maternal love” for those children, and which arise from having differing physiological functions from men, such as the ability to get pregnant, to give birth to a child, and to breastfeed (Tama, Yasuko. *The System of Motherly Love (Boseiai to iu seido)*, Keisoshobo, 2001). This “motherhood”, then, has, at the

same time, two aspects founded in two separate ideologies of women : firstly, it is considered an important element in the positioning of women as differentiated from men, whilst still being full citizens of Japan, and secondly, it is also considered from the perspective of having been accepted by women as being at the very core of the value of their existences, helping them to realize their own role as “bodies to reproduce” (Sawayama, Mikako. ‘Chapter 3 : The historical formation of female body viewpoint : the body as a reproducer’ (*Daisanshō : “Umu”shintaikan*) in *The History of Gender and Education (Jendā to kyōiku no reishi)*, Kawashima Shoten, 2003.

- 4 Previous research on this question of the balance between work and the home, as faced by female elementary school teachers (see also note 7), has tended to consider “motherhood” as something that is self-evident within all women, and little attention has thus been paid to it. It has been most concerned with questions of maternity leave and part-time working patterns from the perspective of the coexistence of work and the home within the lives of these female teachers, these “professional women.” Having said this, the wording of a survey proposal submitted and passed at the 7th National Assembly of Female Elementary School Teachers states that it is being proposed “from the standpoint of motherhood (in the broadest sense of both motherhood and womanhood).” This seems to imply that ‘motherhood’ is at the root of the significance of these female teachers’ existence both in the home and at work. If we do not make attempts to examine what influence this ‘motherhood’ might have had on the issue of work/family balance for female teachers, and in what ways it may have been made use of in the debate, then it is possible that we will not be able to discover how the married female teacher problem developed, how it was perceived by female teachers, and what significance it had. Analyses of the work/home question which center on this concept of motherhood include “Motherhood and the Female Elementary School Teacher : Looking at Issues of Maternity Leave and Part-time Working Patterns” (MA thesis, 2002. Submitted as part of an MA course in the Department of Education, Human Developmental Sciences, Graduate School of Humanities and Science, Ochanomizu University). Also, in terms of previous regional case studies, please see ‘Maternity Leave and Part-time Working Efficiency amongst Female Elementary School Teachers in Kyoto City in the 1920 s,’ *Gender Research*, Vol. 9, Ochanomizu University Gender Research Center, 2006.
- 5 The first National Assembly was held for three days between 20th and 23rd October 1917, as a continuation of the “Survey on Issues related to Female Teachers” held by the Imperial Educational Association in 1916. It sought to discover the reaction of female teachers themselves to a survey conducted amongst male teachers, and also had as an objective the general improvement of educational standards. Amongst the subjects of this “Survey on Issues related to Female Teachers” (‘A survey on Issues related to Female Teachers’, *Imperial Education*, vol. 409, Imperial Educational Association, p7.) were 40 principals of schools for female teachers, 71 principals of elementary schools in 30 prefectures and Hokkaido, together with a number of scholars on education and section chiefs in educational departments in local governments. The survey consisted of

questions on the ratio of male/female teachers, the subjects which female teachers were being assigned to supervise, and opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of female teachers.

- 6 The term ‘part-time working system’ was something that was changed as a result of the issue of married female teachers. Should married female elementary school teachers need time off for childcare, the care of sick relatives, or household related tasks, they could request to work within a part-time schedule - according either to subjects taught or working hours - as their requirements determined. The proposal for such a system sparked much debate, but was never implemented in actuality. An official order from the Ministry of Education, issued on September 18th 1922, on “Matters relating to maternity leave before and after childbirth” allowed for two weeks leave before an expected delivery date, and six weeks leave after delivery, in order to “ensure the safety of mother and child.’ In addition, on 30th October of the same year, the Ministry of Education issued some notes on the implementation of the maternity leave order, and safety during menstruation, calling for the provision of measure to “ensure appropriate methods such as the placement of supply staff in advance” in order to “make schools prepared for leave requests that teachers might be allowed the relevant maternity leave before and after childbirth.”
- 7 The analysis detailed in this paper was carried out using Prefectural Board of Education journals housed in the Central Library at Tsukuba University. However, as a result of differences in the number of issues according to region, and missing volumes, it was not possible to entirely grasp the situation in each region for the relevant period. Further research will be necessary to understand more fully the situation in these regions.
- 8 In terms of exemplary prior research on this issue of married female teachers working in elementary schools before the Second World War, see, for example : 1) Kido, Wakao, *One Hundred Years of the Female School Teacher*, Meijitoshoshuppan Corporation : 1968, 2) Fukutani, Masai & Fukutani Kazuko, *Research into the Issue of Female School Teachers*, Reimei Shobo : 1971, 3) Ichibangase, Yasuko, ‘The Female School Teacher Problem in the Taishō Era’ in *Female Teachers in the Taishō Era* (ed. Japan Women’s University Research Center on Education), Kokudoshō : 1975, 4) Kawai, Akira, Sato, Kazuko & Arai, Toshiko, *Research on Educational History : Female Teachers’ Associations*, Saitama University : 1980, and 5) Arai, Toshiko, ‘Trends in Raising the Status of Women amongst Pre-Second World War Female Elementary Teachers,’ *Education Journal*, Vol. 49, issue 3, 1982.
- 9 See Arai, Toshiko, ‘Trends in Raising the Status of Women amongst Pre-Second World War Female Elementary Teachers,’ *Education Journal*, Vol. 49, issue 3, 1982.
- 10 In Kyoto City, on 10th November 1920, the Education Section in Kyoto City Hall conducted a ‘Survey of Female Elementary School Teachers in Kyoto City,’ surveying 482 female teachers. Amongst the 38 questions asked, number 11 was “would you make use of childcare facilities if they were available to educational staff?” (See ‘Maternity Leave and Part-time Working Efficiency amongst Female Elementary School Teachers in Kyoto City in the 1920 s,’ *Gender Research*, Vol. 9, Ochanomizu University Gender Research

Center, 2006.)

- 11 See Note 8. Arai gives a definite evaluation to the survey draft on part-time working passed at the seventh National Assembly (Proposal No. 2), saying “here we can see the beginnings of an approach that sees the processes of giving birth to and raising children as something with which all of society should be concerned.” It is not, however, the case that there are any direct references to, for example, child-care facilities in the resolution, nor are there any specific indications on the rights of children to be nurtured. As such, Arai’s evaluation of the significance of the debate at the National Assembly could be considered an exaggeration.
- 12 For information on the ratio of married female teachers within each prefecture, see the references detailed in Note

10. The analysis undertaken for this paper determined no direct relationship between trends and marriage ratios, but it is perhaps necessary to collect further case studies on this issue, and facilitate a more detailed investigation.

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