

## **Contradictions in Modern Education**

### 1. Motivation behind Research Paper

Do you know that Japan's educational philosophy has remained unchanged for about 70 years after World War II? We are bound by prison-like classes, school rules, and grades. I don't like the uncomfortable atmosphere of Japanese schools. I wanted to let as many people as possible know about the hopeless situation in which the education of 70 years ago is still being carried out and I hope it will give you an opportunity to improve. So I chose this problem as my research subject.

### 2. Introduction

The American GHQ is behind the creation of the Japanese school education system. According to the Ministry of Education, GHQ created the laws and education system in Japan, which was under the rule of the USA after World War II. The main purpose of this education was to raise the level of the country all at once. In Japan, which was just before a period of high economic growth, most of the work in factories was done by hand, and it was necessary for all workers to do the same work perfectly. So a learning environment that nurtures robot-like human resources was emphasized. Thanks to this kind of education, Japan has achieved remarkable growth since the end of World War II, and has suddenly joined the ranks of the advanced nations. However, no fundamental educational reform has taken place,

and nothing has changed for 70 years. What kind of effects does post-war education have on today? And how do students nowadays feel about it?

### 3. Results and Analysis

First of all, I will explain the problems of the current education system. The first is that there is an atmosphere that every subject must be done on average or higher due to the perfectionism peculiar to Japanese people. Do everything perfectly and we have unconsciously defined the ideal person as one who follows the correct path in life. This 'correct path in life' is defined as people who have excellent grades from elementary school, go to a good high school or university, get a job at a good company, and get a high salary. We were taught in school that these were the goals of life. It's no wonder that students think that this is everything in the world. With this kind of education, we have created an educational society that is more strict than necessary, creating a world that is difficult for students to live in. You can not see personality in a paper test, and even if you can study well, you will not necessarily succeed in the future. It is natural that people are born with their strengths and weaknesses. Just like there are children who are not good at Physical Education (PE), "all people can do everything" does not exist in any world.

Secondly, they ignore the individuality of the children because they have to complete the school curriculum set by the Board of Education for a year. It is very inefficient. They cannot do what they want when they're young, and they're forced to study what they are not interested in. As a result, many people are struggling because they do not know their aptitude when they grow up. Even if you live a normal life, you cannot know what you are good at and what you are interested in,

but everyone at school digests the assigned classes like a machine, and after all, they have to spend time with nothing productive in elementary and junior high school, and even go to high school which is not compulsory education.

Young people are old enough to experience various things, and they have a high ability to absorb information, so it is a waste of time. After all, you have to take the high school entrance exam and the university entrance exam almost compulsorily because there will be a difference in the future of life for junior high school graduates and university graduates. It can't be helped because it's an undeniable fact that modern society makes you do that, but I personally think the high school entrance exam is meaningless. No matter what level of high school a student went to, in the end, it was what each individual would do, and Junior high school students in the middle of puberty felt that there was no need to study while feeling tired. Rather, it is better to cherish the time to experience more things and form a character.

The third problem is that there are too many school rules. I experienced not drinking water during class, not using mechanical pencils, and having to listen for hours while sitting in the gym. The same goes for school bags. I don't think it's a good idea to ban leaving textbooks at school and force growing children to carry such heavy bags every day. Maybe because of that, Japanese people have bad posture. According to Footmark Inc, they conducted an "Awareness Survey on the Weight of School Bags" for 1st to 3rd graders using school bags to go to school as well as 1,200 parents. It turned out that many elementary school students felt that their school bags were heavy when they went to school, and it turned out that one in

three people felt the effects on their mind and body, such as being sad at school and shoulder pain.

At school, we are united in the spirit of “one for all, all for one.” I don't know if the school rules are actually useful. Is there any data that the students who have dyed their hair and piercings will definitely drop their grades? These rules are probably because if students do whatever they want, it will be difficult for the school to keep students uniform. However, it is at the convenience of the school, and it is not a reason to establish school rules. If school is a place to go to study, it doesn't matter what you look like. It's often said that when you grow up, you act responsibly and recognize diversity, but schools control everything.

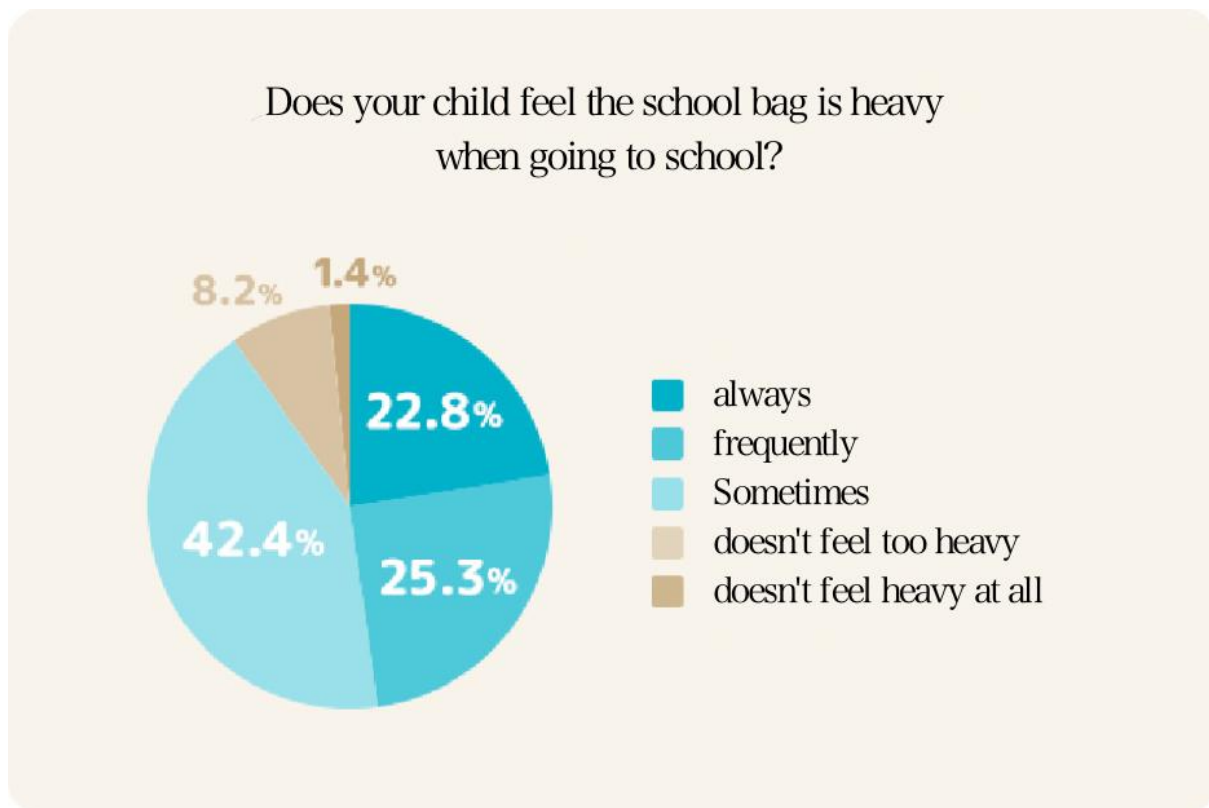


Figure 1. Questionnaire showing how students feel about their school bag

Approximately how many kilograms does your child's school bag weigh?

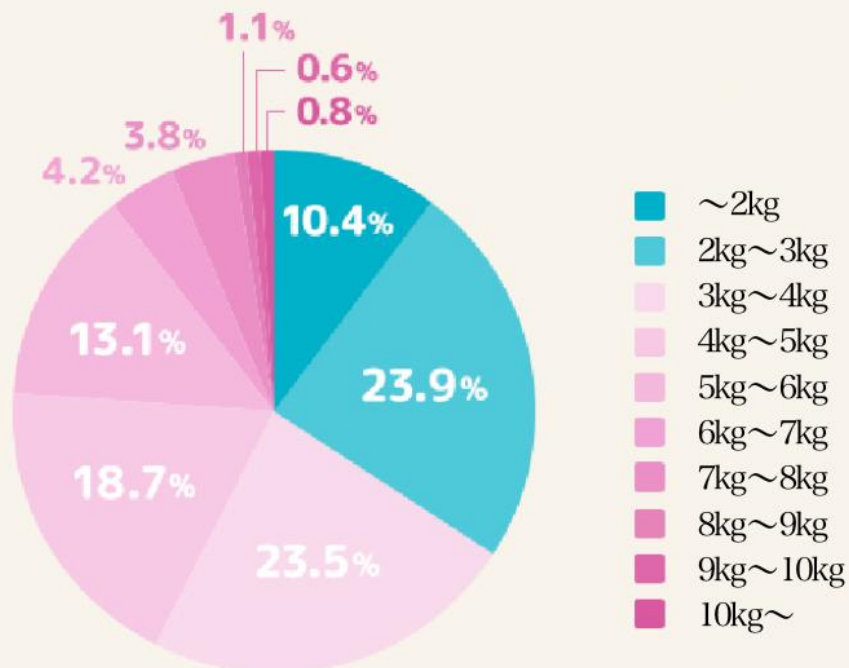


Figure 2. Weight of school bag

The fourth is that the educational content does not match the national character of the Japanese people. That is aggressiveness. During class, the teacher appoints students to answer questions, or students actively raise their hands to express their opinions. However, these are originally the methods of the Western region, not in line with the national character of the Japanese people. As an ancient Japanese culture, it is said that one should be modest and humble, and it is difficult to actively go forward, even today. Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier, in Japanese schools students have to lose their individuality and get used to group life. In this

kind of daily life, it is only painful for students to be asked to be "aggressive" only during class. It's not to make them do it by threatening that their grades won't go up if you don't speak. Including the Sustainable Development Goals, we should not arbitrarily assume that foreign methods are correct and adopt them. Both Japan and overseas have their good points, so it is important to assess them well.

#### 4. Conclusion and Future Problems

As for future issues, let's give concrete examples of how to reform education in the order of elementary school, junior high school, and high school. First, in elementary schools, school bags should be made lighter and the amount of luggage should be reduced to a minimum. Students should stop sitting in physical education as it has a negative effect on the body. And take advantage of tablet devices and the Internet. Next, in junior high school, high school entrance exams should be abolished in order for students to stop studying for entrance exams. By eliminating the high school entrance exam, students can have room in their mind, so they can focus on learning and morality in their original sense in school life. Using the results of the regular test, the Board of Education should automatically assign students to a high school that suits the child and will help them to go on to higher education. In addition, review the wasteful and strict physical education classes peculiar to the Showa era.

Since high school is not compulsory education, the education system needs to be greatly changed from elementary and junior high school. Choose at least three subjects the student wants to learn, so that they can study them first. Teachers should not manage everything and focus on personal learning. As an example, a teacher distributes a test range for each subject and the student studies by themselves.

They can then ask the teacher if there is anything they don't understand. They can go to school and do group assignments with friends, or they can study at home using a tablet device. Emphasis should be put on thinking for oneself rather than being forced by others. Abolishing school rules and eliminating stress is also important. It might be a good idea to incorporate a system like a high school student internship. In addition, it is necessary to teach things that will be useful as soon as students go out into society. For example, the current political structure, investments, how adults actually work in companies and so on. We should create an environment where students can freely learn the reality of modern society.

## 5. Reflection

There is a phrase that I was impressed by in my exploration of education. It is the phrase "harmony, not cooperation." This is a phrase uttered on YouTube by a spiritual world exploration channel called NORI. Cooperation means that each person can be perfect by making an effort to increase their individual abilities to a certain extent for everything, while harmony was stated in the sense that society can be established by sharing the uneven personality that each person is born with and complements it like a piece of a puzzle. What you cannot do, others can help you with, and what you are good at, you can help others with. You can't do everything by yourself. I want to teach these thoughts to young children.

As I have said so far, school education is destroying individuality. Even if you don't like what you're not good at, you have to work hard, and you can't develop what you're good at. As a result, we can grow into an almighty person, but we can't develop into a talented person who stands out. It's an education to nurture ordinary

people who are not interested. This gave rise to the idea that someone would do something about it, and we stopped thinking for ourselves and acted to make society better. Everyone grew up in an environment oppressed by education, so many people will feel negative without confidence in themselves. However, I think that everyone is born with one talent, even if they are not aware of it. And I want to tell you that there is always a shining place that is suitable for you.

In addition, the post-war educational policy that sees hard work and perseverance as a virtue should be abandoned immediately. There are times when effort and patience are necessary, but I want you to imagine that your life will end. Today's education teaches children how to live a way of life where they can't be happy for the rest of their lives. Education, which was not a problem 70 years ago, is now old, and that education has created a way of thinking that it is difficult to live, and it has become one of the causes of Japan's decline. I think everything will go in a good direction just by changing education. Isn't it the original form of education to focus on harmony, make use of individuality, teach a free and extended way of life, and support students at a pace that suits each student for the future?

## 6. Work Cited

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