

Paternity Leave Yields Nothing but Benefit

Lecturer: Representative Director & President of Sakata Manufacturing Co. Ltd. **SAKATA Takumi**

Sakata Co., Ltd is founded for 1990 years and is in Yoita-machi, Nagaoka-city. Main fields of business include the design, development, manufacture, sale and installation supervision of metal folded-roof components and solar panel mounting hardware and frameworks for public facility (non-residential) and industrial use.

President SAKATA was a guest lecturer on the good practices of this meeting of collaborative and Partner Institutions for Diversity.



★White Company Award Grand Prize

Sakata Manufacturing has received the White Company Award for two consecutive years and awarded the Grand Prize: we won First Prize. Our company, an early adopter of teleworking, has made full use of it at all of our offices.

★Absence of women in managerial positions was pointed out

When visiting our company, work-life consultant Ms. Komuro Yoshie pointed out that we had no women in managerial positions. In fact, it had happened before that a candidate woman employee declined our offer. The employee said, "I do not want to be the center of attention. I do not want to take a responsible position. I prefer to remain as I am." I asked Ms. Komuro how we can promote women to executive positions. She replied: "Have you not expected women? Without expectations, no woman would try to meet expectations." This made me realize something. I immediately assembled all women employees and offered my apologies.

★Coming out with a policy of 100% consumption of paternity leave and zero hours of overtime

I came up with a policy of 100% consumption of paternity leave and zero hours of overtime. First, employees voiced their concerns, saying: "We cannot meet deadlines for delivery," and "We will lose customers' trust." Still, I send my enthusiastic message to all our employees: "I do not care if the company's performance drops!" That is because none of our employees would lose the customers' trust. Our sales were increasing.

We highly applauded men who took paternity leave by giving the IKUMEN (fathers who are proactively involved in parenting) award and acknowledged their management by giving them an IKUBOSS (bosses who have a good understanding of the IKUMEN) award.

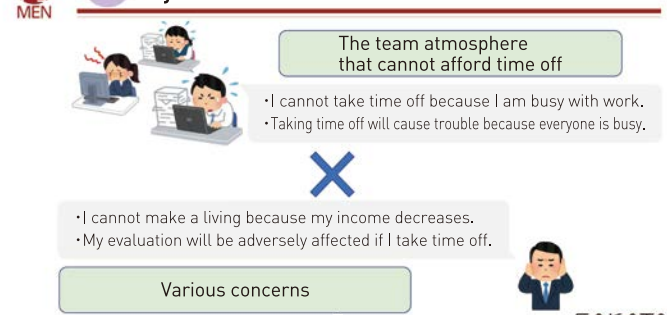
★Fewer singles and more childbirths

After adopting a policy of zero hours of overtime, the number of single employees has dropped, but those choosing to rear children have increased. The facial expressions of men change after taking paternity leave. They come to have the face of a good father and good husband.

★Paternity leave changes men's awareness

Paternity leave brings a change in men's awareness. Men become unable to say, "Fix me dinner quickly." They come to realize how difficult parenting is and deeply consider cooperation with their spouse. Their feelings of gratitude to supervisors and colleagues ultimately improve teamwork.

1 Understanding of the present situation by which one cannot afford to take time off



2 Clarification of policies



3 Establishment of mechanisms



DIVERSITY



ダイバーシティ 2019 MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) Initiative for the Implementation of the Diversity Research Environment (Driving Type)



Greeting

"We promote diversity by disseminating information to KOSEN throughout Japan."

Industries have been compelled to develop new products and business models and to improve high productivity through collaborative efforts with diverse technologies and talented people. We think that places of education similarly must create educational environments in which diverse students can develop their capabilities according to their personalities. To this end, it is crucially important for institute of Technology (hereinafter called KOSEN), with their mission is to develop engineers, to promote diversity sufficient to enable different people to be active, including women teachers in charge of high levels of engineering education.

This project is designed to promote diversity centered on tri-institutional cooperation with Nagaoka University of Technology, the representative institution, and eTrust Co. Ltd., a local company. We promote diversity that incorporates maximum consideration KOSEN's environment and identity in cooperation with Nagaoka University of Technology that has a very close relationship with KOSEN. The achievements and their importance will be disseminated to KOSEN throughout Japan.

KOSEN is expected to contribute to regional revitalization. The National Institute of Technology(KOSEN), Nagaoka College has been promoting education and research in cooperation with numerous local companies. In that sense, we hope that the project can contribute to women engineers to be active in the region through cooperation with local companies in promoting diversity.

General Manager of Co-implementing Institutions
President of National Institute of Technology(KOSEN), Nagaoka College **HARADA Nobuhiro**

We conducted a questionnaire survey of work-life balance (February 2020) for 1,819 instructors, staff members, and graduate students at cooperating institutions.

Results particularly related to researchers are presented below.



1 The response that "I feel busy and tired" was given mostly by women.

About 70% of women researchers responded as "I feel tired because I have been too busy," followed by "I sometimes want to quit my current job." Although about 45% of male researchers similarly responded that "I feel tired because I have been too busy," about 40% stated that they have "no particular" daily worries.

2 It is difficult for women to secure time for research or work because they are burdened by responsibilities for parenting and educating children.

About 50% of female researchers and about 40% of male researchers live with a child(ren) who is a high school student or younger. About 30% of women live separately from their spouse and feel that they cannot do research or work because of parenting.

3 Men and women differ in their respective degrees of awareness of reasons for the small number of female researchers and plans for improvement.

Both men and women researchers most commonly responded that "there is social prejudice that women are unsuited to being researchers". However, women referred to a "tendency to hire men" to a similar degree. As measures to increase the number of women researchers, women requested cultivation of leaders, managers, and professors of the same sex, whereas men described the ease of taking leaves of absence and days off. A marked gap in their awareness persists.

4 Graduate students require a change in awareness.

Among graduate students' responses open-ended questions, we found some ill feelings, such as "Men's rights have been suppressed" and "Do not take measures to give preferential treatment to women," as well as preconceptions about the division of roles between men and women, such as "Men should work and women should be feminine."

Thank you for your cooperation in responding to the questionnaire

Purpose : To understand the actual situation and needs to improve research environments and the ways of working

Subjects : Instructors, staff members, and graduate students at three cooperating institutions

Method : Web survey

Period : January 27 – February 18, 2020

Main questions:

- 26 questions were asked about the following.
- Attributes of respondents
- Support for women researchers
- Balancing of work and life
- Parenting and caregiving

Results:

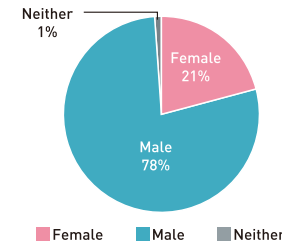


Fig. 1 Gender characteristics.

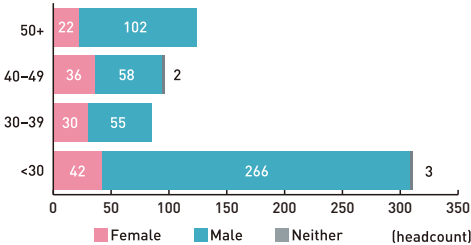


Fig. 2 Age distribution by gender.

Table 1 Number of responses and collection rates by affiliation

Affiliation	Job type	Enrollment	By gender	Number of responses	Collection rates	
Nagaoka University of Technology	Teacher	200	Female	17	64.7%	
			Male	183	45.9%	
	Staff	253	Female	131	45.0%	
			Male	122	51.6%	
	Graduate	1,187	Female	138	25.4%	
			Male	1,049	25.0%	
Subtotal	1,640	Female	281	105	37.4%	
National Institute of Technology, Nagaoka College	Teacher	78	Female	10	60.0%	
			Male	68	39.7%	
	Staff	60	Female	23	12	52.2%
			Male	37	13	35.1%
	Subtotal	138	Female	33	18	54.5%
			Male	105	40	38.1%
eTrust Co., Ltd.	Employee	41	Female	8	7	87.5%
			Male	33	27	81.8%
Subtotal			Female	322	130	40.4%
Total			Male	1,490	476	31.9%
				1,819	606	33.3%

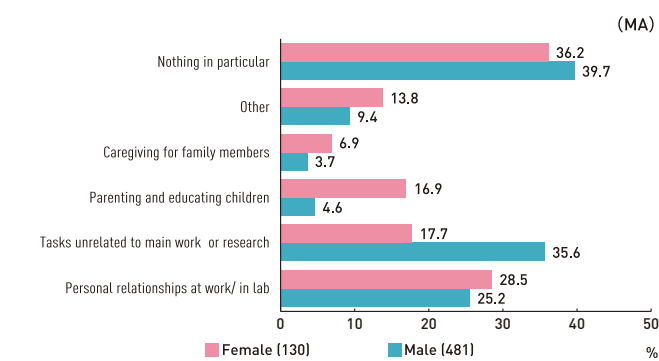


Fig. 3 Factors hindering research or work.

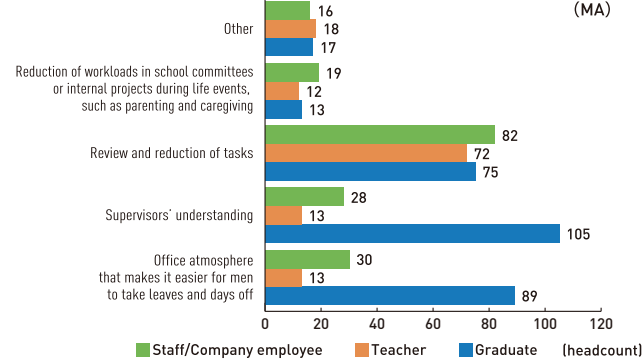


Fig. 4 Necessities for balancing work/research and family life (by job type).

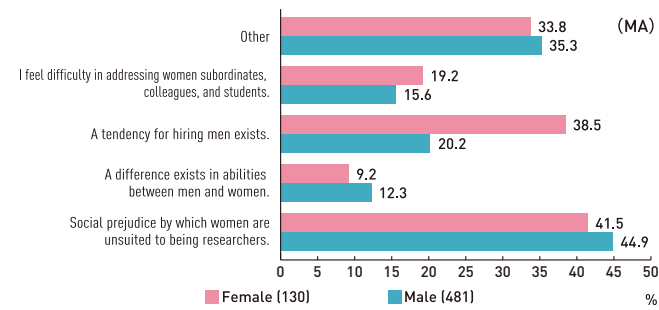


Fig. 5 Reasons for the small number of women researchers and engineers.

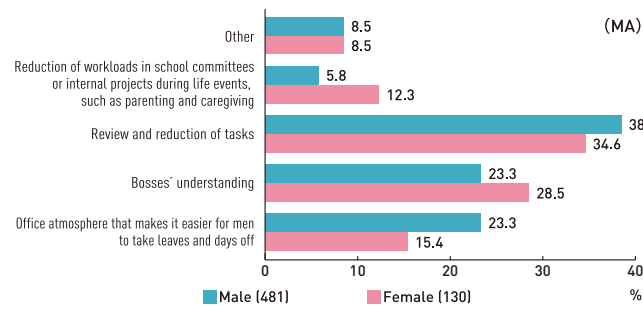


Fig. 6 Necessities for balancing work/research and family life.

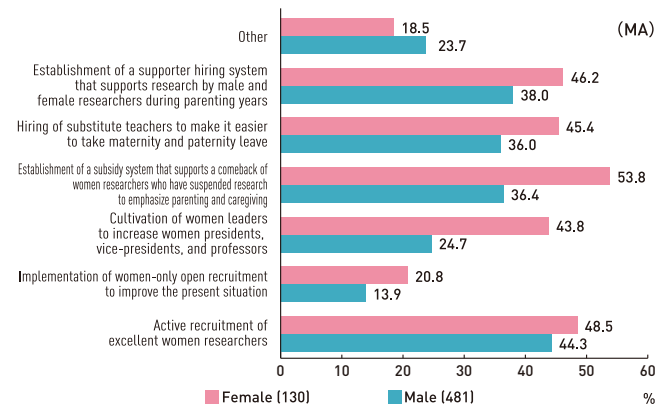


Fig. 7 Measures needed to increase women researchers.

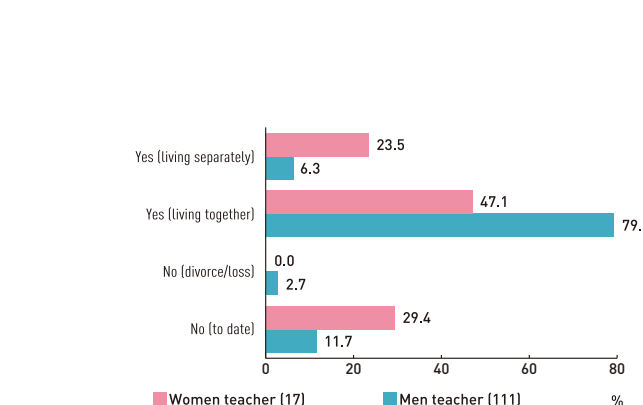


Fig. 8 Whether having a spouse or partner or not, whether living together or separately.

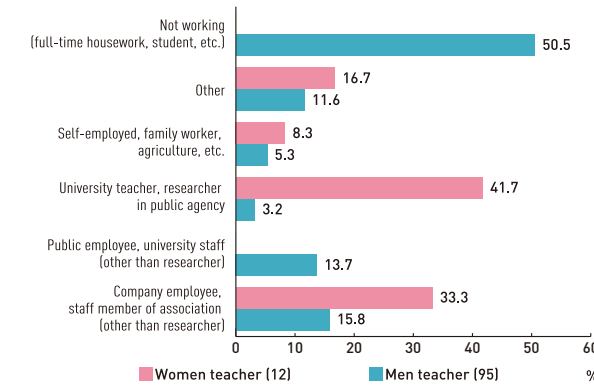


Fig. 9 Whether a spouse or partner is employed or not, the spouse's or partner's occupation.

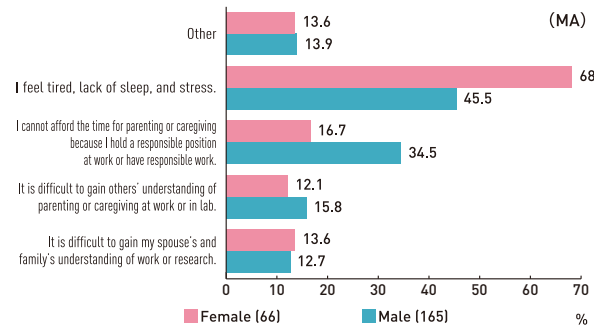


Fig. 11 Difficulties in balancing parenting or caregiving and work/research.

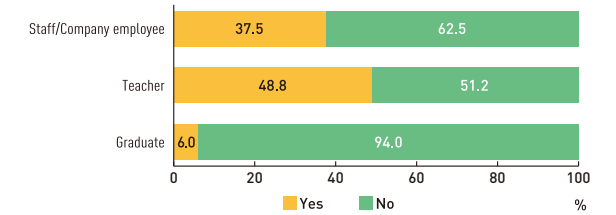


Fig. 10 Whether having a child (0 - high school student) living together or not.

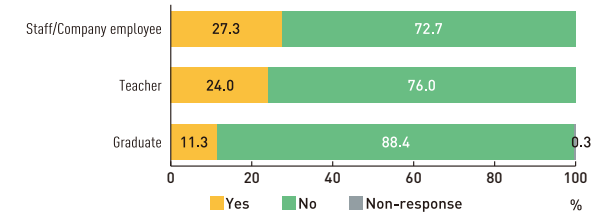


Fig. 12 Whether having a family member in need of care or not.

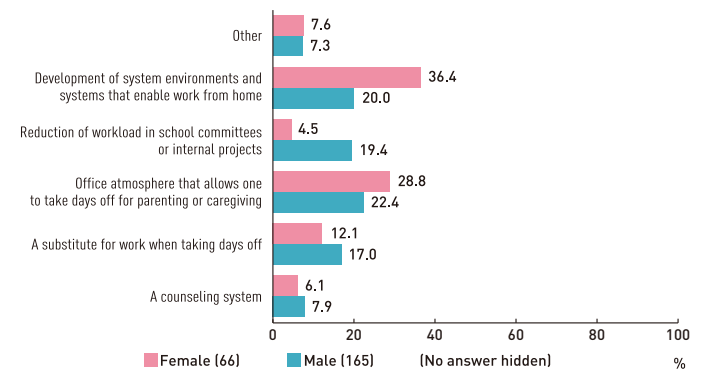


Fig. 13 Support necessary for parenting and caregiving.

Networking to Support Local Women Researchers and Engineers

The First Meeting of Collaborative and Partner Institutions for Diversity (February 28)



Three cooperating institutions and eight partner institutions for diversity held their first meeting on February 28 (Fri.). With due consideration to the prevention of COVID-19 infection, the meeting details (purpose and schedule) were determined with 31 participants.

Additionally, we exchanged opinions under the theme of "A possibility of a support network for women's active participation through industry-academia-government-finance collaboration." Various expectations and requests were expressed: "Even though they are studying design, people become unable to continue working because of childbirth and parenting. It is also difficult to come back to work." As networks for nursing-related professions exist, people doing designing must also be supported. "We have not encouraged industries, particularly commerce and agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries, sufficiently to promote gender equality. Therefore, I want them to be involved in networking." The encouraging opinion was also given that "Let's create a scenario of diversity for the next generation."



Cooperating Institutions

- President of National Institute of Technology, Nagaoka College **TAKESHIGE Motomu**
- President of Nagaoka University of Technology **AZUMA Nobuhiko**
- President & CEO of eTrust Co. Ltd. **SAKAI Ryuichi**
- Professor of Nagaoka Institute of Design **WATANABE Seisuke**
- Assistant Manager of Division of Policy Planning, Nagaoka City **KAWAKAMI Yuichi**
- Manager of Division of Industrial Location, Nagaoka City **KANEKO Motoaki**
- Manager of Division of Human Rights and Gender Equality, Nagaoka City **KANAGAKI Koji**
- Managing Director of Niigata Electronic Industries Association **NAKANO Makoto**
- Administrative Staff of Niigata Electronic Industries Association **SHIMADA Eriko**