



Ochanomizu University Global COE Program
**Science of Human Development for Restructuring the
 “Gap-Widening Society”**

Newsletter No.3



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Greetings from leader in the Childrearing Inequality Research Group

Childrearing Inequality Research Group: Here, we will focus on the interactions over time between individuals and their home and educational environments in the context of the childrearing process. Our goal will be to clarify the inequalities that arise in childcare quality and the quality of life (QOL) through the course of human development, mainly from a psychological perspective. Through various research projects, we will attempt to clarify this process, which comprises many complex factors, using a longitudinal research design. All members will devote themselves to these activities in order to achieve the goals of the research activities in this Global COE program; namely, “To clarify the reproductive structures behind inequality that run through the timeline of human development, and to seek out a path to structural transformations.”

Professor SUGAWARA Masumi: Leader in the Childrearing Inequality Research Group



Disciplinary Linkage Project

The Ochanomizu University Global COE holds Disciplinary Linkage Project to promote mutual understanding and cooperation among three research fields: “International Inequality,” “Educational Social Inequality,” and “Inequality Childrearing” This year, the Research Meetings focused on the fields of International Inequality and Educational/Social Inequality.

In the field of International Inequality, the participants examined the theme of international inequality in education. There were presentations on issues related to global trends in the development of international cooperation and international education cooperation, and on the current status and issues in Laos using individual case studies.

With regard to the problems related to social exclusion and social inclusion, policy-related measures have already been implemented, mainly in Europe and EU countries, but this is gradually becoming an important policy issue in Japan as well. In the field of educational and social inequality, we held an open seminar, inviting some of the top professors from Osaka to discuss a wide range of related issues on the theme of social exclusion and social inclusion. Topics covered included theoretical development of social exclusion/inclusion theory, problems on the policy level in the EU, and current status of support for the homeless in Osaka.

1st Seminar

“Trends and Challenges in International Education Development”

Date: November 14, 2008 (Friday);

5:00 pm-7:00 pm



2nd Seminar

“Social Exclusion/Inclusion: Theory and Social Policy for Redress of Disparities”

Date: December 21, 2008 (Sunday);

1:30 pm-5:00 pm

Hosted by: Ochanomizu University

Communication System Development Program



2nd International Symposium on "Educational Achievement Gaps in East Asian Countries: Current Status and Policy Issues"

What was behind the implementation and resurgence of surveys of academic abilities that took place around the same time in Japan, China, and Korea? Surveys of academic abilities tend to focus their attention on levels of academic skills, and at the same time on academic inequality. The goal of today's symposium is to compare these three societies with a focus on academic inequality, and to clarify the commonalities as well as the differences. Through these investigations, we hope to bring to light the true nature of the problems faced by our own countries, along with the issues surrounding policies aimed at resolving these problems. This second international symposium began with comments from the symposium coordinator, Prof. Hiroaki Mimizuka.

Despite the light rain falling and the very cool temperatures, the symposium welcomed a large number of participants, including researchers and graduate students from inside and outside of Ochanomizu University.

Program

1:00-1:10

Opening comments by Professor Hiroaki MIMIZUKA

1:10-1:50

China: DU, Yuhong (Professor, College of Education Administration, Beijing Normal University)

"Students' Academic Performance and the Allocation of School Resources: Results from a Survey of Junior Secondary Schools in China"

1:50-2:30

Korea: KIM, Kyung-Keun (Professor, Department of Education, Korea University)

"Achievement Gaps in Secondary Education: The Korean Case"

2:30-3:10

Japan: NONOYAMA-TARUMI, Yuko (Assistant Professor, Ochanomizu University Global COE Program)

"Student Achievement Gap in Japan: Findings from PISA Data"

3:10-3:30: Break

3:30-4:00

Commentator

YAMANOUCHI, Kenshi (Associate Professor, Kobe University)

MIMIZUKA, Hiroaki (Professor, Ochanomizu University)

4:00-4:45

Discussion

4:45-5:00

Closing Remarks: Professor Nobuko UCHIDA

5:15-

Reception (Science Bldg3, lounge)

Cocktail/tea/coffee and snacks

Chair: HAMANO, Takashi (Associate Professor, Ochanomizu University)

Simultaneous interpreting (English/Japanese)

The problem of academic inequality has different characteristics in Japan, China, and Korea. In China, there is significant inequality among regions in terms of education opportunities, while in Korea and Japan, a different problem is arising: academic inequality between socio-economic cultural levels accompanying the predominance of neoliberal policies. How do governments perceive these different forms of academic inequality, and how are they going to respond? We heard extremely interesting reports from professors representing each of these three countries.

Following closing comments by Prof. Nobuko Uchida, Vice President of Ochanomizu University, a reception was held as a venue for informal but meaningful discussions and interactions among the participants.



Participants' Comments

— I was glad to be able to hear about current conditions and issues in each country. I hope to be able to put this information to use in my future research.

— I was reminded of the importance of the mother's role in the household environment. There are many issues that cannot be resolved through government policies alone.

— I was happy to hear about research surveys directly from the researchers in China, Korea, and Japan. It was a very valuable experience. It was very interesting to see a comparison of China, Korea, and Japan, and to learn about the current status of academic inequality in Japan.

— It was very interesting to hear about the current status of academic inequality in Japan, China, and Korea, including the differences among these three countries. In my university department, we often talk about countries and societies separately, so it was good to have a fresh perspective on "East Asia."

— It was enough just to be able to experience the atmosphere at the symposium venue, and to see how the presentations were conducted. The content was very difficult for me? particularly the way in which the data was analyzed? but I could understand some of the more general aspects, so it was a really worthwhile experience.

International Seminars / International Training Seminar

1. International Seminar: Current Status and Issues in Early Childhood Education and Development in Central and West Africa

An international seminar was held over two days, from September 30 to October 1, 2008, regarding early childhood education in Central Western Africa. The seminar welcomed nine specialists from five French-speaking countries in Central Western Africa: Cameroon, Senegal, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, including education administrators (central and regional), school inspectors, and instructors from teacher training schools. There were numerous reports covering topics such as early education systems in each



country, the roles of the speakers and the problems that they face in their workplaces, the current status of early childhood education, and inequality in the proliferation of education. Afterwards, there were active exchanges of opinions based on these reports.

2. International Seminar: Early Childhood Education and Development Action Plans of Central and West African Countries

On October 14, 2008, reports were presented by nine specialists from five French-speaking countries in Central Western Africa: Cameroon, Senegal, Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, including education administrators (central and regional), school inspectors, and instructors from teacher training schools, regarding action plans targeting the future of early childhood education in each country. These action plans were created based on the results of three weeks of training in Japan (observations and lectures), and incorporated plans for the future enhancement of early childhood education and the alleviation of inequality in each country. Participants from Japan, including university professors, international assistance specialists, and graduate school students, contributed to the active discussions.



3. International seminar: Early Childhood Care and Education in Mongolia

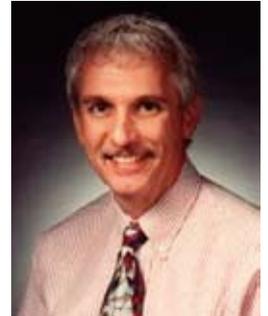
On November 28, 2008, Ochanomizu University Global COE Program "Science of Human Development for Restructuring the Gap-Widening Society" hosted an international seminar on Child care reforms and child development support in Mongolia. Dr. Jamsrandorj Batdelger, Director of Institute of Preschool Education at Mongolian State University of Education, gave a presentation on "Preschool Education Reforms in Mongolia," and Tsendsuren Tumeec, ECD (Early Childhood Development) officer for UNICEF in Mongolia, explained "Alternative Forms of Early Childhood Development Programs in Mongolia." Ariuntuya Myagmar, who is currently registered in the Ph.D program at Hitotsubashi University, reported on a field survey regarding "Ger-Kindergarten for Nomadic Children." As part of the active discussions, the participants fielded questions on collabora-



tive education between kindergarten and elementary school in Japan and Mongolia, child care reforms and early childhood development support in Mongolia, and problems related to inequality.

4. International seminar: Media Violence and the Development of Aggressive Personality

Dr. Craig A. Anderson (Distinguished Professor, Iowa State University), gave two lectures in mid-November. The first, held on November 15 (Saturday) at Ochanomizu University, was hosted by the Japanese Society of Personality Psychology and co-hosted by this GCOE. The title was "Media violence and the development of aggressive personality." The second lecture, entitled "The general aggression model and the escalating cycle of violence" was held on November 18 (Tuesday), also at Ochanomizu University, and hosted by GCOE. Associate Professor Shintaro Yukawa of Tsukuba University acted as the designated debater for the session. Ms. Akiko Shibuya, from Keio University, offered her services as interpreter for both lectures.



5. International Training Seminar: Seminar on Early Childhood Education in Japan and Korea

From December 15 to 22, 2008, the Ochanomizu University Global COE Program "Science of Human Development for Restructuring the Gap-Widening Society" hosted a seminar on Early Childhood Education in Japan and Korea. The seminar welcomed Prof. Lee Ki Sook of Ewha Womans University, one of Korea's top experts in the field of early childhood education, along with 18 students. This international training seminar lasted for eight days, and featured interpreting in Japanese and Korean. There were tours of six daycare centers and kindergartens, including Wakoh Daycare, which emphasizes the development of human character through education in natural surroundings; Tampopo Daycare at Tokyo University, which has mainly male caregivers; and Ochanomizu University's own kindergarten, which has been a leader in the field of early childhood education in Japan for 132 years. There were also lectures by more than 10 professors who are active on the front lines of early childhood education research, including Prof. Takashi Muto of Shiraume Gakuen University, Prof. Nobuko Uchida, Vice President of Ochanomizu University, and Prof. Miyako Ohto, also from Ochanomizu University. There were also two conferences on childcare, where Japanese students and Korean researchers discussed a variety of topics related to early childhood education in both countries, ranging from childcare practices to theory. Over the course of these eight days, there were a total of 228 participants, and more than 100 research texts were distributed. This was a very meaningful and enriching seminar that represents the first step in the history of academic exchanges in the field of early childhood education at Ewha Womans University in Korea and Ochanomizu University in Japan.



Educational/Social Inequality Research Group Seminar

(1) JELS Report Seminar

- "Crisis in development in juvenile stage and family life"
- "Challenge to Sociological Understanding of Adolescence in Japan: Transition, Culture, and Social Stratification"

In the field of educational and social inequality, the JELS (Japan Education Longitudinal Study) is conducted to investigate the transition from adolescence to adulthood. This seminar comprised reports on two surveys conducted targeting elementary, junior high, and high school students and caregivers in two areas.

(2) Communication System Development Program Joint Seminar

- "Career development support for young people through school education"

Given the current crisis in the transition from school to work life, what type of support can be provided to young people through school education? In this seminar, we focused on the results of school education in the formation of careers for young people, and examined measures for dealing with the problems involved in this transition.



"Seminar on Making English Presentations in Academic Conference"

A Seminar on English presentation was held on February 2 and 9, 2009, by the Global COE International Committee. The first half of this seminar examined the importance of making presentations at overseas academic conferences, as well as necessary preparations and skills for making effective presentations. In the second half, we looked at English abstracts written by the participants, and worked on skills using English presentations by the participants as study materials. Many specific questions were asked by the roughly 30 participants, most of whom were graduate students in Ph.D. programs.



RA Research Report Meetings

These meetings provided an opportunity for research reports by 29 RAs from FY2008, excluding those who conducted open call research. (Opportunities for separate research reports by these open call researchers will be provided at the beginning of FY2009.) At the first meeting (September 16), reports were presented by D2 researchers and higher, and at the 2nd meeting (February 24) by D1 researchers. A commentator was assigned for each report, with comments for D1 at the first meeting and for D2 and above at the second meeting. This research base is comprised of three academic fields: psychology, sociology, and education. For all reports, the report presenters teamed up with persons from other academic fields to make comments, in order to

promote deeper mutual understanding among young researchers in these fields, and to promote greater awareness of the uniqueness of each individual field. The questions asked, though often fairly rudimentary, went to the heart of the research, making this a very meaningful exchange for the researchers.



Seminar on multivariate analysis for developmental follow-up study 02: Analysis of Longitudinal Data "Latent Growth Curve Analysis"

A seminar on multivariate analysis for developmental follow-up study, entitled "Analysis of Longitudinal Data-Latent Growth Curve Analysis," was held over three days, on January 19, 21, and 23, 2009, by the Global COE Research Program Committee. At this seminar, we introduced large-scale longitudinal research currently being conducted throughout the world, and explained basic knowledge of Latent Growth Curve Analysis, which is used as a core method in the analysis of this research data.



External Review of the Ochanomizu University Global COE Project

This Global COE Project will soon be finishing its second year. We must not forget, however, that the external evaluations of the directions of these education and research projects conducted by external evaluations committees in the first year (2007) will have dramatic effects. The intent of this Project is always receive and utilize evaluations from outside researchers, no matter how strict those evaluations may be, from the perspective of maintaining objectivity regarding academic and social significance, and of gauging our own activities. The following parties were invited to offer external evaluations: From within Japan: Morikazu Ushioji (Professor, Graduate School of International Studies, Obirin University); Keiko Kashiwagi (Professor, School of Human Studies,

Bunkyo Gakuin University Graduate School); and Natsuo Ichiko (Dean of the Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu Daigaku). From overseas: Phillip Brown (Professor, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University) and Anne Fernald (Josephine Knotts Knowles Professor of Human Biology, Stanford University). The members of this External Evaluation Committee point out directions for education and research activities, and offer proposals for improvements. This project is already conducting activities using the results of these external evaluations during 2008, the second year of the project. For details, please refer to the published "External Evaluation Report."

Information on Scheduled Events

The GCOE will hold a joint meeting with the Japanese Society of Child Science on September 12 and 13, 2009, at Ochanomizu University (main venue: Kiindo Auditorium). The main theme of the meeting is "Children/Environment/Brain Science," and various lectures and symposia are scheduled.

Editorial Board

In this 3rd Newsletter, we have focused mainly on introducing report meetings and research meetings related to research activities in various fields, as well as numerous international symposiums and seminars that have examined the problems of inequality in international society. We will continue our determined efforts to undertake research activities that maintain a full awareness of social issues, combining both theoretical and practical research. We look forward to achieving even more substantial results through academic interactions and the construction of networks with researchers from around the world. In closing, I would like to express my deep appreciation to all those who contributed materials to this newsletter.

Editor: Meichin LEE

Published By

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