Gender equality of community management in Geochemistry

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Activities of Geochemical Society of Japan (GSJ) are introduced in relation to the efforts for the equality of gender and diversity especially from the experiences of managing Goldschmidt Conference.

Female members are 18 % of the total 868 GSJ members, and almost 30 % among the members of the 20s and 30s. The total 20s and 30s members occupy 35 % of the members (Jan 2020). These gender and generation distributions are rather unique among the academic societies of earth science field in Japan. Recently the female members were installed as the president and vice-presidents, however, it is still small female members who can be leaders of the society.

Our society has been collaborating with some international associations, and especially has been deeply concerned with the Goldschmidt Conference. This conference is the largest annual academic meeting in geochemistry field and held by Geochemical Society (GS) and European Association of Geochemistry (EAG). Those societies and Goldschmidt Conference have been traditionally considerable to the equality of gender and diversity, including generation and countries. It is notable that the more than half of board members of the both societies are female (Feb 2020).

When the conference was held in Yokohama in 2016, GSJ organized the LOC. On every occasions of management, gender balance was the first priority to select the persons who were concerned; e. g., 8 was females among 25 board members, and most of the staffs from the project management companies and travel agency were female. Also, gender balance was carefully considered when selecting the lecturers at the plenary session and public lectures, chairs of each break-out session, and so on. The programs for early carrier scientists helped to give chances for the students and early carrier scientists; e. g., the LOC and societies financially supported more than 140 young scientists including students and early carrier scientists from developing countries. As results, 30 % of about 3800 participants were students and the participants were from 72 countries. Those activities contributed to diverse the attributes of participants and succeed the tradition of the conference to the young generation. It is not easy to evaluate the effect of gender balance of the organizing committee on the management and/or participation of the conference, although it is very clear that the females can manage such a large conference as well as males.

The most serious situation of earth science field of Japan to consider the gender balance must be the lower population of female scientists than the males. To improve the gender balance, not only the scientific contribution but also the experience of decision making and management in various organizations and committees. However, as noted above, the rate of female scientists increases among the young generation at least in our field of study, and we can believe that they will work with great success in the future.

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