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## DRIVING SUSTAINABLE AND COMPETITIVE TRANSITION IN ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT: THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE JAPANESE LABOUR MARKET

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**ABSTRACT.** The objective of this paper is to examine the relationship between sustainable and competitive transition in enterprise performance management and measurement and the changing role of women in the Japanese labour market. The work correlates the proportion of female employees in leadership positions in relation to the sector type, firm age, profits and encouragement of women's participation in the labour force over six significant periods. The study also examines correlations between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and high productivity, improvement of work-life balance and higher integration of female staff in the workforce. A questionnaire survey was conducted in 152 Japanese companies as part of the research. Non-parametric tests and exploratory data analysis were used for evaluation. The linear-by-linear test was applied to ordinal categories to determine the trend between the proportion of female employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force. The results indicate that partial changes have occurred as far as women in the Japanese labour market are concerned and confirm that working women are faced with persistent obstacles in terms of higher integration of female staff in the workforce and improvement of work-life balance. A future research direction worth considering is a study focused on other countries in Asia, comparing the findings with this paper.

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## **Introduction**

Performance and its management and measurement are a continuous concern for managers in companies worldwide, regardless of their size. Performance measures have become an integral part of decision-making processes. The obtained results help companies assess their goals and strategies and decide on their future course. Barnard (1962) stated that performance measures are part of planning and controlling. Nevertheless, many such measures were focused solely on financial data and were therefore criticised by a number of authors for their historical focus (Dixon et al., 1990), promotion of short-termism (delay of capital investment) (Banks & Wheelwright, 1979; Hayes & Abernathy, 1980), lack of strategic focus (Skinner, 1974), etc. Another objection stated that performance measures were often poorly defined (Neely, 1999). However, as time went by and both experts in the field and the general public became more aware of performance management and measurement practices, these concepts grew to reflect the realities of the business world and focused on specific needs of individual companies in line with the changing environment. The financial aspect has stayed essential but companies have also had to start considering global changes, including rapidly developing technologies, the dismantling of trade barriers, increasing globalization, environmental and societal considerations and the sustainability of our planet (Ahmed et al., 2021; Bititci et al., 2012; Melnyk, 2014; Pomegbe et al., 2020; Rajnoha & Lesnikova, 2016).

Many manuals appeared describing how to effectively implement performance measurement systems and frameworks (that is not just to monitor the measures but also to implement robust concepts/managerial tools that would encourage a more balanced view, dealing with various topics, such as employees, customers, suppliers, internal processes, innovations, finances and others). Nevertheless, many works tend to be more descriptive rather than analytical, which has been reflected by a number of authors (Bourne et al., 2003; Brignall & Modell, 2000; Franco-Santos et al., 2012; Meastrini et al., 2017; Nudurupati et al., 2011), while others focused on the actual and practical impact of the individual solutions (Gomes, 2011; Micheli et al., 2011; Naslund & Norrman, 2019; Pekkola et al., 2016; Steigenberger, 2014). Different authors proposed various solutions in terms of designing performance measurement frameworks, e.g., Keegan et al. (1989) focused on internal and external measures as well as on financial and non-financial measures. Cross & Lynch (1988-89) described a pyramid of measures that incorporates performance through a hierarchical organization. McNair et al. (1990) designed a model called the Performance Pyramid, based on Total Quality Management, while Fitzgerald et al. (1991) focused on results and their determinants. Kaplan & Norton (1992) devised the Balanced Scorecard concept, which addressed 4 basic prospects (financial, customer, internal processes, learning and growth). In comparison, Bourne et al. (2000) focused on designing, implementing and updating performance measurement systems, and Neely et al. (2001) devised a second-generation performance measurement framework, a dimensional model called the Performance Prism. Current successful models include, for example, the Sustainable Enterprise Excellence Model (Edgeman & Eskildsen, 2014), which allows for both the competing and complementary interests of key stakeholder segments and long-term enterprise success.

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Performance management and measurement reflects the individual factors of specific fields, regions, countries or even continents. Despite globalization, countries continue to display certain differences due to historical development, while changes reflecting contemporary turbulent times are slow. As a result, multinational companies are required to tailor their corporate performance management and measurement concepts to address the local context. In addition, there are obvious disparities between collectivist cultures (Japan and China) and individualistic cultures (U.S., Western Europe, etc.).

This study focuses on Japanese enterprises and their approaches to performance management and measurement since 2000, with estimates until 2029. In order to examine the changes in the individual five-year periods, the study has been divided into 6 sub-periods, namely the 1) pre-crisis period (2000 – 2004), 2) financial crisis (2005 – 2009), 3) post-crisis period (2010 – 2014), 4) recent period (2015 – 2019), 5) near future estimates (2020 – 2024) and 6) future estimates (2025 – 2029).

The main aim was to examine the correlations between performance management and measurement practices in Japanese companies with regard to female employees (ordinary as well as leadership positions) because of the changing role of women in the Japanese labour market. Despite many positive changes brought by Prime Minister Shinzō Abe's government between 2012 and 2020 concerning the support of female employees, the proportion of women in the Japanese workforce and those in leadership positions is much smaller than in western countries. A common problem is trying to combine a time-consuming job with frequent overtime with caring for a family. Although the number of women in full-time employment following graduation from a high school or university is growing, these positions are often vacated once the woman reaches her late twenties or early thirties due to the decision to start a family and raise children. This inflexible system is closely linked with the relatively insufficient support companies offer to women to help them return to work once their maternity leave ends, which results in the fact that more than half of the female workforce prefers part-time employment upon their return (Mishima, 2019). In the individual periods, the research focused on the correlation of support women received in companies in relation to high productivity, improving work-life balance and higher integration of female employees. The analysis of linear dependence examined the support women received in companies and the profits achieved by the particular company. Furthermore, the research explored the correlation between the proportion of women in leadership positions and the support of female employees, profits, the company's age and sector. The analysis of linear dependence then studied the effect of the proportion of female employees in leadership positions on the support of female employees in the organization.

Our study addresses the following research questions. Is there a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of women employees in a leadership position and a sector type, firm age, profits and encouragement of women's participation in the labour force? Is there a statistically significant correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and high productivity, improvement of work life balance and higher integration of female staff in the workforce?

This paper is set out as follows: Firstly, the literature review is performed, followed by the research objectives and the methodology. Data collection and analysis are described in the subsequent section, followed by results that are discussed and elaborated upon in the follow-up section. Conclusions, including limitations of this paper and future research directions, are drawn in the last section.

## 1. Theoretical background

To understand performance and its measurement in Japanese companies, it is important to recognize the basic differences between current Japanese companies and their western counterparts. The key distinction lies in the fact that Japanese companies do not usually operate individually but are a part of a keiretsu – a set of companies from different industries. The keiretsu system replaced the zaibatsu system that was structured around family relationships, especially after the Second World War. Japanese intercorporate networks and the influence of economic and regulatory changes on them have been studied by e.g., McGuire & Dow (2003).

Japanese companies are renowned for their customer orientation, efficient business processes and high-quality products. Terms including kaizen (or continuous improvement), 5S system, just-in-time, lean production, quality circles, genchi genbutsu (go and see), job rotation or reflection meetings have become commonplace in many companies around the world and are often familiar to the wider public as well. Japanese enterprises focus on the group rather than on the individual, which is typical for their western counterparts. Japan is a collectivist culture, which means that the well-being of the whole team is more important than the well-being of one individual (Haghirian, 2010). Despite the characteristic attributes of Japanese corporate culture that are still prevalent today, in recent years, Japanese companies have strived to change and have begun implementing a number of policies typical for western businesses, albeit tailored to respect Japanese customs. There have been radical changes in the human resources sector, where greater flexibility is seen in recruitment practices and the traditional orientation on lifelong employment is far from the prevalent option in many companies (Pudelko & Mendenhall, 2007). Moreover, remuneration is no longer governed strictly by seniority but increasingly by performance (Lehmberg et al., 2013). Most Japanese companies also address a common issue of dealing with changes in the employment of women. Historically, the traditional role of women was closely linked with caring for family and household, which started to change greatly during the Second World War (Mackie, 2003). Until then, working away from home was the domain of men.

From the early 1970s, (when the oil and dollar shocks hit Japan), women began working away from home in order to increase the household income, although mostly only part-time (Haghirian, 2009). In 1986, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law came into effect, the aim of which was to support employers to provide equal opportunities for women in the workplace. However, because this law did not include sanctions for employers for noncompliance, it proved ineffective (Babb, 2015). Many companies introduced a system based on separating the management from the administrative or clerical tracks, which in effect continued the gender discrimination prevalent at the time (Weathers, 2001).

Another effect of this law was an increase in the proportion of women studying at universities. Nevertheless, notes Fatehi, “what made it hard for these women to work was, first, the corporate culture that makes people work from the morning until midnight, requiring women, even those with children to take care of, to work the same amount as male colleagues. Second, except for a few Western societies, in the rest of the world females are not granted the same opportunities as males, and do not enjoy the same privileges. The Japanese society, by all accounts, is still a strictly male society” (Fatehi, 1996, p. 175).

The Equal Employment Opportunity Law was revised in 1997 and again in 2006 to include a clearer definition of sex discrimination (Geraghty, 2008). In 1999, the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society was passed, in which the Japanese government pledged to increase the number of women in leadership positions to 30 % by 2020 (Shire & Imai, 2000). This objective, however, was extremely ambitious, since according to the Women’s Global Representation on Boards research from 2019 (SpencerStuart, 2019), the percentage of women in directorships in

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2019 was only 8.4 % in Japan, compared with the United States where the percentage of women (directors) in the same period was 26 %. Clearly, Japan has long been struggling with a decrease in the working population (aged 20-64) (OECD, 2019). Since 2000, the working population has fallen by 12 %, compared to a 2 % decline in Germany (Morikawa, 2018). This is why the key priorities of Prime Minister Abe's government included the enhancement of women's participation and their advancement at work.

At the end of 2012, Prime Minister Abe introduced three pillars of policies (also known as Abenomics), which included unconventional monetary policy, expansionary fiscal policy and economic growth strategies to encourage private investment (Fukuda, 2015). Their aim was to lift the Japanese economy out of the great stagnation (Grabowiecki, 2019).

The third pillar addressed the issue of the so-called "womenomics" – "prioritized and focused policies to increase the number of women in the workforce, facilitate their ability to stay in the workforce and boost the number of women in leadership positions in a wide range of sectors (Dalton, 2017, p. 96)". Although according to statistics released by the Japanese Ministry for Internal Affairs and Communications in 2019, the total number of women in the Japanese workforce reached record numbers of over 30 million, female employment rates in Japan have been low historically in comparison to other industrialized nations (Buchholz, 2019).

According to the Statistics Bureau of Japan, in 2019, 52.2 % of women over the age of 15 were employed, compared to 69.7 % of men (SBJ, 2019). If women do seek employment in Japan, they often work only part-time or as contract employees, in order to successfully manage their job and care for their family and children. In 2017, this applied to about half of the female workforce, compared to only 18 % of men (Mishima, 2019). This corresponds with the so-called "M-Curve" (OECD, 2019), which illustrates that, around 30 years of age, women leave employment to start a family, only to return later. In Japan, the drop is more significant than in countries such as Germany, Denmark and the United States.

For Japanese women, successfully combining a family and career has always been a challenge. A job in a Japanese company often means working overtime, from morning till night. Despite the fact that nowadays women delay marriage and starting a family (Nemoto, 2008, Nemoto, 2013), and that there is an evident decline in the interest of being a full-time housewife (Schoppa, 2006), "nearly 70 percent of women workers leave their jobs upon marriage and childbirth and this figure has remained the same in the last two decades (Ueno, 2010, p. 30)". Therefore, when needing to fill a leadership position, Japanese companies often give preference to men because training is expensive and time consuming.

In a Japanese company, it is difficult for women to maintain a good balance between working in a leadership position and looking after a family (Nagase, 2006). Nonetheless, over time and following the reforms of the Japanese government, more and more companies promote a good work-life balance to prevent female employees leaving work. Japan strives to introduce measures that would allow women to retain their current positions upon returning from maternity leave, and it promotes childcare policies and flexible work arrangements (Steinberg & Nakane, 2017). In spite of great improvements in this field in recent years and an optimistic future outlook, there are still many obstacles to overcome, not only with regard to companies but also where the thinking of an individual as well as of the society in relation to the historical social role of women in Japan are concerned.

## **2. Research objective, methodological approach and data**

The main research objective was to examine the correlation between the performance management and measurement practices in Japanese companies in relation to the changing role

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of women in the Japanese labour market during six economically significant periods: (1) pre-crisis (2000 – 2004), 2) financial crisis (2005 – 2009), 3) post-crisis (2010 – 2014), 4) recent (2015 – 2019), 5) near future estimates (2020 – 2024) a 6) future estimates (2025 – 2029). Within the given periods, the focus was on the correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions in relation to the sector type, firm age, profits and encouragement of women's participation in the labour force. Furthermore, the study also examined the correlations between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and high productivity, improvement of work life balance and higher integration of female staff. In connection with this objective, the following research questions were defined:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the sector type?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and firm age?

RQ3: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and profits?

RQ4: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force?

RQ5: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and high productivity?

RQ6: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and improvement of the work-life balance?

RQ7: Is there a statistically significant correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and the higher integration of female staff?

To meet the research objectives, a questionnaire survey has been used to conduct this exclusively quantitative study and obtain unique primary data from 152 Japanese companies. The largest proportion of companies participating in the questionnaire survey were medium companies (51-250 staff headcount) – 24 %, and extra-large companies (over 10,001 staff headcount) – 18 %. Most companies came from the tertiary sector (40 %) and quaternary sector (39 %).

On a theoretical basis, including an intensive study of relevant research papers focused on performance management and measurement practices in Japanese companies, a survey questionnaire was developed and pre-tested with a Japanese manager of a selected Japanese company. This increased the internal validity of the questionnaire and ratified its practical relevance. The questionnaire survey was conducted in 2019 (September – December). The questionnaire was designed to explore concurrent approaches to enterprise performance management and measurement in Japanese companies with the focus on the topic of women in the workforce. The questionnaire was divided into five parts that concentrated on various perspectives, namely on financial performance, customer performance, operational processes performance, employee performance, environmental and social performance.

The development of the significance of these perspectives, or more precisely, the changes in their perception by the individual company participating in the questionnaire survey, was monitored in the specified intervals, that is in 1) pre-crisis period (2000 – 2004), 2) financial crisis (2005 – 2009), 3) post-crisis period (2010 – 2014), 4) recent period (2015 – 2019), 5) near future estimates (2020 – 2024) a 6) future estimates (2025 – 2029). Additional information specifying the given perspectives was also examined.

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With regard to the financial performance perspective, the research focused on the frequency of its measurement in the company, indicators used for the measuring of financial performance (e.g., Net Profit Margin, Return of Assets, Return of Equity, Economic Value Added and others), relevance of these indicators over the course of the last decade and the estimate for the near future, on problems related to the use of these indicators and the effect of these indicators on the determination of short as well as long term goals within the corporate strategy.

Where the customer performance perspective is concerned, the needs of the company towards its customers were explored, specifically whether the organization typically wants and needs from their customers (1) profit (reasonable margins to reinvest in improved products and services), 2) growth (increase in sales volume over time), 3) opinion (feedback on performance and suggestions as to ways of improving products and services), 4) trust (access to key information in order to aid supply chain efficiencies and to establish longer-term collaborative ventures, and 5) other. In addition, indicators used by the company for this prospect were examined (e.g., Net Promoter Score, Customer Retention Rate, Customer Satisfaction Index, Customer Complaints, Customer Turnover Rate, etc.) as well as the relevance of these indicators over the course of the last decade and the estimate for the near future.

The perspective dealing with operational processes focused on the evaluation of individual organizational wants and needs based on their importance. These included, for example, high profit, high quality of products and services, reliable delivery services, rapid response when required, continuous improvement of product and services, reasonable/low prices, few suppliers, access to leading technologies, high effectiveness of processes and high productivity. Furthermore, indicators used by the company in relation to this prospect were studied, (e.g., Sig Sigma Level, Capacity Utilisation Rate, Process Waste Level, Order Fulfilment Cycle Time, Delivery in Full, on Time Rate, Inventory Shrinkage Rate, etc.) as well as the relevance of these indicators over the course of the last decade and the estimate for the near future.

The employee performance perspective focused on the percentage of the workforce that is regularly assessed via a formal performance appraisal in comparison with the proportion of merit pay that is determined by a formal performance appraisal or by the number of training hours each employee (new, experienced) receives each year. In addition, criteria considered important in human resource management were examined, e.g., staff training and education, corporate recognition of employees, detailed performance evaluation and feedback, job satisfaction indicators, etc. Subsequently, the organizational wants and needs were monitored in human resources management based on their importance. These included, for example, life-time employment, seniority-based salaries, existence of trade unions, increase of part-time workers, higher integration of female staff in the workforce, increase of foreign staff, improving work-life balance, flexibility, family-friendly companies, high productivity and loyalty. Within this perspective, it was also ascertained whether the companies face any challenges in human resource management and measurement, for example with regard to badly developed or no appraisal and promotion practices, no balanced workforce policies, lack of or no training and skills development, no-focused recruitment standards, difficulties in attracting and recruiting best people, difficulties in keeping existing key people, difficulties in increasing workforce flexibility, etc. Subsequently, the focus was on discovering to what extent women's participation in the labour force is encouraged in the companies and what proportion of women employees hold a leadership (senior executive, managerial) position. In addition, indicators used by the company in relation to this perspective were analyzed (e.g., Revenue per Employee, Employee Satisfaction Index, Average Employee Tenure, Absenteeism Bradford Factor, Time to Hire, Training Return on Investment, Salary Competitiveness Ratio, 360-Degree Feedback

Score, etc.) as well as the relevance of these indicators over the course of the last decade and the estimate for the near future.

The last perspective centered on the environmental and social performance where indicators used by the company in relation to this perspective were examined (e.g., Carbon Footprint, Water Footprint, Energy Consumption, Waste Reduction Rate, Waste Recycling Rate, Product Recycling Rate, etc.) as well as the relevance of these indicators over the course of the last decade and the estimate for the near future. Additionally, the importance of societal engagement during the periods in question was studied and the way the companies participating in the questionnaire survey contributed to the local/national community 10 years ago, now and what they plan for the near future.

The respondents were primarily members of top management (45 %), but a smaller proportion were also from lower management positions. In total, there are 152 items, taking into account the fact that not all of the questions were answered. The respondents had 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The coding of the questions was standard, and the data were summarized and checked for extreme and missing values. Since the data are nominal in nature, non-parametric tests for hypothesis verification have been applied – in most cases the chi-square test and Fisher's exact tests, while exploratory data analysis methods have been used to answer some questions. Thereafter, the main analysis of correlations was conducted, with only the close-ended questions being analyzed. The statistical software R version 3.6.1 was used for all statistical calculations.

### **3. Results and discussion**

This chapter describes the results of the statistical analysis. As demonstrated in Table 1, 152 Japanese companies of various size were approached under our study, from which 23.7 % were medium companies (51-250 staff headcount), 17.8 % were companies with over 10,001 staff headcount, 15.8 % were micro companies (0-10 staff headcount), 15.8 % were large companies (251-1,000 staff headcount), 14.5 % were small companies (11-50 staff headcount) and 12.5 % were companies with 1,001 – 10,000 staff headcount.

The majority of the companies participating in the study were from the tertiary sector (40 %) – retail, entertainment, services, financial corporations, etc. and quaternary sector (39 %) – knowledge and intellectual pursuit including research and development, consulting, education, etc., while 18 % were from the secondary sector – construction, manufacturing, processing, etc., and only 3 % were from the primary sector – agriculture, mining, etc. With regard to historical development, Japan has one of the highest proportions of “old” companies in the world, meaning that the country has 33,000 businesses at least a century old (Lufkin, 2020). In relation to the length of being on the market, 31 % of the companies participating in our research fall into the category of 11-30 years since their establishment, 22 % into the 31-50 years category, 21 % belong in 0-10 years category, 15 % in 51-100 years category and 11 % are over 100 years old. Most respondents in our survey are from the top management (45.4 %), while the rest come from middle management (23.7 %), professional staff (14.5 %), lower level management (13.8 %) and others (2.6 %).



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Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the analysed data

No	Variable	Stats / Values	Freqs (% of Valid)	Valid	Missing
1	X1. Please.state.the. number.of.empl oyees.in.your.c ompany. [factor]	1. 0-10 staff headcount (micro)	24 ( 15.8 % )	152 (100 %)	0 (0 %)
		2. 11-50 staff headcount (small)	22 ( 14.5 % )		
		3. 51-250 staff headcount (medium)	36 ( 23.7 % )		
		4. 251-1,000 staff headcount (large)	24 ( 15.8 % )		
		5. 1,001-10,000 staff headcount	19 ( 12.5 % )		
		6. Over 10,001 staff headcount	27 ( 17.8 % )		
2	X3. Please.state.the. sector.type.of.y our.business. [factor]	1. Primary sector	5 ( 3.3 % )	152 (100 %)	0 (0 %)
		2. Secondary sector	27 ( 17.8 % )		
		3. Tertiary sector	%		
		4. Quaternary sector	61 ( 40.1 % )		
3	X5. Please.state.the. firm.age. [factor]	1. 0-10 years	3 ( 21.1 % )	152 (100 %)	0 (0 %)
		2. 11-30 years	2		
		3. 31-50 years	4 ( 30.9 % )		
		4. 51-100 years	7		
		5. Over 100 years	3 ( 21.7 % )		
			3		
4	X6. Please.state.you r.position.in.the .company. [factor]	1. Lower level management	21 ( 13.8 % )	152 (100 %)	0 (0 %)
		2. Middle management	%		
		3. Other	36 ( 23.7 % )		
		4. Professional staff	%		
		5. Top management	4 ( 2.6 % )		
			22 ( 14.5 % )		
	69 ( 45.4 % )				
	%				

Source: *own compilation*

Subsequently, the analyzed companies had to evaluate their organizational wants and needs based on their importance, choosing from the Likert scale offering 4 options – “very important“, “important“, “slightly important“ and “not important at all“. The evaluation of the “high profit“ item found that almost 53 % of the surveyed companies consider achieving “high profit“ to be “very important“ and 10 % “important“, which shows a great influence of Western companies (and their practices in relation to performance and strategic management) on the traditional Japanese way of thinking and conducting business. Nevertheless, an important finding is that a large proportion of the companies favor the typical attribute of the traditional Japanese management style where achieving high profits is not a priority. This has been confirmed by the survey, where 35 % of the companies consider achieving high profits to be “not important at all“ and 2 % deem it “slightly important“.

A characteristic attribute of a typical Japanese enterprise is a positive approach to the continuous innovation of products and services. Over 60 % of the companies surveyed consider this area to be “very important“ and 8 % opt for “important“. 29 % respondents marked this area as “not important at all“ and 2 % as “slightly important“. High productivity where operational processes are concerned was assessed as “very important“ by 53 % of the companies

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and as “important“ by 10 % of the companies. By contrast, 31 % of the companies consider high productivity to be “not important at all“ and 6 % chose “slightly important“.

In addition, the survey examined what percentage of the workforce is regularly assessed via a formal performance appraisal. An assumption characteristic for Japanese companies which encourages regular assessment of the majority of employees was confirmed. In 46 % of the companies, performance is regularly assessed in 76-100 % of the workforce, while 24 % of the companies regularly assess performance in 51-75 % of the workforce. Only approximately a third of the companies regularly assess performance in less than 50 % of the workforce; assessment is often performed on an irregular basis. 14 % of the companies regularly assess performance in 26-50 % of the workforce, in 13 % companies this applies to 1-25 % of the workforce and 3 % of the companies do not regularly assess performance in the workforce at all. The next item analysed how many hours of training a new employee receives each year. The highest percentage of companies (19 %) gave their answer as between 21-40 hours annually, 16 % stated 11-20 hours annually, for 12.5 % it was 1-10 hours annually, 12.5 % put down 41-70 hours annually and 12.5 % companies opted for 71-100 hours annually. In only 3 % of the companies, no training is provided. These results correspond with the standard findings in Japanese companies, whereby many hours and sources are allocated for training, with the majority of employees taking part.

Regarding the evaluation of organizational wants and needs in human resource management (based on their importance using the Likert scale offering 4 options – “very important“, “important“, “slightly important“ and “not important at all“, an interesting finding was the changing attitude of the companies to the topic of seniority-based salaries. Only several decades ago, the importance of seniority-based salaries was assessed as “very important“ or “important“, however, only 9 % (“very important“) and 29 % (“important“) of the companies surveyed hold the same view today. The research has confirmed a change in the thinking of the companies, whereby 32 % consider seniority-based salaries to be “not important at all“ and 30 % regard it as “slightly important“. The importance of lifetime employment, a characteristic feature of Japanese corporate management prevalent in many companies even today, was also confirmed in our survey, although a significant shift towards less significance has been detected, as found in the past. Over 48 % of the companies surveyed consider lifetime employment to be “very important“ (21 %) or “important“ (27 %). On the other hand, 32 % consider lifetime employment to be “not important at all“, and 21 % believe it is “slightly important“.

High productivity in the field of human resource management was assessed as “very important“ by 64 % of the companies, as “important“ by 6 %, “slightly important“ by 3 % and “not important at all“ by 27 % of the companies. In these companies, we can assume the presence of yet another characteristic feature of Japanese enterprises, which is the priority of maintaining harmony in the communication with and the treatment of colleagues, superiors as well as subordinates over achieving high productivity. Japanese companies are also exceptional in the number of trade unions within their operation. Nevertheless, the research has revealed that currently, the existence of trade unions is “very important“ for only 12 % of the companies and “important“ for 29 % of the companies. A higher proportion of the companies surveyed consider the existence of trade unions to be “not important at all“ (27 %) or “slightly important“ (32 %), which shows a significant shift in the traditional concept of Japanese corporate management. Under the evaluation of organizational wants and needs in human resource management based on their importance, and areas concerning higher integration of female staff in the workforce, the survey has confirmed the existence of persisting obstacles for working women (Table 3). 45 % of the companies stated that higher integration of female staff in the workforce is “not important at all“ and 13 % said that higher integration is “slightly important“.

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By contrast, 18 % of the companies consider higher integration of female staff in the workforce to be “important“, and 24 % deem it “very important“.

Significant changes can be observed in the improvement of work-life balance. Although this topic was not very popular over the last several decades and it still does not hold much interest for many Japanese companies (40 % stated that this area is “not important at all“ and 4 % opted for “slightly important“), there are many companies incorporating gradual changes. 49 % of the companies consider this area to be “very important“ and 7 % regard it as “important“, which corresponds with current research that indicates changes in this area in a high proportion of Japanese companies. Flexibility in human resource management is “very important“ for 55 % of the companies, “important“ for 14 %, “slightly important“ for 2 % and “not important at all“ for 30 % of the companies. An integral part of the research dealt with the encouragement of women’s participation in the labour force by the companies surveyed. As expected, it was confirmed that women do not receive as much support by Japanese companies as they do, for example, in the United States or Europe. From the 5 options of the Likert scale (“to a very great extent“, “to a great extent“, “to a moderate extent“, “to a small extent“, “not at all“), 38 % of the companies say women’s participation in the labour force is encouraged in the company “to a moderate extent“, for 29 % it is “to a small extent“ and in 6 % companies it is “not at all“ encouraged. Only a minority of the companies surveyed (12.5%) state that women’s participation in the labour force is encouraged “to a great extent“, and 14.5 % of companies say “to a very great extent“.

Moreover, the analysis focused on what proportion of female employees hold a leadership (senior executive, managerial) position in the approached companies. A low percentage of women in leadership positions (up to 30 %) is evident in 61 % of the companies surveyed. In 22 % of companies the proportion is between 0-5%, 15 % achieve an interval between 6-10 %, for 13 % of the companies it is between 11-20 % and for 11 % it is between 21-30 %. In 8 % of the companies, the interval for the proportion of women holding a leadership position is between 31-40 %, in 11 % it is 41-50%, 17 % of the companies achieve an interval of 51-75% and for 3 % it is between 76-100 %. Additionally, Fisher’s exact tests were carried out due to the failure to meet conditions for the common Pearson chi-squared test. Fisher’s exact tests are statistical significance tests used in the analysis of contingency tables (Fisher, 1922). In Table 2, the following null hypothesis was tested. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the sector type of the business. The value of Fisher's p reached 0.011, which confirms an association between the variables, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. To determine the strength of the association between two variables, we used the symmetrical contingency coefficient Cramer’s V, the phi (Φ) coefficient correction for larger tables. The Cramer’s V result was 0.287 and is statistically significant. The result indicates the existence of dependence. There is a correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the sector type of the business.

In Table 3, the following null hypothesis was tested. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women’s participation in the labour force. The value of Fisher's p reached 0.000, which confirms an association between the variables, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. The Cramer’s V result was 0.388 and is statistically significant.

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Table 2. Analysis of the correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the sector type

X35. What.proportion.of.women.employees.hold.a.leadership.senior.executive.managerial.position.in.your.company.	X3. Please.state.the.sector.type.of.your.business.	Primary sector	Secondary sector	Tertiary sector	Quaternary sector	Total
0-5 %	1	2	17	13	33	33
	1	6	13	13	33	33
6-10 %	0	4	10	8	22	22
	1	4	9	9	22	22
11-20 %	0	4	6	10	20	20
	1	4	8	8	20	20
21-30 %	1	3	3	10	17	17
	1	3	7	7	17	17
31-40 %	2	3	2	6	13	13
	0	2	5	5	13	13
41-50 %	1	5	6	5	17	17
	1	3	7	7	17	17
51-75 %	0	3	17	6	26	26
	1	5	10	10	26	26
76-100 %	0	3	0	1	4	4
	0	1	2	2	4	4
<b>Total</b>	5	27	61	59	152	152
	5	27	61	59	152	152

*Cramer's V=0.287 · Fisher's p=0.011*

Source: own compilation

The result indicates the existence of dependence. It can therefore be said that the more women there are in leadership positions, the more women are encouraged in participation in the labour force. Also tested was the linear correlation (test linear-by-linear for ordinal categories) to determine the trend between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force. Although the p-value was higher than the critical value of 0.05, namely 0.05717, this result is so close to the critical value that we deem it important enough to be concerned with this trend. The result indicates that the more women there are in leadership positions, the more women are encouraged in the participation in the labour force.

In Table 4, the following null hypothesis was tested. H0: There is no correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and the higher integration of female staff in the workforce. The value of Fisher's p reached 0.011, which confirms an association between the variables, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. The Cramer's V result was 0.267 and is statistically significant. The result indicates the existence of dependence. There is a correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and the higher integration of female staff in the workforce.

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Table 3. Analysis of the correlation between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force

X35. <i>What.proportion.of.women.employees.hold.a.leadership.senior.executive.managerial.position.in.your.company.</i>	X34. <i>To.what.extent.do.you.consider.women's.participation.in.the.labour.force.encouraged.in.your.company.</i>					Total
		Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	
0-5 %	8	2	13	7	3	33
	2	10	13	4	5	33
6-10 %	0	6	11	4	1	22
	1	6	8	3	3	22
11-20 %	1	8	7	2	2	20
	1	6	8	2	3	20
21-30 %	0	5	11	0	1	17
	1	5	6	2	2	17
31-40 %	0	8	1	0	4	13
	1	4	5	2	2	13
41-50 %	0	9	1	0	7	17
	1	5	6	2	2	17
51-75 %	0	6	13	6	1	26
	2	8	10	3	4	26
76-100 %	0	0	1	0	3	4
	0	1	2	0	1	4
<b>Total</b>	9	44	58	19	22	152
	9	44	58	19	22	152

*Cramer's V=0.388 · Fisher's p=0.000*

Source: own compilation

Also tested was a linear correlation (test linear-by-linear for ordinal categories) to determine the trend between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and profits. The p-value was 0.03913, indicating an association between the given variables. The result indicates that the more women's participation is encouraged in the labour force, the less important it is for the company to achieve profits.

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Table 4. Analysis of the correlation between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and the higher integration of female staff in the workforce

	X34. <i>To.what.extent.do.you.c onsider.women's.partic ipation.in.the.labour.fo rce.encouraged.in.your .company.</i>	X32. <i>Please.rate.the.followin g.organisational.wants. and.needs.in.human.res ource.management.bas ed. on.their.importance.</i>					
			Not important at all	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Total
Not at all	0	4	5	1	0	3	8
To a small extent	20	18	5	5	5	9	39
To a moderate extent	27	24	3	7	13	10	53
To a great extent	7	9	4	2	4	4	19
To a very great extent	9	9	1	3	3	7	20
<b>Total</b>	63	63	18	18	25	33	139

*Cramer's V=0.267 · Fisher's p=0.011*

Source: own compilation

```
> lbl_test(table(data[,70],data[,37]))
Asymptotic Linear-by-Linear Association Test
data: Var2 (ordered) by
Var1 (Not at all < To a small extent < To a moderate extent < To a great extent < To a
very great extent)
Z = 2.0628, p-value = 0.03913
alternative hypothesis: two.sided
```

## Conclusion

The topic of performance management and measuring is still quite relevant, especially thanks to changes that have been taking place in this field since the turn of the millennium. The originally simple concepts focusing mainly on the financial perspectives of a company have evolved into elaborate systems that support a more balanced and competitive view of various perspectives, financial as well as non-financial. Nevertheless, the performance of a company is perceived differently in various countries, regions or even continents. Where individualistic cultures are concerned (e.g., the United States or Western Europe), achieving high profit is still a key parameter. Over time, however, even this view has changed, and companies now increasingly focus on social responsibility and environmental issues. With regard to collectivist cultures (e.g., Japan), the key parameter is not achieving high profits but rather people and their happiness. In other words, the well-being of the whole team is more important than the well-being of one individual. Yet, even here the situation has been changing, as more “western” practices are implemented into the traditional Japanese management system. Because of this development, this study has analysed changes in 6 significant periods with regard to enterprise performance management and measurement in Japanese companies, focusing on the changing

role of women in the Japanese labour market. The subjects of analysis were correlations between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and sector type, firm age, profits, and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force. Moreover, the study analysed correlations between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and high productivity, improvement of work-life balance and the increased integration of female staff in the workforce.

The research was conducted in 2019 and involved 152 Japanese companies. The questionnaire survey involved mainly members of top management (45 %) and middle management (24 %). For the purposes of the survey, companies of various sizes were approached, of which most (24 %) were medium companies (51-250 staff headcount), 18 % were companies with over a 10,001 staff headcount, and 16 % were large companies (251-1,000 staff headcount). The majority of the companies analysed belonged to the tertiary sector (40 %), quaternary sector (39 %) and secondary sector (18%). Taking into account how long the companies have been active on the market, most of them fell into the category of 11-30 years (31 %) and 31-50 years (22 %) since being founded. Data were evaluated using exploratory statistics (chi-square test, Fisher's exact test). Linear dependence was analysed using the linear-by-linear test for ordinal categories to determine the trend between the proportion of women employees in leadership positions and the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force, as well as to ascertain the trend between the encouragement of women's participation in the labour force and profits.

Results indicate that where human resource management and employing women in Japanese organizations are concerned, slight changes have been detected in the last two decades, partly owing to the progressive policies of Prime Minister Abe's government, in place between 2012 and 2020. Nonetheless, many obstacles faced by female participants in the labour force remain, among them that 45 % of the companies surveyed do not consider higher integration of female staff in the workforce to be important, or that work-life balance is not interesting for 40 % of the companies. Moreover, one research finding is that for only 28 % of the companies surveyed, women's participation in the labour force is encouraged in the company to a great (13 %) and very great (15 %) extent. With regard to the proportion of women employees that hold leadership positions, the results show that 61 % of the companies surveyed achieve a low percentage of women holding leadership positions (up to 30 %). It can therefore be surmised that, despite a significant shift in this area over the last period, there are still many limitations related to employing women in Japanese companies. Such limitations can only be overcome by gradually changing the thinking of not only companies but also of individuals in the traditionally masculine Japanese society.

This study has limitations that could be addressed in further studies. One of the principal limitations is the relatively small number of companies involved in the study. Further research might consider including more companies in the sample. The respondents' views may not reflect the actual situation in the given company, which may distort the data obtained. A future research direction worth considering would be a study focused on other countries in Asia, comparing the findings with this paper.

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