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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS FOR THE NEW INTRODUCTION OF AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL INTO JAPAN: THROUGH A SURVEY FOR JAPANESE MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

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Teachers' Perceptions for the New Introduction of an Alternative School into Japan:
Through A Survey for Japanese Middle School English Teachers

Recently, an increase in problematic behaviors by K-12 students has been noted in Japan (Fujimoto, 2011). According to Yomiuri Newspaper (2009, 11, 30), the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in Japan reported that the number of violent acts among students and against teachers in 2008 was the highest in recent years. It also indicated that the number of violent acts by middle school students is much higher than those by students in the other school levels. These results suggested that delinquency tends to start in the juvenile period and dramatically increases at the middle school level.

The Japanese government has been addressing juvenile delinquency for over 20 years (Fujimoto, 2011; Nashiki, 2011). Through studies by Nashiki (2010) and Fujimoto (2011), some crucial reformations on disciplinary education can be seen. First, in 1988, Disciplinary Education (*Seito Shidoo*) was added into required subjects in a teacher-training course at the college level to aim at more practical teacher training. Next, in 1997, as a result of reflection on increased delinquencies by students during the 1980s-90s, a report by the Educational Curriculum committee (*Kyooiku Katei Shingikai*) raised credits of the Subject on Disciplinary Education, Psychological Counseling, and Academic and Career Counseling (*Seito Shidoo, Kyooiku Soodan, oyobi Sinro Shidoo ni kansuru kamoku*) in the teaching-training course from two to four. Moreover, Suggestion on Disciplinary Education (*Seikatsu Shidoo Teiann*) by the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (2010) clarified a basic guideline of disciplinary education for K-12 teachers and staff. However, the fact that problematic behaviors by K-12 students has been increasing suggests that such a series of government education reforms has been unsuccessful in addressing the rising delinquency rates of students. Moreover, a few researchers have conducted studies to collect perceptions of

Japanese public middle school teachers on juvenile delinquency. Therefore, aim of this study is to analyze teachers' perceptions concerning the introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system. For this purpose, my study used a survey approach that utilized both close-ended questions and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions referred to (a) teacher characteristics and (b) working conditions; and the open-ended questions pertained to (c) teachers recommendation concerning the introduction of alternative middle schools into Japanese school system. In this study, first, working conditions (e.g., school size and the quality of procedures used to discipline students) and teachers' recommendations to better serve students through the introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system will be described. Then, the correlation between teacher characteristics (e.g., gender and experience years) and working conditions and the recommendations will be examined. Finally, comparisons of both perceptions of participants who recommended the introduction of alternative schools and ones who did not, will be analyzed. Implications of these findings for policy and future research will be discussed.

Literature Review

Several Japanese and American studies examined education for at-risk students through teachers' perceptions because a teacher is a very powerful factor in improving education for middle school students (Foley, 2008). This section will review literatures on education for Japanese at-risk students first. Furthermore, the significance of recommendations to better serve students, teacher characteristics, and working conditions as a construct to examine education for at-risk students will be explained.

Studies on Education for Japanese Juvenile Delinquents

Because of the seriousness of the recent juvenile delinquency, studies on education for at-

risk students at Japanese public middle schools have been increasing in recent years. For example, Yamaguchi, Okada, Kuwata, Susuda, and Hirata (1996) compared 1,292 primary, middle, and high school teachers' perceptions and identified what middle school teachers are focusing on when disciplining students. Tojyo (2011) examined appropriate psychological distance between teachers and students through an analysis of narrative story by an experienced classroom teacher at a public middle school. These Japanese studies described the current situation of juvenile delinquency and education for at-risk students. However, they did not explore how teachers perceive the solution to the issues created by juvenile delinquents.

Recommendations to Better Serve Students

Whether in Japan or America, teachers' recommendations can play an important role in improving the quality of education because teachers connect with students closely and are always facing various issues. In Japan, Yamane and Kita (2011) explored what K-12 teacher-leaders and principals in Okayama recommended to strengthen the connection with a teacher university to improve education and discipline at school sites. In the United States, Aleem (1993) suggested that "teachers need to be provided the time to reflect on the situations in which they work" (p. 27). Silverstein (2010) also suggested that developing and implementing teachers' new ideas are necessary for organizational growth. Moreover, Fullan (2008) suggested that sharing teachers' voices openly is imperative to ensure organizational success.

Some studies recommended the implementation of an alternative school as an institution to provide at-risk students with effective education. For example, Stevens, Tullis, Sanchez and Gonzalez's study (1991) identified the effects of alternative schools and recommendations to improve the education through perceptions of teachers working at an alternative secondary school in Houston, Texas. However, this study did not examine how teachers in other countries

perceive the effects of alternative schools and how strongly they recommend the implementation.

Teacher Characteristics

Teachers' perceptions can be affected by their characteristics. However, there is very little in the literature relating teacher characteristics to recommendations to better serve students. Instead, prior studies have explored the relationship between teacher characteristics and his/her job satisfaction, which impacts student academic achievement, organizational commitment, organizational performance, student behavior, student satisfaction, and teacher quality (Bogler, 2002). For example, Perie and Baker (1997) indicated through analyses of the 1993-1994 Schools and Staffing Survey that secondary teachers appeared to feel less satisfied with their job than elementary schools teachers. The findings also suggested that younger teachers are more likely to feel satisfied than older teachers, though the differences were not extremely large. Moreover, Shen, Leslie, Spybrook, and Ma (2011) indicated that teachers who work at elementary schools, who have longer teaching experience, and who earn more quality certifications feel more satisfied with their jobs. These results were inconsistent on teaching experience whereas both studies indicated secondary school teachers had a negative significant relationship with their job satisfaction. Although these findings suggested that teachers' characteristics can be an important factor in affecting teachers' perceptions, these studies did not examine to what extent teacher characteristics associate with the recommendation to better serve students, which impacts education (Fullan, 2008; Silverstein, 2010) as well as teachers' job satisfaction.

Working Conditions

Likely, there are few studies which examined the extent to which working conditions relate to teachers' likelihood to recommend the introduction of alternative schools to better serve

students. However, a number of studies explored the relationship between working conditions of regular school teachers and teacher job satisfaction. For example, Brunetti (2001) suggested that positive relationships between teachers and students can retain teachers in school. Some other studies also indicated that student misbehavior can lead to teacher stress, indifference toward students, burnout, and leaving the profession (Certo & Fox, 2002; Garrahy, Kulinna, & Cothran, 2005; Wright & Custer, 1998). Moreover, in addition to management of misbehavior by at-risk students, O'Rourke, Catrett, and Houchins (2008) identified "resources," "standards and guidelines, and teacher involvement" (p. 41) as factors related to teacher job satisfaction through the study of teacher retention in Georgia. These studies suggested that working conditions can be an important factor to decide teachers' perceptions.

Conceptualization

Based on the literature, we developed the conceptual framework for the study which includes three constructs: (a) teacher characteristics; (b) working conditions; and (c) the recommendation to better serve students. The purpose of this study was three-fold. The first purpose was to describe working conditions and the recommendation to better serve students. The second purpose was to examine correlates of the recommendations to better serve students with teachers' characteristics and working conditions. The third purpose was to explore differences of perceptions between participants who agree with a recommendation and ones who did not.

In this study, the recommendation was defined as the recommendation for the new introduction of an alternative middle school into the Japanese educational system. The alternative school was defined as a separate facility to which students go when they are removed from regular schools because they displayed problematic behaviors over a certain time. This

definition was based on the explanation in previous American studies that an alternative school is a separate facility in which specific education for students who do not fit traditional education is conducted (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). Although alternative schools were developed to improve education for at-risk students in the United States since the 1960s, they are not familiar among Japanese people yet. However, because developing and implementing teachers' new ideas are necessary for organizational growth (Silverstein, 2010), this study used the alternative school as one of the school types which can improve education for Japanese at-risk students.

In comparison with previous research, this study will have the following advantages. First, Japanese middle school teachers' perspectives on current working conditions and the recommendation to better serve students—especially the recommendation on the necessity of the new introduction of alternative schools—can be described by using such a big nationwide purposive sample. Second, through quantitative statistical analyses between teachers' perceptions on the recommendation and other two constructs, what types of teachers need or did not need alternative middle schools were examined. Thirdly, qualitative analyses for answers of open-ended questions identified reasons why teachers recommend or do not recommend the new introduction of alternative middle schools. Because few previous Japanese studies examined these issues by using such a big purposive sample, these findings can contribute to providing implications for educators and policy makers to improve education for Japanese at-risk middle school students.

Research Questions

Based on the literature review and conceptualization, the following three questions were asked.

1. How do Japanese public middle school English teachers perceive their working conditions and the new introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system?
2. To what extent are teachers' perceptions on the necessity of the new introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system associated with teacher characteristics and working conditions? What are the significant predictors of the likelihood to recommend the information of alternative schools?
3. What are differences in the perceptions on the introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system between participants who agreed with the new introduction of public alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system and ones who did not?

Methods

Participants

The sample used in this study includes 82 public middle school English teachers who teach 7th-9th graders. They were selected as representative Japanese middle school English teachers from the whole of Japan by the Japanese government in 2011 and participated in professional development in the 2011-12 school year. These teachers were also selected for this study through purposive sampling. The sampling was adopted "because prior knowledge suggests it is representative or because those selected have the needed information" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2005, p. G-6). Informed consent process was written on the cover page of the questionnaire. Teachers read the informed consent documentation before starting this survey. When the teachers did not agree, they did not answer my questionnaire. When they chose to answer the questions, their responses were anonymous and reported only as part of the studies on

education for at-risk students. Thus, issues on risk and cost to and protection for subjects were resolved. Finally, 78 teachers (95.1 %) participated in this survey. Among the teachers, 42 were male and 36 were female. The respondents averaged 10.91 (SD = 4.49; Range = 3-20) years of experience as a teachers (Appendix I).

Questionnaire

The questionnaires were designed to identify the current situation of education for at-risk students in Japan and the recommendation by teachers to better serve at-risk students (Appendix I). The three domains of interest were: (a) *teacher characteristics*; (b) *working conditions*; and (c) *the recommendation to better serve students*. This study used a question on the necessity of alternative middle schools as the domain (c). 30 questions were developed to address these three domains of interest. Out of the questions, five were open-ended questions, and the others were closed-ended questions.

Procedures

In January 2012, an officer at the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology was sent a packet of materials which included cover letters and questionnaires for participants and a postage-paid addressed envelope from the author. The cover letter stated the purpose of the study, instructions for the completion and return of the questionnaire, an assurance of confidentiality of responses, and a way to receive the results of the study. At a meeting held in February 2012 in Tokyo, Japan, the teachers, who agreed with informed consent, answered our questions. The participants were provided with an e-mail address to request a copy of the results upon conclusion of the study. After completing the questionnaires for about 25 minutes, the officer collected and returned all questionnaires to the author by mail.

Data Analysis

This study utilized a mixed methods approach, in which the combination of qualitative and quantitative sources allowed the researcher to triangulate the data to compare diverse sources of information and make an interpretation regarding whether they support or contradict each other (Cresswell, 2005). First, the continuous data was analyzed through quantitative approaches to answer research questions 1 and 2. Then, qualitative analyses were used to analyze answers of open-ended questions to answer research question 3. With open coding, which is “the process of grouping similar items according to some defined properties and giving the items a name that stands for that common link” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.121), first, teachers' perceptions on the new introduction of alternative middle schools were divided into two groups: a group of participants who agreed and another group of participants who did not agree. Second, the perceptions were classified into similar categories, and the number of each perception was calculated.

Results

Research Question 1. Appendix I shows that the school size of the participant averaged 436.08 students in a school (SD = 223.13; Range = 22-900). Of the participants, over 60 % answered that they had no students who interrupted their classes whereas only around 10% were struggling with disturbance by over 10 delinquent students. Of the participants, 53.8 % had a manual to discipline students in their schools. Although 33.3 % did not have such a manual, over 65 % of them recognized that their disciplining was enough.

Majority of the participants (52.5 %) did not know well or at all what alternative schools are. On the other hand, approximately 68 % of the participants recommended establishing a separated place for at-risk students from regular schools. That is, 45.3 % of participants, who

recommended the new introduction of alternative middle schools, did not know about alternative schools well or at all whereas 69.6 % of participants, who did not recommend, did not know about alternative schools well or at all.

Research Question 2. Correlation analyses indicated two significant working condition variables which associated with the recommendation of the new introduction of alternative middle schools (Table 1). Both the number of students, who disturb the participant's class, and knowledge of alternative schools had positive relationships with the recommendation. That is, teachers, who are struggling with disciplining at-risk students and know an alternative school better, perceive the necessity of alternative schools in the Japanese educational system.

Table 1
Intercorrelations Between Variables in Three Constructs

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Need AL	1							
2. Experience	-0.03	1						
3. Gender	0.07	0.23*	1					
4. Enrollment	0.14	-0.09	-0.07	1				
5. Delinquency	0.38**	-0.08	-0.16	0.19	1			
6. Manual	0.07	0.43**	-0.04	0.07	0.19	1		
7. Enough	-0.07	0.26*	0.16	0.16	-0.24*	0.14	1	
8. Know AL	0.31**	-0.21	-0.03	0.10	0.09	-0.07	-0.16	1

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Research Question 3. Reasons why the new introduction of an alternative middle school is or is not recommended are explained from three categories: (a) students; (b) teachers; and (c) the current school system (Appendix II). On students, most participants, who recommended the introduction, positively expected for educational effects of alternative schools for at-risk students (60.4 %) and improvement of educational circumstance for non-at-risk students attending in regular schools (22.6%). On the other hand, 30.4 % of participants, who did not recommend, worried about the new connection with other at-risk students at alternative schools, discrimination from others, drop of at-risk student's self-esteem, increase of distrust for teachers,

gain of their isolation from other non at-risk students, and negative effects for their futures.

However, there were a few participants in the both groups who identified aspects of teachers for these reasons. Only three participants, who recommended the introduction, expected for decrease of burdens to discipline at-risk students or improvement of their working conditions whereas only two participants, who did not recommend, worried if teachers at regular schools may give up disciplining at-risk students easily or drop their teaching skills.

In a category of the current school system, about 15 % of participants, who recommended the introduction, feel limitations in current Japanese educational system. They reported:

Teachers have to supplement insufficient parents' disciplining.
I feel limitations for the current school system.
I feel difficulty for teaching many kinds of students in a single classroom

On the other hand, about 30.4 % of participants, who did not recommend, reported benefits of the current school system and 21.7 % doubted that an alternative school fits Japanese culture or think that the new school system should be created based on the current school system.

Moreover, two participants did not recommend because they did not imagine how alternative schools can work.

It is important to learn while communicating with many kinds of students.
I am satisfied with the current system.
I doubt if AL fits Japanese culture.
New school systems should be established based on the current system.

Answers for a question, "If alternative middle schools were introduced, what should be considered?" were similar between participants who recommended the introduction and ones who did not (Appendix III). The participants in the former group cared the most for: (a) how to create clear criteria to allow students attend alternative schools; (b) how to make all stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, students, and teachers) better understand alternative schools and collaborate with each other; and (c) how to gather appropriate teachers. The participants in

the latter group also cared the most for: (a) how to create clear criteria to allow students attend alternative schools; and (b) how to make all stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, students, and teachers) better understand alternative schools and collaborate with each other. On the other hand, 13 participants did not write any comments on the introduction: six participants recommended and seven did not.

Summary and Discussion

The aim of this study is to analyze teacher's perceptions on the new introduction of alternative middle schools into the Japanese educational system. For this purpose, our study used a survey approach on: (a) teacher characteristics; (b) working conditions; and (c) the recommendation of the new introduction of alternative middle schools into Japanese school system. Summary of major findings and implications for policy and future research are discussed as following.

Summary of Major Findings

First, majority of middle schools, where participants are working, is safe enough for teachers to teach English. However, correlation analyses indicated that teachers, who have more delinquent students in their classes, do not perceive that disciplining students in their schools is enough. Moreover, such teachers need the introduction of alternative schools. The findings revealed seriousness of the situation where teachers, who have many delinquent students in their classes, are experiencing as many American studies suggested (Brunetti, 2001; Certo & Fox, 2002; Garrahy, Kulinna, & Cothran, 2005; Wright & Custer, 1998).

Second, majority of teachers have little or no knowledge of alternative schools. 58.5 % of teachers, who do not know at all or know a little, needed alternative schools. Moreover, correlation analyses indicated that teachers, who have more knowledge of alternative schools,

need the school type into the Japanese middle school system. Thus, alternative middle schools will be welcomed more if teachers have more information.

Thirdly, teacher job satisfaction on discipline did not relate to the extent of the recommendation to introduce alternative middle schools. The result contributed to exploring how job satisfaction relates to the recommendation of the new school system. Thus, regardless high or low job satisfaction, Japanese teachers tend to recommend the introduction of alternative middle schools.

Fourthly, perceptions between the participants who recommended the introduction differed from perceptions of the participants who did not. Characteristics of participants, who recommended the introduction, can be explained from two aspects. The first aspect is positive expectation for alternative schools. Over 60 % of participants in the group expected for specialists and special educational programs in alternative schools, improvement of learning environment for at-risk students, and improvement of at-risk student's social skills. Moreover, about one fourth of them expected improvement of education for non at-risk students in regular middle schools on protection of learning rights, protection of safe school circumstance, improvement of motivation of the students, and prevention from increase of new at-risk students due to bad effects of existing at-risk students. The second aspect is dissatisfaction for the current Japanese school system. About 15 % of participants in the group reported the difficulty to discipline at-risk students and the insufficiency of discipline by their parents.

On the other hand, characteristics of participants, who did not recommend the introduction, can be also explained from two aspects. The first aspect is positive image for the current traditional Japanese educational system. Over 30 % of participants in the group were satisfied with the current school system or believed that learning in a school and classroom with

many types of students is effective. The second aspect is distrust or negative image for alternative schools. This aspect is explained on three categories: (a) bad influences for at-risk students by attending at alternative schools; (b) decrease of teaching skills of regular school teachers; and (c) mismatch between alternative schools and Japanese cultural background. One of the interesting findings was that some participants of the group did not recommend the introduction because of insufficient knowledge of alternative schools. This result can be interpreted that three participants thought that more time to examine effects of alternative schools should be prepared before introducing the schools. That is, such participants have more psychological scope to wait because most of them do not experience disturbance from at-risk students.

Finally, hopes to improve education for at-risk and other general students were almost same although their approaches to address juvenile delinquency were different. For a question, *what should be considered to implement alternative schools*, most participants in both groups identified (a) how to create clear criteria to allow students attend alternative schools and (b) how to make all stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, students, and teachers) better understand alternative schools and collaborate with each other.

Implications for Policy and Future Research

Based on the findings of the study, a few policy implications can be drawn. The study also suggests some directions for future research. In this section, we discuss the implications for policy and future research.

First, from the perspective of policy development and implementation, we learn that an alternative middle school can be an appropriate educational system to improve education for at-

risk students in Japanese public middle schools. Majority of the Japanese public middle schools English teachers recommended the necessity of introduction of alternative schools.

Needs for the introduction of alternative middle schools does not simply mean that such teachers were optimistic about implementation of alternative schools. Many teachers, who recommend the school type, know alternative schools. Simultaneously, similar answers for a question, *what should be considered to implement alternative schools*, can be seen between both participants who recommended the introduction and ones who did not. That is, even if there are some issues to take into consideration on the introduction of alternative middle schools, majority of teachers welcome such schools into current school system. This result was strongly related to their working conditions. For example, teachers, whose classes were interrupted by at-risk students, tend to recommend the introduction of alternative schools. Therefore, teachers, who are experiencing more serious issues by at-risk students, recommend alternative schools than others. According to Foley (2008), teachers can influence at-risk students positively. To allow them show their abilities fully, "a school in which students and teachers feel safe" (National School Safety Center, 1992, p.3) should be established. To establish such safe circumstances, information on alternative schools may work. However, in fact, 52.5 % of teachers did not know the schools very well. Thus, educators and policy makers should start to examine effective alternative schools with specialists and provide teachers with clear information of the schools as soon as possible.

Second, to implement alternative middle schools effectively, reasons why some participants did not recommend the introduction and key issues to start alternative schools effectively should be examined. The findings indicated that about 30 % of participants, who did not recommend the introduction of alternative schools, worried about negative educational

effects for at-risk students by alternative schools such as decrease of self-esteem. To solve some of these issues, some American studies have already discussed this issue. For example, Nichols and Utesch (1998) indicated that alternative learning program can improve student's self-esteem in addition to motivation for learning. However, it does not say that these results can also work in Japan. On this point, over 20 % of participants, who did not recommend, did not think that alternative schools could work ignoring Japanese culture. Moreover, there are some points that other American studies also identified as one of the biggest issues for alternative school students. For example, Henry (1988) suggested that “a stigma” (p. 20) for at-risk students in alternative schools should be considered. Aleem (1993) pointed dangerousness that “adolescent delinquents tend to “bond with delinquent peers” (p. 4). However, these studies did not provide appropriate solution for these issues. Thus, to introduce alternative middle schools effectively, these issues should be solved by policy makers and educators.

Thirdly, this study had some limitation. The first one is that participants of this study did not have common knowledge of alternative schools. In this study, there are only 46 % of participants who knew alternative schools. Thus, the difference of the knowledge may lead to the differences of answers. Moreover, limited information on alternative schools may allow participants to misunderstand the school and affect their answers. Although there are many other definitions for an alternative school (Raywid, 1990), this study defined the school as only a separate facility to which students are removed from regular schools because they displayed problematic behaviors over a certain period of time. Thus, in the future research, an opportunity to provide all participants with common knowledge of alternative schools should be set before conducting the survey. The second one is that the relationship between middle values in items and teacher's perceptions for the introduction was not examined. For example, the current

correlation analyses cannot investigate to what extent medium-size schools influence their recommendations comparing with either smaller or larger schools and how effective (Rumberger, 2011). This limitation was also seen on teaching experience. Future studies should have a large sample size to conduct analyses with dummy codes including middle values.

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Appendix I

Variables Used in the Analyses: Definition, Measurement Scale, and Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Wording on Survey and Calculation	Measurement and Descriptive Statistics
<i>Teacher Characteristics</i>		
Teaching Experience	How many years did you serve as a teacher?	Continuous Mean=10.91 SD=4.49
Gender of Teacher	Are you male or female?	Categorical 1=Male: 53.8% 0=Female: 46.2%
<i>Working Conditions</i>		
Enrollment	Currently, how many students are enrolled in your school?	Continuous Mean=436.08 SD=223.13
The Number of Delinquent Students	How many students always interrupt your class?	Continuous Mean=2.00 SD=4.06
Codes of Conduct	Does your school have codes of conduct?	Categorical 1=Yes (53.8%) 0=No (33.3%) Missing (12.8%)
Education for At-risk Students	Do you think that current education for at-risk students in your school is enough? 4 is "I think so strongly," 3 is "A little," 2 is "Not so much," and 1 is "Not at all."	Categorical 4= 24.4% 3=41.0% 2=28.2% 1=1.3% Missing = 5.1%
Information on Alternative Schools	Have you ever heard of alternative schools which educate delinquent students? (The United States has a system in which students, who have behavior problems more than a specified number of times in their regular schools, are transferred to alternative schools.) 4 is "Very well," 3 is "Well," 2 is "A little," and 1 is "Never."	Categorical 4=11.5% 3=34.6% 2=11.5% 1=41.0% Missing = 1.3%
<i>Recommendation</i>		
Necessity of Alternative Schools	Do you think that such an alternative school is necessary? 4 is "I think so strongly," 3 is "A little," 2 is "Not so much," and 1 is "Not at all."	Categorical 4=26.9% 3=41.0% 2=20.5% 1=9.0% Missing = 2.6%

Appendix II

Analyses of answers for Question on Introduction of Alternative Middle Schools (AL)

Do you recommend the new introduction of alternative middle schools?						
Category	Yes (53)	#	%	No (23)	#	%
Students	<i>Expectation for AL on education for at-risk students</i>	32	60.4	<i>Distrust for AL</i>	7	30.4
	a. Usage of specialists & special programs	12		a. Decrease of self-esteem (2) & increase of distrust for adults (1)	3	
	b. Improvement of social skills & self-regulation of at-risk students	11		b. Stigma for at-risk students	2	
	c. Improvement of learning environment for at-risk students ("I worry about improvement of adaptability"...1)	9		c. Increase of connections with other at-risk student	2	
				d. Decrease of connections with general students & regular schools	1	
				e. Bad influence for at-risk students' future	1	
	<i>Improvement of educational circumstance of regular schools</i>	12	22.6			
	a. Securing of safety of general students	7				
	b. Protection of general students' learning rights	6				
	c. Securing of motivation of general students	1				
Teachers in Regular Schools	<i>Expectation for decrease of burden (2) & Improvement of working conditions (1)</i>	3	5.7	<i>Decline of teachers' disciplining skills</i>	2	8.7
				a. Teachers can improve their abilities through commitment with many kinds of students	1	
				b. Teachers may decrease seriousness to discipline students, and want to send at-risk students to AL easily	1	
Current School System	<i>Limitation for the current school system</i>	8	15.1	<i>Continuation of benefits of current school system</i>	7	30.4
	a. Feel difficulty for teaching many kinds of students in a single classroom	3		a. Importance of learning while communicating with many kinds of students	5	
	b. Feel limitations for the current school system	3		b. Satisfaction with the current system	2	
	c. Teachers have to supplement insufficient disciplining by parents	2				
				<i>Concerns on cultural background</i>	5	21.7
				a. Doubt if AL fits Japanese culture	3	
				b. Needs to create new school system based on the current system	2	
<i>Others</i>			<i>I do not know</i>	2	8.7	

Appendix III

Analyses of Answers for Question on Points for which should be care on introduction of Alternative Middle Schools (AL)

Do you recommend the new introduction of alternative middle schools?						
Category	Yes (53)	#	%	No (23)	#	%
<i>For At-risk students</i>		18	34.0		7	30.4
(a) Understanding of students' thought/mind/background (e.g., Inferiority complex)		11		(a) Understanding of students' thought/mind/background (e.g., Inferiority complex)	5	
(b) Protection of privacy		6		(b) Protection of privacy	1	
(c) Bad influence on students' futures		2		(c) Bad influence on students' futures	1	
<i>For Parents of At-risk Students</i>		13	24.5		6	26.1
(a) Better understanding & collaboration		11		Better understanding & collaboration	6	
(b) Inferiority complex		2				
<i>For Community Members</i>		18	34.0		6	26.1
(a) Better understanding & collaboration		14		(a) Better understanding & collaboration	4	
(b) Coping with stigma		4		(b) Coping with stigma	2	
<i>For an AL</i>		29	54.7		7	30.4
• Quality of teachers & appropriate distribution		13		• Well-known criteria to attend in AL	4	
• Well-known criteria to attend in AL		11		• Quality of teachers & appropriate distribution	1	
• Better understanding & collaboration between AL and regular schools		4		• Collaboration with adults	1	
• Curriculum		3		• Establishment of appropriate law	1	
• How AL can deal with students, who do not go to AL and hang around in the town		1				
• Name of the school		1				
• Security of inside/outside of schools		2				
• Codes of conduct		1				
• Source of tuition and management fees		1				
• Establishment of appropriate law		1				
• Secure of the duty of confidentiality		1				
<i>For Teachers in Regular Schools</i>		1	1.9		1	4.3
(a) Prevention from disciplining skills		1		(a) Prevention from disciplining skills	1	
<i>Others</i>						
AL may not be fit.		1	1.9	AL should not be introduced	2	8.7
No comment		6	11.3	No comment	7	30.4