

Let's Increase the Number of KOSEN Girls!

National Institute of Technology, Kure College

- A: Teachers, professors, and fellow students, we stand before you with a strong plea - a call for more female students in our technical colleges, in "Kosens," here in Japan. Our message is simple, our desire is to make an impact: we believe in the power of women's education and their involvement in the workforce. So, we are here to share our thoughts and ideas on how to achieve this goal.
- B: We found two impacts on society by women's activities. First, it will lead to securing more talented human resources. According to the research which Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office did in 2023, in Japan there are only 13.4% of women's executive officer. However, Kosen's students learn high level of field of study from they are 15 years old. So, by increasing the number of women in Kosen, it will be easier to secure better human resources with excellent skills and abilities who will contribute to Japan's future.
- A: Second, it can revitalize the workplace and business. Companies where women are active have higher return on equity and earnings before interest and taxes than other companies. This is because by having more women's opinions, it will be easier to come up with new ideas that have never existed before, and it will be easier for the company to smoothly resolve areas for improvement. Kosen are schools that nurtures human resources who can be work-ready in the field. Therefore, women will soon be able to have a stronger impact on companies.
- C: Even before we joined Kure Kosen, we noticed the low percentage of women in Kosen's pamphlet and on Kosen's websites. Despite that, we chose to go there because we knew what we wanted to try and accomplish at Kosen. I believed that by having more women in Kosen, women's active participation would be better, leading to a wider perspective in Japanese society overall, which would be beneficial for everyone. In fact, the government is working to increase the active participation of women! We want to do what we know we can do! That's why we want more female Kosen students!
- B: What should we do to build such a good society?
- C: At present, only 25.6% of Kure Kosen students are female. Notably, only 8.1% are in the Mechanical Department. These numbers are similar to other Kosens. While it may seem like a decent figure, we have fallen short of the Kosen goal of 30% gender equality.
- A: So, what is being done to achieve this goal? In Kure Kosen, we have a class called Incubation Work, where people who have similar ideas about things, and are interested in same things, get together, regardless of grade to work on specific projects. There are more than 50 themes, for example cooking, making a camper, and making anime.
- B: I'm a member of MECA-jo development project. This project sets up women's counseling sessions at open schools and events. We talk with female students who

are interested in Kosen. For example, do you have any problems with the small number of girls? We could clarify our Kosen life through these events. However, we haven't been able to actually visit junior high school.

C: Additionally, Kure Kosen holds an annual science show where elementary students can experience the fun of science through experiments and crafts. You can also listen to the stories of women who have graduated from Kosen and are active as engineers at Kosen women's exchange events. We also learned that other Kosens, are making efforts to promote the number of female students through scientific experiments.

B: So, why is the female enrollment rate still lagging? Our investigations suggest that deep-rooted stereotypes and misunderstandings are the main reasons. Many people, consciously or unconsciously, hold preconceived notions about Kosen.

A: What kind of efforts should we take?

C: We want to create more chances for girls to be excited about the opportunities at Kosen.

B: To address this issue, we propose several strategies to help female registrations. Information Sessions at Junior High Schools: The idea is to hold information sessions not only for third-year junior high school students, but also for first-and second-year students. According to the research which Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office did in 2021, areas where there are few girls who decide to study science are not enough opportunities to deepen interest in science and engineering. So, since you will have more opportunities to learn about Kosen from an early age, there will be more time to consider Kosen as an option.

A: Showcase Kosen Life: Put the daily schedule and activities of Kosen girls on the homepage or pamphlet as a four-panel comic. If the specific lives of women in Kosen could be seen clearly, their concerns about Kosen would be dispelled, and their parents would be able to feel at ease.

C: Create Appealing Points: We think we need to create conditions that make it easier for female students to visit and enroll. One of the other proposals is strengthening the school cafeteria. Designing desks and chairs may not be taught in some Kosens, but the architecture department plays a central role in creating a stylish atmosphere, and the menu items could be created by Kosen girls who are of the same generation as prospective students.

A: There are many things we can work on!

C: We hope that through our actions, more girls will become interested in Kosen.

B: Many people do not know much about Kosen, so we believe it is important to create an opportunity for them to become aware of it. We hope that those who have even the slightest interest, especially female students, will use the Internet and homepages to explore Kosen, share knowledge with their parents, and create opportunities for them to visit our Kosen and come to information sessions.

A: To everyone here, there should be people who would like to increase the number of female students in your Kosen too.

A, B, C: Let's increase the number of Kosen girls together!