

JELS2009

Japan Education Longitudinal Study 2009

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The Global COE Program
 Science of Human Development for Restructuring the ‘Gap-Widening Society’
 (Adopted in 2007)

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1. Japan Education Longitudinal Study

1) Outline and Significance of the Study

Japan Education Longitudinal Study (hereafter JELS) is the first full-scale longitudinal study in Japan, which focuses on the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Purpose and Need

JELS focuses on the developmental process of one's life from elementary school to early adulthood and to the first stage of work life. We examine various patterns of human development (e.g., academic performance and ability, aspiration, career, academic qualification, job, status attainment), and interactions among family, school education, out-of-school education, and socio-cultural environment from a comprehensive framework of the transition from childhood to adulthood.

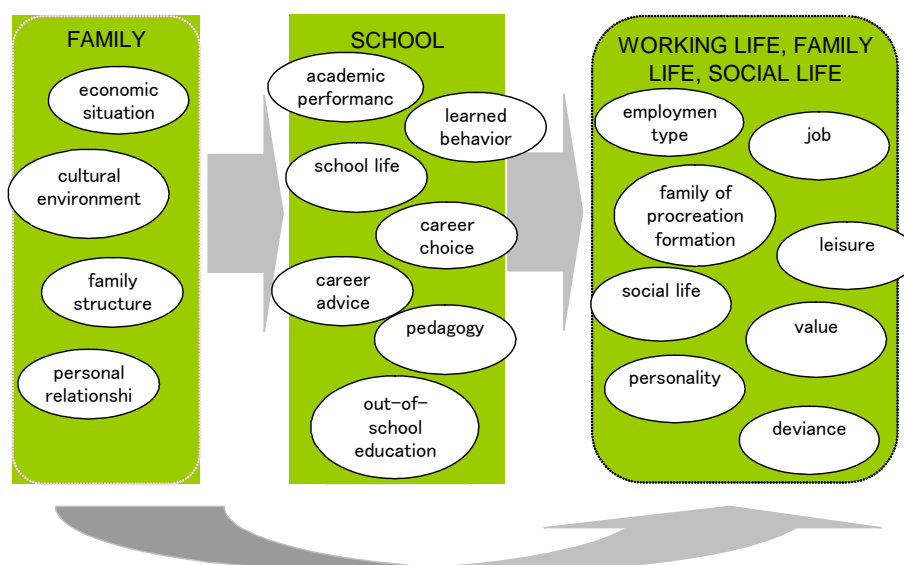
In our changing society in the early 21st century, we can find the “risks” of transition and educational system at the following levels;

- 1) socialization (academic performance, ability, personality formation);
- 2) selection and distribution of human resource (smooth transition to work) ;
- 3) realization of equitable society through socialization and selection/distribution.

For instance, declining academic achievement and increasing number of withdrawals are 1) the risks of socialization, and the increase of so-called *Freeter* (youth part-time workers); and joblessness are 2) the risks of selection and distribution of human resource. Likewise, the expansion of social disparity is 3) the risk of realization of equitable society.

We have to reexamine every phenomenon in the context of the smooth transition to adulthood. We will continue a longitudinal study on children's developmental process, and discuss the aspects of the risks above in the macro socio-cultural environment (e.g. family, school, out-of-school education). The ultimate purpose of JELS is to find a measure to create an educational system in order to overcome these risks.

Framework



Features of JELS

- 1) Follow-up Study (Longitudinal Study)
We follow up the same persons from childhood to adulthood.
- 2) Fixed-point Observation (Cross-sectional Study)
We examine students in the same schools in the same area at different time, and observe young people and school education at fixed points.
- 3) Research on Transition
There are various transition points, such as from early elementary school years to senior elementary school years, from elementary school to junior high school, from middle school to high school, from high school to working world or to higher education, or from school to work. We understand various youth problems as “risks in transition”, and try to find a measure to overcome these risks.
- 4) Measurement of Multiple “Academic achievement”
We try to measure multiple “academic achievement,” which are not only traditional “academic achievement” complying with the teaching guidelines, but also performance assessment (PA) and academic achievement based on the “new view on academic achievement.”
- 5) Quest for Social-Cultural factors
We quest for the relationship between the development of the youth and school education, family, and labor market from a sociological perspective. We especially emphasize the relationship of educational guidance, adaptation guidance, and career guidance, the relationship of home education and family environment, and the role of employment supports.
- 6) Feedback on Research Findings to the Society and Fields
We publicize obtained data for academic research, and give feedback to the fields, in particular, schools, and search for measures to solve clinical problems.

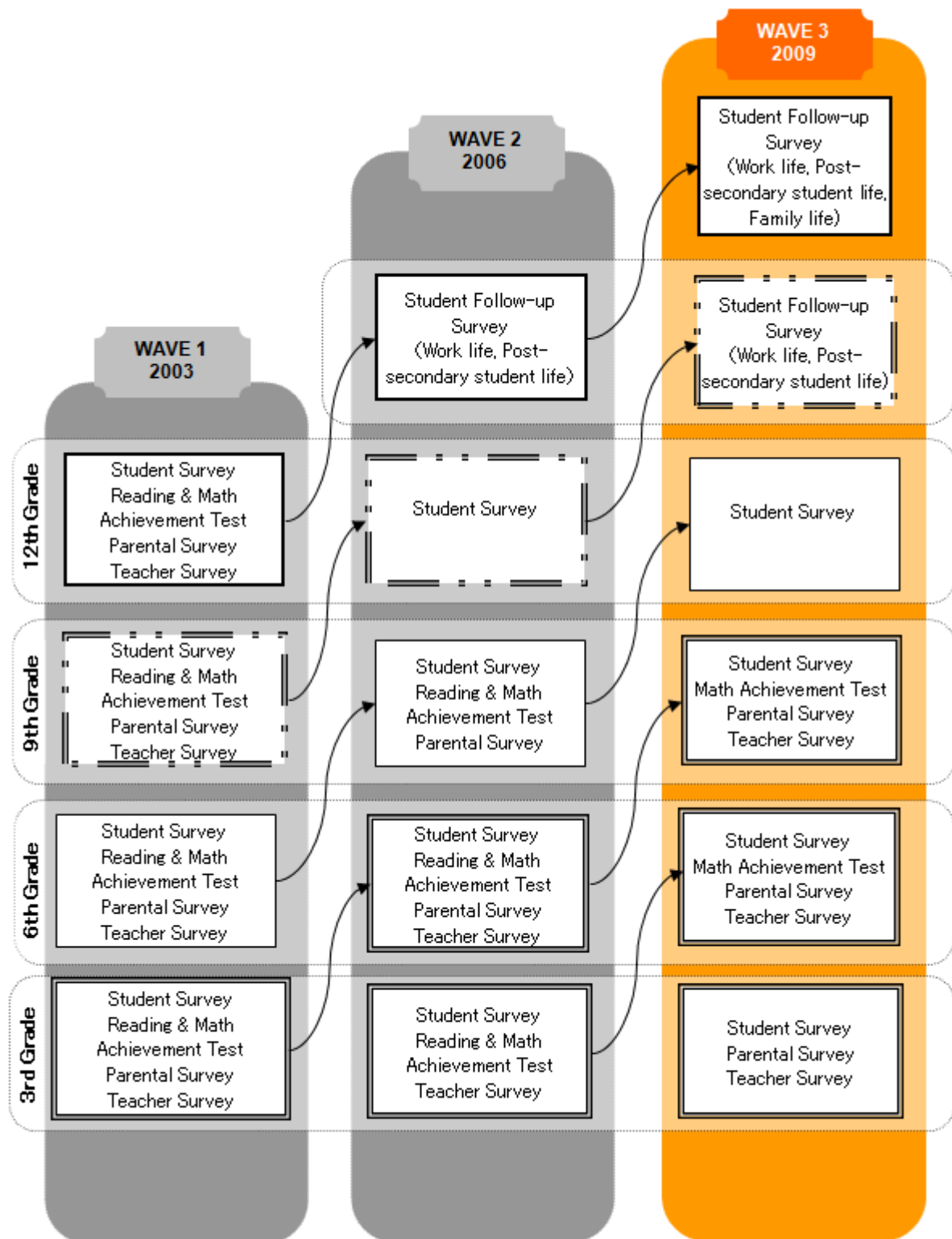
Significance of the Study in the Society

JELS is a study which has the following significance:

- 1) Recommendations for career education
In the 1990s, the previous mechanism of smooth transition from school to work has frayed. For example, at high school level, around 10% of graduates get unstable works, which means they are on the brink between school and working world. From the viewpoint of transition to work, we will suggest educational system and social support that are congruous with changing labor market.
- 2) Quest for understanding the situation and cause of gaps in academic performance
Declining academic achievement has been brought to public attention. We examine whether student achievement has really declined, by collecting successive basic data on student achievement of the youth. In addition, we collect empirical data on the actual conditions for the gaps of academic achievement caused by family background, and about the mechanism of appearance of gaps. Although academic ability surveys by the government such as the Ministry of Education are large, they do not try to find reasons for the gaps of academic performance. It is only researchers who investigate the cause.
- 3) Quest for the impact of academic achievement on children’s future
Although it has been recognized that academic achievement has significant impact on people’s future social status, little is known about the sociological mechanism of academic achievement formation and differentiation. In addition, little attention has been given to the impact of academic achievement of young children on the subsequent

- status attained.
- 4) Quest for the impact of students' family on their future
“Family” has significant impact on academic achievement formation, acquirement of academic degrees and jobs, social status attainment. However, most studies give little attention to both the economic and the cultural situation of the family or on family structure. In our study, we obtain data with higher reliability by collecting data from students' parents or guardians.
 - 5) Quest for the impact of educational policy
The present educational policies are carried out along with both lines of “more relaxed education (*yutori education*)” and “liberalization of education (relaxation of regulation).” We examine the relationship between various aspects of children's development and teachers' pedagogy (contents and methods), and discuss the impact of educational policy on children. We acquire basic data which can test the validity of the direction of these educational policies.
 - 6) Investigation of the mechanism of social competition
Through the investigations mentioned above, we expect to accurately observe the mechanisms of status attainment and distribution of social resources in contemporary Japan, and to gain comprehensive implications for family, education, and working society. If the social gaps of academic achievement, academic degrees, and distribution of labor are affected by a mechanism, which is beyond the control of efforts such as family backgrounds, our society is not a meritocratic society, where people's efforts and results equally affect their future. If a portion of people in privileged class keep a position of superiority, while some people need much more effort in the competition of the society, this society would be an unequal society. JELS is expected to illuminate the Japanese society, a society with meritocracy as an illusion, and to reexamine the mechanism of social competition itself.

2) Research Design of JELS



3) Survey Content

JELS has conducted the following surveys so far.

Questionnaire Survey

- Questionnaire survey on students: 3rd and 6th grade in elementary school, 9th grade in junior high school, and 12th grade in high school
 1. learning behavior and consciousness
 - the level of understanding of classes, preference of subjects, types of classes, interest and concern, self-evaluation of academic performance, aspiration for academic performance, evaluation of ability
 2. school life
 - frequency of tardiness and absence, participation in club activity, school adjustment
 3. out-of-school life
 - deviant behavior, cultural activity and contact, frequency and hours of work at home, opportunity of out-of-school learning (e.g. cram school), allowance and income of part-time job, consumption lifestyle
 4. career consciousness
 - career plan after graduation, desired academic degrees, desired jobs, informally decided track (12th grade), job hunting (12th grade), career guidance (12th grade)
 5. self-concept, value, view of society
 - self-dignity, view of marriage and gender role, view of society (e.g. competition, sense of impartiality), factors of social success
 6. family and family background
 - atmosphere of family, cultural capital, parental and guardians' expectation for academic degree
- Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers
 1. educational objective, problems in teaching
 - educational objective, problems in teaching, problems in class management
 2. atmosphere of classroom
 3. educational guidance
 - type of class, significant concern on pedagogy, guidance of assignment, evaluation
- Questionnaire survey on parents or guardians

Academic Ability Survey

- Mathematics
 - achievement test (AT)
 - performance assessment (PA)
- Reading

Interview Survey on Teachers

- Interview survey on homeroom teachers
- Interview survey on teachers who are in charge of career guidance (12th grade)
- Interview survey on teachers who are in charge of educational affairs (12th grade)

4) Features of Academic Ability Survey

1) Measurement of various “academic achievement”

Our academic ability survey aims to measure various “academic achievement.” We try to measure not only traditional “academic achievement” conforming teaching guidelines, but also various “academic achievement” including performance assessment (PA) and “academic achievement” based on the “new view of academic achievement.”

2) Measurement of the process of thinking and resolving

While existing tests measure the answers, PA measures the process of thinking and resolving and the way of performance. After the introduction of “new view of academic achievement,” more importance has been given to process of thinking and resolving as educational objective and learning activity. However, an appropriate assessment procedure has not been developed. PA has been brought to attention as the assessment procedure in recent years.

3) Elucidation of the determinant factors of academic achievement

We examine the relationship between academic achievement and students’ learning attitude and behavior, out-of-school education, familial cultural environment, and teachers’ teaching methods, by using data from questionnaire survey on students, homeroom teachers, and parents or guardians and academic achievement.

4) Investigation into the cause of the change of children’s academic achievement

By the time-oriented longitudinal study, we can explain the change of academic achievement of the same student as well as social cultural factors which are determinants of the change.

5) Research Findings and Dissemination of Research Findings

1) We transmit research findings to society broadly, not only academia, through academic books and store-bought books.

2) Our study contributes to the formation of an international center of excellence in accordance with the effect of the Global COE programs. At the same time, we are responsible to the governments such as education commissions and schools for providing useful data. We will provide the following information and data;

1. to provide results from student survey;
2. to provide results from academic ability survey; and,
3. to report results in school training.

3) We publish research findings, but individual students and individual schools are anonymous (Only schools affiliated with Ochanomizu University are onymous).

6) Attention on Human Rights and Privacy

Regarding academic research studies in Japan, there has not been a system of the protection of human rights and privacy.

We created “Ethics Board for COE research studies in Ochanomizu University,” where all research studies should be judged, collecting and examining the international situations of research ethics and the protection of privacy.

The following topics should be judged in the Ethics Board.

- 1) the meaning of studies in society
- 2) the need of collecting information violating privacy
- 3) the validity of research methods and the way of the publication of findings from the viewpoint of the protection of human rights and privacy
- 4) the validity of the way of data management (the system of the protection of compromise)

The data collection, management, and publication are based on this regulation.

In addition, we ourselves pay careful attention to research ethics, and commission the logistics of the study to a research company, which is authorized to suit the privacy protection system. In accordance with the Private Information Protection Law, we pay utmost consideration to the protection of individual names and school names.

2. JELS2003 survey and its research findings

1) Outline of JELS2003 and JELS2006

Area A: Kanto Region

2003 - Questionnaire survey on students (all grades; i.e., 3rd and 6th grades in elementary school, 9th grade in junior high school, and 12th grade in high school)

- Academic ability survey (reading and math (AT and PA) for all grades)
- Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (all grades)

2004 - Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (all grades)

2006 - Questionnaire survey on students (all grades)

- Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (6th and 9th grades)
- Academic ability survey (reading and AT for 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades; PA for schools who wished)
- Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (3rd and 6th grades)

Table. Questionnaire survey on students in Area A.

2003/2004 2006	No. of School	No. of Distribution	No. of Collection	Collection Rate (%)
3rd grade in elementary school	14	1161	1118	96.3
	14	1205	1165	96.7
6th grade in elementary school	14	1202	1164	96.8
	14	1275	1260	98.8
9th grade in junior high school	8	1128	1057	93.7
	8	1244	1163	93.5
12th grade in high school	10	1969	1438	73.0
	10	2309	2044	88.5
Parents or guardians	—	3058	920	30.1
	—	2428	1133	46.7

Area B: Tohoku Region

2003 - Questionnaire survey on students (12th grade in high school)

Table. Questionnaire survey on students in Area B.

2003	No. of School	No. of Distribution	No. of Collection	Collection Rate (%)
12th grade in high school	7	1414	1077	94.4

Area C: Tohoku Region

2004 - Questionnaire survey on students (all grades; i.e., 3rd and 6th grades in elementary school, 9th grade in middle school, and 12th grade in high school)

- Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (all grades)
- Academic ability survey (reading and math (AT and PA) for all grades)
- Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (all grades)

2007 - Questionnaire survey on students (all grades)

- Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (3rd, 6th, and 9th grades)
- Academic ability survey (reading and math (AT and PA) for 3rd, 6th, and 9th grades)
- Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (3rd and 6th grades)

Table. Questionnaire survey on students in Area C.

2004 2007	No. of School	No. of Distribution	No. of Collection	Collection Rate (%)
3rd grade in elementary school	21 30	935 1103	921 1017	98.5 92.2
6th grade in elementary school	21 30	974 1104	962 996	98.8 90.2
9th grade in junior high school	8 11	1022 1148	968 915	94.7 79.7
12th grade in high school	6 6	1194 1015	1150 950	96.3 93.6
Parents or guardians	— —	4125 3355	1512 2913	36.7 86.8

Schools affiliated with Ochanomizu University

- 2003 - Questionnaire survey on students (all grades; i.e., 3rd and 6th grades in elementary school, 9th grade in middle school, and 12th grade in high school)
- Academic ability survey (reading and math (AT and PA) for all grades)
 - Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (all grades)
- 2004 - Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (all grades)
- 2006 - Questionnaire survey on students (6th, 9th, and 12th grades)
- Questionnaire survey on parents and guardians (6th and 9th grades)
 - Questionnaire survey on homeroom teachers (6th grades)

Table. Questionnaire survey on students in schools affiliated with Ochanomizu University.

2003/2004 2006	No. of Distribution	No. of Collection	Collection Rate (%)
3rd grade in elementary school	118 —	117 —	99.2 —
6th grade in elementary school	127 131	123 130	96.9 99.2
9th grade in junior high school	135 132	132 130	97.8 98.5
12th grade in high school	118 117	112 109	94.9 93.2
Parents or guardians	484 263	298 181	61.6 68.8

2) Research Findings

Published Reports

- “JELS 1: Base Year Survey Reports 2003 (Questionnaire surveys on students)” 2004
- “JELS 2: Japanese Ability Survey Reports” 2004
- “JELS 3: Mathematics Ability Survey Reports” 2004
- “JELS 4: Detail Analysis Theses (1)” 2005
- “JELS 5: Academic Ability Survey Report: Middle and High Schools” 2005
- “JELS 6: Academic Ability Survey Report: Schools Affiliated with Ochanomizu University” 2005
- “JELS 7: Base Year Survey Reports 2003 (Questionnaire surveys on students and parents or guardians)” 2006
- “JELS 8: Area C Base Year Survey Reports” 2006
- “JELS 9: Area C Mathematics Ability Survey Reports” 2007
- “JELS10: Detail Analysis Theses (2) & Area C Japanese Ability Survey Reports” 2007
- “JELS11: Area A Wave2 Survey Reports” 2008
- “JELS12: Reports in International Conferences & Area C Wave 2 Survey Reports” 2009