Have the gender equality policies filled the gender gaps in the fields of science and technology in Japan?

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1. Relevance:
In order to promote gender equality in the fields of Science and Technology (S & T), gender statistics of researchers and students are one of important issues (e.g. She Figures). The Japanese government announced a policy to promote gender equality in those fields in 2005. Also, it set a national goal to increase the percentage of women leaders to at least 30% in every field by 2020. In order to achieve such policy objectives, it is necessary for Japan to have detailed statistical data showing women’s participation in the fields of S & T.

2. Aims & Objectives:
The long term purpose of our study is to examine measures for resolving the women’s underrepresentation in the fields of S & T. In this presentation, we will focus on the analysis of the gender gaps in researchers and students in higher education institutions based on the public statistical data in Japan. We will also refer to some problems of the gender statistics in Japan.

3. Methods:
Considering the Japanese policy trend referred to above, we compared the gender gaps in the fields of S & T between fiscal years 2004 and 2013. We collected data from the School Basic Survey issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan. And, we reclassified the data to meet UNESCO’s International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) in order to compare it with data of other countries (quantitative research). To reveal details, we conducted an interview with some officials in charge of statistics (qualitative study).

4. Results:
- Quantitative study
  Though the gender gaps in Science and Engineering fields (ISCED 5A & 6) in 2013 became slightly narrower than those in 2004, more than 80% of the graduates of doctoral course were men.

- Qualitative study
  Problems of Japanese Gender Statistics:
  (1) There are not complete data which show the segregations by sex, field of education, and level of academic position.
  (2) In the School Basic Survey, researchers in University Hospitals, Affiliated Institutes and Graduate Schools are not categorized into each field.
  (3) Due to (2), a frequently cited bar chart of the proportion of women academics in the White Paper on Gender Equality at present does not reflect the precise situation.

5. Conclusions:
From 2004 to 2013, the proportion of women students in the fields of S & T slightly increased, but it remained low, compared with other countries. To achieve the goals, more effective measures are required. Strengthening gender statistics is one of pressing issues.

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