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Female Japanese Entrepreneurship
Emily Julius

Overview of Japan:
The 2015 Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum provides interesting quantitative data on the equality women in Japan face. Japan has a GDP of 4779.54 billion in United States dollars and a total population of 127.13 million. Japan has a -1.6 percent population growth. Japan currently ranks 101st out of 145 countries and .67 on the equality scale, with 1 being complete equality. For comparison purposes, the United States ranks 28th out of 145 countries and .74 on the equality scale, with 1 being complete equality. According to the report, Japan performs weakest in economic participation and opportunity as well as political empowerment.

Research/Interviews
1. Do you feel that you have an opportunity to have a successful traditional business career in Japan?
2. What are the top three constraints that would prevent you from starting your own business in Japan?
3. What would be the method in which you started your own business in Japan? Would you utilize technology or would you utilize a brick and mortar approach?
4. What would help you and your business achieve success in Japan?
5. Age? Marital Status? Children?

Womenomics:
The primary goal of Womenomics is to have women occupying 30 percent of all leadership positions, such as heads of local government, members of parliament, and corporate executives, by 2020.

A law enacted in August of 2015 “obliges companies with 301 or more employees to map out and publicize action programs to promote women, including through the setting of numerical targets for female managers, by April 2016”.

In December of 2015, the Japanese government abandoned its primary goal of women in 30 percent of management roles by 2020 and approved a new gender equality road map that decreased original targets. While the Cabinet Office insists the 30 percent figure remains the general goal, the drastic lowering of expectations acknowledges poor progress to date in areas such as government service.

Hypothesis:
I anticipate that various social constraints, gender roles, and the government would be the specific primary factors that prevent or discourage female entrepreneurs from achieving success. I believe that family support, access to technology, and potential government assistance will be the main elements that are necessary for a female Japanese entrepreneur to achieve success.

Japanese Legislation Regarding Women:
- Right to Vote
- Right to Enter State and National Universities
- Equal Employment Opportunity Law Enacted
- Child Care and Family Leave Law
- Labor Ministry Defines Sexual Harassment
- Basic Act for Gender Equal Society
- Charter for Gender Equal Society
- Revision of Child Care and Family Care Leave Law
- Act Concerning Promotion of Women's Career Activities

Reasons for Having Left a Job Before/After Pregnancy:
- Loss of motivation due to change in job duties and responsibilities after childbirth
- Employer’s dismissal or suggestion to leave
- Difficulty balancing work and childcare despite wishes to continue work
- Difficulty of continuing work due to the husband's location of work or transfer
- Reasons not directly related to marriage, childbirth, or childcare
- Voluntary resignation to focus on housework and childcare
- No particular reason
- Other

Conclusion:
Through the use of the Internet, a more visible and proactive Womenomics program, as well as a fundamental cultural and traditional shift that enforces work-life balance and female empowerment, female Japanese entrepreneurs can find success in Japan.