# Survey Research on Actual Situation of Learning Demand for Lifelong Learning and Long-term Changes Therein (Report Outline)

(The full-text is available on the National Institute for Education Policy Research website)

## 1. Purpose and Overview of the Survey and Research

### (1) Purpose of the Survey and Research

This study aims to "identify public needs for lifelong learning in Japan and explore issues on lifelong learning policies through empirical analysis", which was one of the first mid-term goals for the National Institute for Education Policy Research (NIER). While it is necessary to set priorities in concert with changes in public needs for learning when considering lifelong policies, the situation is significantly changing in recent years. Therefore, this study mainly attempts to perceive the current reality of demand for lifelong learning.

○ **Features of the Study**

**A. Continuous Survey on Learning Needs**

This study is a long-term research based on the following three studies:

1) *Survey of Attitudes of Adults Concerning Lifelong Learning* (1991)
2) *Study on Education and Training by Companies and Employees* (1991)
3) *Longitudinal Study on Changes in Demand for Lifelong Learning* (2001)

**B. Survey and Research on Contemporary and Urgent Issues in Lifelong Learning**

Based on study results on major contemporary issues in lifelong learning such as "elderly education", "career development" and "media literacy" on which we have been working, long-term changes in learning needs are clarified for each issue in this study. "Support of home education", which is especially an important policy issue for lifelong learning, is also considered.

Further, in light of the lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred while conducting the survey, two additional subjects were incorporated into the study: disaster prevention education at home, and media for disaster prevention education.

**C. The Study to Support "Comprehensive Knowledge to Survive in the Rapidly Changing Society"**

The 2008 report by the Central Council for Education, entitled "Measures to Promote Lifelong Learning to Lead the New Era", states "the necessity of promoting of lifelong learning so that individuals can acquire 'comprehensive knowledge required to cope with rapid changes in society as an independent individual'. "With this "comprehensive knowledge" in mind, this study considers what kind of knowledge is required in addition to the surveys on professionals and the elderly.

### (2) Overview of the Survey and Research

Four teams were organized to conduct Internet surveys on each theme. Based on the results of these surveys and long-term trends for each theme, this study presented empirical evidences of public demand for lifelong learning while clarifying major contemporary issues (such as social participation of the elderly, lifelong career education, sustainable society and technologies) in an integrated manner.

[Study period: FY 2010- FY 2012, Leader: TATSUTA Yoshihiro (Senior Researcher, Department for Lifelong Learning Policy Research)]

* Outline of the Internet surveys

In light of the preliminary survey in FY2010, and in consistency with Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) in FY2011, this study was conducted from November 2011 to December in 2011. In terms of methodology, firstly, a sampling was performed throughout Japan after the numbers of survey subjects necessary for each theme were decided. The request for participation in the survey was then sent via email, and among valid responses, data responded to all questions in particular were extracted to be analyzed.

A. Survey on vocational education
  ○ Purpose of survey:
  (1) Demand for lifelong learning concerning vocational education and training of adults
  (2) Analysis and specification of qualifications, abilities and characteristics valid for employability according to types of working (i.e. regular employee, non-regular employee, housewife, job seeker and unemployed).
  ○ Respondent: 750 adult men and women between the ages of 25 and 44

B. Media-based survey
  ○ Purpose of survey: Get a real picture of public's media usage in the environment where issues are rapidly increasing associated with the spread of the Internet and mobile phones. As for the issue of digital divide, demand for administrative services to fill skill/moral gaps among the Internet users and to deal with the digital divide was researched.
  ○ Respondent: 750 adult men and women nationwide (150 people each from 20s - 60s)
        * City size (population): 250 people each from >500,000, 100,000-200,000, and <50,000

C. Survey on home education
  ○ Purpose of survey: Clarify the current state of home education and child-rearing, understand the attitudes of parents and guardians, and identify education needs at home education, and thereby obtain basic materials to consider home education supporting measures.
  ○ Respondent: 1,200 parents between the ages of 25 - 64 that have children (infants - high school student)
        * 250 people each from parents with infants, elementary school students, junior high school students, and high school students (total 1,000), and 200 single parents

D. Survey on the social participation of the elderly
  ○ Purpose of survey: Analysis of the attitudes and behaviors by focusing on the attribute of "elderly"
  ○ Respondent: 1,000 men and women between the ages of 50 and 74 (divided into 5 age groups; 100 men and 100 women (total 200) from every group)

| Survey type | Implementation period | No. of distribution target | No. of distribution | No. of valid responses | No. of responses considered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Survey on vocational education | November 1-9 2011 | 724,739 | 92,249 | 1,373 | 1,000 |
| B. Web-based survey | November 14-17 | 1,213,934 | 74,000 | 1,013 | 750 |
| C. Survey on home education | November 20-24 | 323,189 | 80,000 | 2,548 | 1,200 |
| D. Survey on the social participation of the elderly | December 2-8 | 331,045 | 27,000 | 1,223 | 1,000 |

## 2. Outline of Research Results *Shaded page numbers are related pages in this report.

### A. Survey on vocational education

**[Characteristics of respondents]**

(1) 70% to 80% of job seekers and unemployed have household incomes of less than 3 million yen only. p.24

**[Adults' learning styles and experience capital]**

* In this report, accumulated experiences in school days (ex. class representative, planning and management of cultural festival and other events, participation in sports events, part-time job, solo trip) are indexed under the name of "experience capital".

(2) Many of regular employees stood high in their classes in junior high school. pp.52-53

(3) **Regular employees normally have rich experience capital.** pp.53-54

Women***: (Regular employee > Housewife > Non-regular employee) > (Unemployed > Job seeker)

(4) Most of job seekers consider it necessary to acquire new knowledge or skills. p.29

(5) **Regardless of employment type, 80% of respondents consider learning is crucial even after the completion of regular school education**. p.31

(6) **Those who have autonomous learning styles tend to be regular employees. Job seekers have the desire to learn but need guidance. The desire for learning is low among the unemployed**. p.36

(7) Life satisfaction levels are from high to low in the order of regular employee, non-regular employee, unemployed and job seeker for men, and regular employee, housewife, non-regular employee, unemployed and job seeker for women. p.11

(8) **Non-regular employees, housewives and job seekers have large financial obstacles such as learning expense**. pp.115-121

(9) Measures to improve motivation to learn and support learning are required for unemployed people. p.36

**[Society-related capital of working adults]**

(10) **Female workers have more contacts than male workers in their daily lives.** p.63

(11) The level of confidence in others is high among regular employees and housewives. pp.64-65

(12) **The percentage of people who have friends to confide in is the highest for regular employees,**

**followed by non-regular employees and unemployed.** p.68

(13) Regarding the percentage of people who have someone to confide in the workplace, there is no difference between regular employees and non-regular employees in case of female workers, while there is a difference in case of male workers. p.66

(14) **Many of confidants/confidantes of female housewives live in the same region as the housewives.** p.67

(15) Non-regular employees tend to confide in people online. p.69

**[Qualifications and abilities of working adults]**

(16) **Men have high abilities to utilize tools while women have good abilities to control themselves and to deal with human relationships.** p.101

(17) Educational background has a greater effect on economic position in comparison to literacy or competency. p.106

(18) Life satisfaction level is highly related with literacy and competency. pp.106-107

(19) Adults' learning activities are significantly varied depending on the literacy and competency levels. pp.111-112

(20) **A type of working is more closely related to abilities to control oneself and to deal with human relationships than to literacy.** pp.103-104

**[Current of the times]**

(21) **Expense has been increasingly an obstacle for learning activities both for men and women.** pp.123-124

(22) **The number of men who have no one to learn together is on the rise**. p.124

(23) For women, it tends to be difficult to get information or chances for learning. p.123

# B. Media-based survey

**[Media used in daily life]**

(1) The elderly tend to use radio, TV, fixed phone and newspaper while young people tend to use mobile music player/game machine and TV game and to read comics. pp.159-160

**[Use of the Internet, PC and mobile phone]**

(2) **Literal works on the Internet are routinely used** as found in the increase in users of online shopping (reached 90%) and Internet banking and downloaded videos/software (reached 60%).

(3) **Information security has become a serious problem**: over 20% of people repeatedly experienced accidental erasure of files or data loss or were infected by commuter viruses with high frequency. p.171

(4) People who use PCs for learning tend to choose the self-learning method. People in their 20s tend to learn in schools, men from coworkers in the workplace and women from their families. p.204

(5) As for morals related with mobile phone (ex. talking on the phone in the areas where calling is prohibited), 70% of the elderly answered "people should never break rules" while only less than 50% of people in their 20s and 30s consider the same. Additionally, women are more moral than men. p210

**[Impressions of online information]**

(6) 30% to 40% of respondents accept illegal activities such as illegal downloading, quotation and distribution of contents without permission to a certain extent, with lower normative consciousness for men in their 30s in particular. **The issues of information security and information moral have become evident**: there is a strong need for increased opportunities to learn and enhance knowledge and awareness of information security and laws/regulations and morals, in addition to skills such as

basic operation of devices. p.220

(7) People who learned computing skills at work or private computer schools have more normative consciousness while those who learned such skills only during elementary/junior high/high school classes or university/graduate school classes have lower awareness of norms. p.222

**[Learning activities]**

(8) **Many of applicants for extension lectures at universities/junior colleges/high schools or adult education courses at universities are highly educated or have high income. Many of those who choose to learn at culture centers are (1) women in their 30s and (2) residents of big cities, whereas a large number of people who choose to learn at community centers and similar places are (1) women in their 50s, (2) in midsized cities, and (3) with annual income of less than 8 million yen.** p.236

(9) The most learned contents are vocational and computing knowledge and skills and for the latest 1 year. The most popular learning contents are English conversation and other foreign languages followed by vocational knowledge and skills. pp.236-238
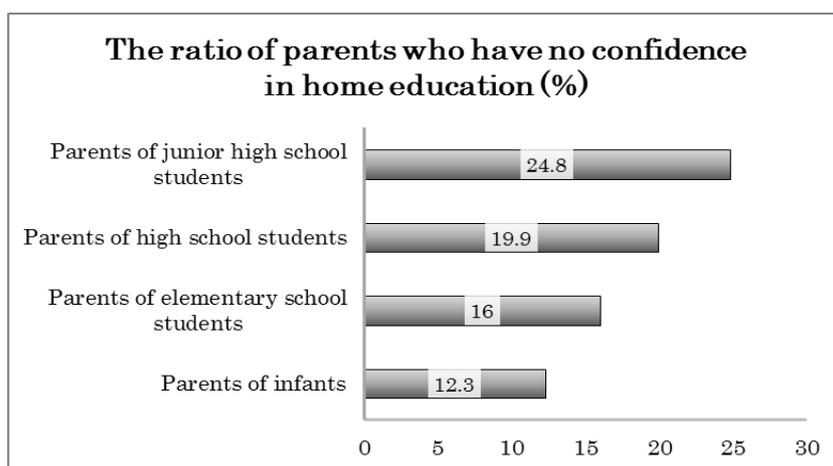
**[Disaster prevention]**

(10) 60% of respondents experienced natural disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons. Nevertheless, **only around 30% took disaster prevention measures** such as storage of food or fixing of furniture for fall prevention. pp.263-265

(11) While the number of people who experienced disasters is higher in small cities, the rate of people prepared for disaster prevention is lower in those cities. It is crucial to increase opportunities to learn knowledge of and preparation for disaster prevention. p.265


## C. Survey on home education

**[Confidence in home education, things kept in mind]**

(1) **Confidence in child-rearing is lower for parents of junior high/high school students**. p.335

The ratio of parents who have no confidence in home education (%)

| | |
|---|---|
| Parents of junior high school students | 24.8 |
| Parents of high school students | 19.9 |
| Parents of elementary school students | 16 |
| Parents of infants | 12.3 |

0　5　10　15　20　25　30

(2) Many parents tried to teach their children in infancy so that "they can say 'thank you' and 'I'm sorry'." A lot of parents of elementary school students answered, on the other hand, they told their children to "greet to those around them". p.299

**[Actual conditions of home life]**

(3) **Parents often communicate with their children when they are small, but the frequency of communication declines when the children get to junior high/high school students** (the ratio of no communication: parents of elementary school students 8%, parents of high school students 15%).

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(4) As for reasons of no communication, parents of elementary school students said "they have no time to talk" (55%) while parents of junior high/high school students answered "children are reluctant to talk" (junior high school students 21%, high school students 46%) and "they can't understand what their children think" (junior high school students 21%, high school students 19%).

**[Values of guardians, understanding of home education, experiences before becoming parents]**

(5) Parents answered they want their children to acquire qualifications and abilities such as "kindness and compassion for others" (73%), "ability to follow rules and tell right from wrong" (71%), "health and physical strength" (71%) and "moral sense, public spirit and courtesy and manners" (69%).

(6) As for abilities their children lack, parents named "skills or education of foreign languages" (28%), "ability to find out issues and think about that by themselves as well as inquiring mind" (26%), and "ability to make and realize a future plan" (22%)

(7) **74% of parents answered "Yes" for the question to ask if the educational functions of families are in decline.** As the reasons for such a decline, "overprotection, spoiling and excessive interference" (87%), "the increase of parents who don't know how to discipline and educate their children" (87%) and "the increase of parents who are not confident in disciplining and educating their children" (78%) were named.

(8) Regarding experiences before becoming parents, 45% of parents had experiences of "taking care of children of relatives or acquaintances" and 32% experienced "taking care of brothers or sisters". As for knowledge associated with child-rearing, 55% of parents "were taught by their parents or relatives" (55%) and 55% "read guidebooks or other books for child-rearing", which means **almost half of parents do not have experiences or knowledge of child-rearing**. Moreover, 80% of parents have never taken any lectures on home education.

**[Request for home education supporting measures]**

(9) What parents want to learn are: "health and medicine" (43%), "physical growth and development" (41%) and "intellectual development of children" (40%) for parents of infants; "plays, relationships with friends and group living" (30%), "health and medicine" (26%) and "career options, finding employment and way on living in future" (26%) for parents of elementary school students; "career options, finding employment and way on living in future" (38%), "academic results, studying and academic performance" (36%) and "health and medicine" (23%) for parents of junior high school students, and; "career options, finding employment and way on living in future" (40%), "academic results, studying and academic performance" (28%) and "stress and mental illness" (24%) for parents of high school students. **Parents' needs for learning changes as children's development phase advances.**

(10) Obstacles for learning related with home education are "difficulties in making money for learning" (42%), "difficulties in making time" (30%) and "difficulties in finding good opportunities" (20%).

(11) **Regarding demand for supports of home education and child-rearing from the administration, many respondents named "pediatric health-care system" (88%), "relief for education expenses" (87%) and "development of safe and secure playgrounds" (85%) as things to be improved.**

**[Worries about home education and child-rearing]**

(12) **As much as 60% of parents have worries about child rearing**. In the case of female parents, seven out of ten have such worries. As ways to relieve such concerns, 80% of parents consult with

their families while, in the case of women, 50% consult with their friends made through their children and 40% with friends from school. pp.321-323

(13) **In the case of single parents, many of them are not only feeling uneasy financially but also have worries about work life balance (two parents 16%, single parents 34%) and their future plans (two parents 18%, single parents 33%).** p.321

**[Commitments with children in the same region]**

(14) **Parents' commitments with children in the same regions are on decline.** "Scold or reprimand children for their bad behaviors" (87% in 1988, 46% in 2011), "Speak to children when seeing them on the road" (85% in 2005, 62% in 2011). pp.386-387

(Note 1) Survey in 1988: "Survey Report on Parents-Children Networks in Local Communities" (Ministry of Education, Social Education Bureau)

(Note 2) Survey in 2005: "Investigation of Current Status of Educational Functions of Communities" (Survey commissioned by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)

**[Disaster Prevention and Preparedness at Home]**

(15) Regarding dangerous areas in the region, only 30% knows where such areas are, and more than 70% of parents do not have disaster prevention map. pp.379-380

## D. Survey on the social participation of the elderly

**[Characteristics of respondents]**

**(1) Majority of elderly respondents answered "Already retired and have no job" (47.0%) or "Not retired yet and have a job" (40.2%) while 12.8% answered "Already retired but have a job".** p.398

(Note) Considering conditions of each age group, the elderly group was further divided into 3 sub-groups: Pre-retirement group with the ages of 50-59, retiring group with the ages of 60-64 and post-retirement group with the ages of 65-74.

**[Activities they want to do in future]**

(2) Activities the elderly as a whole want to do were "appreciating cultural events such as exhibitions, movies and concerts" followed by "group activities to enhance hobbies and cultivation". Looking into more detail, more people study to acquire new qualifications in the case of the pre-retirement sub-group while, in the case of the retiring sub-group, more people tend to engage in more creative and artistic cultural and individual activities. Further, more people from the post-retirement sub-group choose to attend lectures and classes about lifelong learning. pp.403-405

**[Things contributing to satisfaction level]**

(3) **Satisfactory life for the elderly is decided by financial situations (such as the amount of savings and current income) and other individual situations (such as hobbies, entertainment and way to spend free time).** pp.418-419

**[Learning activities]**

(4) **The pre-retirement people choose various types of learning opportunities whereas the post-retirement group tends to choose learning activities focusing more on human relationships. The advancement and diversification of learning activities are determined by income.** pp.424-425

(5) When committed to learning activities intensively, the polarization of learning expenses per month is observed: less than 3,000 yen (nearly 50%) and more than 10,000 yen (around 20%). p.439

(6) **Learners who choose classes and lectures at community centers provided by cities and towns account for 27% for the pre-retirement group and 38% for the post-retirement group,**

**which means learners shift toward social educational opportunities offered by public services as they get older.**

**[Information utilization]**

  (7) The number of the elderly who use the Internet has been increasing and 90% of people with the ages of 65 or older now can use the Internet. Yet, the elderly who already retired use also public information of local governments as information sources at a higher ratio in comparison to pre-retired elderly people. **Highly educated people have more media options with a wide readership.** pp.450, 456-457

**[Group activities and activity capabilities]**

  **(8) No less than three people out of ten do not have anyone to participate in activities together. Even adding those who have one to participate together to these people, almost 40% of elderly people do not have any friends.** On the other hand, in the case of those who have friends, the high percentage of people participates in various types of activities: voluntary and civil activities, social activities (such as conversation, regional activities, art and hobbies), educational activities, fitness activities and learning activities. p.463, 467

  (9) As much as 60% of the elderly do not participate in any group activities. However, **the participation into group activities goes up for higher age groups. For example, more than 50% of people with the age of 65 or higher participate in some kinds of group activities.** p.460

  (10) **People participating group activities tend to have better personalities in a comprehensive manner in addition to higher abilities to use tools, control themselves and deal with human relationships.** p.462

  (11) **After retirement, daily activities get more diversified for many people. This is affected by the fact if they have friends or not.** pp.466-467

  (12) The number of retired people participating in voluntary activities is increasing, but still, nearly half of retired people have never joined such activities. **Because people participating in volunteer activities generally have more friends, it is expected that volunteer activities provide the elderly with opportunities of social participation and help them to get more friends, while contributing to sustaining of elderly people's own abilities by offering diversified activities.** pp.468-469

  (13) As conditions necessary for the elderly to participate in activities to support their regions, they named "having someone to participate in activities together" and "being unconstrained by time or period". Moreover, nearly 70% of them said places of activities should be within the easy access for easier participation. Future measures for the elderly therefore should consider these points to promote social participation of the elderly.

| What are conditions necessary for you to participate in activities to support your region? Please mark all that apply. | % |
|---|---|
| Being unconstrained by time or period | 66.2 |
| Having someone to participate in activities together | 66.0 |
| Places of activities are near from home (easy to participate) | 62.5 |
| Possibility of using own skills and experiences | 38.0 |
| Existence of groups or organizers to ask for participation | 35.5 |
| Being light work | 28.2 |
| Help in actual expenses (transportation fee) | 26.7 |
| Others | 4.2 |
| Total (N=1000) | 100.0 |