



Global COE Program

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

Newsletter No.5



P2 INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM/
 DISCIPLINARY LINKAGE PROJECT

P3 OPEN SEMINARS

P4 INTRODUCTION OF INVITED TEACHERS/RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS BY RAs/INFORMATION ON SCHEDULED EVENTS

Greetings from Chairman of Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee continued to engage in promotional activities related to the program and the sharing of information on its results in 2009. Chinese and Korean language sections have been added to the website, and preparations are underway to stream video of the symposium. In addition to the Japanese newsletter, an English edition is published twice a year and sent by post

to universities and related institutions in Japan and around the world. The newsletters offer a variety of content, including brief introductions to the activities of young researchers aimed at turning out female researchers that are sensitive to social justice. The English monograph is also an important undertaking, and we plan to publish Proceedings No. 9 Selected Papers within this year.



Professor Kenji Miwa, Chairman
 Public Relations Committee

International Seminars

1. Inequalities and Disparities of Early Childhood Development in Central and West African Countries

An international seminar to discuss children's circumstances and disparities in early childhood education in different countries was held on Friday, October 2, 2009. Twelve individuals, including education officials, school inspectors and faculty members from teacher training schools were invited from the five French-speaking countries of Cameroon, Senegal, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. Presenters from each country talked about the system of early childhood education in their countries as well as the current state of affairs, disparities, problems and issues they face, knowledge and skills they would like to acquire in training programs and other matters of relevance. There was a vigorous exchange of ideas among specialists from the five African countries and Japan.

Thirty-two people attended the seminar.

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

On Tuesday, October 20, 2009 twelve participants from the aforementioned five countries gave reports with a particular focus on action plans designed to improve early childhood education in their countries. These action plans were prepared following a three-week JICA training program as a culmination of what was learned from the study of early childhood education in Japan. In addition to the ideas shared between the five African countries, there were valuable comments from Japanese participants, members of aid agencies and local primary education officials, which made for a productive discussion. There were 29 participants.



International Symposium

“Evolution and Development of Children’s Play: Sociocultural Exploration”

Children create their world and create maps through their day-to-day play activities and lifestyles, and they learn many things through participation in life events. What does “play” mean to children? At this year’s symposium, we had presentations from specialists from Japan and Korea in the fields of evolutionary psychology, cultural anthropology, and early childhood education, and explored the process in which children learn through play.

Date: October 17, 2009 (Saturday)

1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Venue: Ochanomizu University Inter-Faculty Building #2, Rm. 201

Program: Keynote Speech

Tetsuro Matsuzawa (Professor; Director of Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University)
“Education by Master-Apprenticeship in Chimpanzees”

Panels

Lee, Ki Sook (Professor, Ewha Womans

University, Korea)

“Children’s Play: Concepts, Socio-Cultural Context and Reflecting on Traditional Play”
Hiroko Hara (Visiting Professor, Josai International University; Professor Emeritus, Ochanomizu University)

“Children’s Lives among the K’a Sho-go-T’ine (‘the Hare Indians’) in Northwest Canada in the Early 1960s—Coping with ‘Gap-Widening,’ ‘Multi-Cultural Diversity,’ and/or with ‘Human Universality as Homosapiens?’”

Professor Matsuzawa showed how the study of chimpanzees may provide unique insights into the origins of human cognition, education, and mother-infant relationships, through highlighting the chimpanzees’ way of “education by master-apprenticeship.” Professor Lee showed various data to illustrate the overheated early education phenomenon in Korea and presented an initiative which promotes learning through traditional play. Professor Hara spoke about the adult-child relationship among the Hare Indians in Northwest Canada



and demonstrated how there is no concept of “teaching” among the culture. The two discussants opened up a heated discussion on the process in which children learn through play, by questioning whether chimpanzees ever initiate their own play, the definition of play for humans, and the long-term consequences of play. Around 100 people participated in the symposium and enjoyed the discussion in Japanese and Korean through interpreters. Videos of the presentations are available on the Ochanomizu University Global COE website at <http://ocha-gaps-gcoe.com/>.

Disciplinary Linkage Project

The Ochanomizu University Global COE has implemented the Disciplinary Linkage Project to promote mutual understanding and cooperation among three research fields: “International inequality,” “Educational and social inequality,” and “Inequality in Childrearing.” These seminars were hosted by the Inequality in Childrearing Group and Educational and Social Inequality Research Group.

The 4th Disciplinary Linkage Project Seminar Childrearing Inequality Research Group “Measuring Children’s Quality of Life and Exploring Relevant Factors”

Date: January 10, 2010 (Sunday)

1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Venue: Ochanomizu University Faculty of Letters & Education Building #1, Meeting Rm. 1

Participants: 15

An open seminar on the problems and determinants involved in measuring children’s quality of life (QOL) was held as the fourth seminar of the Disciplinary Linkage Project. During the keynote address in the first part, there was an overview of the Japanese version of KINDL, an interim report on Japanese KINDL early childhood development research

and a presentation on applications of KINDL in clinical situations as related to the current state of affairs in and future issues facing Japanese research on children’s QOL. During the research presentations in the second part, there were reports on a wide range of topics, such as psychometrical characteristics of KINDL to parent-child QOL during infancy, media usage and QOL, and adolescent QOL. There were also many questions and comments from the floor, which made for a lively and constructive discussion.



The 5th Disciplinary Linkage Project Seminar Educational and Social Inequality Research Group “On Poverty of Children”

Date: January 13, 2010 (Wednesday)

3:30 pm–5:30 pm

Venue: Ochanomizu University Main Building Rm. 103

Participants: 30

The Group held an open seminar on the poverty of children in Japanese society as the fifth seminar of the Disciplinary Linkage Project. The speaker, Aya Abe, Senior Researcher at the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, examined the definition of childhood poverty and referred to various data reflecting the situations surrounding poor children. The issue of how to define the child poverty ratio and problems in the Japanese social security system related to child poverty were highlighted through international comparisons, and the functional insufficiency of Japanese social policies was discussed in comparison with other OECD countries.



OPEN SEMINARS

The 4th East Asia Child Science Exchange Program

“Language Development and Brain Science: Research and Implementation in East Asia”

This open seminar was co-hosted with Child Research Net (CRN) on Friday, September 11, 2009. How do children acquire language and develop? To what extent has this process been clarified through research in neuroscience? To start off the symposium, Hideaki Koizumi (Hitachi Fellow) gave a keynote speech on how social and cultural environments and the relationships between parents and children affect language development. Later, Associate Professor Jiang Yung of East China Normal

University spoke about cultural conditions related to kindergarten teachers in Shanghai, and Associate Professor Zhang Minghon, also of East China Normal University, gave a presentation on the design and implementation of early reading education at Chinese kindergartens. To summarize, this symposium pointed out the importance of supporting parents in child rearing, and succeeded in identifying directions for offering advice to governments on related policies. About 200 people participated.



The 6th Annual Meeting of Japanese Society of Child Science

“Children, Environments and Brain Science”



This open seminar was co-hosted with the Japanese Society of Child Science on Saturday, September 12 and Sunday, September 13, 2009. The Japanese Society of Child Science was founded to provide researchers, educators, and parents with an arena for the free exchange of ideas, opinions, and research on children and their problems. Symposia on childcare design, informatics of childcare, and games were held along with the plenary lectures on childcare design (Noboru Kobayashi, Representative

of the Society), the era of evading children (Masuko Honda, Professor Emeritus, Ochanomizu University), and myths in developmental psychology (Kotaro Suzuki, Professor, Niigata University). This time, discussions were held in symposium format on child-care environments, information surrounding children, games and other such topics addressing current circumstances and issues as well as future developments from various perspectives. About 250 people participated.

JELS 1st Seminar

“International Comparison of Student Achievement Surveys: Reviewing Cross-national and National Surveys”

On Friday, January 8, 2010, the Japan Education Longitudinal Study (JELS) in Educational and Social Inequality Research Group co-hosted a seminar together with the university's special educational research grant CSD (Communication System Development) program. Yuko Tarumi (Assistant Professor in the Global COE Program) gave an overview of PISA survey data and talked about Japanese academic features in PISA. Jie Wang (Lecturer in the Global COE Program) gave an overview of independent academic surveys

carried out in mainland China since 2007 and explained the issues faced. Yuri Nakajima (JELS researcher) primarily talked about the National Assessment of Academic Ability and Study that has been conducted since 2007 and the related issues while also providing an overview of the academic survey conducted under JELS and talked about the issues involved. After the presentations, a lively discussion was triggered by questions and comments from Professor Hiroaki Mimizuka, the commentator, and the floor. There were 16 participants.



JELS 2nd Seminar

“Students' Career Development: Culture, Academic Achievement, and Future Path”



The second seminar co-hosted with the CSD program was held on Friday, January 22, 2010. Naoki Otawa (Assistant Professor, University of Tokyo), Hiroki Nakanishi and Noriko Kanie (both JELS researchers) gave reports on “Tracking and Student Culture,” “Analysis of High School Students' Future Path Selection,” and “Students' Future Path

Selection and Academic Achievement,” respectively, using data collected from Tohoku Area C for JELS. Professor Katsuko Makino, who served as commentator, said that each of them were timely topics and that she would like them to utilize the results in policy proposals. Twenty people participated in the seminar.

Introduction of Invited Teachers

At this COE, young teachers recruited from Japan and other countries work together with the faculty members in charge of program promotion and perform a central role in the promotion of the research. In addition to an associate professor, a lecturer and an assistant professor, there are also research fellows and associate fellows engaged in research and other related tasks. In this issue we will introduce three research fellows.



Research Fellow

Shuichi Takita

Takita specializes in development and education economics. He is engaged in research on educational development policies and planning in developing countries as well as methods of evaluating them and how to ensure the effectiveness of international development cooperation. At the same time, he is promoting empirical research on the relationship between education and the economic growth and reduction of poverty in developing countries. At the GCOE, he belongs to the International Inequality Research Group and is involved in collaborative research with local researchers designed to reveal the structure of the problem of education and inequality/poverty, primarily in Southeast Asia.



Research Fellow

Satoko Matsumoto

Matsumoto specializes in environmental and developmental psychology. She is engaged in longitudinal studies on the relationship between children's environment and development starting from infancy. At the GCOE, she belongs to the Inequality in Childrearing Group where she is involved in research activities on the processes that lead to inequalities in care quality and quality of life from the perspective of the children's environment and development, primarily in the form of longitudinal studies. She has also been involved in a three-year follow-up study on junior high and high school students that the Research Program Committee has been conducting as part of the GCOE's interdisciplinary research.



Research Fellow

Meichin Lee

Lee specializes in linguistic and developmental psychology. She is studying the problems of language education and cross-cultural adaptation among children of international marriages. She is engaged in longitudinal research on the psychological, social and cultural factors involved in the process of language development. At the GCOE, she belongs to the International Inequality Research Group where she is studying regional disparities and the problem of cross-cultural education for children living in multi-cultural or multi-language environments faced by foreign residents and/or their spouses as well as the problems of pre-school education and child care in the foundational stages.

Research Presentations by RAs

Meetings were held for 27 of the 2009 research assistants, excluding those engaged in grant-in-aid research, to report on their research. In principle, the first (October 1, 2009) was for D2 and above, and the second (February 12, 2010) was for D1. Commentators were assigned to each report; the first time, D1 provided comments, and the

second time it was D2 and above. Young researchers from different academic fields increased their mutual understanding and, at the same time, the persons giving the reports were paired with another person from a different academic field who was in charge of comments so that they could recognize the unique characteristics of their own field. Although the reports were rough around the edges, there were also some questions that hit at the essence of the research, and the meetings provided a meaningful research exchange.



2010 Information on Scheduled Events

Research Presentations by 2009 Grant-in-Aid Researchers

Nineteen 2009 grant-in-aid researchers will hold a research presentation meeting.

Date: April 12, 2010 (Monday) 1:00 pm–5:00 pm
Venue: Ochanomizu University Main Building

Rm. 103

For details, refer to the Ochanomizu University Global COE website:
<http://ocha-gaps-gcoe.com/>

6th

Disciplinary Linkage Project Seminar "Reconsidering the Methodology of Language Development Research"

The 6th Disciplinary Linkage Project Seminar: "Reconsidering the Methodology of Language Development Research"
The International Inequality Research Group is planning to hold an open seminar as follows. We look forward to seeing you there.

Date: June 16, 2010 (Wednesday) 2:00 pm–5:00 pm

Venue: Ochanomizu University Main Building
Rm. 103

Lecturer: Nobuko Uchida (Professor),
Meichin Lee (Research Fellow)
For details, refer to the Ochanomizu University Global COE website:
<http://ocha-gaps-gcoe.com/>

Editorial Board

During the second half of this year, in addition to an international symposium, we held the "Disciplinary Linkage Project" to promote mutual understanding and cooperation among the three research fields of the program. We also facilitated lively academic exchanges between researchers from Japan and other countries through open seminars. In this 5th newsletter, we focused mainly on introducing a variety of research activities.

Editor: Meichin LEE

Published by Ochanomizu University Global COE Program
Science of Human Development for Restructuring the "Gap-Widening Society"
2-1-1 Otsuka, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112-8610
Tel/Fax: 03-5978-5247
E-mail: jimu-gcoe@cc.ocha.ac.jp
URL: <http://ocha-gaps-gcoe.com/>