

Article

Representing Women's Interests in Japan's Civil Society

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Abstract: Japan has witnessed marginalization and underrepresentation of women in its civil society. This study examines its extent. It also explores who in Japan's civil society represent women's interests by using survey data from civil society organizations. This study reveals that civil society organizations are generally led by male leaders, and around half of their staff are male. It also indicates that the number of organizations representing women's interests is limited, with only 2.2% representing women's interests. Interestingly, the central actors representing women's interests include economic and business groups, political groups, labor groups, and civic groups including women's groups.

Keywords: civil society; women's substantial representation; women's interests; advocacy; Japan; political science

1. Introduction

The involvement of women and the representation of their interests are nowadays major research arenas for scholars of civil society [1–9]. However, civil society theorists and political scientists, as well as feminist scholars, have mainly focused on whether women are appropriately represented and if the presence of women is necessary for creation of new spaces where they can have a voice. Hence, as Kang [10] observed:

“Civil society has advocated for the representation of women's interests. Yet, relatively little is known about the full range of actors *who* seek the representation of women's interests, mobilize around women's issues, and articulate specific preferences... *Who* in civil society seeks to influence the representation of women's interests and how?” (p. 137, emphasis added).

These questions are especially important in Japan, where women seem to have been marginalized and underrepresented in civil society. Interestingly, a survey of the literature shows a considerable range and variety of activities associated with the representation of women's interests [11–17]. For instance, Asakura et al. [12] found that women's groups and departments in labor unions had formed alliances to influence political elites and achieve outcomes in the policymaking process regarding the Gender Equality in Employment Act from the 1970s to the 1980s. Moreover, the Gender Equality Bureau [14] revealed that neighborhood associations in Noshiro City (Akita Prefecture), Sagami City (Kanagawa Prefecture), and Kurihara City (Miyagi Prefecture) have included women's perspectives in their activities and have been working to create a community in which all citizens, regardless of age or sex, can live freely [14].

These findings indicate that women's interests have been represented in Japan's civil society to some extent. However, relatively little is known about how much women have been represented and who in civil society seeks to influence the political sphere to articulate women's interests in Japan because scholarship on women and politics has predominantly focused on groups specifically identified as “women's groups” and their activities in civil society [18–25]. Moreover, civil society studies in Japan pay comparably little attention to gender inequality in civil society, except for studies by Ushiro and Sakamoto [26]



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and Ushiro and Yamamoto [27], which have revealed that there are gender biases in the leadership of civil society organizations in Japan. Therefore, this study addresses the extent of women's representation in civil society and identifies those who represent women's interests in Japan's civil society using survey data from civil society organizations in Japan. The next section briefly reviews the existing literature on Japan's civil society and women's organizations. The third section outlines the data analyzed and the method of analysis used in this study. The fourth sections discuss the results of the analysis, before offering the paper's conclusions in the final section.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Operationalizing Women's Interests in Japan

Celis [28] surveyed past literature to reveal that empirical studies and theoretical reflections of scholars, such as Diamond and Hartsock [29], Phillips [30], and Young [31] have operationalized women's interests as follows:

"First, women's interests are defined (or operationalized) as *issues* that are related to the private sphere; women's issues are linked to their bodies, sexuality, and the possibility of giving birth. Second, and of course firmly intertwined with the first, women's issues refer to the position of women in the public domain, and specifically in the labor force and the welfare state. Thirdly, women's issues might have a feminist aim to overcome discrimination and to achieve equality and autonomy, be it in the private or the public sphere" (p. 6, emphasis added).

As Celis et al. [32] indicated, women's issues are varied, although the existing literature typically defines "women's issues" as including reproductive rights, equal pay, violence against women, education, women's health, maternity leave, childcare, and legal issues surrounding marriage and divorce (pp. 163–164).

The extant literature on Japan's women's movements or activities in civil society has shown that they are more active in addressing broader issues related to women's bodies and daily lives, such as caregiving, social welfare, consumer protection, environment, and social justice, which are occasionally related to existing gendered roles, such as those of mothers or wives, rather than feminist issues [20,21,23,25,33,34]. For instance, Shindo noted the following:

"In Japan, where the traditional gender roles have remained strong, many women tend to play roles associated with birth, nurturing, and caregiving. The value of the preservation of health has been greatly emphasized in relation to processes that have a negative impact on the living environment, such as pollution, over-consumption, and disrupted education. For this reason, they have identified the "3K (environment [*Kankyō*], education [*Kyōiku*], and caregiving [*Kaigo*])" as the main issues to be dealt with in their lives" [25] (pp. 330–340).

Kinoshita [20] (p. 602) also argued that women in Japan tend to participate in social movements primarily focused on educational, consumer, social, and peace issues. Similarly, Park [23] concluded that women in Japan are more likely to join welfare, environmental, and consumer groups, while groups dealing with women's/feminist issues remain relatively uncommon.

At the same time, however, despite the lack of mainstream acceptance, feminist women's movements have consistently existed in the Japanese society. Typical examples include the women's liberation movements in the 1970s, and the #MeToo and #Kutoo movements (the latter aiming to stop Japanese employers from requiring women to wear high heels in the workplace) in the 2010s [15,17]. Given the Japanese context, women's interests encompass diverse issues. Thus, this paper takes a similarly wide view of women's issues, including feminist issues and broader matters related to women's bodies and daily lives, such as caregiving, social welfare, consumer protection, the environment, and social justice.

2.2. Who in Civil Society Represents Women in Japan?

The scholarship on women and politics predominantly focuses on women's groups and the activities of women in civil society. Although Japan's second-wave feminism movement is marginal, compared to those in Western countries [35], women's movements undertake the role of agenda setting and making citizens realize that gender inequality exists in Japanese civil society [36]. As Miura [17] indicated, many women gained awareness, spoke out, and tried to get involved in politics—through platforms, such as the Parite Cafe, Yuru Femi Cafe, and the Angry Girls' Association—after the Great East Japan Earthquake, which brought various social problems to the surface. The more recent movements such as #Metoo have also been included in this trend of women's movements led by women.

At the same time, however, women's groups are not the only actors that care about and represent women's interests [10,37]. In Japan, civic groups, such as consumer co-operatives or environmental groups, have been regarded as the most important actors for women's interests [16,17,19–21,23–25,37–44]. Academic groups, who have sometimes been criticized for being too willing to compromise during the policymaking processes, have also been central actors, especially after the 1990s. For instance, Otake [43] reported that academic groups, including male scholars and gender-related project teams led by central government ministries and agencies, prefectures, and municipalities, took initiative after radical feminist groups were gradually marginalized in women's movements [43] (Chap. 5–6). Moreover, academic groups, such as the Academy for Gender Parity (Parite akademī), also started fostering women candidates to achieve gender equality in national diet and local assemblies in the late 2010s [45].

Although they have been marginalized in women's history [38], labor unions have also represented women's interests [12,20]. For instance, Asakura et al. [12] found that during the policymaking process of the Gender Equality in Employment Act from the 1970s to the 1980s, women's groups, such as the Group for Our Gender Equality in Employment Act (Watashi tachi no danjo koyō kintōhō o tsukuru kai) and women's departments in labor unions formed an alliance to influence political elites and generate outcomes that were favorable to them [12].

3. Methods

3.1. Research Questions

According to these articles, women's interest are wide and complex. However, how much women are represented and who represents women's interests in Japan's civil society are not necessarily revealed. Therefore, this article addresses the relationship between gender and civil society using survey data from civil society organizations in Japan. Accordingly, it addresses the following research questions to examine the current situation of Japanese civil society:

RQ1: What are the differences in the proportions of male and female leaders and staff in civil society organizations?

RQ2: How much are women's interests represented?

RQ3: Who in civil society represent women's interests in Japan?

In answering these questions, this article contributes to the arguments on gender inequality and women's representation in civil society, a subject that has not been sufficiently considered in previous research.

3.2. Data Set

For this paper, the author used the data set named the Japan Interest Group Study 4 (J-JIGS4), which surveyed 4400 organizations randomly selected from the 9719 listed under "Organizations/Unions" in the telephone directories of Tokyo and Ibaraki Prefecture (the so-called town pages). They used a mail survey format, in which a survey form was sent to the addresses of the 4400 organizations to be filled out and returned. However, the responding organizations could also choose to respond online. Therefore, all mailings were sent by post, but the form of response varied between postal and web surveys. The survey

was conducted between February and March 2017. The questionnaire was mailed to the chosen 4400 organizations, and responses were received from 1303. Therefore, the response rate was 29.6% (1303/4400).

The questionnaire contained 53 questions with five broad sections. It was designed to gather basic information about civil society organizations (goals of organization activities, etc.), the nature of their interactions with administrations and political parties (lobbying strategies, networking, political influence, etc.), relationships among civil society organizations (trust built with other civil society organizations, cooperative/uncooperative relationships with other civil society organizations, etc.), changes in the economic and social environment that affect organizations, and the operation of organizations (year of establishment, resources, etc.). This article mainly focused on the basic information about civil society organizations.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Gender Inequality in Japan's Civil Society

What are the differences in the proportions of leaders and staff in civil society organizations between men and women? Not shown in the figure, women make up only 6.7% of the total number of leaders as a whole, with men making up the majority. These figures are not high compared to other sectors. Table 1 shows the proportion of women in major leadership positions in various fields. Specifically, the percentage of women in leadership positions in various fields is as follows: 10.1% of members of the House of Representatives, 20.7% of members of the House of Councillors, 9.9% of members of prefectural assemblies, 6.4% of prefectural governors, 33.4% of national public employees through the recruitment examination, 21.3% of judges, 23.5% of public prosecutors, 18.4% of lawyers. It indicates that the size of the gender gap in civil society organizations is as wide as, or sometimes wider than, that in the political and economic spheres, which are often criticized as hotbeds of gender inequality, especially in comparison with their international counterparts.

At the same time, however, women account for 44.8% of the total staff in each civil society organization on average, and the median is just 50%. Based on the preliminary figures from the 2018 Labor Force Survey conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the percentage of women in the workforce was 44.1%, so it can be assumed that the percentage of female staff in individual civil society organizations is roughly the same as the percentage of women in the workforce as a whole. Therefore, it can be concluded that the gender bias is small for the employees of individual civil society organizations.

Table 1. Proportion of women in major leadership positions in various fields (unit: %).

<Politics>	%
Diet members (House of Representatives)	10.1
Diet members (House of Councillors)	20.7
Members of prefectural assemblies	9.9
Members of city and ward assemblies	14.6
Members of town and village assemblies	9.8
Prefectural governors	6.4
Mayors	2.3
Mayors of towns and villages	0.6

Table 1. Cont.

<Politics>	%
<Public Administration>	%
National public employees through the recruitment examination	33.4
National public employees in positions equivalent to director of central government ministries and agencies	4.4
Members of national advisory councils and committees	37.4
Local public employees in positions equivalent to directors of prefectural government offices	9.8
Members of advisory councils and committees of prefectures	31.9
Members of advisory councils and committees of city, ward, town, and village governments	26.2
<Justice>	%
Public prosecutors	23.5
Judges	21.3
Lawyers	18.4
<Economic Field>	%
Employees in positions equivalent to section manager level in private corporations	10.3
Employees in positions equivalent to department manager in private corporations	6.6
Executives in listed companies	3.7
<Media>	%
Journalists (Japan Newspaper Publishers & Editors Association)	19.4

Source: Gender Equality Bureau [11].

4.2. How Much Are Women's Interests Represented?

As mentioned, the range of women's interests can be wide and complex, and it can cover a broader range of issues than previous notions of what could be considered "women's issues" in a narrower sense; it includes welfare, peace and security, and the 3K issues (*Kankyō*, *Kyōiku*, and *Kaigo*—that is, "environment, education, and caregiving"). This paper uses factor analysis and cluster analysis to reveal women's interests and to identify groups that could represent them. Considering the nature of women's interests, which are covered by various kinds of organizations, these methods were considered appropriate for such analysis.

The survey listed 29 specific issues and asked in which ones each civil society organization was interested. Table 2 indicates the descriptive statistics of 29 specific issues that each organization was interested in, and these were used for factor analysis.

Table 2. Average and standard deviation (SD) of each organizational interest.

	Average	SD
Fiscal issues	0.10	0.305
Financial issues	0.09	0.283
Trade and international commerce issues	0.07	0.248
Industrial promotion issues	0.26	0.440
Civic engineering, construction, and public works issues	0.12	0.331
Transportation and traffic issues	0.10	0.299
Communication and information issues	0.08	0.272
Scientific technology and research issues	0.09	0.285
Local development issues/ Rural development	0.13	0.333
Diplomatic issues	0.02	0.155
Peace and security issues	0.06	0.243
Law and order	0.04	0.187
Justice and human rights	0.06	0.238
Educational issues	0.20	0.399
Women's issues	0.07	0.261
Local government and administrative issues	0.12	0.320
Labor issues	0.15	0.360
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries issues	0.16	0.369
Consumer protection	0.12	0.322
Environment issues	0.21	0.409
Social welfare issues/ Healthcare issues	0.25	0.431
International exchange, cooperation, and aid issues	0.14	0.342
Academic, sports, and recreational issues	0.22	0.411
Tourist issues	0.09	0.293
Energy and natural resources issues	0.06	0.238
Disaster prevention issues	0.14	0.345
Fire safety issues	0.03	0.173
Group support issues	0.11	0.312
Others	0.06	0.239

Table 3 shows the complete results of the factor analysis. The extraction method used was the principal factor method with Kaiser–Varimax rotation, and nine factors were extracted. Financial issues, fiscal issues, trade and international commerce issues, communication and information issues, transportation and traffic issues, tourist issues, and consumer protection are associated with Factor 1, termed “key industries.” Fire safety issues, disaster prevention issues, and law and order fall under Factor 2 (termed law and order/disaster prevention), while women’s issues, labor issues, social welfare/healthcare issues, justice and human rights, and local government and administrative issues are associated with Factor 3 (termed women, social welfare, and human rights). Peace and security issues, diplomatic issues, international exchange, cooperation, and aid issues are associated with Factor 4 (termed peace and international relations). Academic, sports, and recreational issues, and educational issues are associated with Factor 5 (termed academia, culture, and education), while energy and natural resources issues, science, technology, and research issues are associated with Factor 6 (termed technology and energy). Factor 7 consists of issues related to industrial promotion, while Factor 8 covers civic engineering, construction, and public works issues (termed local development), and local development issues/ rural development. Finally, Factor 9 covers environment issues, in general, as well as agriculture, forestry, and fisheries issues (termed environment).

Table 3. Factor analysis of organizations' issues.

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	Factor 9
Financial issues	0.593	−0.008	0.052	0.005	−0.048	0.020	0.107	0.052	0.083
Fiscal issues	0.467	0.035	0.149	0.049	−0.011	0.038	−0.021	0.059	0.073
Trade and international commerce issues	0.441	−0.003	−0.078	0.074	−0.024	0.191	0.190	0.066	0.071
Communication and information issues	0.407	0.095	−0.018	0.062	0.150	0.262	0.025	0.241	−0.112
Transportation and traffic issues	0.357	0.115	0.032	0.068	0.040	0.159	0.035	0.291	−0.041
Tourist issues	0.343	0.142	−0.002	0.004	0.372	−0.014	0.082	0.138	0.198
Consumer protection	0.328	0.090	0.165	0.034	0.055	0.056	0.247	−0.073	0.243
Fire safety issues	0.018	0.626	0.000	0.022	0.010	0.031	0.007	0.021	0.017
Disaster prevention issues	−0.037	0.568	0.082	0.017	0.075	0.110	0.034	0.212	0.128
Law and order	0.160	0.476	0.098	0.195	0.057	0.018	−0.040	0.022	−0.088
Women's issues	0.079	0.023	0.556	0.266	0.174	0.149	0.061	0.037	0.137
Labor issues	0.173	0.032	0.408	0.107	0.022	0.017	0.128	0.207	0.012
Social welfare issues/Healthcare issues	−0.048	0.034	0.388	−0.010	0.059	0.010	−0.103	−0.071	−0.106
Justice and human rights	0.108	0.118	0.361	0.327	0.080	0.010	0.001	0.033	−0.087
Local government and administrative issues	0.241	0.245	0.350	0.092	0.093	−0.006	0.007	0.240	0.162
Peace and security issues	0.050	0.132	0.263	0.653	0.069	0.026	−0.075	0.010	0.064
Diplomatic issues	0.074	0.055	0.021	0.534	0.166	0.113	0.045	0.024	0.009
International exchange, cooperation, and aid issues	−0.022	−0.018	0.106	0.340	0.456	0.232	0.064	0.072	0.010
Academic, sports, and recreational issues	−0.021	0.066	0.025	0.046	0.547	0.055	−0.058	−0.093	−0.042
Educational issues	−0.052	0.002	0.272	0.177	0.471	0.059	0.001	0.054	0.006
Energy and natural resources issues	0.079	0.131	0.113	0.104	0.048	0.552	0.019	0.092	0.189
Science, technology, and research issues	0.167	−0.011	−0.011	0.053	0.102	0.484	0.086	0.046	0.021
Industrial promotion issues	0.234	−0.011	−0.038	−0.024	−0.021	0.131	0.704	0.170	0.005
Civic engineering, construction, and public works issues	0.155	0.150	0.027	−0.017	−0.103	0.153	0.153	0.417	0.013
Local development issues/Rural development	0.270	0.170	0.160	0.078	0.270	0.005	0.085	0.392	0.263
Environment issues	0.005	0.206	0.162	0.021	0.134	0.286	0.095	0.072	0.431
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries issues	0.100	−0.036	−0.098	0.005	−0.045	0.041	−0.020	0.006	0.335
Group support issues	0.098	0.201	0.184	0.059	0.183	0.013	0.159	0.103	0.015
Others	0.084	0.072	0.077	0.065	−0.042	−0.038	0.015	−0.042	0.007
Contribution ratio (%)	5.662	4.320	4.234	3.943	3.930	3.140	2.538	2.531	2.164
Cumulative contribution ratio (%)	5.662	9.982	14.216	18.158	22.089	25.229	27.767	30.298	32.462

Note: Values of 0.3 or above are highlighted.

Moreover, to find a group representing women's issues, Ward's hierarchical cluster analysis was used with principal component scores extracted from the factor analysis above. Six clusters were defined, and Table 4 shows the average value for each factor in each cluster.

Table 4. Average of each cluster.

	N	Avg. Factor 1	Avg. Factor 2	Avg. Factor 3	Avg. Factor 4	Avg. Factor 5	Avg. Factor 6	Avg. Factor 7	Avg. Factor 8	Avg. Factor 9
Cluster 1	759	−0.13	−0.41	−0.11	−0.13	−0.11	−0.17	−0.02	−0.18	−0.08
Cluster 2	254	0.15	1.22	0.12	−0.18	−0.26	−0.17	−0.17	−0.07	−0.05
Cluster 3	30	−0.44	−0.06	0.07	3.6	−0.35	−0.39	−0.06	−0.18	0.02
Cluster 4	28	3.3	0.69	1.34	0.55	0.86	0.63	0.19	0.55	0.18
Cluster 5	131	−0.18	−0.11	0.02	0.13	1.18	1.4	0.59	0.17	0.37
Cluster 6	64	0.11	−0.06	0.21	0.02	−0.33	−0.26	−0.34	1.97	0.33

Note: Values of 0.3 or above are highlighted.

Importantly, Cluster 4 with the highest average for Factor 3 (women, social welfare, and human rights) may best fit our theoretical definition of organizations representing women’s interests. Cluster 4 also had high values of Factors 1 (key industries), Factors 2 (law and order/disaster prevention), 4 (peace and international relations), 5 (academia, culture, and education), 6 (technology and energy), and 8 (local development). As this cluster seems to best represent women’s interests in Japan, we can label this cluster “organizations representing women’s interests.”

Regarding other clusters, Cluster 2 had the highest average for Factor 2 (law and order/disaster prevention) and could be labeled “organizations representing law and order/disaster prevention.” Cluster 3 had the highest average for Factor 4 (peace and international relations) and could be termed “organizations representing peace and international relations.” Cluster 5, with the highest average for Factor 5 (academia, culture, and education). Cluster 5 also had high values for Factors 6 (technology and energy), 7 (industrial promotion), and 9 (environment) and could be termed “organizations representing issues in general.” Cluster 6 had the highest average for Factor 8 (local development) and a relatively high average for Factor 9 (environment). This cluster could therefore be termed “organizations representing local development and environment.” Finally, Cluster 1 showed negative values on all variables and thus is termed “apathetic organizations.”

As shown in Table 5, apathetic organizations formed the cluster type with the highest percentage (60.0%), followed by industrial promotion (20.1%) and issues in general (10.3%). Regarding women’s issues, the results indicate that organizations representing women’s interests are limited (2.2 %).

Table 5. The number of organizations in each cluster.

	Label	Frequency	%
Cluster 1	Apathetic	759	60.0
Cluster 2	Law and order/Disaster prevention	254	20.1
Cluster 3	Peace and international relations	30	2.4
Cluster 4	Women	28	2.2
Cluster 5	Issues in general	131	10.3
Cluster 6	Local development and environment	64	5.1
Total		1266	100.0

4.3. Who in Civil Society Represent Women’s Interests in Japan?

Using these six clusters, this study examines who in Japan’s civil society claims to represent women’s interests. The factor we focused on was the organization type. The survey listed 13 specific organizational types, such as agriculture, forestry, and fisheries groups, labor groups, civic groups, religious groups, etc. These organizational types are not the same as the issues mentioned earlier, and a different question was used in this section. Organizations were asked to choose one option as applicable to them. Although “women’s groups” or “environmental groups” were not provided as options, they were included as part of “civic groups.”

Table 6 shows the proportion for each cluster by organizational type. The results indicate that economic and business groups, civic groups (which include women's groups and environmental groups), administrative groups, political groups, labor groups, and groups are central actors in representing women's interests. These findings are consistent with the fact that organizations not generally categorized as women's organizations—consumers' cooperatives, social welfare councils, labor unions, and academic organizations—have been addressing women's issues and representing women's interests, as discussed in the Section 2. Moreover, the fact that labor groups represent women's interests as much as civic groups, which include women's organizations, indicates that labor unions, and all organizations with a high proportion of men—have been trying to organize women and articulate women's interests.

Table 6. Organization type.

	Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Groups	Economic/Business Groups	Labor Groups	Educational Groups	Administrative Groups	Health/Welfare Groups	Professional Groups
Apathetic	14.00%	15.10%	6.30%	4.50%	8.70%	11.00%	5.20%
Law and order/Disaster prevention	11.80%	61.40%	4.30%	2.40%	5.10%	2.40%	3.90%
Peace and international relations	6.70%	20.00%	0%	0%	3.30%	3.30%	3.30%
Women	0%	57.20%	7.10%	0%	10.70%	0%	0%
Issues in general	2.30%	8.60%	19.50%	6.30%	4.70%	6.30%	4.70%
Local development and environment	8.10%	38.70%	3.20%	0%	8.10%	0%	9.70%
Total	11.60%	26.30%	7.00%	3.80%	7.40%	7.80%	5.00%
	Political Groups	Civic Groups	Arts/ Cultural/Scholarly Groups	Sports/ Recreation Groups	Religious Groups	Other Type of Groups	N
Apathetic	0.40%	9.10%	12.70%	6.70%	0.70%	5.60%	748
Law and order/Disaster prevention	0%	0%	4.70%	0.40%	0%	3.50%	254
Peace and international relations	0%	53.30%	0%	3.30%	0%	6.70%	30
Women	10.70%	10.7%	3.60%	0%	0%	0%	28
Issues in general	3.10%	21.90%	14.10%	3.10%	2.30%	3.10%	128
Local development and environment	0%	6.50%	24.20%	0%	0%	1.60%	62
Total	0.80%	9.30%	11.30%	4.50%	0.60%	4.60%	1250

5. Conclusions

This study examined how much women and women's interests are represented and who represents women's interests in Japan's civil society. Feminist scholars have pointed out that gender inequality is embedded in civil society, while mainstream civil society theorists tend to describe civil society as a free and equal space. The extant research on women and politics has predominantly focused on avowedly women's organizations, such as women's liberation movements or the various #MeToo movements, as central actors representing women's interests and acting for gender equality.

As the extant research pointed out, this article found gender inequality in Japan's civil society. Specifically, civil society organizations generally have male leaders and around half their staff members are male. However, in contrast to the extant research, this analysis makes an original contribution to civil society studies, as well as gender studies, by exploring how much and who in civil society represents women's interests in Japan. It indicates that the number of organizations representing women's interests are limited, with only 2.2% representing women's interests. Interestingly, the central actors representing

women's interests include economic and business groups, political groups, labor groups, and civic groups such as women's groups.

Many remaining issues can be explored in further research into women's interests in civil society. How and why does gender inequality in civil society differ by country? How is gender inequality related to other factors such as traditional gender norms? To make our findings more robust, we will need to conduct a complete enumeration of civil society organizations in Japan. We hope to deal with these areas in more detail in future research projects.

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