

## **The Need for Inclusive Education: To create a society in which all people can shine**

### 1. Motivation behind Research Paper

Gender, age, place of birth and upbringing are all equal, even if they are different. It is the same for people with disabilities. The topic I worked on is about people with disabilities. My motivation for this theme is my experience. When I was using crutches, steps that I normally would not have thought of as dangerous felt very dangerous. There were only stairs at school and it took me a long time to get to the classroom, and it was very inconvenient to go to the toilet because it was too small for me to enter with crutches. Therefore, I became interested in issues related to people with disabilities when I realized that what I normally consider to be nothing at all is an obstacle in the lives of many people. So, I decided to research disability issues.

### 2. Introduction

The question which was made is “Should inclusive education, which pursues Japan's idea of learning together in the same place, exist?” It is hypothesized that this question is not as it should be. In order to verify the hypothesis, a comparison of inclusive education in Japan with inclusive education in other countries was conducted.

First, an explanation of inclusive education is necessary. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, inclusive education is an educational system in which those with disabilities and those without disabilities learn together. The purposes are to reinforce respect for human diversity, enable persons with disabilities to develop their mental and physical functions to the fullest extent, and to enable effective participation in a free society. It also requires that persons with disabilities not be excluded from the general education system, be provided with opportunities for primary and secondary education in the community in which they live, and be provided with the "reasonable accommodations" necessary for their individual needs. In 2012, in Japan, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology showed their support for the "promotion of special support education for building an inclusive education system toward the formation of a symbiotic society." The data collected for this study will include online sources.

### 3. Results and Analysis

First, a job site was used to find out how many workplaces are available for people with disabilities. What was found was that there are not many places where people with disabilities can work. For example, at Hello Work, there were 1,187,393 job openings in the general job category and 18,155 job openings for people with disabilities, a difference of about 1,170,000. Why are there so few employment opportunities for people with disabilities? According to S-POOL, there were many other reasons, such as not knowing what kind of work to assign, difficulty finding areas of expertise for people with disabilities, company facilities not designed for people with disabilities, and lack of cooperation within the company regarding acceptance (2015).

As a means of resolving these issues, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has stressed the importance of inclusive education. According to Kagayaki no Machi (2022), a child development support and after-school day care service, inclusive education has these advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include; children without disabilities can deepen their understanding of disabilities and eliminate prejudice and discrimination, they can learn from each other what the other wants and how to support each other through learning and daily life, they can receive various stimulation and growth not only in learning but also in daily life, and they can develop a sense of caring and respect for others.

The disadvantages are that the children who are supported may not be able to learn what they want and how to support each other. The burden tends to be heavier when there are children to support, children with disabilities may feel pain even if inclusive education is provided in the lower grades, classes may be delayed, the experience of not being able to study calmly in the presence of children with disabilities may increase, and students may feel "Why should I take care of a child with a disability? Why do I have to take care of a child with a disability?" or "I didn't progress because of ○○(name of child with disability)." When the experience of being late for class or not being able to study calmly when a child with a disability is present increases, one may develop a bad image of the disability and the child.

These disadvantages that I found out through my research also raised a new question: does a child with a disability really want to have classes and school life with children who are considered healthy? According to the Center for Human

Resources of Teachers (2022), in the past in Japan, education called Integration Education was provided with the aim of realizing a symbiotic society. However, at that time, most of the current situation was that they just integrated the place without getting acceptance in the regular classrooms in place. This resulted in many problems, such as children with disabilities not being able to keep up with classes, bullying due to lack of understanding, and many other problems, which led to failure. The major difference between integrated and inclusive education is that integrated education is only about place integration, whereas inclusive education is not only about place integration, but also about education in an environment where children with disabilities can keep up in class just as well as able-bodied children.

There are several countries abroad where inclusive education is said to be successful. According to Edtechzine (2021), in Finland, children are educated with assistance by dividing them into three levels: children who need special assistance, children who need enhanced assistance, and children who need general assistance. According to trends in inclusive education systems in other countries, in the UK, there are teaching assistants in classrooms to support learning, and the National Curriculum provides special classes for students who have difficulty reading and writing, and for children who have difficulty participating in class. I saw an article in which a Japanese psychologist said that Finland's inclusive education is indeed a success, but that it is not inclusive because there is still a part of segregated education. This led me to believe that inclusive education in Japan emphasizes the importance of children with and without disabilities receiving education together. But the education which is needed to create a symbiotic society is an education that

emphasizes increasing what one can do by learning what others can and cannot do through taking classes and living together.

#### 4. Conclusion and Future Problems

This leads us to believe that inclusive education in Japan today is not what it should be. I believe that the reason why inclusive education has not been successful in Japan is due to the small number of teachers. So, I compared the number of teachers in elementary schools in Japan with the number of teachers in elementary schools in the UK, which I introduced as a country with a successful inclusive education system. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's 2019 education statistics for other countries, the number of teachers in Japan is 415,511 compared to 6.25 million children, while the number of teachers in the UK is 260,500 compared to 4.9 million children, or 14 students per teacher in Japan and 18 in the UK. The number of teachers in the U.K. was found to be lower than that in Japan, with 14 students per teacher and 18 in the U.K.

Why, then, has inclusive education been so successful in the UK, where the ratio of teachers to students is larger than in Japan. I think that there are some reasons. For example, according to MEXT, the lower limit per class in elementary schools in the UK than in Japan allows more attention to be paid to students. Also, in addition to school teachers, British schools employ people as teaching assistants, and club activities are held only once a week instead of almost every day as in Japan, so teachers can spend more time on education without losing time to club activities. These factors led me to believe that in order for Japan to succeed in inclusive education, it is necessary to improve the working environment for teachers.

For example, it would be good to reduce the number of students per class like in the UK, hire outside instructors for club activities and teaching assistants, and conduct classes according to proficiency levels like English and mathematics classes in Finland and international high schools. However, these things are not easy to achieve. For example, if the number of students per class is reduced, more classrooms and facilities will be needed. Hiring outside teaching assistants and teachers for club activities would require money. However, in order to realize a symbiotic society, it is necessary to think in such a way that these problems can be solved.

“It is undeniable that discipline, education, customs, and culture from an early age have formed a distorted view of people with disabilities. In our country, the principle of segregated education has led to the separation of children with disabilities into special schools for the handicapped, rather than into nearby regular classrooms, thus erasing them from the view of the general student population. It is common to be wary and distrustful of the unknown, which is met with misunderstanding and distorted preconceptions that spur negative psychological formation. Ignorance may be at the core of the structures that give birth to and nurture discrimination.” (Kazuhiro Nozaki, 2014).

It can be said that contact with people with disabilities from an early age and the development of knowledge and understanding are necessary to create a society in which people with disabilities can live freely. If we were to do these things, we would need a lot of money and people. I believe that to solve this problem, people

need to be informed about the need for inclusive education and more emphasis needs to be placed on inclusive education in society. So I am going to conduct activities to let people know what inclusive education is and why it is necessary.

## 5. Reflection

In the course of our exploration, we had difficulty drawing conclusions on human rights issues because each person had a different viewpoint and we did not know what was right. It is of course important for the government to introduce inclusive education and other initiatives to educate children who have the knowledge and understanding of people with disabilities and to create opportunities for people to reflect upon the issues and challenges people with disabilities face. However, I realized that the most important thing is for each person to change their minds about this issue in order to make significant changes. No matter how much the environment changes, if there is no desire to change, there can be no change. How about taking a look at your own life and actions and see if there is anything you can do to help build a better society in the future. I would like to use what I have learned from this exploration in my future activities.

## 6. Work Cited

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