

The key to women’s advancement is not simply to improve infrastructure and establishing rules, but to create an environment for better mental health care.

*A survey on
“People’s daily anxieties and concerns and its relevance to gender gap”
by Insight Tech and SheStands*

Insight Tech Inc. (Headquarters: Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, President: Tomohiro Ito) and SHeStands, Inc. (Headquarters: Minato-ku, Tokyo, CEO: Keiko Sato), collaborated to conduct a survey on *“People’s daily anxieties and concerns and its relevance to gender gap”* targeting men and women around Japan who are of parental age (ages 20-49). It has become clear that the key to women's social advancement and career development is not only infrastructure improvement and rule establishment, but also building an environment where it is easier to receive mental health care.

<Abstract>

- Apparent that deep-rooted gender gaps have an effect on women’s daily issues
- 60% of women have experiences of abandoning their career development. Although 60% want to restart, many say they hesitate due to anxiety over the matter.
- Less than 30% of women feel that “creating a society where women can play an active role” is progressing, compared to 50% of men. “Gender gaps within society” has yet to be solved.
- The key to women’s social advancement or career development lies not only in infrastructure development and rule establishment, but also in building an environment where it is easier to receive mental health care. This can enhance the effectiveness of infrastructure development and rule establishments.

■ Background of joint survey

In the *“Gender Gap Report*1”* released by the World Economic Forum on March 30, 2021, Japan is ranked 120th, the lowest among the developed countries. The gender gap continues to widen even after 2020. In 2020, the number of female suicide rates increased due to the Corona virus pandemic.*2 One of the reasons for this is that there were many non-regular workers, such as part-time workers, who had to live in poverty caused by unexpected terminations and businesses shutting down. It is said that this is due to the deep-rooted gender gap that exists in Japanese work environments.

*1 : World Economic Forum “Global Gender Gap Report 2021” (http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf)

*2 : Metropolitan Police Department “Suicides in Japan 2020” (https://www.npa.go.jp/safetylife/seianki/jisatsu/R03/R02_jisatuno_joukyou.pdf)

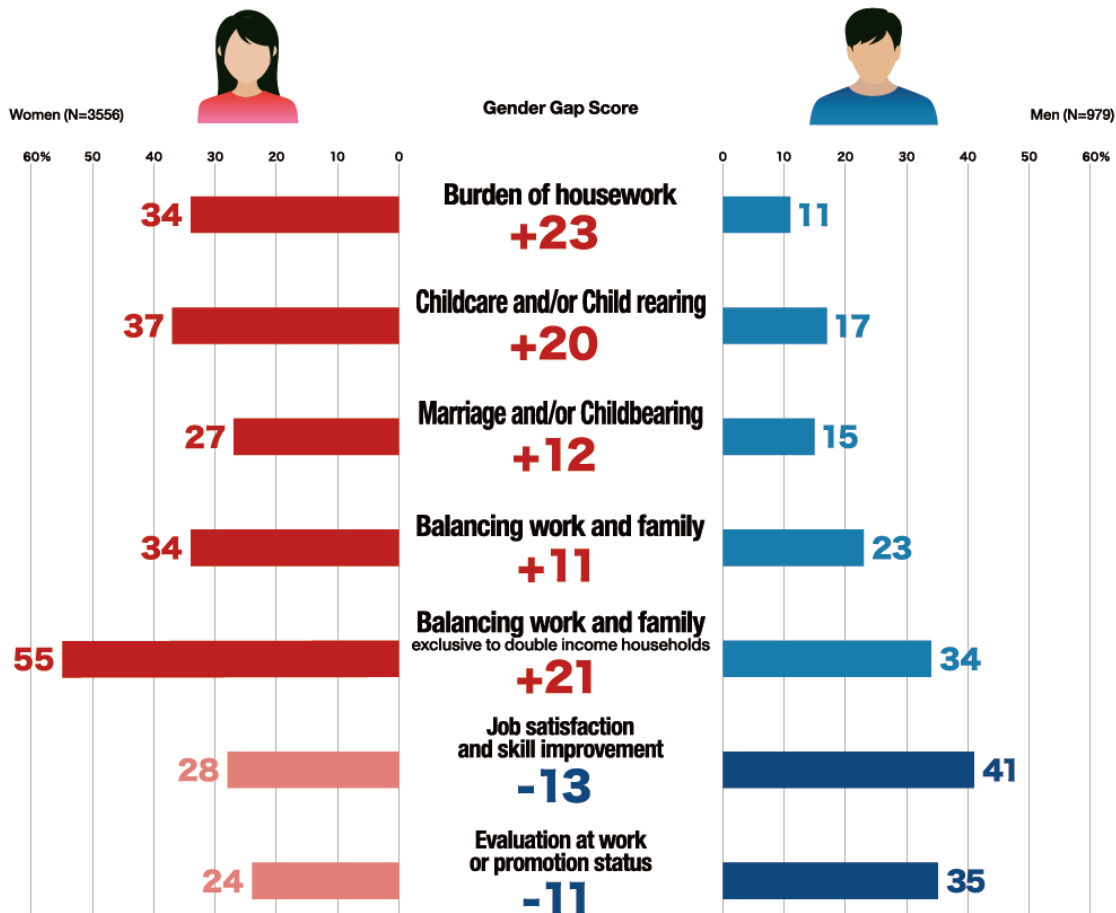
Insight Tech conducted a survey on daily anxieties and concerns in these troubling times with SHeStands, a social business which aims to provide long term support for women’s financial and mental independence. The purpose of the survey is to clarify the relation between societal gender gaps and to obtain hints for its elimination, by listening to the “voices” of both men and women (20-49 year old’s), who have concerns and complaints within the home and the workplace, and who are registered at the “Complaints purchasing center” operated by Insight Tech.

■ Survey results

1. Women’s daily concerns → Women shoulder a variety of burdens in daily life, and men’s involvement and cooperation are lacking

Examining daily anxieties and concerns, there is a tendency for women to be anxious and concerned about many factors such as “burden of housework (cooking, cleaning, etc.)” or “childcare and child rearing”. A glimpse of men’s lack of involvement and cooperation can be examined in the gender gap for double-income households of the “Balancing Work and Family”.

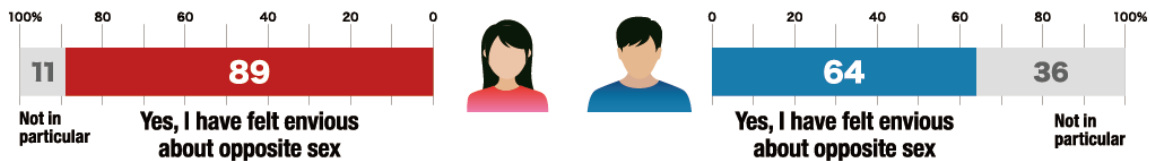
<Table 1> Daily anxieties and concerns



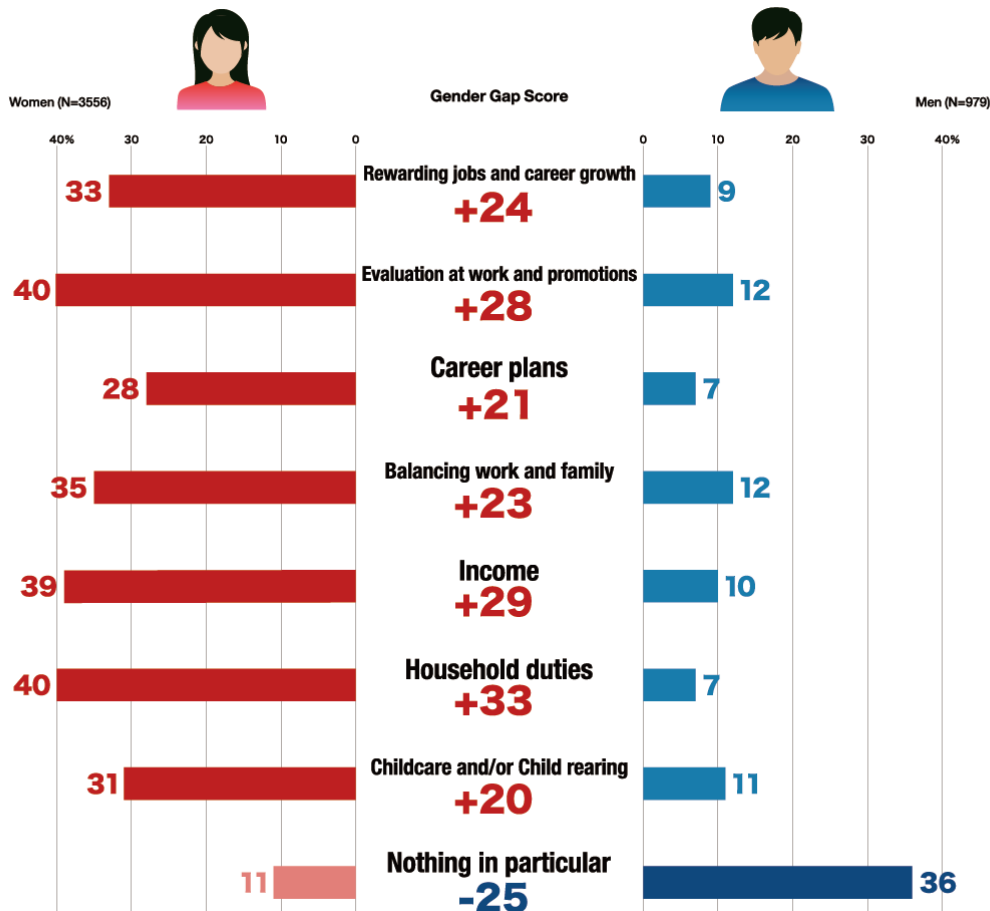
2. Feeling envious of the opposite sex (male) → About 90% of women have experiences of feeling envious of men

In addition to about 90% of women who answered that they “feel envious of the opposite sex”, over 70% have anxieties and concerns due to the gender gap. On the other hand, about 40% of men answered that they “do not particularly feel envious”. Many women feel that there are many advantages that men have that women do not, and it became apparent that this can contribute to anxiety and concerns.

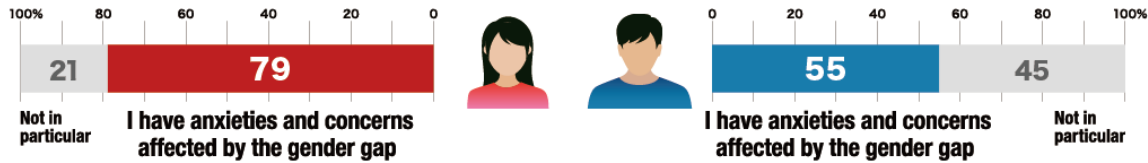
<Table 2-1> Feeling “envious of the opposite sex”



<Table 2-2> About what people feel envious of the opposite sex



<Table 2-3> Anxieties and concerns that are affected by “Differences in treatment and positions based on gender”



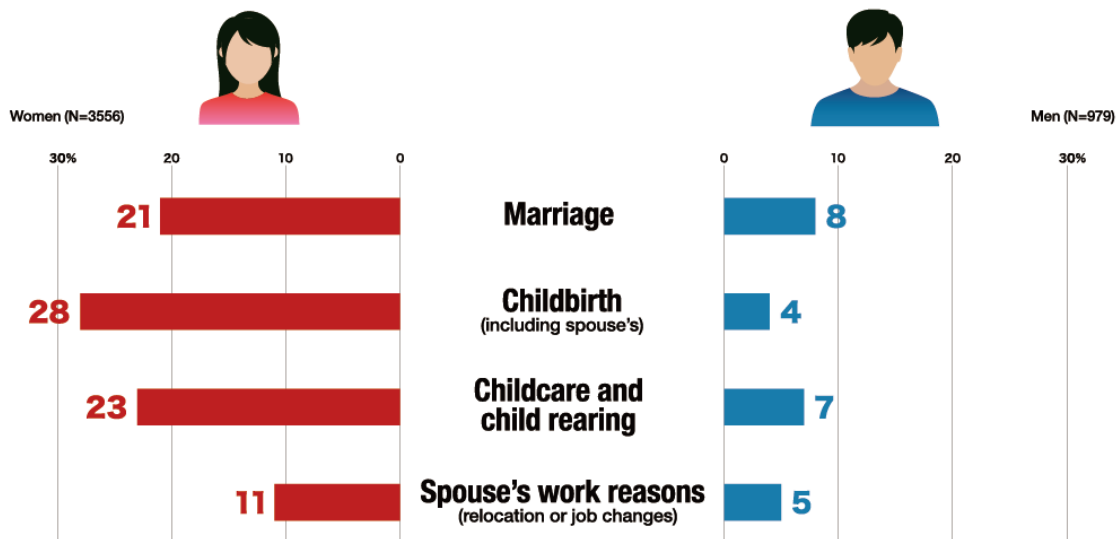
3. Experiences of abandoning career development → About 20-30% of women abandon their careers due to childbirth, childcare and child rearing.

Women’s career development (social advancement) is heavily affected by marriage, childbirth, childcare and child rearing, and there is a tendency for women to prioritize their spouse’s careers over their own. Examining future possibilities, more than 70% of people may abandon their careers, suggesting that uncertainty about their career development is contributing to further anxiety.

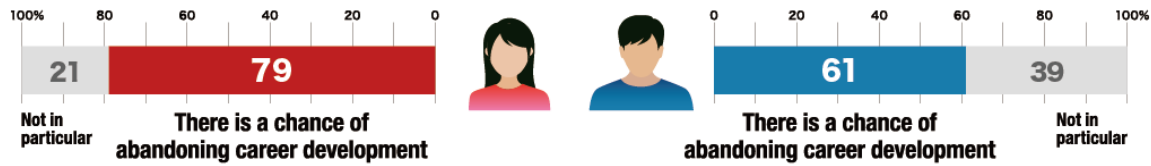
<Table 3> Experiences of abandoning career development



<Table 3-2> Main reasons for abandoning career development



<Table 3-3> Whether or not there is a possibility of abandoning career development

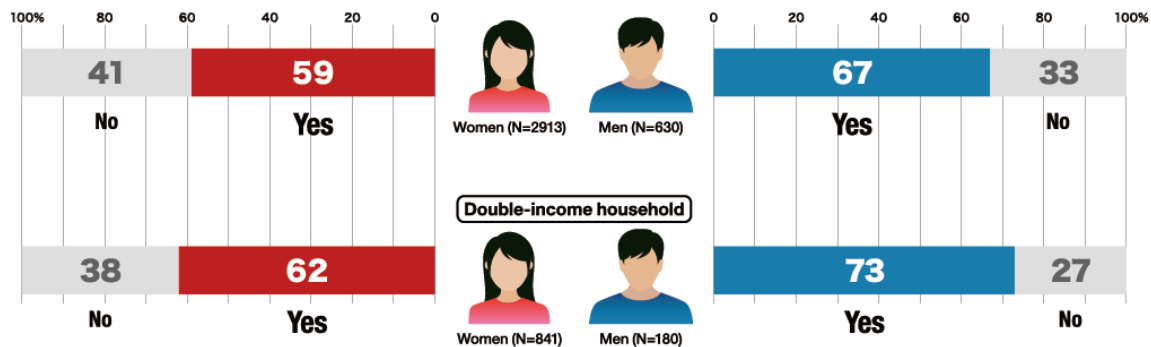


4. Intentions of restarting their careers → About 60% of women would like to restart but lack confidence

Among women who abandoned their career development due to childcare leave or maternity leave, about 60% are thinking of returning to work or trying to develop a new career. However, there are some who express a lack of confidence or anxiety over the matter and feel hesitant to try again because they are “Worried about physical strength and energy” or they have “Worries about causing trouble to others” due to the time spent away from work.

<Table 4> Intentions of restarting after abandoning careers

[Config. Those who have abandoned / may abandon their career development]



<Table 4-2> Reasons to not restart career development (Word cloud ver. of the free answers)

[Config. women and those who do not intent on restarting careers n=1,197]

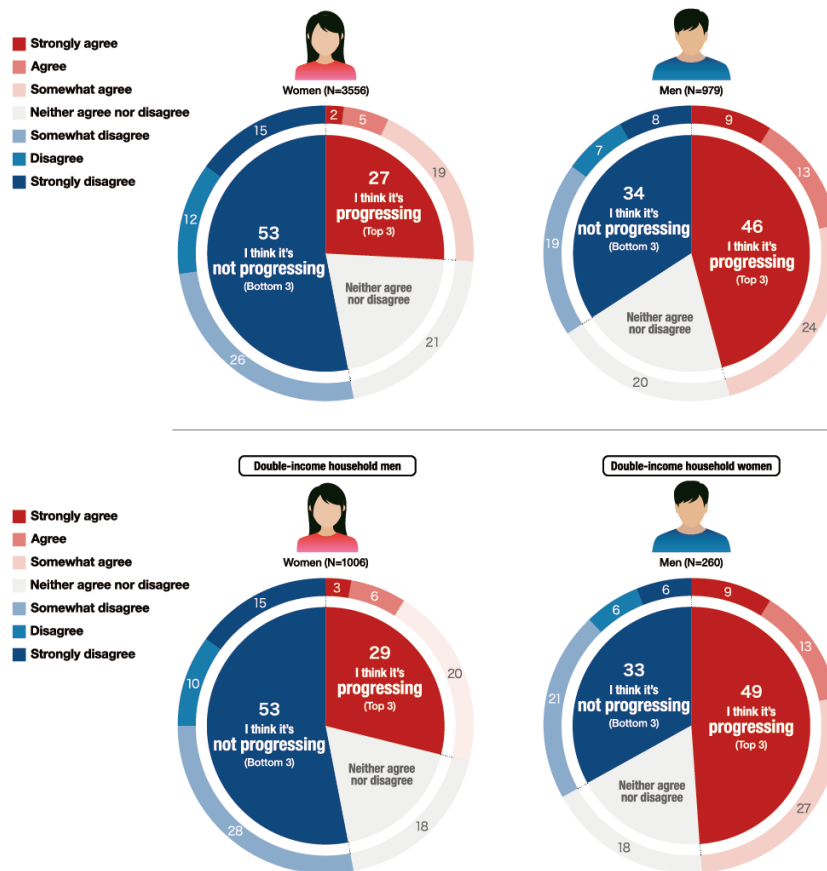


Note: Showing the opinions that “Aitas” a sentence analysis AI processed, through the opinion tag AI where the opinions that appeared frequently are shown bigger.

5. Whether they can notice the progress of the “creation of a society where women can play an active role” →Less than 30% of women say they can notice

The overall feeling towards whether the progress of the “creation of a society where women can play an active role. (Creating a better working environment)” is noticeable is less than 30% of women and less than 50%, and there are gendered differences within the answers. The same result was examined even when answers were limited to double-income households, confirming that “societal gender gaps” is yet to be resolved.

<Table 5> Feeling towards whether the progress of the “creation of a society where women can play an active role”.



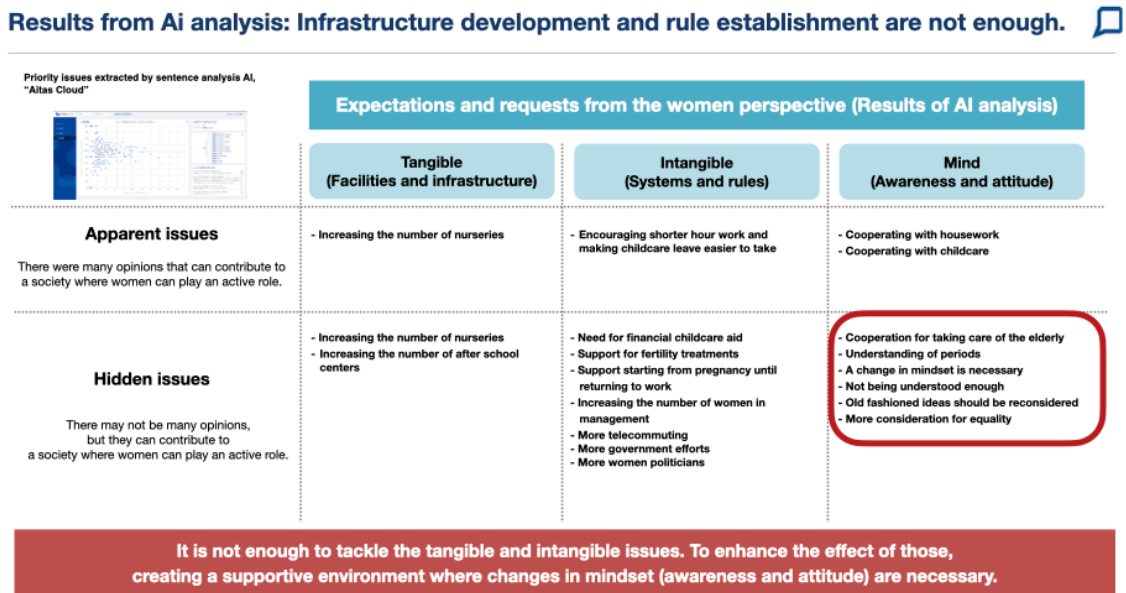
6. Expectations and requests for a “society where women can play an active role”

→Infrastructure and rule establishment are not enough. A change in mindset is essential.

Analyzing the free answers of the expectations and requests to “create a society where women can play an active role”, with the sentence analysis AI “Aitas Cloud”, there were tangible answers such as “Increasing the numbers of daycare centers and nursery schools” and intangible answers like “Promotion of shortened work hours and childcare leave”, as well as answers that asked for mindset changes like “An awareness to cooperate with daily housework and childcare”. It became

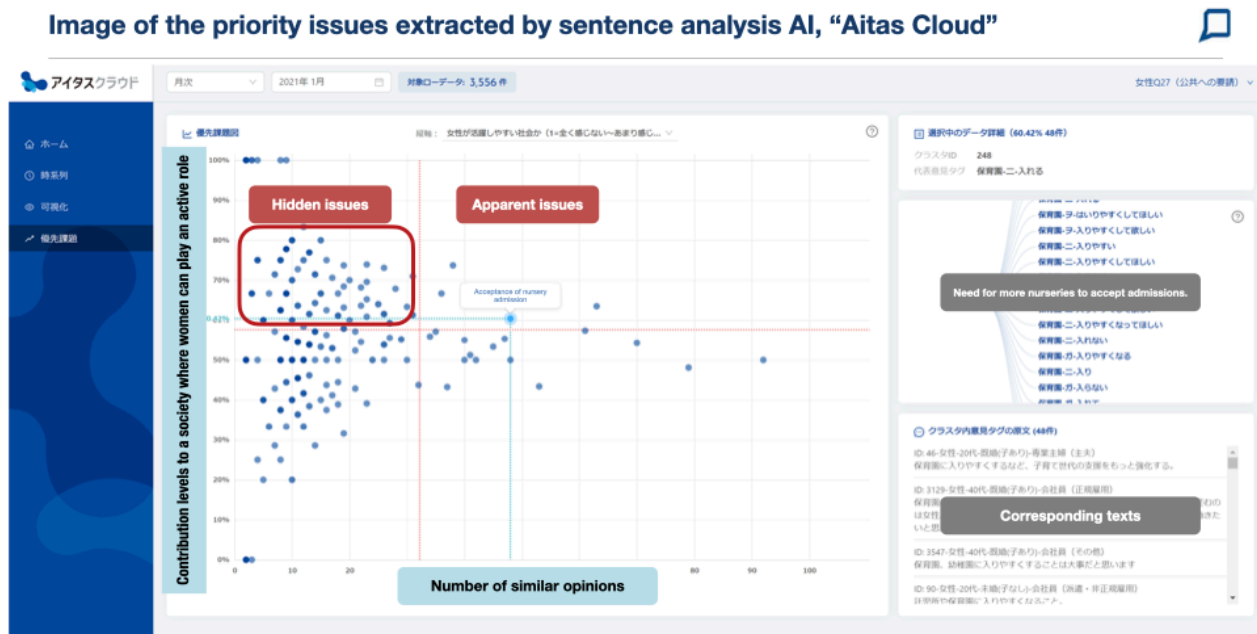
apparent that building a support system and community where people can talk about “understanding the hardships and realities of women who take care of children” or “improving environments that support returning to work” are the issues that must be tackled for women to play an active role in society.

<Table 6-1> Expectations and requests for a “society where women can play an active role” from the women perspective (Results of AI analysis)



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<Table 6-2> Image of the priority issues extracted by sentence analysis AI, “Aitas Cloud”



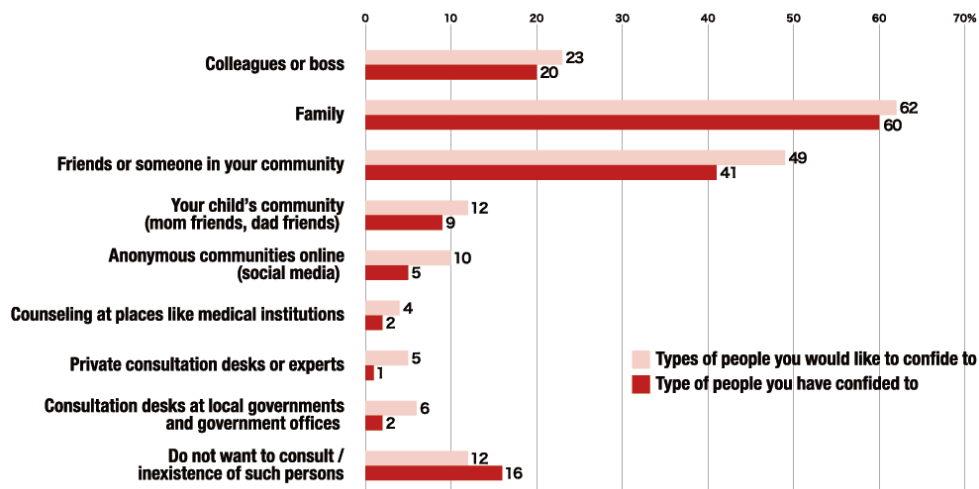
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7. Type of people you would like to confide in → There is a need for a consultation service that supports women’s participation in society, but access is limited

Most of those who people can talk about work related anxieties and concerns are “family and friends” who are close to us. Only about 1- 2% of people have actually utilized counseling or sought professional advice, but about 10% would like to utilize it in the future, suggesting its potential expectations and needs.

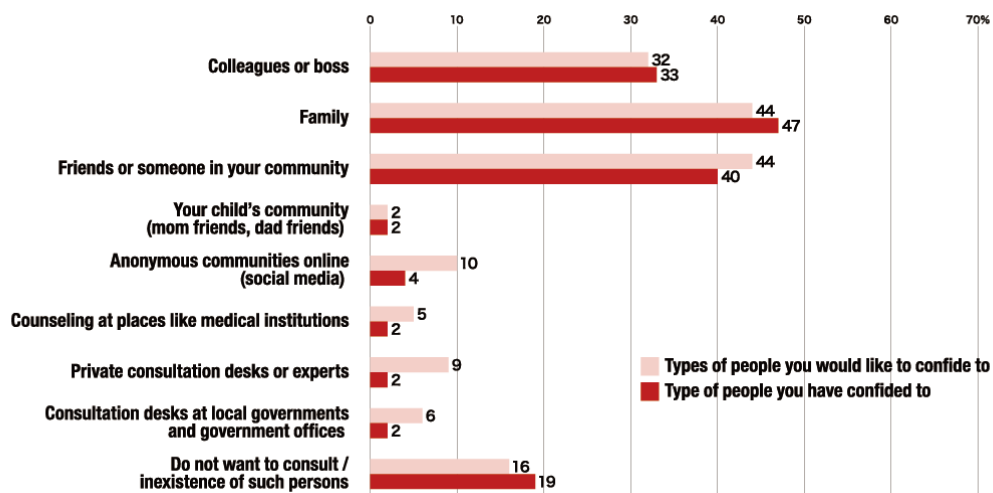
<Table 7-1> Types of people you would like to confide in about anxieties and concerns regarding “balancing work and family” and types of people you have confided in.

[Config: Women feeling anxieties and concerns regarding “Balancing work and family” n=1,202]



<Table 7-2> Types of people you would like to confide in about anxieties and concerns regarding “Improving work skills & work worth” and types of people you have confided in

[Config: Women feeling anxieties and concerns regarding “Improving work skills & work worth” n=1,008]

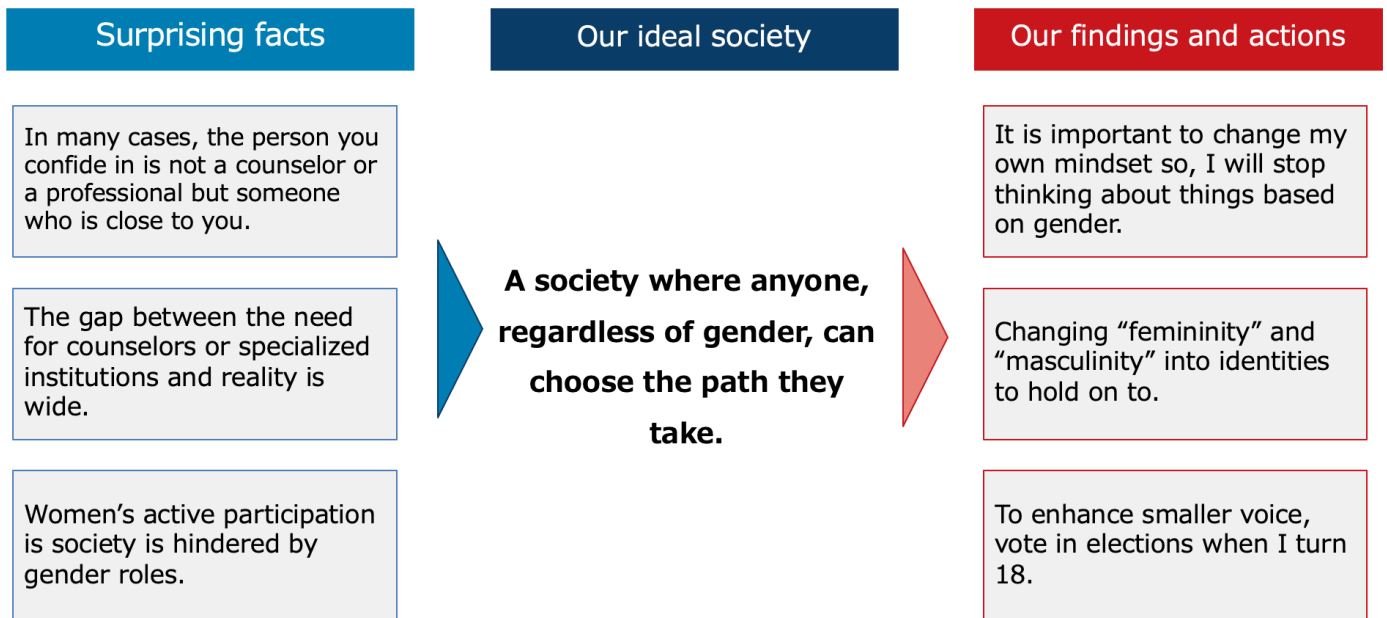


■ Voice of Gen Z (high school students)

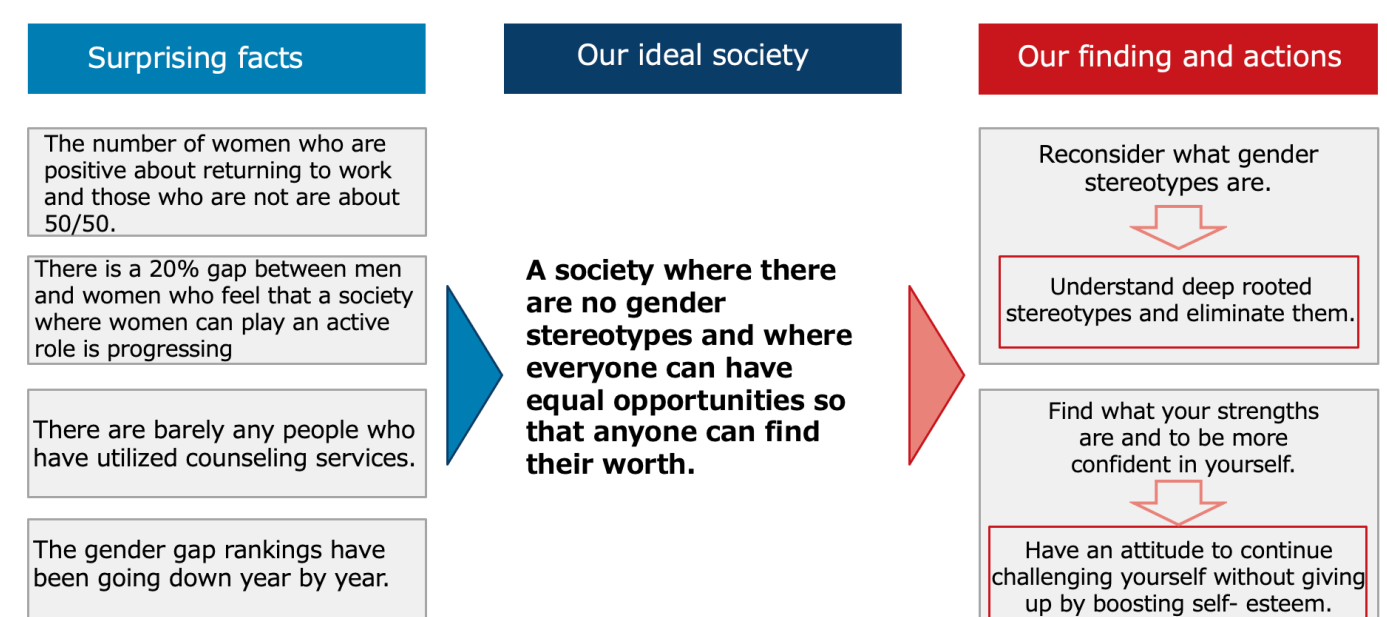
Based on the results of the survey, Gen Z (high school students) made the following proposals. While the opinions from both teams were that they are determined to be more aware and take action towards realizing a better society, they were also surprised that there are only limited opportunities to receive advice from professionals or to receive counseling services. It can be inferred that there is a need for systems that support the success of future generations.

<Table 8> Proposals from Gen Z

Girl high school student: team S



Girl high school student: team S



■ Proposals based on the survey results and future efforts

<Summary>

Examining the 2021 gender gap index and the results of this survey, it is obvious that there is a deep-rooted gender gap in Japanese society which hinders the promotion of women's active participation and career development.

For the closure of the gender gap, it is simply not enough for the government and local governments to improve the tangible factors (expansion of infrastructure such as childcare facilities) and intangible factors (laws like "Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement" and workplace rules), but to eliminate the deep-rooted mindset on "Gender roles or the discriminatory evaluations and treatment of women" that people possess.

As mentioned above, few people in Japan utilize counseling services or seek expert advice to discuss their anxieties and concerns. In addition to accessibility issues, there seem to be negative images or psychological barriers that hinder it from being utilized more.

<Proposals>

Based on such findings, it seems that the first step to closing the gender gap in Japan is to foster a community where people can easily confide in people about their anxieties and concerns about the gender gap, and to also create an environment where it is easier to receive support services like mentoring or counseling for anxieties and concerns on women's work and mental health to hopefully eliminate psychological barriers that hinder women's active participation in society. Eliminating psychological barriers for women's active participation and to boosting self-esteem can potentially result in a higher sense of cooperation among men as well.

Insight Tech would like to take on the role as a hub for closing the gender gap, by utilizing the complaints sent to our own "Fuman-Kaitori Center (Complaints purchasing center)" to not only develop products and services, but to also raise issues and propose policies.

SHeStands strives to promote a better cycle for society by standing together with women on their concerns on life and career plans, to help them live positively and to create a better lifestyle for them.

<Research outline>

Research name: A survey on the *"People's daily anxieties and concerns and its relevance to gender gap"*

Research target: Men and women ages 20-49, who are registered at the "complaints purchasing center" in Japan

Research period: December 18th, 2020 to January 6th, 2021

Research method: A survey on the "Complaints purchasing center" website

<Main questions>

- About yourself (family members, working styles, etc.)
- Your own anxieties and concerns (whether or not you have anxieties and concerns, effects of the Corona virus pandemic, whether you have a person to confide in or not, etc.)
- Whether you feel envious of the opposite sex (experiences, pain levels, etc.)
- Impact on life events on "career development" (Abandoning careers, intentions of restarting, etc.)
- On the "Promotion of women's advancement" in Japan (realization of progress, government and local governments, what is necessary for corporations, etc.)

<Target group: attribute details>

[Gender] women (n=3,556) 78% / Men (n=979) 22%

[Age group] 20s(n=1,048)23% / 30s(n=2,045)45% / 40s (n=1,442)32%

[Living conditions] Married with children (n=2,079) 46% / Double income households (n=1,226) 27% / Education background university graduate or higher (n=2,868) 63%

■ Company Information

Company : Insight Tech Inc. (<http://insight-tech.co.jp>)

Date of establishment: June 19, 2012

Address : Shinjuku Island Tower, 6-5-1 Nishi Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku TOKYO 163-1333

Description: Marketing Research and Reporting
 Commission of Ai analysis of natural language processing & machine learning
 Corporate promotion and branding support/ "Fuman-Kaitori Center" operation

Company : SHeStands, Inc. (<https://shestands.co.jp>)

Date of Establishment: May 26, 2020

Address : 13th Floor Area Shinagawa Building, 1-9-36 Konan, Minato-ku, TOKYO 108-0075

Description: Consulting and counseling/ Seminars, Workshop and Event planning and execution
 Matching business/ Writing and Online Media

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