Nonprofit Education in Japan:

NPO–led Career Guidance at Metropolitan Senior High Schools

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1 Introduction

The demand for education has changed rapidly due to social change and globalization over the last decades. Individual needs have become so diverse that the traditional actors of the Japanese education system can no longer satisfy them. Not only the private sector but civil society has an ever–growing role in the facilitation of knowledge and skill sets. (Okano 2016b: 1). This has serious implications on the role of formal schooling in contemporary Japan.

The smooth transition into the labor market or advance to further education was and is still considered to be one of the major roles of the senior high school. However, this transition system has changed considerably over the last decades (Honda 2004a; Hori 2012a, 2016; Kosugi 2004). In the past, especially foreign scholars have praised the Japanese education system for its uniform curriculum, dedicated teachers, group orientation, and high academic achievement in mathematics and science (cf. Demes and Georg 2007; Miller and Kanazawa 2000) but have disregarded the transition into the workforce where the drawbacks are becoming increasingly apparent (Genda 2005; Genda et al. 2005; Honda 2004b, 2004b, 2005; Kosugi 2006).

While Rövekamp (2017: 125) describes the current performance of Japan's economy as positive, there have been troubling developments on the labor market for quite some time. According to Kariya (2010: 88), irregular employment patterns and average job turnover rate have been increasing drastically. This holds true in the time period from 1984 to 2005, after that we can only see a gradual increase over the following ten years (Graph 1).

The wages of irregular employees are considerably lower compared to fulltime employment. The past development has created a large number of wage earners with lower income. When comparing the development between 2007 and 2012, "regular staffs" and "dispatched worker" decreased while "part–time workers", "contract employees" and others increased. Looking at employees by type of employment, 61.8% of all employees were "regular staffs", 17.9% "part–time workers", 8.2%

"*arubaito* (temporary workers)", and "contract employees" made up 5.4%. By sex, the largest type of employment for males was "regular staffs" with 77.9% of all male employees. This was followed by "*arubaito* (temporary workers)" with 7.5% and "contract employees" with 5.3%. The largest type of employment for females, although considerably lower than for their male counterparts, was "regular staffs" with 42.5% of all female employees, followed by "part–time workers" with 35.2%, "arubaito (temporary workers)" with 9.1%, and "contract employees" 5.6% (Statistical Bureau Japan 2012).

Currently, the share of irregularly employed workers can be considered high but has been stable around 37.5% from 2014 to 2017 (see Graph 1).

Due to the recent developments towards more flexibility, the labor market can roughly be divided into two sectors. There is the first sector in which well−educated candidates still have good chances to obtain stable, well−paid employment with a high level of job−security. Then there is the second sector, entirely consisting of irregular employees with minimal or no job−security and also no chances of promotion within their current employment (Sato and Imai 2011).

Employment in unstable and low–wage sectors, reduced career mobility, fragmented work biographies, and a higher risk of unemployment can be considered, amongst others, as a result of insufficient education (Honda 2004a). Although a crucial factor for finding successful employment, learning competencies are not equally distributed among students. Education can be considered as an institution bringing forth opportunities to sever the cycle of poverty and poor educational background, however, we can observe that many children from economically weak families or those with an inadequate educational background (although these two factors often correlate), have not made effective use of education.

In addition, educational achievements can nowadays no longer reliably and predictably be translated into desirable occupational success. The concept of a smooth transition from education system to labor market, which was once a defining characteristic of Japan's credential society,

has been called into question. Japan is moving towards an unequal society with respect to opportunity of education and employment. The decrease in the degree of intergenerational social mobility is an example for this development (Tachibanaki 2006: 1).

Parallel to this development, we observe a shift from a society where educational credentials are highly valued (*gakureki shakai*) to a so called learning capital society. The challenges that emerge at the intersection of these dynamic shifts in the realms of labor market and education are threefold: (a) an increasing performance pressure for (not only but especially) young people, (b) the emergence of a new dynamic of class cleavage and (c) the overall shift to a flexible labor regime (Kariya 2010: 88).

To stay competitive on a national and global level, companies nowadays require employees who efficiently learn new skills and adapt to quickly changing situations and settings. A flexible “multi−talent” with a high level of trainability has become the norm in labor market requirements (Kariya 2010: 94). In other words, the more learning competencies graduates/employees possess, the higher their chances for stable employment, further training during employment, and promotion. This concept of an almost “omnipotent” worker still lacks a consistent definition, although the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (henceforth called MEXT) and the Ministry of Economics, Trade, and Industry (henceforth called METI) have developed and implemented programs to create a more concrete and graspable image of this desired graduate/employee (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009, 2017, 2018c) not only for senior high school but also for higher education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2012). The MEXT also seeks to enhance career education as well as vocational skills and knowledge to enhance Japan’s competitiveness in the global market (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2011a, 2011b). Furthermore, they have been eager to include the community and civil society in the overall education process nationwide in order to meet the demands of a globalized society as described in the Second Basic Plan for the

Promotion of Education (*dai ni ki kyôiku shinkô kihon keikaku*) (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2013a, 2013b). All these measures aim – to a certain extend – at preparing students for labor market entry, success in their later career, and the overall production of human capital.

In Tokyo I was able to observe these developments on the level of senior high school education and its career guidance programs. I visited a number of senior high schools and two institutes which, in addition to senior high school education, offer vocational training. In the subsequent analysis of my collected data, I found that on the institutional level of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education (henceforth called TMBE) the implementation of MEXT and METI programs has been proceeding in various ways over the last decade. However, on the micro–level of metropolitan general senior high schools, especially those which rank average to low in terms of academic performance, educators appear unable to facilitate neither a smooth transition nor are they able to effectively teach skill sets and competencies described in the programs of both ministries. As a result, schools make use of third sector groups like nonprofit organizations to ensure, amongst others, comprehensive career guidance for students.

With this dissertation I am going to shed more light on the interface between formal schooling, NPO–led career guidance, and labor market entry. In particular, I will examine how and why the nature of career guidance has been changing rather drastically in the recent years and analyze the consequences for the metropolitan general senior high school as an institution which by many is still considered to have the obligation to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market.

1.1 Chapter overview

The second chapter of this dissertation will provide a concise overview of the academic discourse concerning the influence of socioeconomic background on educational attainment, the transition from school to employment, and the current state of Japan’s civil society with regard to

NPO involvement in crucial sectors. I will describe the legal framework of NPOs with special focus on the “Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities” (*tokutei hieiri katsudô sokushin hô*) (henceforth called NPO Law).

In chapter 3, I will present different theory strands which will make up the theoretical framework for the analysis of my collected data and my overall aim to provide a more comprehensive view on career guidance and NPO–involvement in the contemporary metropolitan senior high school education.

Following this, in chapter 4, I will describe my methodological approach in connection with my fieldwork during career guidance events at metropolitan senior high schools.

In chapter 5, my case study with the NPO “Labor Market Cram School”[1]. (henceforth called LMCS) at its center will be presented and I will give a detailed account of the NPO, its members, and the career guidance workshops which they carry out at metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo and the greater metropolitan agglomeration area.

The activities of yet another civil society group in the Japanese education system will be center of an *excursus* in chapter 6. I will describe the activities and development of this rather young project to offer insights into an NPO that tries to completely stay away from government funding and interference. Although the NPO is not concerned with senior high school career guidance but with learning support (in form of a free of charge cram school) for children from a weak socioeconomic background, it will give an interesting example of yet another form which civic engagement in the educational sector can take.

Chapter 7 will be focusing on the analysis of the career guidance system at metropolitan senior high schools. I will pick up on the development of the school–to–work transition system again and take a close look at the role of the senior high school to facilitate a smooth

[1] Cram schools (*gakushû juku* or just *juku*) are private, for–profit schools, which offer supplementary classes for school age children. Typically they operate after regular school hours, on weekends, and during school vacations. They either offer study support for school subjects or prepare the children for the various entrance examinations.

transition into the labor market. I will analyze recent programs put forward by the MEXT and METI and the resulting programs of the TMBE. Implementations and developments on the micro–level, at metropolitan general senior high schools in particular, are the focus of this chapter. An analysis of resulting additional transition patterns into employment or further education will close the chapter.

In chapter 8 I will present the major findings of my study and their meaning for the current academic discourse. In this chapter I will also address the limitations of my study.

In a final conclusion (chapter 9), I will sum up my findings and give an outlook on further research in this promising field of study.

2 Literature review

Over the last decades, rising inequality in the Japanese education system has been a key focus point of educational reforms and policies in Japan. A recent example is the new Law to Guarantee Equal Opportunities in Education (*kyôiku kikai kakuho hô*), which sets, amongst others, new regulations concerning the education of truant children (*futôkô jidô*) with other special needs (http://elaws.e–gov.go.jp 2017). It creates a better framework in which for example (NPO–led) *free schools*[2], can now respond more effectively to the needs of these children. Children and parents now have a greater legal leeway to receive compulsory education in a more flexible and adequate form (Tokyo Shure 2017).

In the following chapter, I will provide information about the past and ongoing academic discourse surrounding the central aspects of my dissertation. I will give an overview of current research and findings about the socioeconomic background of students as a decisive factor for educational attainment and labor market success. I will present findings from the ongoing discourse relating to class position, educational level of the father as well as the widening gap between the rich and the poor in

[2] Private schools, licensed by the government to provide compulsory education for children who struggle in mainstream educational institutions. Often children with learning disabilities and truant students visit these schools in order to receive compulsory education in a more flexible format tailored to their special needs.

Japanese society (*kakusa shakai*). I will pay particular attention to the formation and current developments of the school–to–work transition system which has undergone major changes since the period of high economic growth. These changes have also had a significant influence on career guidance and I will elaborate on this in chapter 7. Additionally, the current development in the NPO landscape as well as the past and present legal framework of the process of becoming an NPO will be presented in a concise form. Throughout my dissertation I will address these issues in more detail and relate them to my collected data and my research findings.

2.1 Socioeconomic background, educational and occupational attainment

In the past, Rohlen (1983) demonstrated that class position has been an advantage in gaining access to better secondary schools, which accounted for the disproportionally high number of middle and upper class children who passed entrance examinations for (prestigious) universities. Academic achievements are crucial determinants to Japanese youths' job attainment, both among and within high schools (Rosenbaum and Kariya 1989: 1358). In this regard, the quality of high school education and, by the same token, the ranking of the high school seems to be the decisive point for the reproduction of both educational and occupational success, on the one hand, or low socioeconomic background, poverty, and disturbed human development, on the other. The nature and ranking of high schools strongly influences the students' future life chances. This close link between schooling and desirable careers is driven by strong competition in the elite high schools and universities alike and was amplified by hiring practices of major companies (cf. Rohlen 1983).

Previous research has also shown that the achievement level of parents in education and occupation determines that of their children. The parents' educational background and their income have, to a varying degree, a direct effect on the children's economic success. Here Fujita

(1993) found that a student's academic achievement in middle school positively correlates with his or her father's education and that the father's occupational status positively relates to the educational attainment of his children.

However, in the last two decades the gap between rich and poor, between the well–educated and those who lack such privilege has been widening according to a large number of scholars (Chiavacci and Hommerich 2017; Fujihara and Ishida 2016; Inui 2003, 2005; Ishida and Slater 2010a; Kariya 2013; Kawanishi 2004). In their opinion, Japan has developed from a thriving and economically successful nation to a country with an economy that is stagnating and a population which is shrinking. In addition to a high proportion of elderly people, there also exists a rising inequality on the labor market as well as in the education system.

Special attention has been paid by Japanese scholars to the widening gap in society between the rich and the poor (Tachibanaki 2012, 2015) concerning income (Tachibanaki 2006), class mobility (Ishida 2010), and in particular educational inequality (Kariya 2012; Kariya and Yamaguchi 2008; Kobayashi 2008; Tachibanaki 2009, 2010; Tachibanaki and Matsûra 2009; Tachibanaki and Yagi 2009) or the lack of equal opportunities (Tachibanaki 2013), which has led to numerous important publications.

Concerning academic and occupational success, the effect of socioeconomic factors of students and parents alike, class differences, and their impact on educational attainment, income, job security, promotion etc. have been at the center of the discourse over the last two decades (Fujihara and Ishida 2016; Kariya 2010, 2013; Kariya et al. 2002; Slater 2010; Tachibanaki 2005, 2014).

In 2018, Ishida Hiroshi (his research focuses on comparative social stratification and mobility, school–to–work transition, and social inequality over the life course) of the Institute for Social Science at Tokyo University stated in his talk "Social Inequality in Japan" at the Annual Conference of the German Association for Social Science Research on Japan (VSJF) that over the last 70 years the Japanese society has not significantly

become more open or closed; there have only been insignificant fluctuations. Income inequality is largest in the older population and from an economist's viewpoint, the demographic change in Japan is the main reason why the overall income inequality is on the rise. While there is a change visible in the absolute rate, the relative mobility rates have been remarkably stable in these past decades, which depicts a relatively robust society.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a ceiling in upward mobility and an increase in downward mobility in the most recent period of the 2000s. Ishida concluded that school plays a major role for students to find employment after graduating high school, because every student is in a position to use the school networks to do so. This runs contrary to the opinion of a number of scholars (Brinton 2011; Honda 2003; Hori 2016; Slater 2010).

Fujihara and Ishida (2016: 25) have used three models to measure the value of educational attainment with regard to the influence of the social background of students and their educational attainment. In particular, they paid attention to the fathers' education level. While the first model focused on the absolute value of educational attainment, the latter two measured the value of educational attainment according to "*its relative standing in the labor market or within the distribution of education*." Data from the Social Stratification and Social Mobility (SSM)[3] and the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys (JLPS)[4] was used and the analysis was restricted to males[5] who were born after 1926 and attended the post–war educational system.

When looking at the results from the viewpoint of absolute terms, inequality regarding educational opportunities in context of social background was reduced during the period following the Second World War (Fujihara and Ishida 2016: 25).

[3] Cross–sectional survey in Japan, which has been conducted every ten years since 1955 with a large representative sample of persons aged 20 to 69.
[4] Panel survey, first conducted in 2007, of with large representative sample of respondents aged 20 to 40 years of age.
[5] Women were excluded because the SSM surveys from 1955 to 1975 did not include women.

Especially the least advantaged groups (students whose fathers only graduated from junior high school) benefited most from the expansion of general education and helped to decrease the "*gap in the average years of schooling between the least and the most advantaged groups*." However, the results show a different trend when looking at this with regard to occupational returns to education. There has been no change in the difference in access to further education with regard to students whose fathers attained higher education and those who only graduated from junior high school. The former are still much more likely and the latter much less likely to move on to higher education and consequently enter prestigious employment. When comparing the chances of students whose fathers graduated from senior high school with those of students from the most advantaged group, Fujihara and Ishida even see an increase in the gap with regard to entering high ranking universities. Social background of students still has a strong influence on occupational returns, especially when taking into account the education of the father (Fujihara and Ishida 2016: 34).

The educational expansion caused a significant decrease in the value of a junior high school certificate in the labor market and students whose father only graduated from junior high school were much more likely to enter senior high school education in order to stay competitive on the job market. When looking at educational attainment within an educational distribution, i.e. the relative advantage of getting a better position in the labor queue, the relative advantage of the most and the least advantaged group has remained constant. However, educational choices of students whose fathers graduated from senior high school did not change significantly despite the educational expansion. Due to the fact that the father was able to attain a secure labor market position in the past with a senior high school degree, the pressure to move on to university education in order to stay competitive in the labor market seems to be lower for these students. Yet, as the senior high school enrolment rate reached almost 100%, "*the relative value of [senior] high school education clearly declined."* Also, due to the increasing number of individuals graduating from university and the increase of private

universities, the investment into further education for students whose father was university educated appears to be viewed as necessary "*to maintain their advantage in the labor market*" (Fujihara and Ishida 2016: 35).

Di Stasio et al. (2016: 62–63) have shown that in European countries[6] education functions as a positional good in countries where the vocational education system is only weakly developed. They found that overeducation (years invested in education above the requirement for a certain type of employment or position) is more likely to occur in countries in which only a small number of students are enrolled in vocational training programs "*even after controlling for macroeconomic conditions*."

To analyze the relationship between formal schooling and labor market outcomes they compared the following three theoretical models: the job competition, human capital, and social closure model. In the first model, education is viewed as a positional good with relative value on the labor market. In the other two models, the value of education is viewed as absolute, yet they differ regarding their expectation about the returns to years of overeducation (Di Stasio et al. 2016: 53).

Returns to years of overeducation are lower in countries where an institutionalized wage–setting is prevalent (Di Stasio et al. 2016: 62). This would, to a certain degree, also apply to the Japanese labor market where the seniority wage system, due to past macro–economic conditions, has been dominating the wage coordination for decades, although a performance–based pay system (cf. Ishida 2006) has been introduced around the beginning of the 2000s (Nishimura 2017: 22–27).

When the employers control over the reward of differences in productivity among their employees is limited by the wage coordination and the extension of collective agreement, the returns (for males) for overeducation is lower. Here they point out that there are other variables to take into account than formal education which influence the job matching process. Across the course of an individual's life the importance

[6] They used data from the European Social Survey (2010).

of education for job sorting declines as the individual progresses in his or her career. In their study they tried to bring together the strands of overeducation literature and literature which regards education as a positional good and have shown that "*institutions channel the allocation of individuals to the labor market and can reduce the incentive to overinvest in education.*" They suggest to study academically and vocationally trained individuals separately with a focus on how institutions might influence chances for such groups regarding positional competition (Di Stasio et al. 2016: 62–63). This is an approach that would also be fruitful in the Japanese context.

According to Shavit and Müller (2000: 42) vocational training provides students – especially from a weaker socioeconomic background – with occupationally significant skills for labor market entry and, therefore, serves as a safety net. While it reduces the risk of employment in an undesirable occupation or not finding employment at all, it also reduces incentives for these students to enter institutes of higher education like universities.

Under the current macro–economic conditions, graduates from technical high school still find regular employment in prefectures with a strong manufacturing industry. However, in metropolitan areas with an ever–growing service sector, a high school degree is often insufficient to find stable employment. These students often find themselves in irregular employment after graduation (cf. Hori 2016). I will discuss this in more detail in chapter 7.

In the past, the improvement of academic skills and training has become apparent in most industrial countries. Here the focus should particularly lie on the socioeconomically weaker groups. While educational investment by the government is imperative and a key factor for the redistribution of possibilities, one should not assume that education by itself can reduce inequalities in a direct way; to actively participate in society solid employment is vital (Giddens 1998: 109–110).

Enhancing general as well as vocational skills in order to produce human capital, which can contribute to society over the whole life span

of an individual, has recently become the new mantra for the METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2018b).

The Japanese government has already put emphasis on life–long education, starting from an early stage in life and continuing far beyond retirement (cf. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015a: 104–129). Although underdeveloped or missing (soft) skills amongst Japanese students have been pointed out by many teachers during the course of my fieldwork, emphasis should not only be put on general or vocational education but also on the transfer of knowledge and (soft) skills aiming at successful labor market entry and societal participation. In this context senior high school education still seems to be a decisive factor.

2.2 The school–to–work transition system

The transition system of graduates from high school to employment regarding its formation, its historical framework, and economic conditions has been focus of the academic discourse at least since the time of high economic growth (Honda 2004a; Kariya et al. 1997; Okano 1992, 1995; Rosenbaum and Kariya 1989). Internationally, Japan was pictured as a prime example for an efficient system, which facilitated a smooth transition into the labor market and especially the US was eager to learn from Japan's experience (Brinton 1998; Rosenbaum and Kariya 1991). Factors inherent to the education system as well as certain macroeconomic conditions facilitated the effectiveness of this transition system. A stratified education system acted as a selection mechanism that sorted students into rather homogeneous groups. This resulted in a high number of well–educated high school graduates which met the high demand for young workers for entry–level positions. This meant that up to the 1990s, graduates could find employment easily on an internal labor market that offered secure jobs for high school graduates (Brinton and Tang 2010: 229–230).

One particularity of the Japanese school–to–work transition system are the so called proven relationships (*jisseki kankei*) which can also be

translated into "*result–oriented relationships*" (Brinton and Tang 2010: 218). They describe the ongoing semi–formal relationships between a certain school and employer with no formal or written contracts. These relationships are formed over time, have been and in some cases still are central to graduates finding employment after finishing high school. They are rather hard to circumvent in the transition process. In the English language literature they are also sometimes referred to as "*semiformal employment contracts*" (Rosenbaum and Kariya 1989: 1343), "*implicit recruitment contracts*", or "*recruitment relationships*" (Brinton and Tang 2010: 218).

After the labor market went through significant changes in the 1990s, problems appeared to emerge for young graduates who, up to then, were able to successfully transition from high school to work (cf. Hori 2005, 2007). The historical and macro–economic conditions, which once brought stability and security to the Japanese school–to–work transition system, have since then ceased to exist (Honda 2003: 11, 2004a: 105–113) and young people have had an increasingly difficult time to find secure employment. The expansion of irregular employment (Graph 1) and the problems graduates and young job–seekers face have been at the center of the academic discourse ever since (Hara 2005; Inui 2003; Ishihara and Shinozaki 2005). Especially new phenomena like NEET[7] and *freeter*[8] have found scholarly attention (Cook 2014; Genda et al. 2005; Honda 2004b, 2005; Inui 2005; Kosugi 2004; Maguire 2015; Pilz et al. 2014; Rahman 2017; Toivonen 2011).

The Japanese transition system – from senior high school into the labor market – has regained some attention recently in the English and Japanese language literature (Brinton 2011; Hori 2012a). In this context, the necessary re–evaluation of the transition–system (Hori 2012b, 2016) is of particular interest. Not only general and vocational education and

[7] Acronym for "Not in employment, education, or training"

[8] Freeter (furîtâ) is a portmanteau of the English word "free" and the German word "Arbeiter" or rather the Japanese word *arubaito. It* is a loanword and mainly describes part–time work of young people. Freeter can therefore broadly be described as (young) people who lack full–time employment or have chosen not to enter such employment. Students and housewives are excluded. Sometimes unemployed young people are included in the category.

their impact on career choices and trajectories (cf. Oguro 2013, 2014) but career guidance has to be paid close attention to in the Japanese language discourse in order to identify practices and environments which foster successful education and transition into the labor market. I will elaborate on the formation and development of the school–to–work transition system in the context of my findings in chapter 7. Particular attention in this context will be paid to the contemporary career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools and its role in the transition process.

Preparing students for the labor market entry can nowadays not exclusively be facilitated by institutionalized formal education and alternative third sector groups have become essential in this process (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015a: 106). In the following sub–chapter I will describe the background which made this development possible.

2.3 Civil society and NPOs in Japan

Inequalities are a threat to social cohesion and in a democratic society which generates large–scale inequality widespread disaffection and conflict are a logical outcome. Fortunately for Japan, open conflict is rare and social order with an emphasis on the public good can be seen as an essential part of the Japanese society and culture (Schwartz 2003: 5).

To measure the health of a democracy, the size and quality of civil society organizations can be regarded as important units of measurement. When looking at the size of civil society with regard to institutions recognized by the state, Japan – looking at it from a per capita basis – has about half as many nonprofit corporations as the United States of America. However, when looking at these figures with regard to the share of all corporations, the figures of the US are only half of those of Japan. In the past, economic growth has had a strong influence on Japanese civil society associations. Over the years, there has been a distinct shift from the producer sector to the social service sector and recently to the advocacy sector (Tsujinaka 2003: 112–115).

Up to the present, civil society has been stimulated by different waves of democratization in Japan. According to Tsujinaka (2003: 97–99), the first wave of democratization lasted from 1826 to 1926. This included the building of the nation–state (Meiji Restoration of 1868), the establishment of a modern constitution (1889), the formation of a party–led government (1918, 1924–1932), and universal manhood suffrage in 1925. In the second wave, which lasted from 1946 to 1962, Japan enacted a democratic constitution (1947) and by that institutionalized and consolidated its civil society by passing various laws that legitimized e.g. labor unions, consumer cooperatives, or business associations etc. Additionally, Japan underwent periods of large civil society movements during the late 1950s and 1960s. In the third wave, which lasted from 1974 to the present[9], the non–producer sector became more significant. Emerging citizen–led movements have pointed the governments attention to environmental and welfare policy. During this time, the NPO Law of 1998 was "*a symbolic event*" of the maturity of Japan's civil society and civil society actors have "*rapidly acquired legitimacy as actors in the policy–making process*" ever since. Throughout these waves, Japanese civil society organizations have constantly gained greater access and acceptance (Tsujinaka 2003: 112–114).

The development of the Japanese civil society is the result of the structure of incentives put in place by the state. While it promotes one type of group, it might hinder another by e.g. not granting them legal status. Small, local groups (like neighborhood associations (*chônaikai*)), which can contribute to social capital and enhance the performance of the local government, were and are groups promoted by the government. Concerning the legal environment, large, independent groups like "*Greenpeace have faced a much more hostile legal environment*" (Pekkanen 2003: 116–117).

Neighborhood associations are among the oldest and most common groups in the Japanese civil society. Nationwide there are about

[9] The article was published in 2003, suggesting that the early 2000s are meant with "present", yet there has been no such significant change recently, which would suggest that a "fourth wave" has begun.

300,000 of these groups. While urbanization and generational change have taken their toll on the significance of such groups they still "*remain a central part of associational life in Japan today*" (Avenell 2018: 17–18). They can be defined as groups with a voluntary membership with members from a small (residential) area carrying out multiple activities with their neighborhood at the center (Pekkanen 2006: 87). Neighborhood associations are a perfect example of cooperative civil society groups which are promoted by the Japanese state. They benefit from their "*de facto legal recognition, the devolution of powers and jurisdiction, the conferral of monopoly of legitimacy (tantamount to the repression of rival organizations), and state funds*" (Pekkanen 2003: 125).

Japan has undergone continuous structural reforms since the beginning of the 1970s. The resulting increase in affluence and diversity has improved the ability of private groups to organize themselves independently from the state. By making demands on the state, these groups have created a variety of political interactions. Yet, civil society has faced many obstacles due to Japan's strict regulatory environment (Schwartz 2003: 9).

Although freedom of association is provided by article 21 of the Japanese constitution, it does not guarantee that any group can obtain legal status. Due to the fact that Japan is a civil code nation, this kind of legal status (*hôjinka*) is rather important. Small groups can, of course, still operate in Japan even if they do not have legal status, but they are in a significantly disadvantaged position (Pekkanen 2003: 123). The Japanese legal system has a heavy bias against such groups. At the center of this bias is the structuring of incentives that help to manifest the distinctive pattern of civil society in Japan. This makes it very difficult for groups to grow larger, especially when they seek independence from the state (Pekkanen 2003: 125). To put it in simple terms: If a group or organization does not have legal person status, they cannot sign contracts and have no legal standing. As a group they cannot hire staff, rent or own property, or open a bank account etc. Besides these obvious disadvantages concerning operational ramifications, the status of the

groups also results in a lack of social credibility, which not only effects themselves as a group but civil society as a whole (Pekkanen 2006: 51).

Around the time of the enactment of the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (*tokutei hieri katsudô sokushin hô*) in 1998, the term NPO entered the general Japanese vocabulary. The legal entities created by this law are so called specified nonprofit corporations (*tokutei hieiri katsudô hôjin*) which are normally referred to as NPO corporations (*NPO hôjin*) or just NPOs. When looking at the broader definition of NPOs, it refers to civil society organizations and groups conducting different voluntary activities, which take various corporate forms. This can also include citizen organizations on the grassroots level like neighborhood or village associations, which have been an integral part of Japanese society for decades and which have now obtained legal status by taking advantage of the legal framework created by the NPO Law (Japan NPO Center 2015b).

2.3.1 The NPO Law and subsequent developments

The Japanese NPO Law was designed and crafted in the aftermath of the great Hanshin earthquake of 1995 which struck the city of Kobe particularly hard. While the urge to help was enormous in the general population, it became apparent very quickly that there was an urgent need for a national–level structure that could support such a voluntary third sector. The creation of the law represented a considerable step towards the liberalization of the nonprofit sector in Japan. It can be considered as the basis of a more robust and modern civil society that is now better equipped to meet the challenges and social problems brought forth by the generations of the 1990s, commonly referred to as the "*lost decade*" (Ogawa 2014: 53).

After the massive earthquake in Kobe, grass–roots volunteer groups, neighborhood associations, and other civil society groups took action quickly while the government responded with too much delay. Having learned its lesson, the Japanese government quickly joined efforts with these groups, which already had collected experiences during

the Kobe earthquake, after the earthquake in March 2011 and even went so far to appoint "*leading activists to official disaster–response positions*." Afterwards, anti–nuclear protests led by the civil society emerged in Japan. Yet, the "*successful disaster response and the largely unsuccessful anti–nuclear protest suggests that Japanese civil society may not have changed much: a space strong in social capital yet critically weak in advocacy in spite of supposedly transformative changes of the 1990s*" (Avenell 2018: 26–27).

From early on, the gravity of the impact this law was going to have on the Japanese society was apparent. Pekkanen (2000: 113) saw the NPO Law as an important aspect of the changing relationship between the Japanese state and its civil society and as "*part of a broader series of changes rippling through Japanese politics*." While the international media focused on the stagnating economy and other negative aspects of this time, Kingston (2004: 70–71) saw this decade as a "*time of dynamic transformation and reform.*" He argued that the growth of NPOs, greater transparency in the government, and judicial reforms depicted a very active and vibrant civil society in Japan with a high potential to facilitate further important change in the future. According to Avenell (2018: 18), NPOs – which are incorporated under the NPO Law – are an example for a development away from bureaucratic oversight and towards "*greater autonomy in Japanese civil society over the past two or three decades or so*."

By design, the law permits groups to attain legal status without being subject to elaborate bureaucratic screening and "*aims to allow the groups to operate without continuing bureaucratic administrative guidance*" (Pekkanen 2006: 55).

The law's purpose is the promotion and sound development of specific nonprofit activities. These volunteer activities are freely performed by citizens in order to benefit society. Through the provision of corporate status to such organizations, which engage in specified nonprofit activities, it contributes to the advancement of society and public welfare (Japan NPO Center 2015a).

Before the NPO Law came into existence, the Japanese civil society was characterized by small civil society groups and only few large organizations (Pekkanen 2006: 1–2). Furthermore, the government seemed very reluctant to incorporate nonprofit organization in the first place (Ogawa 2009: 3).

Access to legal status in form of a public interest legal person was highly restricted until 1998 and was mostly based on Article 34 of the Uniform Civil Code of 1896. While freedom of association was – as mentioned before – guaranteed by the Constitution, it was limited by Article 33 of the Civil Code, which stated that all legal persons had to be formed according to its regulations. Legal persons can be defined as groups or organizations which are legally empowered with an independent existence and possess rights and obligations. Hence, without legal status groups have no legal existence at all. These general provision are followed by Article 34 and 35 which create classes of legal persons. While Article 35 provides the legal framework for establishing for–profit organizations or companies, Article 34 does not provide any category for nonprofit organizations. It did, however, provide for the more restrictive category of the *nonprofit public interest legal person* (henceforth called PILP). Accordingly, nonprofit groups that are not in the public interest do not have any legal basis to form. The NPO Law of 1998 tries to mitigate this legal blind spot. When there is no legal category for a group they are only left with the option to operate informally as a voluntary group or they have to become a corporation. If this is the case, they are denied public legitimacy in a country where the legitimating role of the state is much greater than in other industrialized countries. The granting of the PILP status is left to the respective ministry from which they are also funded. If a group's activity falls into the jurisdiction of two or more ministries, it is very difficult to obtain legal status. Such cases are labeled joint supervision (*kyôkan*) (Pekkanen 2006: 51–52).

To be approved as a public interest corporation, their activities must be for the public good. This does, however, not include organizations or groups that come together for maintaining personal networks or ties (e.g. alumni groups), groups that offer welfare services to a specific group of

people, members of a specific occupation, or organizations which provide economic or spiritual support to individuals. Another hurdle is the sound financial base (around 300 million yen/ approx. 2.8 million USD/ approx. 2.5 million EUR) which is a prerequisite for being recognized as a public interest corporation. Needless to say that it is very difficult to raise this amount of money for e.g. a small citizen group. Due to this strict regulatory framework, which acts as a screening mechanism, many groups that are not considered as acting for the public interest by the bureaucracy are prevented from obtaining legal status. Therefore, many civil society groups not qualifying as PILP have been disrupted in their activities, which influences civil society in Japan as a whole (Pekkanen 2006: 51–53).

After the enactment of the NPO Law, two changes regarding the tax law were deemed necessary by the then Japanese nonprofit sector. The first was the deductibility of donations which were given to a legal person by private donors or corporations. This change occurred rather speedily; partly because provisions in the NPO Law made a revision of the tax law necessary two years after the NPO Law was enacted. However, it only enabled a small number of the ever–growing body of NPOs in Japan to receive special tax–deductible contributions (Pekkanen 2006: 155–156).

This new tax–deductible (*nintei*) specified activities legal person is able to receive contributions from individuals or corporations who can deduct these contributions to the NPO from their income tax. However, it does not lower the tax rates for the NPOs which have gained this status. The number of NPO legal persons which have the permission to receive tax–advantaged charitable contributions has since the enactment of the change in the tax law remained small. At the end of 2018, while the total number of NPOs who had received legal status (*ninshô*) was 51,609, only 1,105 were approved to receive tax–advantaged contributions (Graph 2). In the past, these groups had to be certified by the commissioner of the National Tax Administration [Agency] (*kokuzeichô*) of the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and meet a number

of strict criteria. One of these was the requirement that one–third of the organizations budget came from donations (Pekkanen 2003: 125, 2006: 69–70).

Secondly, the nonprofit sector wanted NPOs to be taxed at a lower tax rate. At that time, there was strong opposition of the Ministry of Finance as well as some parts of the LDP, but the government (a coalition of the LDP, the Kômei and the Conservative Party) stated in December 14th 2000, that the change would be considered soon. Due to the Fiscal Year 2001 Tax Reform a new sub–category of NPO legal persons was created and NPOs could now receive tax–deductible contributions. (Pekkanen 2006: 155–156).

This was followed by the Law No. 49 (Intermediary Legal Person Law), which was announced 2000, enacted in 2001, and enforced from 2002 onward. It created yet another category of NPO legal person. The status of the so called *intermediary NPO legal person* (*chûkan hôjin*) applies to nonprofit organizations that are "*not explicitly in the public interest, such as clubs, alumni associations, and trade and business associations*." Two types of intermediary legal persons exist: the *unlimited liability* and the *limited liability intermediary legal person*, which both have to have two or more employees. Although *intermediary legal persons* have to register (*tôki*), they "*face minimal regulatory involvement with public authorities* […]" (Pekkanen 2006: 70).

In 2002, the Fiscal Year 2001 Tax Reform was amended. Within a short period of time major changes within the Japanese NPO landscape took place. The NPO legal persons which were created after the law of 1998 "*were the first new class of legal persons ever created through indigenous legal changes* […]." This was then followed by another new legal class just three years after the enactment of the NPO Law (Pekkanen 2006: 173). As Pekkanen (2006: 184–185) stated, the changes discussed above "*are part of self–perpetuating changes that will alter the regulatory framework in Japan*." The numbers of NPOs has risen ever since – although, within the last five years, numbers have not increased as drastically as before (for further reference refer to: Graph 2) – and the application and approval process has been simplified over the

course of the following years, making it easier for civil society groups to gain legal status. I will describe the process of becoming an NPO and important changes in the NPO landscape as well as the legal system, which happened in the recent decade, in the following sub–chapter.

2.3.2 Becoming an NPO: Application process, approval, and recent developments

The application process to become a registered NPO has been designed to be rather simple. NPO application packages containing the necessary documents can be downloaded from prefectural government websites or the special website for NPOs by the Cabinet Office of Japan (https://www.npo–homepage.go.jp/). While the law intended to limit bureaucratic discretion, it still seems that administrative guidance by bureaucrats when applying for NPO status is omnipresent. While it is an attempt to help groups navigate through the application process, it also evokes a feeling of a screening process (Pekkanen 2006: 55).

It is possible to register for one or cross–register for more than one out of 20 categories reaching from "*promotion of social education*" and "*social welfare*" – which are the two most popular categories from the point of view of total registrations – to categories like "*consumer protection*" and the "*promotion of rural and intermountain regions*". The total number of NPOs, when counted as registered to only one category, was 51,609 in March 2019[10] (Cabinet Office 2019b). Here the most popular categories – in order of the number of registrations – were categories: 3. *community development*, 4. *tourism*, 2. *promotion of social education*, 5. *promotion of rural and intermountain regions*, and 1. *health, medical treatment, welfare* (for further reference refer to: Table 1).

Due to the fact that an NPO can select numerous categories in its application, the numbers of NPOs registered for each category exceed the total number of NPOs in Japan. Table 2 shows the numbers from the viewpoint of the total number of (multiple) registrations of NPOs to a category. The most registered categories were: 1. *Health, medical*

[10] This number is the same as total number of registrations at the end 2018

treatment welfare; 2. *Promotion of social education*; 13. *Healthy nurturing of children*; 3. *Community development*; and 19. *Administration and organization*. There seems to be a clear trend towards NPO registrations in the area of education and social welfare.

A group or organization which wants to obtain status of an NPO corporation or specified nonprofit corporation is under the jurisdiction of the prefecture where the main office of the group is located. When the required documents have been turned in, the necessary procedures are completed by the jurisdiction office. If the organization fulfills the requirements, the organization is authenticated by the jurisdiction office as an NPO corporation or specified nonprofit corporation. The recognition process which follows the registration is also rather straight forward and is overseen by the responsible prefectural governor or the Cabinet Office, if the NPO has offices in at least two prefectures (Cabinet Office 2017, 2019b; Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2015).

To receive legal status as an NPO the group or organization has to meet the following conditions:

1. The main purpose is to engage in specified nonprofit activities; 2. The generation of profits is not their purpose; 3. Its provisions regarding acquisition or loss of membership are not unreasonable; 4. The number of staff receiving remuneration is less than one third of the total staff number; 5. Religious or political activities are not their main purpose; 6. The recommendation, support, or opposition of a (prospective) political candidate or a person holding a public office are not the purpose of their activities; 7. The group is not a criminal organization or under the control of such an organization; 8. It has at least ten members (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2015).

After meeting these requirements and receiving legal status, the NPO can now own or rent real estate, open bank accounts, and subscribe to necessary services like internet or telephone. Before the NPO Law such contracts were under the names of individuals. Legal status makes it much easier to sign contracts and cooperate in projects with the government or overseas organizations. The group can now operate with a minimum of bureaucratic supervision (Pekkanen 2006: 55).

Tsujinaka (2003: 115) already pointed out in the past that there was evidence that the number of civil society organizations like NPOs "*may increase significantly in number and resources in the decade ahead* […]." He regarded it as evidence of "*increasing pluralization and growing maturity in Japan's civil society, regardless of what happens to its economy*."

After the NPO law was passed in 1998, there was a massive increase of NPOs being certified up to 2015. While in 1998 only 23 NPOs gained certification, it spiked to 1724 NPOs in the following year and more than doubled (3800 NPOs) with the beginning of the new millennium (Graph 2). As of June 2019, 51,589 organizations had attained NPO status and a further 1,107 had qualified as so called "approved NPOs" (Cabinet Office 2019c). This enables donors – as mentioned before – to make contributions to these NPOs and receive tax concessions for their donations (Avenell 2018: 18). Alone in Tokyo there are 9,372 NPOs (until June 2019) which have been officially certified by the government (Cabinet Office 2019a).

Since the enactment of the NPO Law of 1998 and the consequent revision of the tax law, further substantial changes have taken place. In 2010 a simplification of the authorization process for NPOs seeking approval (*nintei*) was implemented and in 2011 a selective system (*sentakusei*) for deductions in the tax system concerning income tax was introduced. The maximum deduction rate (*zeigakukôjo*) is now 50%; e.g. the amount deducted from the income tax in the case of a donation would be the amount of money of the donation minus 2000 yen multiplied by 40%. The individual metropolitan tax for donations, the municipal tax (*jûminzei*) of 10% (administrative division of Japan (*todôfuken*) tax for donations of 4% and local government/metropolitan (*shikuchôson*) tax for donations of 6%) will be deducted. This taken into account, it results in a possible tax deduction of up to 50% (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2016b).

With regards to the public support test, the exceptions for small scale NPOs (*kibo NPO hôjin*) or so called special cases (*tokurei*) concerning the basis for the relative value (*sôtaichi kijun*) of the NPOs income, which has to derive from donations, has been set permanently at one–fifth of the total income of the NPO (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2016a, 2016c, 2017). Concerning the absolute value (*zettaichi kijun*) of the total sum of donations, only donations of 3000 yen (approx. 28 USD/ 25 EUR) or more count toward the public support total. Accordingly, these have to be donated by 100 individuals or more (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2016c), which still "*prohibits the group from having the contribution from a large single donor count toward their public support*" (Pekkanen 2006: 71). So to put it in simple terms, if an NPO wants to receive approval (*nintei*) more than 100 individual donors have to annually contribute 3000 yen (or more) each and the sum of these donations has to surpass one–fifth of the NPOs total income.

While previously the authorization process was carried out by the commissioner of the National Tax Administration, following the legal reform in 2011, as of April 2012 the responsible jurisdictional office (*shokatsuchô*) will oversee the new authorization system (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2017).

The period in which NPOs, which have been approved for the first time (*shokai nintei*), will be judged with regard to their achievements (*jisseki hantei kikan*) has been set to two years. Additionally, a temporary approval system (*kari nintei NPO hôjin seidô*) has been introduced. Following the legal reform in 2016, as of April 2017 temporary approved NPOs (*kari nintei NPO hôjin*) will be referred to as specially certified NPOs (*tokurei nintei NPO hôjin*). Furthermore, to speed up the process of approval, the time period of inspection of the application documents has been reduced from two months to one (Cabinet Office NPO homepage 2016a, 2017).

The legal framework is constantly being adjusted to the NPO sector which has not only been growing in numbers substantially over the last decades but also regarding its significance in supporting the government

in crucial sectors like welfare and education. In the following chapter, I will elaborate on the re–defined partnership between state and civil society. I will present a theoretical framework to better explain the position of the NPO, which is at the center of this dissertation, within the educational system.

3 Theoretical background

For this dissertation, I have developed a theoretical framework to analyze the influence of civil society actors on and in the Japanese education system, especially in the context of NPO–led senior high school career guidance.

The past and current developments in the educational sector and the NPO landscape demand a more comprehensive approach incorporating a number of theory strands from different perspectives. When taken on their own, the theoretical concepts I have chosen do not fully encompass all the different aspects of the current reality. Yet, when combined and supplemented to a certain extent, they enable one to better understand the current developments on the micro–level and put these developments into a broader context within the educational sector and the Japanese civil society.

In order to realize citizens' interests and promote reform, civil society can be seen as a powerful vehicle to facilitate citizens' ambitions. Here one should not forget that, depending on the society and culture, a specific version of civil society has developed, which is unique to the country in question. The development of civil society in Japan has to be viewed in light of historical developments as well as political and economic factors (Ogawa 2014: 60).

In Japan we need to adjust our understanding of civil society, especially concerning the state's involvement. Historically speaking, Japan's civil society can be considered as rather weak. As Ogawa (2014: 60) additionally points out, civil society is often perceived as a product of western culture and in the Japanese context it tends to be portrayed as monolithic, although this image has recently "*come under critical scrutiny from many quarters*" (Ishida and Slater 2010b: 1). Furthermore, Pharr

(2003b: 324) calls Japan an “activist state” in which the government has successfully institutionalized specific sectors of civil society by means of funding and tax treatment.

> *“Perhaps the most striking feature of Japan's civil society over the past century, dating from around 1900, has been the degree to which the state has taken an activist stance toward civic life, monitoring it, penetrating it, and seeking to steer it with a wide range of distinct policy tools targeted by group or sector.” (Pharr 2003a: 325)*

So not only has the control of the state in Japan always been strong, state intervention is rather common and has also led to a symbiotic relationship between civil society and the government (Pharr 2003a: 326).

Different scholars have promoted different ideas regarding the function and influence of civil society, NPOs, and other third sector groups in contemporary Japan. In this dissertation I will draw on four core concepts of social science research in general, and on Japan in particular, in order to develop my conceptual framework, which allows me to interpret the observations I have made during my fieldwork and put them into context.

I will draw on Mary C. Brinton’s (2000) concept of *institutional social capital* (Illustration 1) to explain how the role of the senior high school as an educational institution and provider of a smooth transition into the labor market has developed since the period of high economic growth. Also I will draw on the works of Margarita Estévez–Abe (2003) and Ogawa Akihiro (2009) regarding *state–society partnerships*, *policy collaboration* and *‘NPO–ization’ led by the government,* respectively. Both scholars have a similar take on the governmental involvement in the Japanese civil society and the NPO sector. A combination of their findings will help to paint a more holistic picture of the recent developments in the relationship between state and civil society. Finally, I will use the concept of *nonformal education* by Okano Kaori (2016a) to better categorize the NPO in the center of my dissertation as a provider

of educational content in a locus between institutionalized learning and civic education.

At the end of this chapter I will bring together these different strands for a more comprehensive framework (Illustration 2) to understand how recent developments have led to changes regarding the involvement of NPOs in the educational system and, in particular, senior high school career guidance.

3.1 Institutional social capital: Influence on school–to–work transition

According to Brinton (2000), the school as an institution – especially general senior high schools at academic mid–level – has lost its ability to ensure occupational success for its graduates. The schools have done so due to deteriorating networks and have forfeited their so called *institutional social capital*. In her paper she explores how the Japanese high schools' stock of social capital was a by–product of government labor policy rather than its purpose (297) and I will elaborate on the policy process and its outcome in chapter 7.1. (For a simplified graphical illustration please see: Illustration 1)

Before exploring the concept of institutional social capital, I would like to – without going into too much detail – set a frame of reference on which this theoretical concept is based. When talking about capital in this dissertation, it is not from a strictly economic perspective, but as the social world is a multi–dimensional space, so there exist also different facets or rather types of capital.

According to (Bourdieu 1986: 243) there are three different types of capital.

1. *Economic* capital which is "*immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights;*"

2. *Cultural* capital or better information capital (Bourdieu 1987: 4) which can be converted into economic capital under certain conditions. When institutionalized, this type of capital takes the form of e.g. educational qualifications.

3. *Social* capital which can be seen as social obligations or connections; in other words, it consists of resources based on connections and group membership.

All three types of capital are distributed in the social space and confer strength, power, and consequently profit on their holder (Bourdieu 1987: 4).

According to Bourdieu (1986: 248–249), social capital can be seen as a resource (actual or potential) that is linked to the possession of a durable network of mutual acquaintances. "*These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchange which help to maintain them.*" So some networks are only formed to create and maintain social capital for its members. They are also sometimes socially instituted with a name attached to it, like in the case of a school or university etc. The amount of social capital an individual possesses depends on the size of the network, in other words, the connections the individual can effectively mobilize. Furthermore, it depends on the amount of all three forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social) which each of the people or group members this individual is connected to possess.

Social capital in the job searching process is described in the relevant literature as social ties an individual can use to obtain job information or introductions to employers. Here we have to bear in mind that Granovetter (1973) has shown that acquaintances rather than close friends in an individual's personal network are much more likely to provide the function of informing about or connecting an individual looking for employment with an actual job. Lee and Brinton (1996: 179) distinguish between such social capital in the context of the Korean educational system, which derives from personal social networks to such social capital that individuals access by being member of a certain educational institution i.e. a school or university and its alumni associations.

Brinton (2000: 289–290) has developed the concept of institutional social capital and shown its importance in the labor market as a resource inherent in an institution, which is available to members of this institution.

If students are part of an institutional network through which they can access this institutional social capital, it supplies them with opportunities, they could not obtain from other networks (like family, friends or acquaintances) by means of information or introduction.

She came to the conclusion that Japanese high schools possess such institutional social capital in form of networks with local companies. To be able to make use of this network, the students within the high schools compete with each other for recommendations of the teachers. Students would otherwise have little chances to find employment on their own and therefore are supported by the transition system of the school to find stable employment after graduation. By this logic, institutional social capital has a meritocratic control function because the most ambitious students with the highest academic abilities are recommended for preferable job openings. By sending the best students to the potential employer, the proven relationships (*jisseki kankei*) between companies and school based on mutual trust are in return strengthened. This practice, therefore, also ensures a successful partnership between school and companies in the future. Students benefit from the school's institutional social capital by attending a certain school. So merely due to the membership in the educational institution, they have gained access to, they do not only find employment through the schools network but the school matches each student to an appropriate company and facilitates the transition process into employment. (Brinton 2000: 291).

In this context, class background was and still is a decisive factor for educational attainment and whether one became a white– or blue–collar worker. However, in the past this did not influence whether young graduates gained stable employment and a decent income because during those days this was not only limited to the academic elite (Brinton 2010: 130). Nowadays, the reality when transitioning from school to labor market is rather different.

Through the continuing breakdown of the school–company relationships since the burst of the bubble[11] and the consequential loss of institutional social capital, young people have been robbed of an essential resource for job attainment. The coinciding expansion of the irregular employment, which gave high school students the opportunity to work part–time in the service sector, now leads students into dead–end jobs with limited to no prospects of regular employment (cf. Hara 2005; Honda 2004b, 2005; Kosugi 2004).

The Japanese school–to–work transition system was rooted in the macro–level conditions of the period of high economic growth. When the economic situation changed this system only remained healthy for certain high schools and employers (Brinton 2011: 98–99). Brinton (2000: 297) stresses that "*Japanese high schools as sites of institutional social capital need to be understood in the context of the contemporary work culture, educational system, and economic environment of Japan*." Hori (2016) comes to a similar conclusion and links it to the type of school–to–work transition programs at different types of high schools in different regions of Japan. The development of the Japanese high school graduate labor market over the last decades and its implications on the work–to–school transition programs as described by Hori will be addressed in detail in chapter 7.1.

Brinton and Tang (2010: 230) – whose results are based on data collected in the mid–1990s – have also shown that general senior high schools received few job offers from companies and students had to find employment by themselves. Only the manufacturing industry – as Hori (2016) pointed out – continues to have stable recruitment relationships with high schools. Here vocational senior high schools tend to be the most promising institutions when it comes to upholding the proven relationships (*jisseki kankei*) to employers in postindustrial Japan. I will elaborate on these proven relationships as a central aspect of the transition process from graduates into employment in chapter 7.

[11] During the Japanese asset price bubble from 1986 to 1991 the real estate and stock market prices greatly inflated. This price bubble burst in about late 1991/ early 1992 and was followed by a ten year period of economic stagnation; the so called Lost Decade.

I have come across a similar narrative during my interviews at educational institutions which offered senior high school education with a vocational focus. These institutions were traditionally designed to cater to the needs of the manufacturing industry and still have solid networks with companies to help their students find secure employment after graduation. The findings of my interviews in these schools will be discussed in chapter 7.4.

In this context, industry– or rather sector–specific education and career guidance counseling may serve as means to enhance employment chances, prevent mismatch, and reduce employment under undesirable working conditions. Industry–specific training and connections between companies and schools have ensured a smooth transition into the labor market and a long–term employment perspective with positive outcomes for employees and companies alike in the past and still do so in some school forms under certain circumstances (cf. Hori 2012b, 2016; Oguro 2013, 2014).

Shavit and Mueller (2000:42) have found that vocational training, which gives students occupationally significant skills for labor market entry, serves as a safety net for graduates from a weaker socioeconomic background. While it reduces the risk of unemployment or employment in an undesirable occupation, at the same time, it prevents graduates attending such schools from entering tertiary educational institutes like universities due to the fact that these schools focus less on purely academic education.

This is, again, supported by Hori's (2016) findings, which state that technical high school graduates still have good chances to enter regular employment in prefectures where the manufacturing industry is strong. In metropolitan areas, where the service industry has been growing constantly, students with a high school degree have a much harder time finding stable employment and often end up in irregular employment.

However, this does not solve the contemporary difficulties graduates of (average to low–level) general high schools face. Compared to graduates from vocational high schools, graduates from general senior high schools possess fewer or no vocational skills or other (industry–

specific) specialized knowledge in order to appeal to employers. They also cannot use their school networks for introductions to employers because the schools have little to no proven relationships with companies. In addition, when comparing them to graduates who have studied at institutions that offer higher education, they lack general human capital and are therefore not sufficiently equipped to compete with other, better educated graduates (Brinton 2011: 118). In some cases, opting out of the rigid school–to–work system, made possible by the new economic environment, remains an option (Brinton 2000: 303–304) This, however, is only successful under certain circumstances. It also requires membership in a certain group or network like a school sports team (*bukatsu*) (cf. van Ommen 2015). Again, students have to make use of the institutional social capital of the institution they are attending, even though this might not be by academic performance and subsequent recommendation of the teachers. I will examine these additional transition patterns in chapter 7.5.

The question about the current role of the general senior high school in providing marketable skills for occupational success and the influence of career guidance in the process of occupational attainment remains difficult. Third sector actors with more detailed knowledge about the current developments on and the resulting demands of the labor market might now be in a much better position to teach knowledge and skills for labor market entry. While the number of specialized senior high schools has declined since the middle of the 1970s, there have since then been more high schools with a general academic focus (Graph 4). The latter cater to students who aim at entering a university and their popularity can be considered a development leading up to of the expansion of university education starting around the beginning of the 1980s and peaking around the middle of the 1990s. Due to the decreasing value of a junior high school certificate, from this point onward the number of junior high school students has been declining constantly (Graph 3). During the time of high economic growth there was an abundance of entry–level positions for graduates from (general) senior high schools on the labor market. This group was hit the hardest during

the economic downturn of the following century (Brinton and Tang 2010: 218–220). Due to this, the number of schools with stable networks, which were actually able to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market, started to decline and have put especially average–level general senior high schools at a disadvantage.

Here programs and services provided by NPOs seem like a viable option to enhance students' skills to compete in the labor market. However, I argue that this does not help to mend or strengthen remaining school–company ties or develop new networks for actual job attainment.

3.2 State–society partnerships, policy collaboration, and NPO–ization by the government

Japan has developed "*a rich tradition of civil society*" after the Second World War. The public sphere, comprised of non–state institutions and associations that are vital to support modern democratic participation of citizens, is called *shimin shakai*. Within this broad definition, neighborhood associations are probably the most common and longest surviving Japanese civil society organizations (Ogawa 2014: 52).

Formal as well as informal associations help citizens to connect to each other and produce trust. According to Putnam (2000: 338–339) this can improve governmental effectiveness as well as the quality of democracy. When people come together in associations, they exchange ideas and views which in turn form public opinion. Groups and associations are also a form of social capital; some groups like a parent–teacher association (PTA) or a labor union are organized to a very high degree, others are highly informal like a group of individuals which gather on a regular basis with little to no structure. Yet, both are networks in which reciprocity and gains can develop (Putnam 2001: 41).

When analyzing political economic literature, Estévez–Abe (2003: 155) found that states need reliable partners in society to cooperate in policy making and its implementation. She points out that scholars need to pay more attention to the direct roles that these so called "*intermediate associations"* fulfill and "*the consequent blurring of the distinction between state and society.*" Here the state shapes civil society as well as

civil society shapes the state. Estévez–Abe continues that the pattern of societal organizations combined with the resources and needs of government officials are crucial to understand the direct role of civil society organizations. In the context of social welfare and welfare policy, these state–society partnerships involve the participation of individual citizens as well as groups. Intermediate associations and individual citizens play important roles in creating and implementing social welfare policy.

By also drawing on the findings of (Ogawa 2009, 2014), I argue that a similar process can be observed in the realm of education and educational policy when it comes to career guidance and post–graduation trajectories of students. However, according to my findings, the level of government involvement and bureaucratic discretion seem to be much smaller than described by Ogawa or Estévez–Abe.

The state forms a partnership with an intermediate association reaching from participatory civic groups and NPOs etc. to quasigovernmental organizations created by the state outside the states formal structure. Because of the strict regulations and level of bureaucracy involved, these partners often seem like governmental agencies. On the one hand, the government or rather the ministry in charge of the process decides whether an organization gains NPO status, on the other hand, these organizations then act as subcontractors of government services and cannot be regarded as independent. So in the end, bureaucrats decide whether an organization qualifies as serving the public interest or not. Even though the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (*tokutei hieiri katsudô sokushin hô*) (NPO Law) made the process of becoming an NPO easier, the bureaucratic discretion of the ministry that has jurisdiction over the NPOs activity is still high.

While Article 21 of the Japanese constitution guarantees freedom of assembly and association, it does not guarantee legal status to any specific group. Here the NPO Law, which came into effect in December 1998, and reforms in the 2000s, people could, from 2008 onward, set up general incorporated associations (*ippan shadan hôjin*) and general

incorporated foundations (*ippan zaidan hôjin*)[12], which had a lasting effect on Japans civil society landscape (Ogawa 2014: 52).

Bureaucrats depend on the resources of civil society to implement policies. Here the associations the state has formed partnerships with provide public services as subcontractors of the government and implement the policy in a cost efficient way. When the government works together with civil society groups which have attained NPO status, it conveys an image of political neutrality. At the same time, these associations gather information about society and monitor compliance for the government. Through their involvement, they help to legitimate activities of the bureaucrats because these groups represent civil society in the whole process (Estévez–Abe 2003: 157).

According to Ogawa (2009: 117), the collaboration between prefectural or local governments and NPOs in policy making, called *kyôdô*, has been a successful way to facilitate effective policy implementation and cost–cutting for the government at the same time. It is also regarded as a development where citizens actively involve themselves in public affairs and enhance the resources, skills, and knowledge of their community members. It seems that local governments are now ahead of the central government when it comes to reforms. NPOs and other third–sector organizations – promoted by the local government – now offer specific services in place of the governmental programs or facilities.

After having formed such state society partnerships, it is a difficult to break them up. When a group has gained NPO status, the disbanding of such a public interest organization is highly regulated. In case they were to dissolve, all assets have to be turned over to the government.

[12] Originally only two types of legal interest bodies were legalized under the Japaese Civil Code from 1986: the incorporated association and the incorporated foundation. Yet, after the reforms one could just register at the Legal Affairs Bureau (hômukyoku), permission by local or central government was not necessary anymore. For both it was later possible to obtain the status of either public interest incorporated association (kôeki shadan hôjin) or public interest incorporated foundation (kôeki zaidan hôjin) respectively for a more favorable tax treatment. The well–known parent–teacher–association (PTA) is, after applying for the new status in February 2013, such a public interest incorporated association since April 2013 (Ogawa 2014: 52–53; PTA Japan homepage: http://www.nippon–pta.or.jp/index.html).

Not only these strict regulations but also the "[b]*ureaurcatic discretion over the granting of legal status to groups makes the Japanese nonprofit sector appear quasigovernmental*." (Estévez–Abe 2003: 156–157)

According to Article 89 of the Japanese Constitution the government is not allowed to channel public funds to private charitable, welfare, or educational organization.

> *„Article 89. No public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use, benefit or maintenance of any religious institution or association, or for any charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority." (Japanese Law Translation, Ministry of Justice 1946)* [13]

To circumvent this, the so called community chest (*kyôdô bokin*), which allocated private funds to charitable activities, was put into place. Although welfare is centralized under the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (henceforth called MHLW), it relies on local governments to implement nationally determined welfare policies and provide according services. The local governments establishes public facilities and subsidize private organization, which then provide the actual welfare services. Because these private welfare providers are paid for with public funds, they have to be licensed as a social welfare corporation, which is a type of public interest nonprofit organization. To get licensed, applicants have to donate assets, for example in form of real estate, to the social welfare corporation they aim to create. They need to prove that they have prior agreements with the local government in question where they want to provide welfare services. Hence, the decision of the local government to use a specific group for certain services secures the social welfare corporation status of said group. When they then work as a subcontractor for local government, the groups have to follow detailed regulations in order to receive future subsidies and government payments. "*In short, for*

[13]第八十九条　公金その他の公の財産は、宗教上の組織若しくは団体の使用、便益若しくは維持のため、又は公の支配に属しない慈善、教育若しくは博愛の事業に対し、これを支出し、又はその利用に供してはならない。

most of the post war period local governments decided who participated in the policy process and who subcontracted public services." (Estévez–Abe 2003: 159–160)

Intermediate associations in Japan directly represent societal views in policy making and help implement the resulting policies. The government establishes and strengthens organizations and entrusts them with the provision of services as partners. While Estévez–Abe (2003: 168–170) cites many arguments that point out that government effectiveness and economic performance are enhanced by the involvement of intermediate associations, in the public policy process for the realm of welfare she cannot conclude that the direct participation of civil society actors always creates positive results due to the vested interest of the actors involved.

The demographic change poses challenges to the elderly care system with rising demands for cost efficient solutions. The supply of cheaper care and effective prevention measures in a non–medical context, which can be provided by civil society actors, increases the overall supply of services. In addition, the actors' expertise would also benefit the policymakers' knowledge. Estévez–Abe stresses that one should not only focus on civil society, but also on the bureaucratic framework which allows the formation of such society–state partnerships, making some organizations almost equal partners to the government while others, which are for example not granted NPO–status or chosen for a partnership, are not included in the policy making process at all (Estévez–Abe 2003: 170–172).

As mentioned in chapter 3.1, educational institutions, especially senior high schools, were the sole providers of a comprehensive education, skill sets which can be used in the labor market, and a secure transition into a life–long occupation. For decades teachers provided information about job openings, oversaw the screening process prior to application, and facilitated the transition into a secure position in the labor market. By many they are still considered to fulfill this role without outside interference. In recent years, they have – at least to some extend – lost the ability to fulfill this function.

While policies, which target vocational education to increase the employability of graduates, can be easily implemented by the teachers in the concerning educational institutions, the average general high school is struggling. Broad programs like the fundamental competencies for working persons (henceforth called FCWP) (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009) aim at increasing the skill set and employability of the average senior high school student. They have, for example, been implemented to a certain extent by means of the new subject and textbook “people and society” (*ningen to shakai*) (for more details see chapter 7.2). The same applies to the program of the MEXT to improve career education at senior high school level in order to prepare students to compete on a labor market with diversifying and fluid forms of labor and employment patterns, and raise young people with “*zest for living*” (*ikiru chikara*) (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2011b). However, teachers are often not capable of translating this into concrete measures or programs on the micro–level. While innovative teaching methods are to be incorporated in the curriculum, teachers seem neither to have the means nor the training to implement these broad programs effectively. Around the beginning of this decade, schools have gradually started to make more use of the services provided by third–sector organizations like NPOs to bridge the widening gap between educational content and labor market reality.

In numerous cases, private institutions as well as actors thought to be outside of the formal educational context (NPO’s etc.) have started to provide supplementary services to schools. Sometimes they have even taken over basic functions which the schools can – due to staff shortages, a time demanding curriculum, and budget cuts – no longer (fully) provide for their students.

Almost half of all free schools, private institutions which support students who are truant (*futôkô*), in Tokyo are under NPO leadership (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015c: 4). I will describe a similar case of an NPO that offers supplementary education for children with a weak socioeconomic background in chapter

6 to give yet another example of civil society actors tackling contemporary shortcomings in the educational system.

In the context of this dissertation, I will examine the provision of career guidance lessons at a senior high school level by an NPO, which was founded outside the context of formal schooling and without prior encouragement or support of the government. The NPO in question was founded after realizing these shortcomings in the current educational system in a grassroots fashion.

According to Ogawa (2009: 53), NPOs have really come into the focus of the attention in the early 2000s and can be roughly divided into two categories. First, so called “GoNPO” (an abbreviation for government–led NPO), which function it is to provide services – amongst others – in the area of social welfare and life–long education, or act as subcontractors of local governments. The second category are so called “social enterprises” (*shakai kigyô*), which act parallel to the government. The NPO is in this case seen as a vehicle facilitating social entrepreneurship within the local community. This kind of social engagement needs strong initiative in order to define and solve problems on an independent level. Here the civil society actor delivers its services directly to the end user.

To distinguish between the multitude of NPOs with different or overlapping functions, aims, and program content, we need to take a closer look at GoNPOs, which are classified as one of the most prevalent in the Japanese civil society. The government has a leading role in establishing and operating such NPOs. Ogawa views them – just like Estévez–Abe – as sub–contractors for the Japanese government, which enable them to provide requested social services at a fraction of the costs via the mobilization of community volunteers (Ogawa 2014: 54). He comes to the conclusion that NPOs are to a large degree co–opted by the state due to their dependence on state funding. Because of the necessity of state funding, the state fails to contribute to social diversity or increased pluralism and also reduces the possibility of critical social and political participation (Ogawa 2009: 143). Whether or to what extent

this is the case with the NPO at the center of this dissertation will be discussed in chapter 8.

Diversity and pluralism are a prerequisite for a thriving civil society in which the buzzword “new public commons” gained popularity since the late 2000s, especially under the short time period in which Hatoyama Yukio (DPJ) and after him Kan Naoto (DPJ) were Prime Minister of Japan. Their governments created a positive environment for the establishment of social enterprises in Japan. Boundaries of moral and social responsibility between the state and the individual were redefined and a greater emphasis was put on the virtues of public self–help and the necessity to solve social problems independently. During the brief time of the DPJ–led government, an alliance of organizations which led to a powerful social movement brought attention to issues of income inequality and poverty in Japan. This was one factor which enabled the DPJ to win the election but when in power, they failed to address this subject in an adequate fashion. After a failed attempt in 2011 by Prime Minister Kan to position the DPJ towards the gradual phasing out of nuclear energy, the LDP achieved a major electoral victory in 2012. While civil society clearly addressed political issues like nuclear power and the rising inequality in Japan, it did not translate into change in the political arena and policy outcomes (Ogawa 2014: 61).

About a decade earlier, during the two year period (1998–2000) Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo (LDP) was in office, the policy rational for the *new public commons* was developed by the Commission on Japan’s Goals in the 21st Century (*21 seiki nihon no kôsô kondankai*). The importance of giving power to individuals and creating a framework to build a public sphere was emphasized in it. By empowering individuals and through the creation of a new public sphere responsibilities could not be helped to shift from the state to the civil society. This concept of the *new public commons* could also be seen in the discussions surrounding the revision of the Fundamental Law of Education in the first half of the 2000s (Ogawa 2014: 55–56).

Depending on the political climate, some groups which promote state ideology are supported while others are marginalized for their

critical or independent stance. Ogawa (2014: 61–62) picks up on this, reiterating that the state seeks to dominate civil society and has succeeded in doing so with NPOs. This leaves neighborhood associations, public interest legal bodies, and NPOs (GoNPO and social enterprise) as organizations all supported by and operate under what Pharr (2003a) calls the *activist state*. Especially NPOs have been the key form of agency in supporting the activist state and furthering Japans neoliberal agenda in promoting a small government. It has become apparent since Prime Minister Koizumi (LDP, 2001–2006) in the early 2000s. According to Okada (2002: 436–437), Koizumi was eager to "*reform with no sacred cows*" (*seiiki naki kaikaku*) and his approach to reform the educational system was a combination of neo–conservative and neo–liberal ideologies. His aim was to enhance the self–awareness and the pride of Japanese youth and create a system which teaches them skills and knowledge to rebuild Japan. He also wanted to tackle problems (e.g. bullying and truancy) that have been plaguing the Japanese education system for decades. This bears close resemblance to Prime Minister Nakasone Yashuhiro's Ad Hoc Council on Education in 1984, which led to the transition of the two pillared system of school education and social education in Japan into a system with lifelong learning as its foundation (Hood 2001: 145–148; Ogawa 2009: 73)

In 2003, during Koizumi's time in office, the Japanese government received the proposal to revise the Fundamental Law of Education[14] (*kyôiku kihon hô*). In it the term *new public* (*atarashii kôkyô*) was introduced for the first time. With this new or rather redefined terminology volunteer subjectivity has been institutionalized; it is a sphere in which people can voluntarily participate to support this *new public* and promote a better society through solidarity and good citizenship. Occurring problems are now to be addressed spontaneously by citizens themselves in order to solve them without waiting for the government to provide a solution (Ogawa 2009: 105–107). Yet, Ogawa (2009: 143) criticizes that

[14] Basic Act on Education is the current English translation since its revision in 2006

"*the government is now rushing to cut costs under the name of structural reform.*"

When looking at the current literature on civic engagement and the activities of the NPO in the educational system, I have observed during my fieldwork that some central services (career guidance, extra–curricular/sport activities, supported learning, special needs education etc.), which were the responsibility of the local government or educational institutions, now often fall into the competences of the civil society organizations. It seems the public's relationship with the government has been redefined. Ordinary citizens have brought forth socially relevant businesses in order to solve prevalent or newly emerged social problems efficiently and quickly. Especially in the educational sector we can see this development, which poses the question of a more complex framework encompassing new forms of education and the level of institutionalization.

3.3 Nonformal education: An alternative locus of education

According to Okano (2016b: 1), *nonformal education* refers to "*intentional teaching and learning activities that occur outside formal schooling*." To distinguish this form of education, she provides two further definitions for other types of education. *Formal education* is mainstream education with content approved by the government with the aim to provide formal academic qualifications. This intentional, organized learning, which is provided in educational institutions (schools etc.), is facilitated by teachers who require a qualification. This qualification is recognized – and in most cases provided – by the government. It has clear objectives which are, most of the time, directed at a specific age group. The resulting qualifications for the graduates of educational institutions are a prerequisite for advancement into higher education or transition into the labor market. By this logic, the workplace is not a locus where formal education is taking place. *Informal education*, as the term might suggest, is individual, unsystematic learning, which a person can gain through self–study and experience on an every–day basis outside any strict institutional context. It can take place at home, at work, or in a community.

Simple experience, where the degree of intention or awareness about the learning process might vary, also falls under this category. Now, *nonformal education* is located between these two other modes of learning and is therefore flexible "*to suit local specificities and periods in time*"(Okano 2016b: 4–5).

In the context of my dissertation, this flexibility is important because it is debatable whether career guidance classes (or rather workshops) run by an NPO can actually be considered to completely fall in the broad but yet not sufficiently differentiated category of *nonformal education*. For one, workshops run by the NPO are carried out within the formal context of the school; within the school building and during class time. Yet, content is taught, so to speak, by professionals from outside the traditional education system with a teaching method that is not controlled by the school.

According to Okano (2016b: 4), there exists no international consensus regarding the operational definition of *nonformal education* and it is often used together with other terms like "lifelong learning for adults" and "alternative education for school–age students". In various studies it is differentiated from formal education by using terms like "complementary", "alternative", "community education", or "adult education". All these categories fall inside a continuum which stretches from informal education on the one side to formal education on the other, leaving a flexible locus between these two for nonformal education. It remains to be said that the research corpus on formal education is greater than the one on *nonformal education*, suggesting a lower value attached to the latter.

Japanese scholars use the same terminology and have contributed to the Japanese language discourse with e.g. a focus on Japanese language education (Higuchi 2004; Nishiguchi 2008; Tomiyama 2009; Tsuzuki 2001; Watanabe 2007; Yonose 2016), however, as Okano (2016b: 6–8) points out, English language publications about nonformal education in Japan remain scanty. One book, which linked civil society and *nonformal education* in the form of lifelong learning for the elderly, is Odawa's (2009) "*The failure of civil society? The third sector and the state*

in contemporary Japan" on which I have elaborated in the previous sub–chapter and numerous contributions to Okano's (2016a) edited volume, which is at the center of this sub–chapter.

In recent years, the significance of nonformal education has been acknowledged by formal education and the relationship to mainstream schooling has become closer. This development, according to Okano (2016b: 2), has been driven by increasing demands for and on education due to the ageing population and globalization. The nonformal education sector has been assisted indirectly by educational policy in Japan since the 1990s. With the progressing of civil society, local groups like NPOs and NGOs have started to provide nonformal education. As a result to the rising demand for education – reaching from young children to senior citizens – the private sector has also been involved in the provision of nonformal education. Here the internet, as the most prominent of the new communication technologies, has had a decisive effect on the delivery of nonformal education (Okano 2016b: 6).

While some sort of knowledge and skills are undeniably taught to students by means of nonformal education, the degree of usefulness of them and the facilitation of networks to actually obtain stable employment remain uncertain. However, the utilization of third party actors seems to be a problem–focused and cost–efficient approach, which go along well with recent governments programs mentioned earlier in this sub–chapter.

3.4 Combined theoretical framework for NPO–led career guidance in Japan

Total autonomy from the government can be considered as relatively rare even among major civic groups in countries with strong civil societies (Pharr 2003b: 318). Boundaries of civil society in Japan have been defined by the central government for the last decades, especially in the context of the provision of social services (Schwartz 2003: 19). This trend can still be observed today, although more exceptions to the rule have surfaced in the educational sector as I will describe in more detail throughout this dissertation.

State–society partnerships are not singular to Japan. Martin et al. (1999) have shown in their study about collaborative partnerships between schools and parents in Scotland that such projects, which gives individual actors a larger role in activities the government once provided for, have positive outcomes for the community and all actors involved. Yet, in Japan the level of governmental involvement, especially on a local level, seems to have grown substantially over the last decade.

On the one hand, this gives nonprofit organizations etc. more agency to provide activities and services in order ensure the public interest. On the other hand, the government can provide resources to help the organizations, which might fail if it were not for such joint projects, to further develop.

It seems that as Martin et al. (1999: 74) pointed out for the case of Scotland, in Japan – now more than ever – "*education needs communities as much as communities need education*."

In Japan it certainly appears that senior high schools have started to reach out to civil society and the community to a larger extent. Throughout metropolitan senior high schools numerous programs to enhance the connection of schools to society (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2011c: 2, 2016e), improve career guidance with NPO support (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2013b: 2–5, 2015c: 4), or improve collaboration between schools, companies, universities with the support of NPOs (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2010b: 6–7) have been developed and implemented. This happened not only to improve academic ability but to provide the students with specialized knowledge and skills which cannot be taught in a standard curriculum. I will elaborate on this in chapter 5 when I describe in detail the activities of the NPO at the center of this dissertation and chapter 7 in which I will talk about career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo. On a less institutionalized level, we can already see that *nonformal education* has expanded in numerous areas of education (cf. Nakamatsu 2016; Tsuda 2016).

With regards to supplementary education, private institutions could be an alternative to children from families with a strong financial

background. It goes without saying that families with less means are more restricted in their choices. While the average involvement of parents in their children's education in Japan is comparatively high, there is a strong discrepancy according to socioeconomic background of the student and ranking of the school in question. In the case of Martin et al. (1999) the key finding was that collaborations are only successful if the institutional values and purposes can be reconciled while each partner contributes their distinctive skill. In such a collaboration each partner brings their own tradition to community education, which of course limits them concerning their contribution to the whole; each partner brings strengths as well as limitations. The most effective partnerships were those committed to – amongst others – inclusiveness, the recognition of social as well as academic goals, and active citizenship.

In order to foster an effective community education diverse institutions, agencies, and services have to come together, contributing their distinct knowledge and skill sets in order to achieve such goals. In this context, schools face statutory constraints which limit them in their contribution. Yet, to fulfill the functions which are expected of them, they have to work together collaboratively (Martin et al. 1999: 72–73). In Japan one might observe emphasis to be put on academic achievements and a lack of the so called "social component". In the schools themselves – as many teachers disclosed to me during my fieldwork – there seems to be neither enough time nor leeway to deviate from the strict curriculum, even under the light of recent reforms towards a more flexible curriculum and innovative teaching methods.

The NPO in the center of this dissertation was founded spontaneously and as a response to shortcomings in the Japanese education system. The initial development could be considered bottom–up yet the current educational content, which is provided by the NPO, covers almost all the areas the MEXT wishes it to cover (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2011b). The workshops offered by the NPO and content taught are heavily based on programs developed by the MEXT and METI, which were implemented –as mentioned before – in the school curriculum by means of e.g. the

new class “people and society”. Although the content was not prerequisite for the governmental acknowledgement, according to the founders of the NPO it somewhat simplified the process of gaining legal status. Ogawa (2009) describes similar tendencies in his book.

In an Era with a complex society, new social problems and diversifying needs of citizens, the government seems to struggle to solve problems and provide services that meet the demand of the citizens. Here NPOs are a cost–efficient alternative to meet the citizens’ needs (Estévez–Abe 2003: 157; Ogawa 2009: 117, 2014: 54) on a problem oriented basis while NPO members and volunteers already possess skill sets to solve a variety of social problems. Single issue groups appear to be much faster in addressing problems shortly after they occur. During my fieldwork I have come across individuals who founded NPOs after prior involvement with a certain problem. They already possessed networks and – in many cases – detailed knowledge and experience to tackle the issue. This benefits the user of resulting services and achieves lower costs for the government.

After achieving NPO status civil society organizations can form collaborative partnerships with the government and other private sector companies as equal partners. However, aims and values have to be consolidated in order to work together successfully towards a common goal.

Unlike the government–led NPO which provides life–long learning opportunities in a community described by Ogawa (2009), the NPO in the center of this dissertation was not a project which was prepared and led by the government. They were founded spontaneous on a grass–root level and almost completely stayed away from government interference. They are not like “*new partnership organizations*” which are “*primarily intended to form collaborative relationships with the government,* […]*”* as Ogawa (2009: 143) tends to depict NPOs in his publication.

We can safely assume that the NPO landscape has changed even further in the last decade since Ogawa (2009) has published his book and the relationship between the government and the civil society has become much more complex. This leads in turn to developments on both

sides to adapt to the changing situation creating more opportunities to tackle emerging social issues, which the government cannot singlehandedly solve. In the case study at the center of this dissertation, I will show that civil society actors provides an innovative way of taping into a sheer limitless resource of skills, knowledge, experience, and networks, which educational institutions can access to overcome their shortcomings.

4 Methodological approach

In my study I have predominantly used qualitative research methods to illuminate current influence of NPOs on the career guidance programs in metropolitan general senior high schools. To complement my collected data, I made use of various quantitative data sources from the MEXT, TMBE, and the relevant research literature in Japanese and English language.

It is the aim of qualitative research to analyze and understand an empirical phenomenon with all its specific structures and dynamics and is especially valuable for explorative research (Johnson and Christensen 2004: 47). To approach the empirical phenomenon open and unbiased I chose grounded theory as a mode of operation due to its micro–sociological perspective. In its classical form (cf. Glaser 1992, 1998; Glaser and Strauss 1967), the particular focus of grounded theory lies on individuals, relationship between individuals, their actions in groups, and the larger social setting.

To analyze the individual and the social reality, one has to take the empirical findings to a higher level of abstraction to develop hypotheses and/or middle–ranged theories which are empirically grounded. It is necessary for the researchers to combine empirical facts with existing theoretical knowledge (Peters 2014: 6).

For the creation of theories the type or number of cases is negligible. To show a general conceptual category or characteristic a single case can often suffice. When generating theories, the researcher does not need to know the concrete situation or social setting better than the

individual he or she is observing. His or her task is to generate general categories and properties for general and specific situations and problems (Glaser and Strauss 2010: 47–48). To further systematize this method, all statements about events concerning the field of study are perceived as data. All topics, issues, and events are as much data as the statement of a laymen (Glaser and Strauss 2010: 267). Thus, a narrative in an interview or an informal conversation, for example, often points at a much broader underlying concept.

The research design should be tailored to the particular research project and its research questions (Strauss et al. 1998: 32–33). In this context, grounded theory is especially useful when conducting research in a foreign language (Peters 2014: 7), yet is often dismissed by educational researchers due to the fact that the literature review is delayed until the end of the analysis to avoid contamination (Thornberg 2012: 243). According to Dey (2003: 229), it is not advisable to leave ideas and values implicit and pretend that they do not exist, they should rather be made explicit from the start. A *tabula rasa*[15] approach, as he calls it, leaves the researcher prone to many prejudices and preconceptions during the analysis of the data. Here Thornberg's (2012) approach essentially allows the researcher to use broad conceptual frameworks, while avoiding empirically oriented theory which would generate direct implications on the conduction of the fieldwork. I will elaborate on this in the following sub–chapter.

4.1 Informed grounded theory

Robert Thornberg (2012: 249) has built on the constructivists branch of grounded theory (cf. Charmaz 2006; Strauss and Corbin 1998) and developed this into what he calls *informed grounded theory*. It refers to the product of the research process and the research process itself. Both – process and product – are grounded in data collected by grounded theory methods and, at the same time, *informed* by established theoretical frameworks and related research literature.

[15] Latin for "blank slate"

He contrasts his approach from the classical grounded theory (cf. Glaser 1992, 1998; Glaser and Strauss 1967) and aligns it with the constructivists tradition of grounded theory (cf. Charmaz 2006; Strauss and Corbin 1998). The researcher is thus able to use already existing theories and findings by other researchers in the concerned field of study in a flexible and creative manner. Instead of seeing existing literature as a threat to objectivity, it can be seen as a possible source of inspiration, which also applies to the logic of abduction.

Abduction refers to a selective and creative process which has at its center the careful investigation of how far collected data agrees with theories or hypothesis as well as the possible necessity of having to modify said theories and hypotheses. The researcher "*goes beyond data as well as pre–existing theory or theories.*" Thornberg's key argument is that the researcher "*has to accept the impossibility of pure induction*" and make use of "*the analytical power of the constant interplay between induction […] and abduction"* (Thornberg 2012: 247–248).

Thornberg (2012: 243–245) sees in *informed grounded theory* not a completely new version of grounded theory but a possibility to add literature review strategies to an already existing branch of grounded theory. This enables the researchers to situate their study and their findings in the current scholarly discourse but also contribute to it by extending existing theories, redefine concepts, or challenge dominant paradigms (255).

> *"Informed GT [grounded theory] is not about focusing data into pre–existing concepts and theories nor replicating constant comparison and systematic coding with prejudiced and insensitive theoretical interpretation of data." (Thornberg 2012: 249)*

Accordingly, he suggests the following seven data sensitizing principles (Thornberg 2012: 250–255):

1. *Theoretical agnosticism*, after the definition of Henwood and Pidgeon (2003: 138) can be seen as a critical stance of the researcher to pre–existing theories and research findings throughout his or her research

project. It is, therefore, imperative to work cumulative and relate one's work to or build on earlier work, yet not be uncritical of it.

> *"The trick in theoretical agnosticism is to treat all extant theories and concepts that one already knows or might encounter during the pre–study or on–going literature review as provisional, disputable and modifiable conceptual proposals" (Thornberg 2012: 250)*

By doing so, important or potentially relevant data is being taken into account while providing a general sense of reference and guidelines in the specific setting of one's research.

2. *Theoretical pluralism* gives the researcher flexibility when choosing among existing concepts and ideas. As Dey (2003: 229) suggests, it is about "*keeping an open mind*" and accepting different explanations to a phenomenon. The view of the researcher should not be constrained by different theoretical perspectives towards the collected data. On the contrary, it should "*keep the researcher's eyes open to all kind of observations and aspects*."

When considering or comparing extant theories, it promotes a "*critical stance toward each of them and thus remain theoretically agnostic during the analysis*" (Thornberg 2012: 250).

To avoid being constrained in one theoretical perspective, *theoretical pluralism* leads to a critical and creative confrontation between different theoretical perspectives when exploring and interpreting data. This way, existing theories and concepts can be applied according to their usefulness to the study at hand and are not reduced to their epistemological origins. As with abduction, the researcher is encouraged to modify or elaborate on existing theoretical concepts if it is in line with pragmatism and promises better utility with regard to the study (Thornberg 2012: 251).

3. The *theoretical sampling of literature* in a way contradicts the classical approach of grounded theory. The classical form delays the literature review until the end of a study to ensure objectivity in the field

as well as not wasting resources when reading wrong literature (cf. Glaser and Strauss 1967).

As defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967: 45), *theoretical sampling* is the process of collecting data in order to generate theory. The researcher collects, codes, and analyses the data and subsequently makes a decision about further necessary data and its location. This results in the developing of theory as the data emerges.

Thornberg (2012: 251–252) suggests to apply this principal of *theoretical sampling* to the researchers ongoing literature review in order to develop a higher sensitivity to data as well as elaborate themes, concepts, and ideas constructed by the researcher. Reading literature guided by the codes, concepts, and ideas that emerge during data collection offers new insights into the issue at hand. Thornberg does not agree with the concept of entering the field with no knowledge about existing research and literature, but stresses that "*the researcher should investigate the prior knowledge in the substantive field to enhance his or her theoretical sensitivity as well as the potential of the study to relate and contribute to this pre–existing knowledge*." Literature with more empirical description content might prove more useful in earlier stages of the research project, while more abstract or conceptualized content might be more relevant in a later stage.

Here the concept of *theoretical saturation*, when the collection of fresh data no longer inspires new theoretical insights or reveals new properties of the central theoretical categories, proves useful to find a natural stopping point in the theoretical sampling of literature (Charmaz 2006: 113).

4. By *staying grounded*, the central importance of collected data and not of literature enters the focus of the researcher. All codes, concepts, or theoretical ideas have to be grounded in the data by means of grounded theory methods. Although prior knowledge of the ongoing discourse as well as general knowledge of theories and theoretical coding families cannot be denied, during data collection and analysis the researcher has to "*constantly switch between the active use of prior*

knowledge as analytical tools and the mentally striving to put […] *prior knowledge aside in* [the] *exploration of data* […]" (Thornberg 2012: 252).

In order to include existing theoretical concepts and findings from existing literature into grounded theory, Thornberg refers to Strauss and Corbin's (1998: 43–46) advice when working with grounded theory as a guideline. According to them, it is necessary to think comparatively while at the same time obtain multiple viewpoints. Data gathering on the same event or phenomenon in different ways is imperative and it occasionally becomes necessary to investigate assumptions and hypotheses to see whether they are in accord with collected data. In that situation, it is often advisable to step back and re–evaluate one's conceptions about the perceived reality and remain skeptical regarding all categories, hypotheses, and theoretical explanations, which were constructed or used provisionally.

5. *Theoretical playfulness*, according to Charmaz (2006: 136), should help researchers to deviate from the notion to see theory construction as a mechanical process. Openness to unexpected events and results expands the researchers view on a studied phenomenon and consequently gives way to more theoretical possibilities.

Elaborating on this, Thornberg (2012: 253–254) suggests that researchers should make use of existing theories and concepts in new, creative, and innovative ways. He points out that in *theoretical agnosticism* and *theoretic pluralism* there is apt room for this playfulness. By not just recycling existing theories, this method promotes flexibility and innovative ideas "*as well as counteracting uncreative, forcing, and mechanically applications of pre–existing knowledge*." *Informed grounded theory*, when constructed by the researcher, will extend, elaborate, and/or challenge extant theories or concepts, maybe even inspire their revision.

6. By *memoing extant knowledge associations*, "*the researcher develops ideas, conceptualizes data and makes analytical conversation with him– or herself about the data and the research*." Memo writing and documentation of how one connects them with the collected data or other memos is imperative in order to use it in the ongoing process of

comparison, coding, and theoretical sampling in grounded theory. One has to keep other pre–existing concepts in mind as means of enhancing flexibility, modifying ideas, and using them as a heuristic tool (Thornberg 2012: 254).

7. *Constant reflexivity* is important in this context because researchers use themselves as the main instrument of data collection and analysis. According to Thornberg (2012: 254), it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of prior knowledge and understanding of pre–existing theoretical concepts and thus embrace constant reflexivity "*instead of denying prior knowledge, perspective and privileges, and pretending to be without preconceptions and theoretical influences*" (cf. Charmaz 2006). By taking field notes and writing memos researchers interact with their own concepts and reflect on their construction as well as monitors their use of extant literature and pre–existing theoretical concepts.

4.1.1 Informed grounded theory in educational research

In the field of educational research grounded theory has still much to contribute (Thornberg 2012: 255). I am using Thornberg's informed grounded theory in my study and dissertation as a means to address the analytical relationship between the literature and my data collected by a qualitative research approach. During my study, I had to be aware of my theoretical assumptions and prior knowledge and consequently took advantage of pre–existing research and theoretical concepts in order to enhance my own theoretical sensitivity. As with classical grounded theory, I remained free, open, and data sensitive while avoiding to force pre–existing theories, concepts or assumptions into my analysis (cf. Thornberg 2012: 255).

When grounded theory methodology is applied "*data collection and analysis should be iterative*." The data collected in the first round should be analyzed and followed by a subsequent round of data collection. This then has to be based on the results of this first analysis. By following this

procedure, it "*leads to the theoretical sampling of interviews and contributes to the theoretical saturation of the concept*" (Peters 2014: 7).

However, *"[…] qualitative research is frequently considered weak on the 'generalizing across the populations' form of population validity […], and on ecological validity (i.e. generalizing across settings), and temporal validity (i.e. generalizing across time)"* (Johnson and Christensen 2004: 256). To make up for this weakness and put the collected quantitative data in a broader context, I supplemented my collected data with quantitative data and findings from pre–existing studies to confirm my observations and interpretations.

Also, data and method triangulation seemed in this context the adequate choice in order to see whether the information obtained from my different data sources are in agreement. The former refers to the use of multiple data sources using one single method (i.e. interviewing multiple actors with the same method). In the latter, the concept of methods can be used quite broadly and refers to different research methods (i.e. the combination of semi–structured interviews and participant observations) (Flick 2011: 36–38, 2011; Johnson and Christensen 2004: 254–255).

> *"The logic is to combine different methods that have nonoverlapping weaknesses and strengths. The weaknesses (and strengths) of one method will tend to be different from those of a different method, which means that when you combine two or more methods, you will have better evidence." (Johnson and Christensen 2004: 254)*

By collecting rich information gathered from different people at different times and different locations, the researcher is able to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that is under investigation. (Johnson and Christensen 2004: 254–255).

My collected empirical data consists of three pillars:

1. Semi–structured Interviews with principals, vice–principals, and career guidance teachers at senior high schools and colleges of technology;

2. Participant observation at NPO–led career guidance events at metropolitan general senior high schools in Tokyo;
3. Semi–structured Interviews with the founders of the NPO and staff members, who conduct career guidance events at metropolitan general senior high schools in Tokyo.

In the course of this chapter, I will describe my research methods in the field as chronologically as possible.

My main focus was on the career guidance programs of metropolitan senior high schools and NPO–led career guidance workshops at those schools. To gain insights in the educational reality of career guidance at the senior high school level, I Interviewed principals and teachers of institutions that offer senior high school education. To gain further insights on the influence of NPOs on career guidance, I conducted participant observation during NPO–led career guidance workshops at various general senior high schools. While my initial research plan only contained interviews at senior high schools, my participant observation soon overlapped with subsequent interviews with NPO members and interviews at schools. At this point, I used the results from the ongoing analysis of already collected data to enhance my subsequent data collection in order to produce richer and more refined data.

It remains to be said that the dissertation at hand is a multilingual dissertation. The language during the interviews and participant observation was Japanese. Collected data from the schools and NPO during my fieldworks was also in Japanese language. The relevant research literature is largely in English or Japanese language with the exception of some German publications. While the dissertation is written in English language, the mother tongue of the author is German.

4.2 Research aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to provide detailed micro–level data on career guidance and NPO–led career guidance events at metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo. To complement my collected data I examined

policies of the MEXT and METI, the resulting programs of the TMBE with regard to career guidance and labor market entry of high school graduates, and the educational reality at the schools themselves. In this dissertation, I will analyze the past and current role of career guidance, its recent development, and the consequences of the involvement of NPOs at metropolitan general senior high school in Tokyo.

In the course of my fieldwork and my first data analysis, the following four research question emerged and guided my inquiry, the subsequent analysis of my collected data, and my continued review of the academic literature:

1. How has the practice of career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools changed over the last three decades?
2. Why is there such variety in how metropolitan senior high schools have implemented government policies and programs?
3. What is the current role of nonprofit organizations in career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools?
4. What are the consequences, chances, and possible risks that arise from a stronger involvement of civil society in the educational sector?

Due to the scarcity of existing English language literature as described by Okano (2016b: 8) about the impact of civil society, especially NPOs, from a pedagogical perspective, I hope to contribute by providing detailed micro–level data obtained from my research on career guidance at general metropolitan senior high schools.

According to Brinton (2000), especially general senior high schools are in a difficult position as a consequence of their shrinking networks with local businesses and enterprises; these educational institutions have lost, what she calls, their institutional social capital. To make up for this and other shortcomings in the educational system, Okano's (2016a) concept of nonformal education can be interpreted as a way to ensure to meet students educational needs while utilizing third sector actors like NPOs. According to Estévez–Abe (2003), state–society–partnerships can have positive effects by providing better services and reduce costs

but also negative impacts on civil society due to strong bureaucratic discretion and governmental involvement. In this context, Ogawa (2009) sees the NPO–ization by the government as more than a way to cut costs for the government but as hindering the development of civil society itself.

By combining these theoretical concepts – as described in the theory chapter – and looking at the micro–level of the schools, the current struggle of general senior high schools in providing adequate career guidance and the benefits as well as limitations of NPO–involvement in senior high school educational and their role in preparing students for labor market entry can be understood in a more comprehensive and holistic way.

During my fieldwork in the setting of senior high schools and NPO–led career guidance workshops, a different NPO was brought to my attention. Although its activities were not at all connected to career guidance or senior high school education, I also conducted participant observation at that particular NPO. Its main activity was the supplementary education for primary and junior high school students as it is provided in the private sector by so called cram schools (*juku*) (cf. Dierkes 2009, 2010; Entrich 2018). The fieldwork at this NPO was initially not supposed to be included in this dissertation. However, after a more thorough analysis of the collected data, I came to the conclusion that it will provide the reader with yet another example of civil society involvement in the educational sector. It also illustrates another example of a nonprofit organization that has set out to solve a specific shortcoming of the education system in Japan by a unique approach. I will briefly describe the fieldwork at this particular NPO in chapter 6 to avoid confusion concerning my research with the LMCS at its center.

In the following sub–chapter, I will describe in detail the different stages of my fieldwork and how each of these stages has influenced the subsequent data collection and analysis.

4.3 Fieldwork at metropolitan senior high schools and colleges of technology

For my initial interview phase, I chose a qualitative interviewing design which is a more flexible and interactive method of data collection than e.g. a survey study. As described by Babbie (2005: 297–299), I did not use a specific set of questions with a particular wording or a particular order of the questions. Basically, I set up a conversation with a general direction and pursued specific topics raised by my respondents. The answers to my initial questions shaped my subsequent questions.

> *"It doesn't work merely to ask pre[–]established questions and record the answers. Instead, you need to ask a question, listen carefully to the answer, interpret its meaning for your general inquiry, and then frame another question either to dig into the earlier answer or to redirect the person's attention to an area more relevant to your inquiry. In short, you need to be able to listen, think, and talk almost at the same time." (Babbie 2005: 298)*

I went into my interviews with a set of general and some more specific questions which I wanted answered as well as some general topics I wanted to address. A written interview guideline in Japanese language was used during each interview. I especially wanted to gain detailed information about the specific knowledge and experiences of my interview partners with regard to career guidance.

As Lofland and Lofland (1984: 38–39) called it, I assumed the position of the "*socially acceptable incompetent*". In my previous research in various educational institutions and settings, I noticed that assuming the role of someone who finds himself in a situation he does not fully comprehend and that has to be explained to him is particularly effective when teachers are the interview participants. They explained to me – as it is their profession – even the most basic and obvious aspects of any given situation or issue. Teachers are used to people approaching

them in the role of a "*watcher and asker of questions*", which is the "*quintessential student role*" (38). This might sound trivial but in a situation where the interview language is Japanese this attitude of the interviewee is extremely helpful for the non–Japanese researcher.

After each interview, which were recorded with a tape recorder, I reviewed my interview notes and observations on the same day to add details which I was not able to note during my interviews. From time to time, I found aspects I needed to pay more attention to in future interviews and occasionally optimized my interview guideline concerning especially effective questions as well as possible new important questions which resulted from follow–up questions during the interviews (cf. Babbie 2005: 300).

The names of the schools are not mentioned in this dissertation and they are only referred to by the name of the area they were situated in. In chapter 7.4 three particular schools of which I describe the career guidance program in detail are referred to as school A, B, and C.

All interview participants signed an informed consent form (Illustration 3), which explained my research topic, before I started each interview. Information about my research was also provided in form of an introductory letter when I asked them for interviews (Illustration 5). Here my affiliation to Waseda University as a research fellow[16] and my subsequent affiliation to the German Institute of Japanese Studies (DIJ Tokyo)[17] as a scholarship holder were very beneficial to my research.

4.3.1 Semi–structured interviews at metropolitan senior high schools and colleges of technology

During my initial fieldwork in early spring 2017, I set up interviews with principals and teachers concerned with career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo. After having reviewed the central literature in the current academic discourse and analyzed the distribution and variety of institutes that offer senior high school education I applied a

[16] October 2016 to December 2016 and two follow–up research trips October 2018 and February 2019, financed by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).
[17] April 2017 to December 2017, financed by the Max–Weber Stiftung.

purposive sampling "*to select units that are 'representative' or 'typical' of the population*" (Singleton et al. 1993: 160–161). My strategy was to identify important variations in the population – in this case the types of schools according to rank (*hensach*[18]*i*) and specialization (*senmonka)* – and accordingly select a sample that reflected that variation.

In 2017 there were, according to the official list of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education (TMBE), 186 senior high schools in the 23 special wards of Tokyo and the greater metropolitan area including the numerous outlying islands. Of these, 183 were schools with an all–day school system (*zennichisei*), 60 with a part–time school system (*teijisei*) and 3 with a correspondence school system (*tsûshinsei*) in place. Because many all–day schools also have a part–time school system at their school (*heisetsukô*) – students of both systems share the school facilities at different times of the day – the total number of schools (186 schools) differs from the combined number of schools when divided by "school systems" (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2017). For further details see: Table 3.

Out of these schools, there are 124 general senior high schools (futsûka kôtôgakkô) with an all–day school system, while 30 had a part–time school system in place. Another 59 schools had a specialization like technical (*kôgyô*) high schools or such with an agricultural (*nôgyô*), home economical (*katei*) or welfare (*fukushi*) etc. focus. 30 of these schools had a part–time school system. Again, many of the all–day schools also have a part–time school system in place which leads to different total numbers when adding up the schools by specialization or school system. In the Tama–area for example, some schools also have more than one specialization (*heigôka*). A mainly agricultural senior high school might have classes with a general and an agricultural focus in the all–day and the part–time school system, which explains the irregularities when adding up the numbers. (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2017). For more detailed information please refer to: Table 4.

[18] Score deriving from the statistics on the minimum standardized test score for students to enter different high schools. They are published by private publishing companies or private prep schools. To assess the academic quality of a high school it is according to Brinton (1998: 445) the best single indicator.

From the list of all senior high schools in the special wards of Tokyo and the greater metropolitan area, I chose all schools (43)[19] in the special wards Setagaya (9), Minato (2), Taito (5), Chiyoda (2), Toshima (3), Itabashi (6) and Nerima (9). From the Tama– area I chose the cities Kunitachi (2) and Fuchû (5) (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2017). These areas were chosen to provide a representative sample close to the school demography of Tokyo. Additionally, all areas could be more or less easily reached by public transport and/or on foot from either my office at the DIJ Tokyo, my home, or other centers of my private life. Nevertheless, this sample included a large number of general senior high schools – some of which also had a part–time school system in place – as well as a number of schools with different specializations. Additionally, I chose two colleges of technology (one private and one national), which offer senior high school education in combination with vocational training. I did so to widen my scope concerning specialized education beyond the senior high school level. My initial sample therefore contained 45 educational institutions.

The senior high schools in my initial sample ranked from top to bottom regarding academic quality according to the minimum standardized test scores required for entrance (*hensachi*). They provided a large variety of academic quality, school specialization and therefore student outcomes regarding post–graduation trajectories.

After acquiring the names of all current principals of all these schools from each schools website I sent out 53[20] letters to these schools asking for an interview with the principal or teacher(s) responsible for career guidance. The letter contained an introductory letter in Japanese language explaining my research project (Illustration 3), a pre–printed answer sheet (Illustration 4) as well as a stamped addressed envelope to return the answer sheet. I used official paper and envelopes from the DIJ and the postage thankfully was paid for by the DIJ as well.

[19] The number of schools in the area is indicated in the brackets.
[20] Because eight schools also had a part–time school with a different principal, the total number of letters was larger than the number of schools in my initial sample. The postal address of these schools was identical, yet I wrote to each principal of both school forms separately.

Of the 53 schools I contacted, 17 sent back the addressed envelope. In the end, eight[21] schools (five general senior high school, one technical senior high school and two colleges of technology) agreed to an interview. My response rate, therefore, was approx. 32.1% and my positive response rate was approx. 15.1%.

I then set up interview appointments via email or telephone with the person whose contact details were given to me by the school in the response letter. In most cases, it was the vice–principal of the school who arranged the interviews with either the principal, the vice–principal, or the career guidance teacher.

Detailed information about my research project was provided again on the informed consent form (Illustration 5) on the day of the interview. Before I started recording the interviewee(s) read and signed the consent sheet and a copy remained with the interviewee. I also gave them the opportunity to ask questions before and after the interview. The interviews always took place on school premises, either in the principal's or a teacher's office. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and one and a half hours.

All but one of the interviews at senior high schools and colleges of technology took place between April and May 2017. The last interview took place in March 2018 after I visited the school's foreign language program several times for participant observation to establish a better relationship to the body of teachers. To get an interview with the career guidance teacher at this particular school proved as rather difficult although the setting was not more closed than other schools. During my fieldwork at this school I had numerous informal conversations with a number of foreign language teachers about their subjects, career trajectories of their students and the school's career guidance program.

In my first round of interviews I interviewed four school principals, two vice–principals, and five teachers. At two of these interviews, at a college of technology and a technical senior high school – without having

[21] In the course of my fieldwork, I conducted a further interview with a career guidance teacher at a metropolitan senior high school. I will describe this at a later point of this chapter.

arranged so – I had two and three Interview partners, respectively. This had happened to me in previous research so it did not catch me off guard. Even though I had more than one participant in these interviews, I was able to engage in a productive guided conversation (cf. Lofland and Lofland 1984: 12) and raised all important issues and questions, which my interview participants answered according to their position and role at the school. To give a better overview of my interviews and additional information about my interviewees, I have provided this information in form of Table 7.

Before each interview, I collected information about the school regarding size, student numbers, career guidance programs, and career trajectories of graduates from each school's website. The main information about the ranking (*hensachi)* of each school was from the website *minna no gakkô jôhô* (https://www.minkou.jp/), the number one website on the internet to compare schools nationwide, which was suggested to me by an acquaintance who is a teacher at a national senior high school. I did so to adjust the interview questions and interview guideline according to the schools disposition and ranking.

During all interviews I collected supplementary data in form of official documents provided by the school which are also available to the general public. I also collected semi–official and private documents which are only available to students, parents/legal guardians, and/or teachers. I was provided with brochures of the school which are made available during e.g. open–school events or which could be attained via internet. Furthermore, I received career guidance booklets or guidelines which students receive at the beginning of the school year. In some cases, they handed me additional information material like results of surveys conducted at the school, copies of newspaper articles in which the school was mentioned or articles written by either teachers or individuals the school was collaboration with (business professionals, community members, or university professors etc.).

For the semi–structured interviews at the schools I developed a basic interview guideline with three broad topics, which I will later elaborate on: 1. the role of the school, 2. the student's consumption of

education, and 3. the role of career guidance (Illustration 6 and Illustration 7).

Each category contained three to five rather open questions which I slightly adjusted to each school regarding its ranking and specialization. At a school where graduates go on to vocational schools after graduation or enter the labor market directly, I did not specifically inquire about moving on to university education. By the same token, at a high ranking school which exclusively caters to universities, specific questions about graduates entering the labor market seemed unnecessary. If such topics were brought up by the interviewee it goes without saying that I then addressed them.

The format of the interview guideline as well as the resulting interviews were therefore flexible, which allowed the "*interviewee to speak freely in their own terms about a set of concerns [I brought] to the interaction […]* " (Lofland and Lofland 1984: 59). I started each interview with an open question asking the interviewees about their own career and/or a general question about the school concerning size and disposition etc.

Topic 1 contained questions concerning the post–graduation trajectories of the students, the influence of the school on said trajectories, the existence or absence of connections to local enterprises or other networks, and the influence of the deregulation of the labor market on the role of the high school in the education and transition process. Topic 2 contained questions about the students' interaction with the teachers and the learning content, their involvement in extra–curricular activities like sports etc., and the parents' involvement in the students' education. Topic 3 contained questions regarding the disposition of career guidance and the resources (time, budget, staff etc.) used for such.

I also inquired about the experiences the interviewees had with career guidance at their present school and – if applicable – experiences at schools they were previously employed at. Here I specifically paid attention to perceived changes in career guidance methods and its role over the course of their career as well as how this was connected to the raking of their former or present place(s) of employment.

I took notes during the interview, like key words or sentences, key names, and time markers to better find specific content in the recordings which were of particular interest. To these notes I added more details directly after the interviews to add ideas or tentative pieces of analysis, aspects of methodological difficulties or success during the interview as well as personal emotional experiences. I also included a description of the school grounds, the surrounding area, and the overall atmosphere as it was perceived by me to complete my field notes.

During one interview (at a metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku) in mid–May, I was invited to take part in an NPO–led career guidance event in the following month. There I first came into contact with the NPO Labor Market Cram School which is at the center of my dissertation. The data collected during the participant observation during NPO–led career guidance events, the subsequent teacher/staff meetings, and content of the interviews with the NPO staff members will be described and discussed in detail in chapter 5.

4.4 Fieldwork at the NPO Labor Market Cram School

During my participant observation I followed the process described by Lofland and Lofland (1984: 11–19). The defined overall goal was to collect rich data on a ground level about career guidance at general metropolitan senior high schools. I set out to collect data which provided me with a wide and diverse range of information over a relatively prolonged period of time. For this, I established and sustained a relationship with the NPO members and teachers/lecturers in the social setting of the numerous career guidance events. To obtain this data, I used the two qualitative data collection methods of participant observation and semi–structured interviewing. Although I modified the method of Lofland and Lofland, who suggest intensive interviewing, it still was very close to a "*guided conversation whose goal it is elicit from the interviewee rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis*" (Lofland and Lofland 1984: 12).

4.4.1 Participant observation during NPO–led career guidance events and interviews with NPO members: The Labor Market Cram School

After the initial contact with an NPO staff member of the Labor Market Cram School, I set up an interview with the two NPO founders, which led to additional participant observation at ten metropolitan general senior high schools and one private general senior high school. In total I visited eleven schools together with the NPO, which amounted to a total of approx. 40 hours of participant observation.

To enhance the theoretical validity of the study extended field work over a longer period of time is necessary. The time period in which the actors and their interactions with each other in the setting are observed has to be long and diverse enough to recognize and interpret all interactions and reoccurring patterns correctly (Johnson and Christensen 2004: 253).

To gain further insights in the activities of the NPO I interviewed another five members of the NPO during August and September 2017 (Table 5). All of these members have been working for the NPO for several years and have either supported or supervised a large number of career guidance events up to the present. A detailed description of the different functions of the NPO staff members as well as information about LMCS and organization of the NPO's career guidance events will be provided in chapter 5. All the Interviews were recorded with a tape recorder and detailed notes were taken during and directly after each interview. To ensure the anonymity of my interview participant from the NPO I used aliases.

I got to know my interview partners during the workshops they supervised from June to July 2017. One or more of these NPO members were always present at each event I conducted participant observation at. After this intensive period of fieldwork at NPO events, I scheduled the Interviews with the NPO staff with whom I interacted most during that time for August 2017. I used a written Japanese and English language interview guideline (Illustration 8 and Illustration 9). The group interview

with three NPO staff members took place at the office of the NPO where I had previously interviewed the NPO founders, one took place at the DIJ Tokyo, and one in a coffee shop during the interviewees lunch break. Due to the background noise in the coffee shop I already suspected the audio recording to be of bad quality and I took detailed notes during the interview. Luckily the interviewee had requested the questions beforehand, taking into consideration the small amount of time she could spare, and had answered my questions briefly in writing. She handed me that document after finishing the interview.

The three NPO members I interviewed together were more involved in setting up and supervising events while the two other interviewees were more involved with activities in the classroom during NPO–led career guidance events (for further information please refer to Table 5).

Before I started each interview, all interview participants read and signed an informed consent form which explained my research. A copy remained with each participant. All the Interviews were recorded with a tape recorder and detailed notes were taken during and directly after each interview. As mentioned before, at two occasions more than one person was interviewed. My first interview was with the two founders of the NPO, Mr. and Mrs. Morita whom I interviewed together. After this interview I conducted my participant observation at the various NPO–led career guidance workshops. After concluding my fieldwork in those settings, I interviewed a group of three coordinators, Mrs. Satô, Mrs. Watanabe and Mrs. Nakamura. This was followed by two single interviews of two facilitators, Ms. Itô and Ms. Tanaka. All names are aliases to protect the anonymity of my interview participants. The interviews took place in late summer 2017.

As a result of my fieldwork with the NPO, I conducted another interview with a career guidance teacher to whom I came in contact through the NPO. This brings the total number of schools I conducted interviews at to nine. The interview took place in September 2017 at a general senior high school in Higashi–Kurume–shi.

4.5 Analysis of interview data and data collected by means of participant observation during NPO–led career guidance events

As mentioned before, all interviews from my initial sample were transcribed as memos shortly after each interview occurred in order for the results of their analysis to shape the subsequent inquiry (cf. Thornberg 2012: 254). The interview guideline, the recording of the interview, and the notes taken during the Interview formed the base of these memos. Each audio recording was listened to and either the answers of the interviewee were summarizing or the important information given by the interviewee were collected in short notes. While listening to the recordings, the content was translated directly into English. Some answers and information of particular interest were transcribed verbatim in Japanese. Afterwards grammar, colloquial terms, and abbreviations were smoothened out to enhance the readability of the transcript.

After some interviews conducted at the senior high schools were transcribed as memos, certain narratives and themes concerning the role of career guidance at senior high schools as well as the importance of third sector groups already started to emerge The five major themes which were mentioned repeatedly were:

1. The general unpreparedness of students at average–level metropolitan senior high schools regarding labor market entry;
2. Lacking time and experience among teachers to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market or further education;
3. Inconsistent career guidance programs and the lack of general guidelines at metropolitan senior high schools;
4. The quality of career guidance programs depending on the motivation and experience of the teachers as well as the principal;
5. The importance of third sector groups and individuals from outside the formal context of schooling as a supporting element for career guidance.

I paid attention to reoccurring themes during my participant observation at the NPO–led career guidance events as well as in informal

conversations with teachers, NPO members, and workshop lecturers. Most themes reemerged during the interviews and conversations. Later I specifically addressed them during my interviews with the NPO staff members in addition to the questions in the basic interview guideline (Illustration 8 and Illustration 9). The interviews with the NPO members were also first transcribed as memos and briefly analyzed in a first step shortly after the interviews had taken place.

In a second step, the interviews at senior high schools and institutions which offer senior high school education in combination with vocational training and the interviews with the NPO members were transcribed in detail. This happened in Germany after my return from the field. While the interview language was Japanese, the interviews were transcribed in English and particular answers or excerpts of the interviews, which were used as citations in this dissertation, were transcribed verbatim in Japanese and afterwards carefully translated into English to stay as close to the original wording as possible.

The focus during the transcription process was on the semantic content of the interview although attention was paid to the wording, tone of voice, and the way certain subjects were addressed by the interviewee when it appeared to be important (e.g. when the interviewees described a difficult situation or something that might let their school appear in a bad light). The Japanese language parts of the transcript were checked by a native speaker who has been employed by a national senior high school for several years.

In these detailed transcripts, the themes and narratives mentioned by the interview participants became more prominent and I will give a detailed description of the career guidance workshops in chapter 5 and three examples of career guidance at three general senior high schools in chapter 7 to provide a more comprehensive and tangible account of the educational reality at metropolitan senior high schools.

4.6 Collection and analysis of available research data and official documents

Apart from gathering firsthand information during my fieldwork by interviews and participant observation, I collected numerous different data sources in the course of my fieldwork in Japan.

According to Singleton et al. (1993: 354–363) sources of available data can be placed in five broad categories: 1. Public documents and official reports; 2. private documents; 3. Mass media; 4. Physical, non–verbal materials; and 5. Social science data archives.

For category 1, I collected official reports of the MEXT and METI, which included, amongst others, official reports about the state of Japanese high school education, information about career guidance programs, which were mostly published in the last decade. I obtained survey results about senior high school students' academic and general abilities as well as career trajectories and interrelated programs. This data will be describes in more detail in chapter 7.2.

I also used the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education (TMBE) as a data source. In particular, I paid attention to official reports published after 2009, the year the LMCS was founded. I also analyzed the content of the publication *tôkyô no chiiki kyôiku* (which translates to *Tokyo community education*) published by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Division of Lifelong Learning (*tôkyô to shôgai gakushû jôhô*) of the TMBE. The booklet is published on average every two to three months and has on average eight to twelve pages. It contains reports and articles about current developments in the educational sector and of programs in Tokyo, first–hand experiences with and evaluations of new teaching methods and activities (volunteer–activities, sport events, NPO or community programs etc.), and other general information about education in the Tokyo metropolitan area. Each article or report in this publication is on average one to two pages long and often illustrated with pictures, graphs and photographs. Its target group is predominantly actors in the educational sector like teachers etc. but also parents and students. My attention was brought to this publication of the TMBE by the NPO, when

they gave me a copy in which a report about one of their workshops was featured. To protect the anonymity of the NPO, I am not able to reference this article at this point.

Back numbers of the TMBE's publication (2002 to present) can be downloaded as pdfs on the official website (www.syougai.metro.tokyo.jp/). Up to issue No. 115 (February 2014) the magazine was called *minna no shôgai gakushû* (which translates to *lifelong learning for everybody*) but changed to *tôkyô no chiiki kyôiku* when the TMBE wanted to emphasized the new focus on building, strengthening, and maintaining community networks and collaboration with enterprises, local businesses, community members, and third sector groups like NPOs (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2014c: 2). The analysis of this data collected from the TMBE will be the basis for chapter 7.3 in which I describe relevant recent programs put forward by the TMBE for senior high schools.

I also collected, as mentioned before, public and semi–public data sources like school brochures, survey data produced by the schools and made public on the schools website or during open school events regarding the career trajectories of their graduates, and career guidance worksheets etc. Some of these I would consider to fall into the category 2 of private documents. While some of the leaflets and booklets collected during my fieldwork could be obtained freely, some were not intended for public consumption. This included some materials collected at the schools during interviews and participant observation. They consist of program– or school–specific guidelines, leaflets and print material such as work sheets which were only intended for students, teachers, or NPO staff members. This data will, amongst others, serve as the foundation for chapter 5, the case study of the Labor Market Cram School, and chapter 7.4 in which I focus on career guidance a three particular schools in detail.

Mass Media data (category 3) was not used in this dissertation because the focus is on career guidance at the micro level against the background of programs by the MEXT, METI, and TMBE. Even though newspaper articles about the schools in my sample and the NPO that is

at the center of my dissertation exist, I chose to exclude such data sources. By using them, it would have been difficult to protect the anonymity of my participants or the schools I visited.

Physical, non–verbal evidence (category 4) was also not used as data because none of the settings I operated in produced such data sources which could have been relevant for my research.

The relevant research literature, which falls under category 5, contains publications about the Japanese education system with focus on senior high school education, career guidance, and vocational training. Also, I reviewed literature about the Japanese labor market with a focus on labor market entry of high school graduates, and publications on Japanese civil society with a focus on NPOs and their development since the late 1990s. The relevant academic discourse and its literature has been described in my literature review.

The relevant academic books in English and Japanese language were either obtained in the libraries of Waseda University and Sophia University by manual searches, or bought. To find relevant Japanese and English language journal articles and publications, I used the data bases Cinii, JSTOR and Google Scholar. Most journal articles could be obtained through the electronic database for academic articles of the University of Hamburg (*Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek*). This literature search was completed by manual search in the references or bibliographies of already obtained articles and publications. I also received many recommendations from experts in the concerning fields due to my affiliation at Waseda University, the DIJ Tokyo, and Sophia University[22] during my time in the field, which enriched my literature corpus and for which I am very grateful to them.

[22] After leaving the DIJ Tokyo, I spent the rest of my time in Japan (December 2017 to March 2018) as a visiting research fellow at the Institute of Comparative Culture, after being offered this opportunity by the director, Prof. David H. Slater.

5 The case study: NPO–led career guidance

> *"They have potential, they really do. But they commute to school by bike, I mean, this is the kind of school we are. Our students live in the neighborhood and some even do not go to Ikebukuro or other places in the city. Everything revolves around the school. Their view on the world is quite narrow, so it is good that we have such events"* (personal communication, *male teacher at metropolitan senior high school, Higashi–Kurume–shi,* 07.07.2017)

Since the 1980's irregular forms of employment like *freeter* have been on the rise, youth unemployment and the number of NEET[23] have been increasing as well. This has caught the attention of Japanese and international scholars alike (Tsuru 201759; Gordon 2017; Kreitz–Sandberg 2008: 503–505; Honda 2005: 5; Inui 2003: 221). This especially concerns students who are attending average to lower ranked general senior high schools, which makes them more likely to look at an uncertain future on the labor market (Kariya et al. 2002: 33–34). It is, therefore, mandatory to provide students with skills and opportunities that enable them to choose a profession and successfully participate in the labor market as well as society.

In this context, mismatch is one of the most prominent problems among the younger generation of workers (Brinton 2000). The so–called "753 problem" (*nana go san mondai*) illustrates this alarming phenomenon. 70% of all junior high school graduates, 50% of all senior high school graduates, and 30% of all university graduates quit their first employment within three years (JILPT 2016: 141–142; Mainichi Shinbun, 03.03.2017; Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2015a; Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2015b). This is not only problematic for their career trajectories but also for the companies which have hired these

[23] Not in employment, education or training

graduates. They have invested in these new employees, yet they do not get to reap the benefits.

While schools as well as companies stress the importance of career guidance, the reality in the classroom is far removed from the ideals postulated by the MEXT. The implications of the current state of the school to labor market transition system will be discussed in detail in chapter 7.

Not only in Tokyo but all over the country there is a growing number of schools which are suffering from shrinking school–employer networks and eroding ties with the community (Brinton 2000; Brinton 2011: 104–115; Honda 2003: 10).

Students nowadays do not have many opportunities to interact with adult members of society and the ongoing trend still tends towards nuclear families which, again, limits social interactions with adults for the students. Students have no clear image of the meaning of work and what to expect once they have entered the labor market (Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017). On the institutional side one can name budget cuts, extensive curricula, and an ever–increasing workload for a body of teachers who decrease in numbers (Hooghart 2006; Nagai et al. 2007). Due to this, it becomes extremely difficult for students who visit the average senior high school to get valid information about the labor market in order to make an informed career choice (Honda 2005: 14–15).

In my interview with Mr. Morita (Interview Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017), he stressed that there is a broadening gap between the provision and demand of adequate information about further education, vocational training, and the labor market. Hence, many students graduate from senior high school without a clear or any picture of which career to choose and little means which could enable them to successfully transition into the labor market and find secure employment.

I went into this project to provide ethnographic data showing how career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools tries to adapt to the development on the Japanese labor market and how third party actors

like NPOs influence the content of career guidance education at general senior high schools.

Initially, I contacted 43 senior high schools in seven of the special wards of Tokyo and the Tama–area via letters with a stamped response letter enclosed. I chose these districts because the sample included a large number of metropolitan senior high schools which could be considered as “average” regarding their academic ranking. Furthermore, I contacted two colleges of technology in the Tokyo area (one national and one private). This broad range of educational institutions with students from different social backgrounds in different parts of the urban agglomeration area of Tokyo gave me a detailed inside into career guidance at these institutions.

I conducted the initial interviews in the period of April 2017 to June 2017. I interviewed four principals, two vice–principals, five head–teachers of the career guidance division (*shinroshidôbu shu’nin*) and one head–teacher of the educational affairs division (*kyômu shu’nin*).

Following an interview with a career guidance teacher of an average level general senior high school in one of the western wards of Tokyo, she invited me to join an NPO–led career guidance event which was taking place in the first weeks of June 2017. At this event, I met a NPO member and coordinator of the Labor Market Cram School. Through her, I established contact with the NPO founders and conducted an interview with them at the end of the same month.

They invited me to join career guidance events at ten further metropolitan general senior high schools and one private all–boys general senior high school. After the first interview with the founders of the NPO, I expected career guidance at private senior high schools to differ substantially from metropolitan senior high schools and therefore chose to cease this opportunity to include a private high school into my original sample.

The participatory observation at these schools took place from the middle of June 2017 to the end of July 2017. The *hensachi* of all the schools I visited lay between 42 and 69 with most of the schools averaging between 46 and 56.

As it turned out, I had visited three of the schools previously for interviews with either principles or career guidance teachers which I contacted via letter before. Now I could cross–reference the results of my interviews with my observations during the career guidance events at these three schools.

During my field work, I interviewed seven members of the NPO: The founders Mr. and Mrs. Morita (alias), four coordinators (all of which have in the past also worked or sometimes still work as facilitators) and one facilitator. Furthermore, I have received a lot of valuable information through conversations with facilitators and lecturers at the career guidance events, NPO meetings, and private events. The function of said members of the NPO will be described in more detail later in this chapter.

As I soon found out, the NPO was a common denominator at most of the metropolitan senior high schools I had included in my initial sample. Hence, I decided very early in my fieldwork to focus on the activities of the LMCS, the educational content of their workshops, and their impact on the career guidance curriculum at senior high schools.

5.1 The Labor Market Cram School

The aim of the Labor Market Cram School project is to engage the community, businesses, and professionals from all different kinds of trades and professions in senior high school career guidance to better meet the demands of students, companies, and society alike.

By explaining to the students the meaning of “work” and the significance of their current education in order to find employment after graduation, the project brings so called working members of society (*shakaijin*) (henceforth called WMS) into the schools during one of their workshops and encourages them to share stories about their line of work, self–employment, or their education.

In the initial phase, after Mr. and Mrs. Morita founded the NPO in 2009, the program consisted of two pillars (Labor Market Cram School 2010: 4–100):

1. A career guidance support seminar, which they held 23 times in eleven different metropolitan senior high schools within the Tokyo city limits and five times at two metropolitan senior high schools in the greater Tokyo agglomeration area. The total number of participants during that time was about 3200 students. The seminar was called “My CV from age 16 onward” (*16 sai kara no rirekisho*). The WMS lecturers talked about their work experiences and how their choices in and after high school have influenced their lives up to the present. On the one hand, they were expected to explain their profession or trade, on the other hand, it was their goal to show students that work has an enjoyable side to it if chosen with care and not only out of necessity. Mr. Morita repeatedly mentioned in the interview (Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017) and personal communications the importance of this and called it one of the main motivations when he founded the NPO together with his wife.

To evaluate the impact of the seminar a questionnaire was handed out afterwards. The participating students were supposed to picture themselves in ten and five years’ time and afterwards write down how their current actions as a senior high school student reflect on their imagined trajectories.

2) Outside of the school context, the LMCS had several events/seminars in cooperation with other organizations/companies, which gave high school students the opportunity to witness products or technologies out of the ordinary while talking and interacting with the professionals in this field. To provide first–hand experiences of this sort was the second proclaimed goal of the LMCS project.

In the very beginning, they had a network consisting of one organization, 23 companies and 40 individual professionals who worked as WMS lecturers. According to the founder of the NPO, since the NPO was founded in March 2009, the number of participating companies and especially schools which make use of the NPO’s program has increased drastically. As of November 2016, they worked together with lecturers or professions from more than 100 companies and were conducting workshops at over 130 schools on a regular basis. The great majority of

these schools are metropolitan general senior high schools, followed by over 20 private high schools and over ten junior high schools in the greater Tokyo agglomeration area. Recently, the NPO has expanded their activities to the neighboring prefectures. In total, they have conducted more than 3500 workshops and taught an approximate 81,000 students in the time period between March 2009 and November 2016. Nowadays, the LMCS conducts workshops at about half of all metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo. This even includes schools on the outlying islands of Tokyo (LMCS brochure, Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017)

The NPO is one of about 80 organizations chosen by the TMBE that provides services like career guidance etc. to metropolitan high schools in Tokyo. They are listed in the publication of the TMBE for schools to choose from.

> *Mr. Morita: "Our program has been introduced often and we often receive orders from high schools. […] There are about 80 organizations like the Japan Association of Corporate Executives or Recruit or other NPOs, there are also some enterprises. But out of these, we are the one that is approached the most. […] Of course, we get contacted, but it comes down to relationships. We were part of it from the beginning. One year earlier, [around 2012/2013] we had already been and conducted lessons at some metropolitan senior high schools. So we had relationships and could register." (*Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017*)*[24]

Mrs. Morita continued that in the beginning there were only about ten organizations and the LMCS conducted career guidance events at about

[24] 森田理事長: うちのプログラムはよく紹介していただけるんで、高校からのオーダーもすごく多いというかたちですね。[..] ８０団体ぐらいあるんですね。経済同友会とかルクルトとか、ま、ほかのＮＰＯとか、ま、企業もあるんですけど。で、うちは一番多いですね、そのなかで。[…] もちろんコンタクトするんだけど、実績をとわれるんですね。私たちは最初からはいっているんですけど。その前の年ぐらいにから都立高校でちょっとはいって、授業やったりした。ということは、実績があって、こう登録してくれる。

27 to 30 schools at that point of time. In the next year, the number of schools making use of the TMBE program rose to 70 while, at the same time, 20 more organization registered. According to Mr. Morita, the program designed by the TMBE was specifically directed at general senior high schools because they seemed to struggle the most at that point of time.

5.2 Development of the NPO

Mr. Morita, the founder of the NPO, once worked for one of the biggest companies in Japan which provides consumer and professional electronics, gaming, entertainment, and financial services. He was head of the show room department and science museum which presents the latest achievements in consumer electronics and robotics. The other seven board members of the NPO consist of his wife in the position of the administrative secretary and, amongst others, colleagues from said company and teachers involved in senior high school education.

In Mr. Morita's opinion, sixteen is a crucial age for a young student. The students have just entered their first year of senior high school and soon have to make the first of many important choices in their educational career that will shape their life trajectory: the choice between the liberal arts (*bunkei*) and the science (*rikei*) track, which can have strong implications on their future career choice.

When Mr. Morita was still working for his former employer, a friend asked him if his son and some friends could visit the show room during their holidays. At this time of the year, there were no events scheduled at the showroom and Mr. Morita had enough time at his hands. He gave the students, who were in their first year of senior high school, a tour around the facility and noticed that one of the students took a particular interest in the robotics section. This student later asked to visit the show room again and has ever since aspired to study engineering in order to find employment in a company that develops or build robots. According to Mr. Morita, this was the first time that he thought about focusing on education

of (senior) high school students. Soon after he quit his job and, together with his wife, founded the NPO

In his opinion, within the short span of three years the students have to decide what route to choose after graduating. Will they continue on the favored university–track, visit a vocational school, or enter the labor market directly? Whatever option they, their parents, and their teachers regard as most feasible, the students have to decide by the end of their second year, at the latest. Moreover, because time is a valuable and scarcely spread resource for the students, it is imperative to provide them with as many opportunities as possible to collect information and experiences that will help them make up their mind about their future (Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS 07/07/2017).

The average student encounters only a limited number of fully–fledged members of society to interact with on a regular basis; namely their parents, other family members and their teachers. While the latter can only teach them about the profession of the teacher, their family members, in many cases their fathers, will have very limited information about professions different from their own or new developments on the labor market. Therefore, to broaden the student's horizon and give them a graspable picture of the concept of work and the skills needed in the current labor market, the NPO provides a variety of workshops, which I will describe in detail later in this chapter.

It remains to be said that the NPO is supported by one of Japan's largest airlines and a major Japanese NGO (nongovernmental organization) that concerns itself with independent child rights and humanitarianism committed to children living a life free of poverty, violence, and injustice.

5.3 NPO members and their functions

When becoming a full member of the NPO there is an entrance fee of ¥5000 and a yearly fee of ¥30000. Individual (passive) supporters who want to join do not have to pay the entrance fee and only pay a yearly fee of ¥5000 (LMCS website). Mr. and Mrs. Morita run the NPO on a

regular daily basis. The other board members occasionally join the NPO for workshops and are of course present at meetings. However, they are more engaged in administrative work or promoting the NPO. They also join private events like the “end of the year party” (*bônenkai*) to which I was also invited in 2017. It was a good opportunity to socialize with the NPO members and WMS lecturers in a relaxed atmosphere, to strengthen the relationship with the NPO, and listen to their experiences.

One board member who is involved in career guidance at his workplace, a private school the NPO caters to and which I visited for participant observation in mid–July, is always present whenever there is an event at his school.

Members with three different functions conduct the workshops of the NPO: coordinators, facilitators and WMS lecturers.

Mr. and Mrs. Morita and five other NPO members are the core of the LMCS. When they visit schools, they do it in the position of a so–called coordinator. As the name suggests, their function is to coordinate the events with the career guidance teachers and staff members at the high schools.

Before every event, coordinators and facilitators discuss the expectations of teachers and students at the schools they are conducting a workshop at. In most cases, they already know the ranking of the school and the students’ disposition. Mrs. Nakamura, who currently works as a coordinator for the LMCS, stressed that the matching of school and WMS lecturer is of vital importance. When the students are, for example, of a rather shy nature, it is important to choose WMS who can draw them out and engage with them (Interview, Mrs. Satô, Mrs. Watanabe, Mrs. Nakamura, LMCS, 08/18/2017).

Whenever the LMCS holds a workshop at a high school, the coordinator who planned the event with the school beforehand is present at the day of the workshop to ensure that everything runs smoothly. When there is a shortage of staff members due to illness the coordinator can always act as a facilitator.

According to Ms. Tanaka, who has been working as a facilitator at the LMPS for two years, the primary role of the facilitators and WMS

lecturer is to show the students that adult society is enjoyable. They want the WMS lecturers to function as role models for the students and inspire them to engage with the subject of work and think about their future (Interview, Ms. Tanaka, LMCS, 08/22/2017).

Mrs. Watanabe (coordinator and facilitator for three years) describes the function of the facilitator as providing a framework for interaction with the WMS (in case of a workshop where WMS are present). They are supposed to build a connection with the students and create a positive working environment for the students to communicate successfully with the WMS. At workshops where only a facilitator is present in the classroom, their function is to motivate the students to engage with each other or the task at hand. (Interview, Mrs. Satô, Mrs. Watanabe, Mrs. Nakamura, LMCS, 08/18/2017).

The facilitators can be described as the workshop leaders. They are in the classroom with the students, bridge the gap between students and WMS lecturers, and report to the coordinator about the outcome of the workshop or problems that might have occurred. These facilitators are not full–time employees of the NPO but are also engaged in other types of employment. Yet, there is an overarching theme of either educational or labor market support in their CV's. Most of them work as councilors, life–coaches, consultants for companies, or have attained certificates in similar fields.

According to Ms. Itô (coordinator and facilitator with 5 years' work experience at the LMPS) (Interview, Ms. Itô, LMCS, 09/21/2017), the quality of education varies regarding school type, ranking, and area the school is situated in. She sees the necessity for the government to further develop the educational system and make more use of civil society organizations like NPOs. In her opinion, even basic skills like reading, writing, and math are not sufficiently taught at junior high school, which in turn leads to difficulties in senior high school. Not only in the career guidance but in all sectors of education, NPOs should take more responsibility for the comprehensive education of students.

There are currently about 50 facilitators working for the NPO. All of them were introduced to the position at the NPO by somebody who was

already working in the NPO or were approached by Mr. and Mrs. Morita directly. Normally, members of the NPO start working as facilitators at workshops. After they have collected enough experiences at all different types of workshops, they are approached by Mr. or Mrs. Morita and can afterwards work as coordinators if they wish to do so. The number of facilitators who visit the school always depends on the number of classes they are conducting workshops in. For example, if there are seven classes of first year students at the school the NPO will send one coordinator, seven facilitators and, depending on the workshop, seven WMS lecturers. These lecturers are in most cases employees of big, medium, or small sized companies. Others are self–employed or professionals working freelance. At present, the NPO has a network of over 200 WMS lecturers (either employed, self–employed or freelance) who visit different schools with them on a regular basis.

While employees of small businesses and such who work freelance or are self–employed get an expense allowance, some larger companies use this opportunity to promote corporate social responsibility and the WMS lecturers attending the workshops decline any sort of payment. Especially well–known companies tend to send white–collar employees from management to the workshops. In conversations before or after the workshops, some WMS told me that they support this project to give something back to the community but also because they want to promote either their company as well as inspire possible future employees. It is also a chance to get out of the office and do something enjoyable and useful they added (personal communication, WMS, private senior high school in Nakano–ku, 07/18/2017).

The variety of the professions these WMS work in is vast; reaching from the normal salary man who works for a well–known company to the freelance photographer or even a professional boxer. A more detailed explanation of some of these WMS lecturers and their CV’s as well as teaching methods will follow later in this chapter.

5.4 The NPO's workshops and seminars

The workshops (LMCS leaflet 2016: 4) can – with one exception – be divided into two categories: 1. those which have "*career design at their center*" (*kyaria desain wo têma to suru puroguramu*; 2. those which are "*based on the fundamental competencies for working persons*" (FCWP) (*shakaijin kisoryoku wo têma to suru puroguramu*). They were developed by the METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009). I will talk about the FCWP in detail in chapter 7.2

In an interview with a female teacher of an average general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 56, I was told that one workshop costs the school about 200.000 yen (approx. 1600€/1800$), which is basically paid for by the TMBE. For schools with a small budget such workshops are a good opportunity to provide the students with interesting learning content in an innovative way. She explained to me that the budget of metropolitan schools is allocated according to the performance of the school for which the test scores of students and the advancement level to (high–ranking) universities are the main indicator. Here she feels that metropolitan senior high schools seem to have started losing ground against private senior high schools for some time. (Interview, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan senior high school, Toshima–ku, 05/18/2017).

In order to provide a comprehensive overview, I summarized the specifics about the schools and the workshops I visited together with the NPO in Table 6.

5.4.1 Career design workshops

5.4.1.1 Class with a working member of society: Values and work interest (shakaijin jugyô kachikan shokugyôshumi wâkushoppu)

To choose a suitable career or profession, it is necessary to develop one's interest and values concerning work life beforehand as well as according to one's surroundings and preposition. To become aware of their values and interest, students are, with the support of one WMS and

one facilitator per class, encouraged to analyze themselves in order to get a clearer picture of their career or future in general.

After an introduction about their profession, the WMS lecturer elaborated on the construction company he was working for and the students received various work tasks, in which they had to take notes, fill in worksheets, or questionnaires. Because he was working for a major Japanese construction company, he discussed the positive aspects large construction projects might have on the surrounding area and how they might hold lasting benefits for the local economy. He explained how, for example, the Tokyo Sky Tree construction project influenced businesses in the surrounding area and stimulated the local economy and still has a positive effect on the local community (personal communication, WMS, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi–Kurume–shi, 07/07/2017).

The first task for the students then was to think about their future with regard to four words: interest (*kyomi*), values (*kachikan*), abilities (*nôryoku*), environment (*kankyô*). They had to engage in small group discussions for a couple of minutes.

Afterwards they were handed a list with 60 phrases or short statements like “I like freedom” (*jiyû ga suki*), “healthy” (*kenkô ni*), “[what I do] now is important” (*ima wo taisetsu ni*) etc. from which they had to choose five that described their values and vision regarding their future work life most accurately (Illustration 11) They had to draw an outline of their own hand and then were told to assign each finger one of the statements. In a speech bubble assigned to each finger they were supposed to write why they had chosen these statements and how they could lead to happiness in their later life. Some students found this task rather difficult.

In a further worksheet they were then asked to mark 30 statements (Illustration 12) with either a circle, “fits perfectly” (*pittari*), triangle, “kind of fits” (*sukoshi atehamaru*) or an X “no” (*chigau*) according to their level of approval. Here they had to choose from rather detailed sentences like: “Rather than putting in efforts with another person, I would like to operate a machine” (*hito to nani ka doryoku shite suru yori, kikai wo sôsa suru hô*

ga suki) or “Whenever I finish writing a sentence or an email, I check them for mistakes afterwards” (*bunsho ya mêru wo kakiowaetara itsumo machigai ga nai ka to yominaosu*). Each sentence allotted points (two points for the circle, one point for the triangle and zero points for the X) to six broad categories. The six categories are namely: “Enterprising” (*kigyôteki*), “conventional” (k*anshûteki*), “realistic” (*genjitsuteki*), “investigative” (*kenkyûteki*), artistic (*geijutsuteki*) and “social” (*shakaiteki*). The sum of each category was then filled into a radar chart. According to the chart that points out one’s character traits/talents, the students could then look up possible career choices from a separate list which gave them a rough idea for future employment options (Illustration 13).

A high score in the category “social”, for example, points towards a career in medicine or elderly care, on the one hand, but also towards a general aptitude in the teaching profession, on the other. The categories were kept broad on purpose to give the students a large number of choices and professions to think about

At the end, an evaluation sheet with five multiple choice questions regarding the satisfaction with and the content of the workshop as well as three open questions addressing personal remarks and self–evaluation (Illustration 14) was filled out by the students and collected by the facilitator.

Facilitator and lecturer read the answers in the short break before the final meeting in which lecturers, facilitators, and teachers shared their experiences and thoughts about the impact of the workshop. I will elaborate on the content of these meetings with examples at appropriate times in the descriptions of the other workshops.

5.4.1.2 Left side of the brain, right side of the brain (sanô unô wâkushoppu)

This workshop tries, to put it in simple terms, to help students understand whether the artistic right side or the analytical left side of their brain is more dominant and what implications that might have for their career choices.

The school I visited together with the LMCS was a below–average general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 42. The majority of the

students visit vocational schools after graduation or entered the labor market directly. Only about one fifth of the students enter a low–ranking four–year university after graduation.

After the introduction by the teacher, the facilitator started to explain the workshop by showing different pictures to the students. In one of them, a black and white map of the world was turned clockwise by 90 degrees. Due to this, none of the students could identify what they were looking at. After the puzzle was solved by the facilitator, she continued to explain that the human brain is “trained” to understand or remember things in a certain way, shape, or form (e.g. a world map is always shown with north at the top and south at the bottom). Hence, the human brain has often difficulties to process specific information when it is shown in an unfamiliar way or alignment.

After this she spoke to the students about the effect of computer or smartphone games on their young brains. She compared excessive gaming to drug abuse, stressed that it reduces the ability to concentrate and, therefore, might influence their performance at school. Beforehand the homeroom teacher asked the facilitator to weave this topic into the workshop because she was worried about her students constantly playing with their phones. In her opinion, students nowadays communicate less with their peers and for her it is exceedingly difficult to engage her students with the learning content (personal communication, teacher and facilitator, metropolitan general high school, Higashi–Murayama–shi, 07/12/2017).

This feeds into two common narratives: The declining communication skills among students, which I have encountered in numerous conversations and interviews. Furthermore, it was another example of the teacher asking the facilitator to implement a guidance measure into the workshop to modify the students’ behavior with regard to a problem perceived by the teacher which she was not confident enough to address by herself.

After the introduction, the students were given a list of 48 statements, paired in twos (Illustration 15). The students then had to pick 24 statements with which they agreed the most. Some are loosely

connected by an overall theme like being a social member of society e.g. “I am a person who obeys rules and manners” (*kimari ya manâ ni shitagau kata da*) and “I am a person who can understand how other people feel” (*ta’nin ga dono yo ni kanjite iru ka ga wakaru kata da*). Yet, sometimes they were given the choice between two completely different topics like: “I am a person who feels relived if somebody decides the plan for me” (*keikaku wo kimete morau to anshin suru kata da*) and “I am a person who prefers things connected to math” (*sûgakuteki na mono wo konomu kata da*). The statements either fell in the category “X” or “Y”. After the students had finished this first work sheet with 48 statements, the results were filled into a table on a second worksheet (Illustration 16) that was handed out after the facilitator made sure that everybody had finished. Here four new categories (A, B, C and D) were introduced. According to whether the students had chosen a statement which was assigned “X” or “Y” on the previous worksheet, these answers were then assigned one of the four new categories. For example, if for statement pair 1 the statement of the “Y” category was chosen, this translated into category “C” on the second work sheet. Depending on the statement pair, “X” and “Y” could only be assigned two of the four new categories. The other fields were blacked out in the table.

The values for each new category were then filled into a radar chart on the same worksheet (Illustration 16) ranging from “0” on the inside to “10” on the outside. If, for example, the value for category “B” was five, the student would mark this point on the radar chart. After all categories had been marked in the radar chart, all four points had to be connected by the students. Depending on the value of each category and the shape of the four–sided figure, they then evaluated their inclinations according to a list on a third (Illustration 17) and fourth (Illustration 18) worksheet. Students could see whether different character traits they might have, figures of speech they might use without noticing, or inclinations they already discovered for themselves might match with the requirements for a certain job or profession, pointing into a general direction regarding their future career.

During the whole workshop the students actively engaged in a new and enjoyable way with the subject of “work” in connection with their own inclinations.

In the final evaluation they were asked two multiple choice questions which they had to answer on a scale. They had to answer if they had understood the overall aim of the workshop and if they had discovered where their inclinations might lie. Two additional open questions asked them about “new things they have discovered for themselves” (*arata ni kizuita koto*) and what “further actions will be positively influenced by what they have learned” (*kongo no kôdô ni ikaseru ten*) (Illustration 19)

All the evaluation questionnaires had the name, class, and school year of the students on them and were collected by the facilitator after the workshop. The facilitator then read these comments and the most “inspiring” or “critical” answers were read aloud and discussed during the final meeting with NPO staff, the homeroom teachers, and the principal.

Facilitators or the coordinator photographed some of the questionnaires for the NPO’s record or the use in printed/online materials. After inquiring further, I was told that the students’ names would not be shown if these photos are used for printed materials or on the NPO’s website. Afterwards the questionnaires were handed over to the teachers. After asking one of the NPO members whether the teachers would read all questionnaires and how they would use this information, I was told that it entirely depended on the teachers and their level of motivation (personal communication, facilitator, LMCS, metropolitan general high school, Higashi–Murayama–shi, 07/12/2017).

In the meeting, some characteristics of the school were mentioned by some of the teachers. They then connected them to the outcome they were wishing for when they chose this particular workshop.

> *“Students at our school are not very good at studying. They just ‘moved up’ through junior high school and afterwards went to our school. That is the reason why they do not ask questions when they do not understand something. We chose this workshop because there is no*

> *'right answer' to the questions and, additionally, in order for them to become aware of their own abilities. This is important for them."* (Personal communication, young female teacher at metropolitan senior high school, Higashi–Murayama–shi, 07/12/2017)

As at many other schools, the workshop was carried out during the students first year of senior high school. At the end of the school year, they will have to choose the liberal arts (*bunkei*) or the science (*rikei*) track.

Before doing so, the teachers I talked to during the workshop stressed that the students should become aware of their inclinations and abilities. In the eyes of the teachers, the normal curriculum in the first year might not be enough for everybody to make an informed long–term decision. With the help of the NPO and the workshop, they can form a first or clearer image of what they want to do later in life. (Personal communication, male teachers at metropolitan senior high school, Higashi–Murayama–shi, 07/12/2017)

In the final meeting, yet another teacher mentioned the decreasing ability of the students to communicate with their classmates and teachers. The teacher's hope was that such a workshop might make the students understand that there are different kinds of people with different abilities, inclinations, and characters. In his eyes, the main goal of school and such extra–curricular activities is communicating the joy of learning to the students. This goes especially for those students who have difficulties following the everyday curriculum and learning content. In his opinion, it is the teachers' role to help them transition into a job that enables them to live a happy and fulfilling life, yet teachers sometimes do not feel confident to facilitate this (personal communication, young male teacher, metropolitan senior high school, Higashi–Murayama–shi, 07/12/2017). This was not singular to this school alone and I will reiterate this in the following workshop descriptions as well as address this problem in chapter 7.

5.4.1.3 Myself in society: Thinking about roles (shakai no naka no jibun: yakuwari wo kangaeru wâkushoppu)

This workshop is not offered in the first semester of the first year of high school, but at a later point in the students' school career. Thus, I could not conduct participant observation at this particular workshop. All information regarding this workshop were collected through information material provided either by the NPO, the NPO's website, or from interviews and conversations with NPO members.

The goal is to teach the students that everybody in society is connected depending on the role or function they have. In this particular workshop, students are given guidance while they try to understand and imagine their (future) role in society. Another aim is to trigger "self–assessment about their usefulness [to society]" (*jikoyûyôkan*) and to produce a "feeling of self–affirmation" (*jikokôteikan*) (Interview Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017).

The favored career – or rather life path – is selected from the so called "life career rainbow" developed by the American psychologist Donald E. Super. He introduced this theory, which was based on his book "The psychology of careers" (1957) in the 1980s and it describes career development in terms of life stages with the corresponding life roles (Super 1980). Students are supposed to read out of this life career rainbow (Illustration 20) what kind of decisions led to what kind of life in the future. If you, for example, stop working in one particular career stage there is a high risk that you will not advance in your line of work. Advancing in your career or life stage is called "to step up" and students have to analyze, everybody for themselves, how this process is connected to their life. The outer edge of the rainbow indicates the career development as a life cycle, starting at the bottom left and running chronologically to the right in steps of five years in the future representing the natural life span of a human being. The different life roles are described above and in the middle of the rainbow, describing the situation an individual might find him/herself in, their socioeconomic status, and certain activities that might influence their life. The role of the "child" for example might continue until later in life when the individual has already

started a family him–/herself while the role of a “student” starts with the enrollment in school and ends with graduating from university. The high school students have to analyze this with regard to their own life and perceived future career.

In the second half of the workshop, they create an avatar who is 23 years of age in a computer program. To create this avatar, the students have to make a number of decisions; they practically choose a history and lifestyle. To accomplish this, the facilitator asks the students various questions like: “It is 6 pm, do you want to stop working for today?”; “Are you going home?”; “Are you a leader?”; “Your co–workers in your company office have not finished with work, what do you do?” They have to decide for themselves what is right in which situation and, according to their answers, the consequences are shown to them on the screen. The avatar lets them grasp what decisions in certain situations led to what outcomes in a comprehensive way. This teaches them that they are fully accountable for all of their actions. The workshops aim is to show the students what it means to live a self–determined life within a community, their workplace, and society. Furthermore, the cost of education is explained to the students in order for them to become aware of the amount of money which will have to be spent if they, for example, attend a university. According to Mr. Morita (Interview Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO, founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017), students who participated in the workshop always felt gratitude towards their parents afterwards. Many of them realize for the first time how much money their parents are spending on their education.

5.4.1.4 Employment and professions (kinrôken shokugyôken wâkushoppu)

In the first part of the workshop, students have to think about and discuss the development of work and the labor market in groups. A facilitator and a WMS are present in every class. After a short introduction, the WMS moves from discussion to discussion and listens in while the facilitator monitors the groups. Afterwards, every group briefly presents their results. During my fieldwork I was not able to visit a school together with the NPO while they conducted this particular workshop. According to Mr.

Morita (Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO, founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017), the way Japanese work and the labor market in general has changed quite substantially over the last decades. For this reason, the NPO developed this workshop.

The questions the children are supposed to ask themselves are how the development on the labor market is going to influence their future, where new jobs will be created, and which new professions might emerge in the near future due to progresses in different sectors.

In the second part of the workshop, the difference between irregular and regular employed workers, based on data from the MHLW and METI, is explain to the students by the WMS lecturer and the facilitator. The facilitator presents the data while the WMS adds stories and examples from her/his own work life. The categories which are rather vague for first year high school students are subsequently explained in detail. The overall aim of the fourth of the career design workshops is to explain how unintended consequences of making the wrong choices in a crucial time of their life might led to taking up irregular employment or not being employed at all. The workshop is specifically designed to prevent graduates from taking up this kind of insecure employment.

For example, real life consequences of choosing a “freeter lifestyle” are explained in terms that the students can understand. While the freedom which such a form of employment brings with it might be appealing to some students, the LMCS tries to point out possible pitfalls that go along with it and the long–term consequences which unfold in later parts of their life.

Before they can decide what career path to choose, they need to be in possession of enough information which allows them to picture their future. Mr. Morita stressed that, when thinking about the future career of a child, it does not differ much from an adult who is thinking about changing his or her job. Being a certified career consultant, Mr. Morita developed the workshop with this in mind. However, he added, students have to decide for themselves what career or profession they want to take up. They become aware whether or not it is possible for them to enter regular employment right away or if they should consider entering

vocational training. As with other workshops, factors like “values” (*kachikan*) and “abilities” (*nôryoku*) play a central role. The students have to ask themselves where their interests lie and how they want their future life to turn out. Concepts of “working hard” (*bari bari hataraku*) and “work–life balance” (*wâku raifu baransu*) are being addressed and students are encouraged to think about their family background and how this might influence the range of choices.

The workshop is not supposed to make the students listen to the career choices of the WMS as a fully–fledged member of society but inspire them to start thinking about their own future. This forms, according to Mr. Morita, the starting point for future decisions and career trajectories (Interview, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017).

5.4.2 Workshops based on the fundamental competencies for working persons

5.4.2.1 Fundamental competencies for working persons (shakaijin kisoryoku wâkushoppu)

The Ministry of Economics Trade and Industry (METI) came up with the concept of fundamental competencies for working persons (FCWP) (Illustration 10) in February 2006 (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2018b: 2); Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009). They consist of twelve competencies which a working member of society should possess to actively and successfully participate in work life and society.

In this workshop, the students have to analyze their abilities while engaging in practical group work to fully grasp the concept of these fundamental competencies. However, when looking at the overall design of the workshop, the implementation of the competencies is rather abstract.

I visited two schools together with the LMCS when this workshop was carried out. One school we visited was an average metropolitan general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 53. The percentage of

students entering employment after graduation was low and most students tried to enter a four–year university. The other school was an above–average senior high school with a *hensachi* of 61 in the outskirts of Tokyo; many of the students enter a university after graduating.
I will now describe the workshop at the school in Hachiôji–shi in detail.

In the opening remarks the facilitator explained to the students that the main difference between school and adult life is that once they have graduated from high school and entered a job people rarely take the time to explain to them in detail what they are supposed to do. She repeatedly stressed the absence of "*teachers*" (*sensei*) in working life and the fact that they have to "*do everything by themselves*" (*nandemo hitori de yaranai to ikenai*). Buzzwords like the digital revolution (*dejitaru kakumei*), Industry 4.0 (*indasutrî* 4.0) and information society (*jôho shakai*) were also briefly addressed by the facilitator. She mentioned Japan's over aging society and the decrease in the working population as well as the term *shakaijin*, which she basically described as a member of society that contributes to it by working and being a part of a community.

When asked what a workshop was, all the students fell silent; either because they could not grasp the concept of the word "workshop" or because they were too shy to answer. The facilitator defined the term workshop and told them that in this particular workshop they were supposed to learn abilities which would prepare them for later life.

After dividing the class, the facilitator handed 24 sheets of A4 paper to groups of about five students. The task was to build a paper tower with these sheets of paper. She deliberately did not explain in detail how the students were supposed to go about this task. The only rules were that they were not allowed to use anything but the paper; scissors or other tools could not be used. Their only option therefore was to fold or rip the paper.

The main goal of this particular workshop, the facilitator explained to me during the time the students were busy building the paper tower, was to engage the students successfully in self–led group work (personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan senior high school, Hachiôji–shi, 07/13/2017).

During the first half of the workshop there was a lot of commotion in the class. Some students just started folding the paper and tried to stack it and some other students tried to start discussions with their group members about how to build a tower in a practical way. Both approaches only produced mixed results.

After about 30 minutes, their towers all increased in size but collapsed just as fast as they had been built up. Also, the air conditioning was causing the paper towers to fall and consequently it was switched off. On such a hot summer day for it was mid–July, this was rather uncomfortable for students, teachers, and the NPO members alike. Nevertheless, the students were in a good mood and enjoyed themselves despite the fact that they did not really succeed in their task. Paper towers fell and were built up again. After another five minutes, the facilitator stopped the students.

At this point, the first half the workshop was evaluated and the students were ready to learn their first lesson of the day. The facilitator praised the students' spirit and good work and evaluated the approach of every group by asking a series of questions. Whenever students described how they went about building the paper tower, she linked whatever approach the students had chosen to one or more of the FCWP. When, for example, a student told the facilitator that the group discussed how to go about the task, she mentioned the "ability to work in a team" (*chîmu de hataraku chikara*). When another student said that they just started immediately, she referred to "the ability to move forward" (*mae ni fumidasu chikara*) (cf. Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009). Therefore, it seemed to the students that they already possessed some of the required skills. This, the facilitator stressed repeatedly.

In a conversation during a short break, the facilitator mentioned that this form of positive reinforcement, which is used at every workshop, ensures that the students do not get bored and keeps them motivated during the second part of the workshop (personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan senior high school, Hachiôji–shi, 07/13/2017).

After the short break, the workshop recommenced and the students had to self–evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Choosing from a

list (Illustration 21), they had to pick three abilities or skills they already possessed and another three abilities or skills they needed to improve. After this short evaluation session, the same groups were given the same number of A4 sheets and the task to build another paper tower. Yet, two things were different with this work task. They were giving an extra piece of A3 paper which had to be used in addition to the other sheets and three minutes to plan their approach for building the paper tower. In these three minutes the paper was not to be touched. As with the other workshops I visited, the focus was on teamwork, communication skills and the ability to create group consensus; all of which are included in the FSWP. The students were given an info sheet about the FCWP before they started the second part of the workshop (Illustration 22)

When the students started the task now familiar to them, it was in a much more orderly fashion. Students divided the work among each other after the chosen group leader gave different students different tasks. This led to the work continuing much smoother than in the first half of the workshop. This time, the paper towers did not fall and all reached about the same height. The winning team was chosen by the homeroom teacher and facilitator but was decided in a rather subjective manner. At this point, the students were not very competitive anymore and it was not taken very seriously. The joy about the groups' joined success had replaced the initial competitive ambitions of the students.

Again, the facilitator and homeroom teacher praised the students. Afterwards the strategy of the winning team was discussed and analyzed. The team stood *pars pro toto*[25] for all groups in the class because there was only one pattern of teamwork noticeable during the task. Namely, a group leader was decided upon and the students divided the different work tasks among each other. The facilitator asked questions like: "Who took over which role?", "Who had the best ideas?" and "How did you decide in what way to build the tower?" and the students described their approach. Almost all students nodded in approval or whispered to each other that they had done the same or a similar thing.

[25] Latin for "a part [taken] for the whole"

Afterwards they were given two worksheets to evaluate themselves with regard to the FCWP. First, they had to evaluate themselves in the three core categories of the FCWP (Illustration 23): “Action”, “thinking”, and “teamwork”. On a scale of one to four (one meaning they did not possess the skill in question and four meaning they absolutely possessed the skill) they had to judge their abilities according to several statement pairs consisting of two short statements each. In the competency “action” (*akushon*) and sub–category “ability to act” (*jikkôryoku*) one statement was “I am a person who decides goals and targets” (*mokuteki ya mokuhyô wo kimeru kata da*) and the other was “I accomplish things I set my mind to” (*yaru to kimeta koto ha yaritodokeru*). According to their level of agreement, they had to mark their results on the scale und add the two numbers together and write down the result in the column on the right hand side of the worksheet. They did that for every competency and according sub–category.

In the second worksheet (Illustration 24) they then marked the results in a radar chart in order to have a visual representation of their abilities according to the FCWP. Three open questions on the right side of the worksheet additionally made them think about how these competencies were connected to their life and which they had to improve on.

Again the aim of this evaluation was put in context of the twelve competency factors for working persons. At this point, the necessity to work on their communication skills was stressed repeatedly by the facilitator. It remains to be said that the homeroom teacher asked the facilitator beforehand to mention this and emphasize the importance of communication skills in later life during this workshop.

During most of my participant observation, I have noticed that teachers, in general, believe the work–related opinion or advise of an outside professional, in this case the facilitator, has a greater impact on the students. In a conversation with the facilitator, she mentioned that teachers tried to influence their students by means of the workshop, facilitators, or – if present – WMS lecturers. Therefore, for the school or teachers the overall aim of the workshops was not only the content of the

workshop itself and the skills taught but also to address problems teachers were having with the children. By using the workshop in this manner, they tried to improve the class climate, performance, and/or overall participation rate off the students (personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan general senior high school, Hachiôji–shi, 07/13/2017). As with every workshop, the students had to fill out an evaluation sheet at the end.

In the final meeting, three teachers voiced their concerns about their students and their current skill sets. It was mentioned that “active learning”, a buzzword that has been around in education in schools for quite some time, had been integrated into the curriculum at this school. However, the first teacher did not believe that this prepares the students adequately for the time after graduation. He continued that it did not teach them any skills they might use in a work environment. This was the reason they had decided to conduct the NPO’s workshop at their school. Especially the aspect of improving communication skills was very appealing to them. The second teacher agreed that the skills of their students were not sufficient to take part in society and the labor market in an active manner. He also mentioned the lack of communication skills and ability to listen thoroughly to other peoples’ opinions. According to the third teacher, this was not a problem only perceived by the teachers but also by the students themselves. He felt that the students also lack of the ability to express their own opinions (personal communication, teacher meeting, metropolitan senior high school, Hachiôji–shi, 07/13/2017).

5.4.2.2 Team consensus (chîmu konsensasu wâkushoppu)

The two metropolitan senior high schools I visited together with the NPO, when they were conducting the team consensus workshop, were both situated at the outskirts off the 23 boroughs of Tokyo. Both were situated in a suburban area. One was in Nerima–ku, the other one of at Edogawa–ku, both close to the neighboring provinces, Saitama and Chiba, respectively. At the former school (with a *hensachi* of 56), the NPO members were greeted by the principal who talked about some of the

characteristics of this particular school. He emphasized the team spirit and the students' affinity to sports while stressing the importance of teamwork at his school. In a later conversation with the homeroom teacher of the class I visited, I was told that one of the reasons the principal might have chosen this workshop was because it could benefit the school's team spirit. This might also have a positive influence on the athletic achievements of the school, the teacher told me (Personal communication, teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Nerima–ku, 06/24/2017).

At both schools, either the long homeroom session or the integrated session (*sôgô gakushu*)[26] was used for the workshop.

Together with the facilitator I visited a class of first year students. After a short introduction, the facilitator explained to the students that today there were no right or wrong answers to the task they would be given. The main theme of the workshop, she explained to the students, was to "*achieve consensus*" (*gôi wo keisei suru*).

> *"In our society it is very important to work together and achieve consensus. This means that we always have to reach an agreement." (Personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan senior high school, Nerima–ku, 06/24/2017)*

The students were placed in an imaginary setting where they were shipwrecked and stuck together on a life raft (Illustration 25). Ten items were listed on a worksheet (e.g. rope, water bottle, compass, map etc.) (Illustration 26) and students had to sort them by their importance and the role they played in their struggle for survival (Illustration 27). Different roles were given to students who formed groups of five: Leader (*shinkô*), presenter (*shoki*), timekeeper (*taimukipa*), spy (*supai*), and supporter (*sapôta*). While most of the roles are self–explanatory I will briefly explain them. The leader was going to act as a moderator in the discussion. The presenter would present the results of the group discussion later in the workshop. The function of the timekeeper was to remind the group

[26] Topic based learning by integrating cross–curricular thematic projects

periodically to keep an eye on the time in order to have a result at the end of the discussion time. The spy was supposed to listen in on the other groups at a specific point of time to get ideas for her/his own group. The supporter was a group member without a specific function, but it was stressed that she/he should also actively participate in the discussion.
There were four basic rules for this workshop:

1. All the team members had to decide together
2. There was no majority vote
3. No *quid pro quo* (*torihiki*) [27]
4. Everybody had to listen to everybody else.

The students then started discussing in what order the items had to be put. At both schools, this process was very energetic and the students seemed to enjoy the task. The teacher voiced her astonishment to me about how actively the students engaged with each other and how lively but still concentrated they worked. The facilitator walked around in the classroom, listened to the conversations, sometimes commented on what was being said, or offered advice. After the discussion, the students presented the results and explained why they had chosen their particular order of the items. Every group was praised individually and the positive points of their teamwork and their decision making process were pointed out.

After all groups had presented their results, surprisingly for the students, the correct order was revealed. Some students voiced their discontent about this because it was said at the beginning of the workshop that, as they pointed out, there was not supposed to be a right or wrong answers to this task. The facilitator stressed that every group had at least put some of the items in the correct order and, therefore, it was a success.

The teamwork was now evaluated with an additional work sheet. (Illustration 29). Depending on how many items they put in the right order they could calculate the score off their overall success and see how well

[27] "A favor for a favor"; Students were e.g. not supposed to trade e.g. cleaning duty in order for another student to change his or her opinion during the task.

they worked together as a group. As an additional task, they had to write down problems they faced during the decision making process.
In the closing remarks in the classroom, the facilitator stressed the importance of teamwork one more time.

> *"You will need this skill set when you become adults. When you work together, you will be able to 'survive' (ikinokoru). You will always have to interact with each other." (Personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan senior high school, Nerima–ku, 06/24/2017)*

After this wrap–up, the students had to fill out an evaluation sheet with three open questions (Illustration 29)

During the final meeting, the students' answers were discussed and all the teachers praised the success of the workshop. Especially the level of the students' energy and commitment to the task surprised the teachers. They admitted that they were always worrying about the decision–making and the listening skills of their students. All of them described experiences where students were unable to reflect upon opinions of somebody else or voice their own opinion. They admitted that this made it difficult for them to engage their students in discussions. Although "active learning" was supposed to be implemented into every subject teachers stick, in most cases, to the old "chalk and talk"[28] format. Career guidance seemed to them like a good opportunity to try something new, which was the reason they chose this particular workshop and – as they put it – persuaded the principal to invite the NPO to the school (personal communication, teacher meeting, metropolitan senior high school, Nerima–ku, 06/24/2017).

[28] The teacher stands in front of the class and talks while writing down notes on the blackboard, which students copy into their notebooks. There is little to no active participation on the student side.

5.4.2.3 *Interview with working members of society (shakaijin he no intâbyû wâkushoppu)*

In the interview with a working members of society workshop, WMS lecturers from different companies visit the school and talk about their line of work and how they had chosen what they wanted to be after graduating from high school. They set out to inspire the students to think about their own future and give them some idea regarding what life after graduation might hold for them. The goals of the workshop are outlined on an information sheet all WMS receive before visiting the class they were assigned to (Illustration 30). Again, communication is a major factor in this workshop and the students are required to participate actively in it (personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan general senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

One of the schools I visited when the NPO conducted this particular workshop was situated in Itabashi–ku, one of the 23 special wards of Tokyo, and is considered an average general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 51. The NPO has been visiting this school with the same workshop for a couple of years and the students have always been very eager to learn and have asked many questions. The principal mentioned, when greeting us in the meeting room, that their students were very competitive athletes and were always preparing for yet another sports competition. However, he thought that under the current circumstances of a rapidly changing society, the school needed help to turn their students into self–reliant members of society in order for them to find meaningful (*imi ga aru*) employment after graduating (personal communication, principal, metropolitan senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

The day I visited this school was part of the so–called “work week” (*shokugyô wêku*) for students in their first year. During this particular week, representatives of universities and vocational schools etc. visited the school, gave talks, and conducted workshops. At this school, students had one intensive week for exploring the subject of “work” and think about their future. The time slot designated for such events always

fell into the long homeroom[29] (*rongu hômurûmu*) or integrated studies (*sôgô gakushu*).

Together with a facilitator and a WMS lecturer, who was a salesperson for a well–known copy and print machine maker, I visited a class of 40 students in their first year. The main aim of this workshop was to help students accustom themselves in some detail with one particular profession and to give them the opportunity to learn from and talk to a WMS who has collected unique experiences over the course of his or her employment.

The workshop started with a 20–minute talk from the WMS lecturer about his current employment, the steps he took to get to his present position, and also his time at high school. The students took notes during his talk on a memo sheet which had been circulated beforehand (Illustration 31). The WMS lecturer opened his talk with the words “Alone one cannot accomplish anything!” (*hitori de nanimo dekinai*) (Personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

He was part of the sales department and his talk focused on the subject of service to and communication with his customers. After that, he showed the students so–called ambiguous images[30]; some students saw a rabbit in the picture some students saw a bird (Illustration 32). He explained to them that what he wanted to illustrate with this is that people do not always perceive things the same way. He stressed that communication skills were, therefore, one of the most important aspects in the business world to reach mutual understanding. He reiterated that if a person cannot understand what the customer wants them to do, they would not be able to build solid and reliable business connections. Furthermore, he explained to the students that an interview is not only something they had to do when they wanted to find employment but that these skills were transferable and necessary, especially in his line of work,

[29] Class period that is used by the teacher to address organizational issues or special content of the curriculum etc.
[30] Optical illusion images, which exploit graphical similarities and other properties of visual system interpretation between two distinct image forms.

to successfully communicate with customers (personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

After the first 20 minutes, the facilitator and the WMS had a mock interview to give the students some idea about what they were supposed to do later in the workshop. The schedule for the workshop was very minutely planed (Illustration 33) and the facilitator kept the time very accurately. She handed out post–it notes to the students who had been divided into groups of five. The students then had to come up with questions they wanted to ask the lecturer. Beforehand, they had been given an example sheet (Illustration 34) which gave them some idea of how to come up with proper questions for the WMS lecturer.

Students at every school I visited struggled with the task of coming up with questions and teachers as well as NPO staff told me that this is rather common in all the interview workshops they had done so far.

After a short break, a group leader was decided and the group decided on the questions that they wanted to ask the lecturer. In this second part of the workshop the facilitator explained to the students that the group leader was now supposed to ask the WMS lecturer the questions they had decided upon and after hearing his answer the student quickly had to come up with a follow–up question. Because the facilitator knew from experience that these types of conversations are always difficult for students, she reminded the students that they had to greet the lecturer in the proper manner and ask the questions while directly looking in to the lecturer's eyes. In addition, she stressed that it was imperative to listen closely to the WMS lecturer's answer in order to come up with a follow–up question that relates to what already had been said. The lecturer added that in an interview situation when, for example, applying for a job the first 30 seconds count and that talking loud and clear is very important to make a good first impression (personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

Although it might sound odd, but at first it was quite common that first year students struggle with such a task. The questions the student asked were often very broad and it was extremely difficult for them to

come up with a follow–up question so that the facilitator had to give them some hints.

At the final teacher meeting after the workshop had finished, the teachers stressed the importance that WMS talked about experience to which the students can relate. To get a clearer picture of their future, the facilitator seated next to me in the meeting also told me, they needed to be able to identify with the WMS (personal communication, facilitator, metropolitan general senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 07/14/2017).

Students of metropolitan general high schools cannot choose the lecturer they will listen to during the workshop. The teacher responsible for career guidance and the NPO coordinator decide beforehand which lecturer and facilitator visits which class. Nevertheless, time and financial resources are the limiting factors here. This becomes apparent when comparing workshops held at metropolitan high schools to those at private high schools. I will elaborate on difference of career guidance at private and metropolitan schools in a later part of this chapter.

When I visited the other school, about 15 minutes away by foot to the closest train station, in Fuchu–Higashi–shi, a city in the western outskirts of Tokyo, I had similar experiences. It was a slightly below–average general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 46 located in a quiet residential area. However, at this school the interview workshop was held not only for first year students but also during second year. This gave the students the chance to listen to another WMS lecture in their second year.

While the lecturer at the first school had what could be considered as a normal career path – he entered university after graduating from high school, did job hunting, and then entered a big company – the lecturer at the second school had a rather bumpy start. He admitted that he failed the entrance examination for university because he did not study much in high school and concentrated on playing football. Because of that, he did one year of *rônin*[31] and then eventually entered a low ranking

[31] A student who has graduated from high school but has failed to enter a university and, consequently, is studying outside of the formal school system for the entrance exams in the next year.

university of which he deliberately did not mention the name. Now he was working for a big sister company of one of the top companies providing consumer and professional electronics, gaming, entertainment and financial services in Japan. He also had some experience of working as a freelancer on which he elaborated.

> *"When you work as a freelancer you find out very quickly that you do not get paid if you do not work. This might sound rather simple but it is one of the most valuable lessons I have ever learned*." (Personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan senior high school, Fuchu–Higashi–shi, 07/10/2017)

As in almost every other workshop I visited, in this school emphasis was also put on communication skills. At the end of the workshop, the students filled out an evaluation sheet which was collected by the facilitator (Illustration 35). Here many students wrote that they enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to a professional about his work but admitted that coming up with questions was the hardest part of the workshop. Teachers took up on this and voiced their concerns about this repeatedly in the meeting afterwards. At this point, the coordinator reassured the teachers who looked worried that this is a common response students give (personal communication, WMS lecturer, metropolitan senior high school, Fuchu–Higashi–shi, 07/10/2017). Again, the lack of communication skills and the lack of opportunity to practice them was one of the main narratives at this school.

5.4.2.4 Presentation workshop (purezentêshon wâkushoppu)

This particular workshop is the most time intensive workshop the LMCS is offering. It takes about ten session á 50 minutes each. The students visit a company together with their teacher for a whole day. A number of lecturers teach the students about work and afterwards they talk in groups about different work–styles and how to achieve consensus in a work environment. This workshop combines elements of other workshops which are in the repertoire of the NPO.

At the end of the workshop, students present their results about a particular topic in a PowerPoint or flipchart presentation and receive detailed feedback from the lecturers. Due to the amount of time needed for this particular workshop it is an option that schools rarely choose. In the interview, Mr. Morita briefly mentioned that for this reason it is currently not in the portfolio off the NPO (interview Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, LMCS, 06/22/2017).

5.4.3 The NPO's working member of society seminar

The content of the working member of society seminar (*shakaijin jugyô)* primarily depends on the lecturer and his background. Three overall themes are covered in each presentation: The lecturers "CV from age 16", the "importance of communication", and the "importance of one's own interests or values". It is designed to last for one teaching session á 50 minutes, giving students the opportunity to listen to the experiences of a lecturer they are interested in. The most commonly selected format is two sessions following one another rather than a single session. By doing so, students can listen to two different talks they have chosen.

The CV of the lecturers and/or information about the companies they are working for are collected in a brochure designed by the NPO, which is printed by the school and distributed to the students about a week prior to the event. At this point, I would like to mention that this workshop is almost exclusively selected by private high schools which seem to allocate more time and resources to such events in general. When comparing the printed resources, for example, they had a much higher quality at the private senior high school I visited than at any of the metropolitan schools. Also, this event can be (and in most cases is) carried out not only for first year students but also in the second year depending on the school, the principal, and the teachers' commitment to career guidance. The students can choose based on their personal preferences and in most cases visit two sessions by two different lecturers on a single day.

As mentioned before, I only visited one private senior high school together with the NPO. One of the board members of the NPO, who is a teacher and functionary at that school, was present during the workshop and stayed with me for almost the whole workshop. He talked to me about his job as a teacher there and his involvement in such events. Because it was a private all–boys school with a *hensachi* of 70 and connected to a well–known private university in Tokyo, the atmosphere was very different to the other schools I visited. The school building was about twice the size of a metropolitan school and the facilities and equipment were very modern.

I was told by Mr. and Mrs. Morita, who both were present as additional coordinators at this workshop, that some of the lecturers used a PowerPoint presentation, some interact with the students while others just talked for 50 minutes straight. It entirely depended on the WMS and neither students nor teachers could influence the content or presentation style (personal communication, Mr. and Mrs. Morita, NPO founders, private general senior high school, Nakano–ku, 07/18/2017)

I joined the talks of two WMS lecturers; one was employed at a European travel agency and the other one at a famous web service provider with its headquarters in the US. The female employee of the travel agency as well as the male lecturer employed by the web service provider spoke at least one foreign language rather fluently. They talked about their work, company, and the steps they took to get to their current position. Both talks were very popular and they were held in larger classrooms and additional chairs were brought in. About 60 students joined each talk.

The WMS for the web service provider talked in detail about the rapidly changing work environment in his profession.

> *"You will probably have to work until you are 80 years old; not only for one company. In the future, you will have to change jobs more frequently. New companies are founded everyday but after 10 years they are already bankrupt. It is very important for you to plan ahead when choosing a company."* (Personal communication, WMS

lecturer, private general senior high school, Nakano–ku, 07/18/2017)

A facilitator was present to support each WMS lecturer if necessary but most of the time their function was to introduce the lecturer to the teachers and students, escort them to and from the classroom, and occasionally add information or opinions at the final meeting after the event.

During the final meeting, the principal mentioned current problems at the school including bullying and the difficulty for teachers in an age of social media like LINE or Facebook to address bullying cases in a proper manner. In his opinion, decreasing communication skills of students are part of the problem. This was also the reason for the rather passive participation of students at most of the lectures during the workshop. Students did not know how to talk with the WMS. For this reason, the NPO would conduct the same workshop again for the same group of students at the end of the year. In Mr. Morita's closing remarks, he added that it was important for schools to re–connect with their surrounding community to address such problems and successfully transition graduates into higher education and the labor market (personal communication, principal and Mr. Morita, private general senior high school, Nakano–ku, 07/18/2017).

6 Excursus: The minor case study

At this point of my dissertation, I would like to describe an additional minor case study of a program run by another NPO which operates in the educational sector. The program is called "Free of Charge Cram School" (muryô *juku*) but to avoid confusion with the Labor Market Cram School (LMCS) at the center of this dissertation, I will call the program "Free Juku".

Since 2016, the Free Juku has been using the facilities of a local kindergarten in a quiet residential area of Shinjuku–ku (Free Juku 2016).

This location I visited during my fieldwork in 2017 and 2018 and conducted my participant observation at.

At the Free Juku children who visit compulsory primary and junior high schools are given the opportunity to receive one–on–one learning support, as they would receive in one of the many private cram schools all over Japan. In addition to a place to study at, the children are also provided with a free dinner at the facility, which is freshly prepared for them by volunteers. The program was especially designed to facilitate this support for children from families with a weak socioeconomic background.

The amount of data I have collected and the time I have spent with this NPO is not as extensive as what I have collected about the program of the LMCS or at various metropolitan senior high schools. Nevertheless, I think that it will serve as a valuable addition to my data and provide yet another example of a civil society group that was founded to target a specific problem with a grassroots approach on a local level.

At the same time, because the NPO's activities and development seem to occur without government interference, it is an interesting case to observe how such an NPO can adapt, grow, and expand its activities on to a larger area. The NPO serves as an example of an organization which holds a certain degree of mistrust against the government. It is an attempt to solve a specific social problem on a civil society level by an actor engaging the task at hand on their own terms and with their own means.

I will give a compact description of the NPOs origins, its activities, and recent developments. I will also briefly describe the results of my participant observation at the Free Juku and informal conversations with the founders of the NPO, volunteer teaching staff, and other volunteers. I collected official documents as well as documents not produced for general consumption like teaching guidelines, brochures, and annual reports for internal circulation. I visited the Free Juku in its classrooms in Shinjuku–ku from June to August 2017, in February 2018 and in October 2018. Class was only once a week every Thursday from 17:30 to 21:00. After my first time in the Free Juku, I always arrived about half an hour

earlier when everybody was preparing for class and left with the last members after they were finished tidying up about one hour after classes were finished. In total I spent about 40 hours in the setting. During my participant observation, I was able to move freely in the facility, observe the interactions between students and the volunteer teachers, I helped out in the kitchen when the NPO members where shorthanded and could therefore also talk to some of the children's' mothers who volunteer as kitchen staff, and I had extensive personal communications with the two NPO founders. I also stayed in contact with some NPO members via email and Facebook where they provided me with updates about their activities and recent developments of the Free Juku.

6.1 The Free Juku: Its aim, its members, and its students

The NPO in charge of the Free Juku program gained NPO legal status in August 2008 and its predominant activities were in the field of environmental education (kankyô keihatsu). In January 2012 they joined the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (*nihon yunesuko kyôkai renmei*), a public interest incorporated association (*kôeki shadan hôjin*). Although member of this association, the Free Juku does not receive funding from UNESCO. Like in the case of the LMCS, the NPOs Free Juku project was started by a married couple. The husband acts as the principal and his wife as the vice–principal of the Free Juku. Nowadays, they are mostly occupied with administrative work while the students are studying. Sometimes they also engage in teaching.

When the Free Juku project started April 2014 (Free Juku 2017a: 2), 22 students were enrolled and the NPO had classrooms in the Waseda district in Shinjuku–ku and Shimokitazawa district in Setagaya–ku. Classes ran from 15:00 to 18:00 in the Waseda classroom and from 18:00 to 21:00 in the Shimokitazawa classroom. At that time they had 30 volunteer teachers teaching at both facilities and a total of 44 students enrolled in their Free Juku. (Free Juku 2015: 3).

Volunteer teachers are mostly university students who are enrolled in the educational department. Most of them aim at becoming primary or

junior high school teachers. With the help of some initial volunteers, the founder of the NPO established a volunteer club at several universities and students have supported the NPO on a regular basis ever since. In addition to these students, there are also some retired teachers and university professors who support the project.

The number of teachers has risen to 71 volunteer teachers (mostly university students) and 13 volunteer teachers who are senior high school students (Free Juku 2017b). Some of the senior high school students visited the Free Juku in the past as a primary or junior high school student and wanted to show their gratitude by supporting the project as a volunteer teacher. The latest numbers from February 2018 put the total number of volunteer teachers at 166 people of which most are students from prestigious universities like Waseda University, Sophia University, and Tokyo University.

At the end of 2017, the student numbers for the ongoing semester have risen to 45 students, putting the total number of students who visited the Free Juku since it was founded at 153 (74 primary school students and 79 junior high school students). 138 of these children come from a single–mother and six from a single–father household. Only nine children live with both of their parents. Eleven of the total number of children have a migration background and two were affected by relocation due to the Great East Japan Earthquake (*higashi nihon daishinsai*) in March 2011. Regarding the socioeconomic background of the children the majority of them come from disadvantaged families. In that year, 96 of the children were living in households that earned 1/4th or less than the average yearly income of 2017[32]. 39 of the households earned more than 1/4th but less than half of the average yearly income and only 18 children were living in households that earned more than half of the average yearly income in that year (Free Juku 2017a: 7).

The number of students enrolled in the Free Juku is rather small when compared to private for–profit cram schools and, therefore, it is

[32] In 2017, the average yearly income was at 5,410,000 yen (approx. 51,200USD/ 45,300 EUR). In earlier years, the average income in Japan (2014 to 2016) was about 4,880,000 (approx. 46,200USD/ 40,800 EUR).

hard to generalize from this. Nevertheless, the numbers show without a doubt that this free of charge supplementary education program is predominantly used by families with very small income and single–mother households. Some of the mothers whose children visit the Free Juku also volunteer and help with the preparation of the students' dinners. One of the volunteers is a professional photographer and responsible for the NPO's internet presence on social media sites like Facebook. There are posts created every other day and the network of volunteers and sponsors is growing due to this use of social media and the attention the project received from traditional media outlets.

In addition to the learning support, the NPO also conduct a "cleaning up your neighborhood" program every other month with the students who are enrolled or were enrolled at the school, active or former volunteer teachers, and other staff members. These activities have been reported about by local news channels and the Free Juku project itself has appeared in a popular evening program on a major Tokyo TV channel. The Japan Office of the international lifestyle magazine "VICE" has also published an Interview with the founder of the NPO where he talked about his motivation and voiced criticism over the current state of the Japanese education system and the necessity to take matters into one's own hands.

6.1.1 An evening at the Free Juku

I visited two classes at the location in Shinjuku–ku. Class A runs from 17:30 to 20:00; it is for primary school students in the 1st to 4th year. Class B runs from 18:00 to 21:00 and caters to primary school students from the 5th year to junior high school students in their 3rd year of school.

The principal always greets every child at the entrance and their attendance is monitored by a computer program. They each have a student card with a bar code which they scan upon entering the building. As a recent addition to the children's safety, an email is sent automatically to the parents' phone when the child "checks in" or "out" at the Free Juku. In the past, this list was done manually on the computer but since some

of the sponsors are part of the electronics and computer sector, the equipment has been updated considerably since my first visit. This includes several modern laptops, printers, and tablets for teachers and students. All of these were donations from different companies.

A large amount of data is collected about each student. This includes not only attendance but a minutely kept record about the learning goals, the progress, and grades of the students. Each child has a folder in which before and after each class study targets and their progress are written down and evaluated afterwards. Upcoming tests at their school are also noted. The children do this themselves, sometimes with some help from the volunteer teacher. The principal told me that this is done in order to teach them self–reliance, responsibility as well as time–management and to reach goals they have set for themselves. Many of the children do not have a daily routine and their life is governed by instability. They often underperform during normal classes and sometimes have difficulties adjusting to structured school life. Visualizing their aims on the so called “step–up sheet” is vital for them to advance in their studies. They are supposed to set realistic goals and think about how to achieve them beforehand. Their success and their problems are minutely monitored in order to analyze their performance and to offer better individual support. The NPO also tries to involve the mothers in the children’s education. This, however, often proves difficult. Many mothers are either not concerned with school education and are happy to leave any obligations regarding the child’s education to the Free Juku. Parents (in most cases the mothers) are often lenient with their children because they are feeling guilty about their family (divorce etc.) or socioeconomic situation. Except for the mothers who help out with preparing the children’s meals there is little contact with parents. When the parents approach them, the NPO tries to offer information about financial support they can receive from the city or the government for their children. (Personal communication, principal, 08/14/2017)

During class students work together with a certain teacher or teachers. If the particular teacher is not present, another teacher takes over. However, it is important that the student has a person he or she can

rely on in order to build up trust. The favored teachers are noted in the child's folder. In every class there are about 20 children present and, at the same time, always more than ten volunteer teachers to facilitate a student–teacher ratio of at least two to one (personal communication, male volunteer teacher, Free Juku, 06/15/2017).

After class A is finished, students all eat together with their teachers volunteer while class B is still studying. After class B is finished they also eat together with their teachers. The principal always tries to join at least one class if he has enough time on his hands. I regularly ate together with the students and used that time to engage with them and the teachers in a relaxed atmosphere. The dinner is of course also free of charge but guest like I pay 300 yen (2.80 USD/ 2.50 EUR). Sometimes visitors from companies the NPO receives donations from also join the children for dinner. The volunteer teachers do not pay for their dinner. This dinner is an essential part of the Free Juku project. The NPO's aim is to provide nourishment for the mind as well as the body, as the principal put it at the first time I visited the Free Juku. He wanted to create a safe space for learning but also for interaction, which can be in a way compared to a big and healthy family (personal communication, principal, Free Juku, 06/15/2017).

6.1.2 Current developments of the Free Juku

The founders of the NPO wanted to expand their program, however, did not want to be tied down in one or two locations. Therefore, they decided to start the "Mobile Free Juku" project. It basically is a trailer which is designed as a classroom for up to 10 students above 4th grade of primary school. It is equipped with heating and air conditioning, Wi–Fi, and a small kitchen to provide snacks for the students. This trailer is a study space for the children, which they can visit at their convenience during more than one day of the week. At least one volunteer teacher, in most cases a university student, is present. Additionally, every desk is equipped with a tablet for students to contact volunteer teachers via video chat in case they have a question. The Mobile Free Juku is designed to

give students a safe space to study in their own time and at their own pace. The one–on–one support, as provided in the Shinjuku classrooms, is not at the center of this project. Many of the children visiting the Free Juku are, according to the principal, children with a weak socioeconomic background in general. Sometimes they do not even have their own desk at home to study or do their homework. It goes without saying that this has a negative effect on their performance at school. Thus, the NPO started this additional project to address this rather specific but essential problem and enhance the overall flexibility of the initial project (personal communication, principal, Free Juku, 10/15/2018).

The NPO was in the middle of setting up the project, finding sponsors, and buying the car and other equipment when I conducted participant observation at the classroom in the summer of 2017. According to the principal, the biggest challenge was to find a place to set up the mobile classroom because parking space is expensive and rare in inner–city Tokyo. By October 2018, the project had been financed, the mobile classroom had been built, and they had found a location near Waseda University where the mobile juku was allowed to set up. The trailer is located at a free building plot which will stay unoccupied for at least two years. According to the founders of the project, NPO legal status did not help at all when they tried to find a location for the mobile classroom To find a location for the trailer was the most difficult task and only through the support of a local politician they were able to get permission to use the Waseda location (informal conversation, principal and vice–principal, 10/16/2018).

Fundraising for the car, trailer and equipment as well as the assembly was done by volunteers. The total yearly operating costs of the mobile juku are 4,790,000 yen (approx.45,300 USD/ 40,100 EUR) (Free Juku 2017b, 2017b). For the future, the NPO plans to have three more mobile class rooms. The principal stresses that it is very important to fund these projects independently from the TMBE or the MEXT. Otherwise funding could be reduced if disagreements about e.g. the way the classes are organized arise. By funding the whole project with donations, the principal said that the NPO has complete control over the project and

cannot be co–opted by the government. Many procedures and teaching methods have developed naturally and over time. In the principal's opinion this is the only way how such a project can develop. This independence is important to adjust to changes and the different needs of the students which are among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the educational system of contemporary Japan. (Personal communication, principal, Free Juku project, 02/15/2018)

6.2 Preliminary summary: Another problem, another NPO

My research at this particular NPO was initially intended to be only a side–project during the fieldwork for my dissertation. Throughout my fieldwork at the Free Juku I discovered certain similarities to the LMCS project. The Free Juku project is also addressing a single social issue although their target group is much smaller than the one of the LMCS. Both NPO–led projects were created in a grass roots fashion and both NPOs were founded at about the same time; although the Free Juku itself opened its doors in April 2014. Therefore, by the time I conducted participant observation at the Free Juku in 2017, it was still a very young project.

Both NPOs are led by a married couple who quit their former employment to concentrate on their NPO activities. Yet, while the LMCS has various MEXT and METI concepts at the center of its educational content, the Free Juku provides a substitute for additional education – normally provided by private cram schools – in order to enhance performance of disadvantaged students in compulsory education. While the LMCS target career guidance classes of the student attending the average–level metropolitan general senior high school to enhance their skill set for labor market entry, the Free Juku caters to children from a weak socioeconomic background in order to improve their academic performance and other shortcomings.

Both NPOs address a specific problem with a tailor–made approach that developed naturally over time. Both projects have – influenced by their level of funding – grown at a rapid rate considering the short time

they since they were founded. In spring 2018, the LMCS was conducting workshops at more than half of all metropolitan senior high schools in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area and the Free Juku was just about finished setting up their first Mobile Free Juku. More volunteer members have joined the Free Juku project since then and funding has increased quite substantially. The number of students using their facilities is also rising, yet they still have capacities to accompany more children. The social stigma attached to taking advantage of free support services is still an issue for many parents, however, the principal is confident that due to the Mobile Free Juku they will now be able to reach more children in a more flexible way. The Free Juku project could be considered what Ogawa (2014: 53) calls a “social enterprise”, that provides services parallel to the government – or in this case more accurately to private, for–profit cram schools – to the end–user.

Further research about the Free Juku project is necessary to produce richer data for analysis. However, the project offers an interesting outlook on a promising future research project in the area of NPO–led educational services and serves as another example of how a civil society actor addresses a specific problem in the Japanese educational system in an innovative manner within a very short period of time.

7 Analysis: Preparing students for the transition

The Japanese school graduate employment system has always been described as a very distinctive mechanism of transition from junior or senior high school to the labor market. It has long been regarded as underpinning the stable transition of high school graduates into employment and has enjoyed a high international reputation (Brinton 1998; Jambor 2017; Kosugi 2005). However, there have also been scholars who are concerned that this system has been perceived inaccurately and stress the need for its re–evaluation regarding its transformation at present as well as its formation in the past (Honda 2004a; Hori 2016). While in the past this system enabled young people

to leave education at an early stage, which prevented the problem of youth unemployment (Hori 2012a: 33), in recent years the rather simplistic nature when describing this system as well as the resulting problems have caught the attention of Japanese and international scholars alike (Brinton 2011; Hori 2007, 2016; Miyamoto 2005; Pilz et al. 2014).

The following chapter will describe developments of this system, which has always been described as a singular to Japan, from the 1960s up to the present. I will try to shed some light on a process which has always been described as a "*smooth transition*" made possible by the interplay of educational institutions and Japanese companies, in order to point out misconceptions as well as its actual shortcomings which Honda (2003: 11) describes as "*superficial efficacy*".

7.1 From School to work: Transition into the labor market

I reviewed the Japanese and international research literature as well as government publications and by integrating data from interviews I conducted with principals, vice–principals, and teachers at senior high schools I will give a closer and more detailed picture of the current situation of career guidance at metropolitan general senior high schools in Tokyo. In order to provide a comprehensive overview, I summarized the specifics about the schools I visited and the interviews I conducted in Table 7.

I have visited numerous metropolitan senior high schools in Tokyo covering a large range concerning school ranking (*hensachi*). When looking at it from the perspective of career guidance in Japan in general, I am aware that it is still only a narrow field of view. However, I will be able to address claims made in the academic discourse about the current state of the career guidance system and add a fresh perspective on the topic due to the rich data I have collected during my fieldwork.

The developments of the labor market before the 1960s, especially regarding the employment situation of junior high school graduates, needs to be addressed briefly at this point. The economic situation of

Japan in those days is one factor which influenced the development of the transition system from school to work substantially and the perception in Japan and internationally that it was a prime example of efficiency. Its formation goes back to the 1960s and after its transformation in the 1990s its limits became more and more apparent (Honda 2004a: 105–113).

With the exception of the two baby–boomer cohorts in the mid–1960s and since the mid–1980s the overall number of students has continuously decreased in numbers (Graph 3). Before the burst of the bubble, junior high school graduates formed a large pool of future employees for the industry to choose from. Employment chances were good but the growing economy and rising demands of the labor market led to a massive surge in demand for higher education. The industry needed more well–educated employees and not only mere laborers for e.g. the manufacturing industry. This development led to more and more students aiming for senior high school education. This did not only changed the composition of different types of senior high schools (Graph 4) but also the post–graduation trajectories for senior high school students (Graph 5). However, overall student numbers continued to decline. This in turn led to a decrease in the numbers of senior high schools. Budget cutting “at the bottom” (i.e. schools with low academic achievement) led either to the closing of “unpopular” specialized senior high schools or merging them into so called integrated senior high schools (*sôgô kôtô gakkô*) which increased in numbers from around 1995 onward (Graph 4).

Since the middle of the 1970s, the number of general senior high schools exceeded that of specialized senior high schools. With periodical blanket recruitment (*shinki gakusotsu ikkatsu teiki saiyô*) still dominating the Japanese labor market, vocational specialization at a high school level was perceived as redundant because of on–the–job training within the company and the unappealing character of these below–average schools.

In the past, graduates from the lower end of the educational spectrum were more easily absorbed by the Japanese labor market (Brinton 1998: 443). Due to the expansion of academic education, the

differentiation of types and forms of labor, and an increase of non–regular employment in the last three decades (Graph 1) the relationship between educational credentials, labor force entry and career trajectories has been drastically changed. Consequently, schools – especially general senior high schools – find it exceedingly difficult to find secure employment for their graduates and have to come up with new ways to facilitate what has been expected from them since the time of high economic growth – their graduates' smooth transition into the labor market.

7.1.1 The school–to–work transition system: Past to present

The Japanese transition system from school to work has at its center the concept of proven relationships (*jisseki kankei*). It can be translated literally to "*relationships based on past results or records*" and indicates highly trustworthy "*semiformal employment contracts*" between high schools and specific employers (Rosenbaum and Kariya 1989: 1343). It was and still is considered to be an effective system which ensures fairness, due to selection within school, and a smooth transition into the labor market in a society which is still permeated by the guiding principle of meritocracy (Hori 2012b: 46). These ongoing proven relationships were the foundation of the practice of "*referral by designated schools*" (*shiteikô*) and "*one application per student*" (*hitori issha*), which still are a central component of the Japanese high school graduate employment system (Hori 2012a: 33).

When looking at the legal or rather policy situation, the school's role in the transition process from school to labor market was, according to Brinton (2000: 297), not so much policy design but a by–product of it (Illustration 1). The establishment of the transition system itself was designed by the national government. It is administered by a network of public employment security offices. The aim of this system was to efficiently match demand of the companies and labor supply of the educational institutions while, at the same time, protecting the young graduates from unfavorable working conditions and exploitation. Thus, it

can therefore not be considered as a grassroots system which derived from the partnerships of employers and schools (Brinton 1998: 449–450).

The employer's recruitment of graduates from junior or senior high school is regulated by the local public employment security office. Before information about job openings can be submitted to high schools, companies are legally required to submit them to the employment office first. The job listing forms are standardized and are generally submitted at the end of June for graduates planning to enter the labor market in spring of the following year. The job descriptions and working conditions etc. are then approved by the public employment security office. Because many employers target specific schools and send the job opening notice directly to the school as well, they usually also write down the names of schools they wanted to recruit from. This is done in order to discourage applicants who do not meet company requirements. The so called informal employment commitments (*naitei*) for students starting employment in Spring of the following year are announced starting from the beginning of October (Brinton 1998: 444–445).

In the 1949 revision of the „Employment Security Act" (*shokugyô antei hô*) it is explicitly stated that schools and public employment security office can cooperate to provide a smooth transition from school to labor market. The following paragraphs are from the bilingual version (Last version: Amendment of Act No. 79 of 2007) of the Employment Security Act provided by the Japanese law translation database by the Ministry of Justice (http://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp). The Japanese original is provided in the foot notes.

> ***Article 26 (1)*** *With respect to employment placement for students or pupils of or graduates from schools provided in Article 1 of the School Education Act (Act No. 26 of 1947) (hereinafter referred to as "schools") (such students, pupils and graduates exclude those specified by a Cabinet Order; hereinafter referred to as "students, pupils, etc."), the Public Employment Security Offices shall endeavor, in cooperation with the schools, to provide students, pupils, etc. with employment*

information and results of occupational surveys and research, give them vocational guidance, and, through liaison between Public Employment Security Offices, develop as many job offerings as possible that are found to be appropriate to be introduced to students, pupils, etc., and arrange students, pupils, etc. to obtain jobs conformed to their abilities.[33]

Employment offices also have the responsibility to support the school in providing "employment guidance" (*shokugyô shidô*) and create "opportunities for employment experience" (*shokugyô wo taiken suru kikai*) and facilitate the students engagement with the subject of "choice of employment" (*shokugyô no sentaku*).

(2) *Public Employment Security Offices shall cooperate with vocational guidance that schools give to students and pupils.*[34]

(3) *In order to effectively and efficiently provide vocational guidance to students, pupils, etc., Public Employment Security Offices shall, in cooperation with schools and other persons concerned, create opportunities for employment experience and take any other necessary measures for deepening the interest and understanding of students and pupils concerning the choice of employment.*[35]

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[33]第二十六条 公共職業安定所は、学校教育法（昭和二十二年法律第二十六号）第一条に 規定する学校（以下「学校」という。）の学生若しくは生徒又は学校を卒業した者（政令で定める者を除く。以下「学生生徒等」という。）の職業紹介については、学校と協力して、学生生徒等に対し、雇用情報、職業に関する調査研究の成果等を提供し、職業指導を行い、及び公共職業安定所間の連絡により、学生生徒等に対して紹介することが適当と認められるできる限り多くの求人を開拓し、各学生生徒等の能力に適合した職業にあつせんするよう努めなければならない。

[34](2) 公共職業安定所は、学校が学生又は生徒に対して行う職業指導に協力しなければな らない。

[35](3) 公共職業安定所は、学生生徒等に対する職業指導を効果的かつ効率的に行うことが できるよう、学校その他の関係者と協力して、職業を体験する機会の付与その他の職 業の選択についての学生又は生徒の関心と理解を深めるために必要な措置を講ずるも のとする。

Furthermore, it is stated that principals of high schools are responsible for coordinating this transition process and are named explicitly in the role of facilitating free employment placement services

> ***Article 27****. The Chiefs of the Public Employment Security Offices may, when they deem it necessary for smoothly conducting employment placement for students, pupils, etc., have the heads of schools undertake a part of the functions of the Public Employment Security Offices, with the consent, or at the request, of the heads of those schools.*[36]

The law also states that:

> **Article 33-2 (1)** *The heads of the facilities listed in the following items may conduct, after giving notification to the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, free employment placement businesses [services (shokugyô shôkai jigyô)] for the persons stipulated in the respective items (including the persons specified by an Ordinance of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare as those equivalent thereto):*
> *(i) Schools (excluding elementary schools and kindergartens) — students, pupils, etc. of said schools. […]*[37]

Yet, due to the complex and time–demanding nature of the issue, principals are allowed to assign teachers who take care of this particular matter on their behalf – the career guidance teacher.

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[36]第二十七条 公共職業安定所長は、学生生徒等の職業紹介を円滑に行うために必要があると認めるときは、学校の長の同意を得て、又は学校の長の要請により、その学校の 長に、公共職業安定所の業務の一部を分担させることができる。

[37]第三十三条の二 次の各号に掲げる施設の長は、厚生労働大臣に届け出て、当該各号に 定める者（これらの者に準ずる者として厚生労働省令で定めるものを含む。）につい て、無料の職業紹介事業を行うことができる。(一) 学校（小学校及び幼稚園を除く。） 当該学校の学生生徒等

> **Article 33-2 (2)** *The heads of the facilities listed in the items of the preceding paragraph conducting free employment placement businesses pursuant to the provisions of said paragraph may designate persons to be in charge of the businesses concerning the employment placement business from among the personnel of said facilities, and may have those persons conduct such matters in their place.*[38]

Companies used to heavily rely on recommendations of principal and teachers from one or several particular schools. In periods of high economic growth and a resulting labor demand relationships of mutual trust developed – the so called proven relationships (*jisseki kankei*).

Brinton (2000: 295) concludes that – paraphrasing the text of the Ministry of Labor and its interpretation of the Japan Employment Guidance Association – schools, hence, have always been considered a highly appropriate site for carrying out guidance and are "*the logical site of social capital from which students can draw as they try to enter the labor market*."

While until the beginning of the 1960s Japanese blue–collar workers were recruited by ad hoc recruitment (*chûto saiyô*), the period of high economic growth of the 1960s and early 1970s and the resulting demand for vast numbers of blue–collar workers forced companies to find more reliable sources of future employees (mainly junior high school graduates). In the 1960s the first baby–boomer generation – born in the late 1940s – reached working age and "[…] *the youth population, which was unprecedented in quantity at that time, was quite desirable for companies suffering from the labor shortage.*" (Honda 2004a: 106).

According to Hori (2016: 6–7), this generically "*Japanese type*" (*nihon gata*) system had, up to the beginning of the 1990s, advantages as well as disadvantages for the senior high school graduates preparing

[38](2)前項の規定により無料の職業紹介事業を行う同項各号に掲げる施設の長は、当該施 設の職員のうちから、職業紹介事業に関する業務を担当する者を定めて、自己に代わ つてその業務を行わせることができる。

to enter the labor market, for the schools, and for the companies hiring new graduates.

It was possible for high school graduates to enter regular employment without having to compete with university graduates on the labor market. Because of the strict selection process in their school, it was customary that only one student could apply at only one company (*hitori issha*). Furthermore, depending on the school the students were attending, they might not be able to apply at their desired company because their school was simply not in the position to send applications to the company in question or did not receive information about job openings from said company.

On the side of educational institutions, the high schools – due to their role as an intermediary – were able to successfully facilitate employment for the majority of their students in a short period of time and, therefore, considerably reduce youth unemployment amongst their graduates. Again, the degree of success depended strongly on the ranking of the school (*hensachi*) and actual relationships with companies (*jisseki kankei*). For example, general senior high schools in which the number of students planning to enter employment directly is low, do not receive many offers of job openings. The students aim is to enter a high–ranking university and, therefore, the school does not invest resources in such relationships with companies.

In the past, companies had a steady influx of reliable new graduates provided by high schools they have sent job offers to but, by the same token, are restricted in their original choice due to the selection process within the school.

With the mid–1990s there came a drastic change concerning the career paths of senior high school students. While the proportion of high school graduates entering the labor market halved to a mere 20%, the proportion of university applicants increased dramatically (Graph 5). At this point, the labor market which high school graduates were entering was suffering from a recession. This development caused in turn major changes in quality and quantity of job openings for these graduates. Around this time, the rising numbers of graduates who did not enter

employment, vocational training, or enrolled in university – so called NEET and freeter – were recognized as a social problem (Honda 2004b: 79–80; Hori 2005: 26, 2012a: 34).

The term NEET originates from the United Kingdom and describes recent school graduate aged 16 to 18. In Japan, however, it includes people such as the "non–job–seekers" and the "discouraged" among the population of 15 to 34 year–old single people without employment. One also distinguishes them from "job seekers" who are considered as “unemployed”. By this definition, young people falling into the NEET category in Japan reached a total of 847,000 persons in 2002. While in 1992 the number of youth without employment was about 1.31 million, it rose to about 2.13 until the mid–2000s. In Japan this was called the “lost decade.” Adding so–called freeter (approx. 2.1 million) to the equation, this would amount to more than four million youth who were either unemployed or in insecure working conditions about ten years after the burst of the bubble (Genda 2005: 3–4).

Due to economic factors and structural changes in the labor market, relations between schools and companies, which many still regard as the linchpin of the Japanese school graduates employment system, are less continuous than in the 1980s. They have structurally changed during the early 1990`s but could since then be regarded – with regional differences – as being maintained as they are (Hori 2012a: 33).

Hori (2012b, 2016) developed four classifications of career guidance models to describe and explain different types of career guidance happening at different high schools:

1. The “80s model” (*hachijû nendai gata*), 2. the “semi–80s model” (*jun hachijû nendai gata*), 3. the “semi–free model” (*jun jiyû gata*) and 4. the “free–model” (*jiyû gata*).

In the “80s model” the development of employment opportunities is carried out eagerly. This happens mostly to provide exchange of reliable graduates and consistent job offers with local businesses with the overall aim to raise the ratio of first–choice informal promise of employment (*daiichiji naiteiritsu*). Students are screened based on academic abilities and overall aptness for the position in question. A graduate or a pre–

selected batch of graduates are then sent to the company, depending on its size and informal agreements with the school.

In the “semi–80’s model” most effort is put into students entering higher education (*shingaku*). Preparation for university entrance examinations is priority at schools with such a model in place. For students who want to enter employment after graduation, the focus of the school lies on finding suitable companies and filter out job offerings with undesirable working conditions. Yet, students aiming at labor market entry are few in numbers. As a result, it is not necessary for the students to undergo any formal screening process. Therefore, in most cases it is possible for students to apply at their first choice company and the school can fulfill its goal to raise the ratio of first–choice informal promise of employment.

While the development of employment opportunities and raising the ratio of first–choice informal promise of employment is at the core of the “semi–free model”, the schools’ priorities lie in finding actual job openings for their students. Offers with unfavorable working conditions are neglected and not displayed to the students, however, raising the ratio of first–choice informal promise of employment is key at schools with this model just as with the “80’s model”.

In schools with the “free–model” of career guidance most energy is directed towards students entering higher education and as a result, the exchange with local businesses or the ratio of first–choice informal promise of employment are not a priority. When students planned to enter employment anyway, working conditions are of little importance and all job–offer application cards[39] (*kyûjinhyô*) are shown to students without filtering based on working conditions.

In this regard, three factors are being considered by Hori (2016: 74) in particular: (1) The number of graduates entering the job hunting process, (2) the presence or absence of a strong regional manufacturing

[39] On a job–offer application card information about the kind of work, the employment period as stated in the contract, the place of work, working hours, wages, and health insurance as well as pension are disclosed to the potential applicant.

industry, and (3) the labor market situation for high school graduates in the region.

For example, in a region with a strong manufacturing industry the “80’s model” would still be dominant because the labor market situation for high school graduates would still be favorable. Yet, by 2010 the “80’s model” of career guidance at schools has shrunken to a mere fifth of what it used to be during the time of high economic growth (Hori 2012b: 51–52).

Hori’s main findings are threefold. Job placement guidance as it was conducted in the 1980’s aimed at the labor market of said period and is nowadays by far less dominant than it was three decades ago. Furthermore, the labor market situation for senior high school graduates has a large influence on the organization of job placement guidance within the school and the transition process into the workforce. Also, with a completely different situation nowadays, it becomes exceedingly difficult on a political level to continue education and labor market policies based on presumptions from the 1980’s (Hori 2016: 170–171).

When a graduate fails to transition successfully into employment or quits his job soon after starting, it is no longer the responsibility of the school to find employment for this particular student. However, in some schools where proven relationships between school and company are still strong, there is a certain degree of responsibility towards the company where the student terminated his employment.

> “*This is an episode, right. The day before yesterday a student who graduated in spring quit his job. Although it is none of our business anymore, but we are still going to have a relationship with this company, [I] the principal said to the company: ‘Sorry, we caused you inconvenience’, and they will reply: ‘No, no, well, we still want to do business with [your school] in the future.’ This kind of thing is probably a bit complacent. If the children we raise cause inconvenience to a certain degree to companies or society, even if it has nothing to do with us, even if we have no manufacturer responsibility, we still*

> *deal with it. This is quite common for Japanese senior high schools, especially for technical high schools it is common, I think.“* (Interview, principal, metropolitan technical senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 04/27/2017)[40]

In the following sub–chapter, I will have a detailed look at programs designed to support the transition process from educational institution into the labor market as well as tertiary education and its implication for graduates and companies. The government had to react to the changing labor market situation. As a result of new demands on the company–side, the MEXT as well as the METI developed new programs for graduates to equip them with skills and knowledge which would make them more adaptable to a diverse market. I will provide context by giving examples of the implementation of such programs at educational institutions I did my fieldwork at as well as describe the experiences of teachers regarding the impact of said programs.

7.2 Recent METI and MEXT programs and their implementation on a micro–level

> *“What is truly needed in Japan is independent–minded learning by individuals in order to realize independence, collaboration and creativity.”* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2013a: 1)[41]

[40] ほら、エピソードなんですけど。おとといですね、この春卒業した生徒が、会社やめちゃったんですよ。普通だったらもう卒業したから関係ないんですが、やっぱり会社との今後があるので、校長はやっぱりこの会社に「どうも、ご迷惑をかけました」と言ったんですね。そうすれば、向こうも「いやいや、ま、今後も[...]さんもとはお付き合いをしていきたいのです」って。こういうところっていうのはちょっと独特かもしれません。やっぱりうちの育てた子供たちが会社に、社会に迷惑をある程度かけてしまったら、もう関係はないんですけど、やっぱりもう責任はないんですけど、そういった形で、対応するっていうのは日本の高校、特に工業高校に多いと思います。

[41]今正に我が国に求められているもの、それは「自立・協働・創造に向けた一人一人の主体的な学び」である。

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) addressed the need for a better transition to postsecondary education in the First Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education although it did not elaborate on the requirements in the changing labor market (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2013c). The Second Basic Plan (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2013b) has pointed out many challenges concerning the current labor market situation (declining birthrate and over aging, globalization, and a changing work−environment) but can still be considered vague with regard to the concrete implementation and its actual effects on the school level.

Nevertheless, taking into account recent efforts of the MEXT tackling the growing difficulties of students to successfully transition into the labor market, a focus on alternatives to a system purely focusing on university education is visible:

> *"[…] it is necessary to establish smoother pathways from upper secondary schools to postsecondary schools, ensuring that all levels of education (elementary, secondary, and higher education) work toward a common base of general abilities, specialized knowledge, and practical skills required in the new knowledge–based society." (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015d)*

Of course it reiterated the importance of improving higher education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015a) but also stressed the further development of institutions that offer vocational training in order to "*cultivate the skills necessary for work and practical life, and aim to improve students' general knowledge*." So called specialized training colleges (*senmon gakkô*) which students visit for two years after graduating from high school and colleges of technology (*kôtô senmon gakkô*), a combination of three years of sector/industry–specific senior high school education with two years of vocational training, are the main provider of said skill sets. These *"institutions are comprised of*

practical vocational education and specialized technical education, and aim to foster specialists in various fields." (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015b: 29)

Vocational education, which is principally undertaken by specialized training colleges in Japan, has only recently been recognized as a part of the higher education sector. In the past, not government regulations but the development of the market influenced their behavior in response to the needs of students and labor market alike (Goodman et al. 2009: 14).

The top 1% of junior high school graduates account for the students of colleges of technology in Japan. Graduates of such institutions, according to the principal and vice–principal of a national college of technology, cannot be considered as "normal" graduates of vocational institutions. They are and always have been the technical elite of Japan. Due to their early specialization and thorough vocational training they are highly sought after by Japanese companies and factories, as the principal pointed out

> *"We provide a wide range of job offers [to our students]. […] We get about 20 job offers [from companies] per student. […] Well, this even during periods of a stagnating economy, like the Lehman shock, they [job offers] do not decrease in numbers. […] The reason for that is, I worked in the business world long enough so I know, that in–house training up to a level that you can actually work [in a company] takes about two years. And in a stagnating economy [the company] does not have that leeway. And because at [a college of technology] we focus on teaching manufacturing skills, because we train [our students] like that, it take much less time until they can work independently [in a company]."* (Interview,

vice–principal and principal, national college of technology, Hachiôji–shi, 06/31/2017)[42]

Not only the high level of vocational training these students receive makes them attractive for employers, in a globalized society with high fluctuation in demand economic factors are also considered by companies.

> *"Another reason is that they graduate at 20 years of age. This influences salary. An average university student is 22. So there are advantages with the salary [when hiring graduates from a college of technology]. During a recession graduates from colleges of technology are cheaper than the average university student who needs more time [for in–house training.] Companies are not allowed to just stop hiring during a recession and during times like that our graduates prevail. That's why even during a recession the job hunting situation [for our graduates] does not worsen. That's my opinion."* (Interview, vice–principal, national college of technology, Hachiôji–shi, 06/31/2017)[43]

Due to the changing labor market and demand for specialized labor alike, the focus of vocational training has changed over the last two decades. Accordingly, colleges of technology have to adjust their curriculum and the career trajectories they can offer their students.

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[42] すごい幅広いところから求人がありまして[…]一人当たり 20 社以上の会社からのオファーがありますから。[…] ま、たまたま今年が非常に条件がいいですけど、例えばリーマンショックみたいなときでもですね、高専は、就職は困らなかったです。非常に恵まれています。[…] その理由はね、私が思うに、大学卒は企業に入って、私も企業にいましたから、よく分かるんですが、実際に、仕事ができるまで社内教育で二年ぐらいかかるんですよ。で、不景気になるとその余裕がないですね。で、高専の場合はやはりそのものづくりを中心にそういうトレーディング受けてますから、仕事ができるまでの間がもっと短い。

[43] それともう一つは、二十歳で卒業しますから、やはり賃金もですね、やぱり安いわけですよ。大学は二十二でしょう。賃金のアドヴァンテージもあるということで、不景気になるとその時間もう少しかかる大学生よりも高専生、ま、不景気でも会社人とらないとダメですからね、そういうときは高専生を優先して、とるので不景気の時も就職状況は悪くならない。そう思っております。

> *“Not only educating people for the labor market but for the labor market and further education, to provide different options, to educate the students according to their aspirations is what we aim to do.* (Interview, principal, national college of technology, Hachiôji–shi, 06/31/2017)[44]

A similar narrative appeared during the interview with the head teacher of the career guidance department at the private college of technology. When students enter the college after graduating from junior high school, they already have chosen an area of study which they want to pursue to enter in the according profession after graduating from the college of technology.

> *“Already at the stage of entering, they have decided which area of study to enter and enroll at our school. […] It is different from entering a normal senior high school, children choose this college and enroll because they have already chosen their professional domain.”* (Interview, head career guidance teacher, private college of technology, Machida–shi, 05/15/2017)[45]

However, while in the past the function of the college was to facilitate employment of all graduates, nowadays the number of students aiming at higher education after graduation has increased. About 30% of students enter university after graduating from a college of technology. The university and department they enter naturally depend on the area of study they pursued during their time at the college. If they stay in the same area of study, they can enter university at year three. If they want to change their major to a different but related area of study, they can do so but must enter the university at year two. As I was told by the career guidance teacher, students do not have difficulties adapting to the

[44] 就職できる人を育てているではなくて、就職も進学もいろんな選択肢が学生の希望によってとれるような、そういう教育をしているつもりです
[45] もう、学校に入る段階でどの学科に入るかというのを決めて、入ってきます。 […] 普通の高校に入るのとは違って、やっぱりこういう専門領域を学びたいっていう子たちは選んで入ってくる。

curriculum of university because they have been taught content which is normally taught at university from the first year at the college. It goes without saying that this is not the equivalent of the first year of normal senior high school education (Interview, head career guidance teacher, private college of technology, Machida–shi, 05/15/2017).

Although the education at colleges of technology is always described as three years of senior high school education with a technical focus and two years of additional technical vocational education, he suggests to picture the education at his school as a five year package. Although it is possible to graduate with a senior high school degree after three years, it is highly uncommon for students to do so, the career guidance teacher stressed.

When students reach the end of the fourth year the career guidance curriculum intensifies. While during the first three years, it was the aim of career guidance to provide information and experiences about a broad variety of areas of study and professions, starting from the fourth year, specific internship programs and lectures of former graduates who have found employment increase. After students have decided their career path, the school oversees the transition of every student into either employment or advance to further education. Applying at a large number of companies during the period of bulk–hiring is highly uncommon for the graduates of this private college of technology.

> “As you can imagine, because they are studying a certain profession, it is obvious that their future is somewhat confined. For example, if you enter a normal university and, for example, study economics, the students there do not have a profession, therefore, they can go to different places and do job–hunting. You hear stories of them going to 40 or 50 [companies]. Our students do not do that.” (Interview, head career

guidance teacher, private college of technology, Machida–shi, 05/15/2017)[46]

However, during times of economic downturn, the opportunities for employment seem not to be as secure as at the national college of technology. The career guidance teacher mentioned that after the earthquake of March 2011 the numbers of students entering further education increased. He added that during the current labor market situation with high numbers of irregularly employed the importance of studying in a specific field becomes apparent in order to have better chances of finding employment.

> *"It is connected to the development of the economy. For example, if the economy does well, it is a chance to send many [students] into society, but if the economic situation is difficult they [the students] want to buy some more time. At such times the advancement to further education increases among our students. A couple of years ago, after the Japanese earthquake [3/11], at that time companies decreased the number of hires. At that time the advancement to further education rose. […] The raison d'être [of colleges of technology] became stronger. As you can imagine, the necessity to study abut a specific field of study became ever more important, I believe."* (Interview, head career guidance teacher, private college of technology, Machida–shi, 05/15/2017)[47]

[46] やっぱり、ある程度専門を勉強しているので、行く先の数はおのずと限られていると思います。例えば、一般の大学に入って、例えば経済を勉強して、そういうところの学生さんたちは自分の専門はないですから色んな所に行って就職活動に行くわけですね。４０も５０もあったという話も聞きますけど。うちの学生はそのことはないです。

[47]社会の流れとも関係していると思っています。例えば、その経済がいいとき、これはどんどん社会に出ていくチャンスだと思うんですけど、ちょっと経済的に厳しいときは少し時間を稼ぐというか。やっぱり、進学が増えていくんですね、学生たちの。ちょうど何年間前の日本の地震があったとき、あいうときなんかやっぱり企業もなかなか受け入れが減りました。そのときは進学する学い生は増える。[…] 存在意義が強

The surge in demand of higher education, which could be observed during and after the period of high economic growth, has also strongly influenced the demand for further education and better career opportunities of graduates of colleges of technology (National College of Technology 2015: 10).

Shavit and Müller (2000: 42) have found that vocational training, which gives students occupationally significant skills for labor market entry, serves as a kind of safety net for graduates from a weaker socioeconomic background. It reduces the risk of unemployment or employment in an undesirable occupation but, at the same time, discourages them from entering higher education. This is supported by Hori's (2016) findings which state that technical high school graduates still have good chances to enter into regular employment in prefectures where the manufacturing industry is strong. In metropolitan areas, where the service industry has been growing constantly, students with a high school degree have a much harder time finding stable employment and often end up in irregular employment.

The Second Plan for the Promotion of Education, therefore, ties on to efforts with the aim to smoothen the transition between different levels of education and on a school–workforce level (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2013b, 2013c).

But to what extent did the reforms influence the supply of education and how were they translated into consistent and effective programs on a school level?

The addressing of individual differences was and is directed principally to high achievers or students with special talents. This also includes graduates from elite vocational institutions. Little reference is made to children with other special needs (disabilities, learning difficulties, minority status etc.). This education appropriate to individual needs, as stressed in the last school reform, has served up to now almost exclusively to those who excel in what is arbitrary considered as "useful" (with programs such as "Super Science High School"(SSH) or "Super

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くなったというか。やはりその専門について勉強する必要性はより強まったというのはあるかもしれない。

Global High School" (SGH) (cf. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2015a: 141–147)), and consequently to the business and industrial circles or academia. Since the period of high economic growth or, at the latest, since the 3rd educational reform initiated in the 1980s', educational policy was supposedly directed to meet the demands of economy and labor market (Takayama 2011: 253).

In the course of these changes, expectations towards teachers concerning pedagogical responsibilities have shifted (Bjork 2011: 159). While in the past memorizing of teaching content has been at the core of the curriculum, teachers are nowadays faced with the task of developing and supporting independent and self−determined learning. The transmission−based pedagogy, which does not require active participation of the students, was supposed to be reviewed after the introduction of the "*relaxed education*" (*yutori kyôiku*)[48] in 2002. After the "PISA shock" [49] in December 2004, when the results of the PISA 2003 were published, almost all the measures introduced have gradually been reversed because the fault seemed to be inherent in the curriculum (Tasaki 2017: 147–148). At present, we have arrived at the status quo of pre–*yutori* education concerning workload and hours spend in the classroom. Many teachers mentioned this repeatedly in interviews and personal communications.

Senior high schools with a technical focus, just like colleges of technology, prepare the graduates for employment within their area of study. In technical senior high schools students have the choice between vocational subjects in addition to their senior high school curriculum. It

[48]The name *yutori* education has not been decided officially by the MEXT. In a report issued by the Central Education Council in 1996 it was emphasized that "abilities to survive" and "relaxed times" were to be fostered. Developing problem solving skills in order to actively participate in a changing society were also emphasized. To achieve this, two hours of integrated studies were introduced, revised in 1998 and fully implemented by April 2002. During the time period where *yutori* education was carried out, school hours were reduced and the content of the curriculum cut to leave more room for innovative forms of learning.

[49] Japan's students underperformed during PISA 2003 and compared to the previous test in 2000, in the ranking for "reading comprehension" they went down to 14th, compared to 8th in 2000, and in "mathematical applied ability" they dropped from 1st to 6th place. Although the academic ability of Japanese students was and is in the upper level internationally, this downward trend led to the MEXT acting promptly and focused especially on improving reading comprehension and mathematical literacy (Tasaki 2017: 150).

goes without saying that subjects like electrical engineering prepare students much better for employment in an electrical company than the student from an average–level general senior high school. Yet again, career guidance at such schools also aims at broadening their students' view on different professions in order for them to make an informed career choice.

> *"I think, one function of school is to broaden the breadth of the [career] course, the field of vision so to speak. Well, regarding the role [of school]. After that, the school is a place where we teach [the students] how to engage with the course they have turned to, we teach them how to get there. It is about providing opportunities* "(Interview, head teacher career guidance, metropolitan technical senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 04/27/2017) [50]

The significance of the post–graduate career choice was stressed by all teachers from educational institutions which provide vocational training in addition to the senior high school curriculum.

> *"If possible, we guide them from the standpoint that they continue in one employment for the rest of their life, which is the way all technical senior high schools do it. However, unfortunately for graduates who have terminated their employment, it is very easy for them to end up in the so called temporary employment sector." (*Interview, head teacher career guidance, metropolitan technical senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 04/27/2017*)*[51]

Due to the recent growth of the irregular employment sector (Graph 1), for students with insufficient educational qualifications, the danger to end

[50] 学校というのは進路の幅を、視野ですね、視野を広げさせるもの一つとしてあるんではないかと思っています。ま、役割として。あとは、見付けた進路に向けて、どのように取り組んだらよいのかということの指導する場所だという風にとらえて、指導しております。きっかけ作りですね。

[51] できるだけ、一つの職を一生続けられる観点で指導する方がどこの工業高校も多いです。ただ、残念ながら、その一度勤めた会社を辞めてしまった卒業生たちはその後いわゆる非正規雇用になることは非常に多いです。

up in this sector with low wages, limited job mobility, and practically no job security is very high. This also includes those who terminated their first employment after graduation which leads to even more fragmentation in their work biographies.

Yet, Japan is a country with very strict rules about layoffs in large companies. These rules are based on the accumulation of case law and are not a component of the labor standards law (Estévez–Abe 2008: 33). This highlights the necessity for schools to facilitate stable, regular employment to their graduates.

> *"One [reason] is, if you stop being employed by one company, sure enough there will be some underdeveloped skills, in Japan it is quite safe to say that one person has [to have], if anything, a wide range of abilities. However, temporary work recruits only for one particular occupation, so it is particularly easy for those who have quit in such a sector to fit the description. You have that and children who go down that path are very common. But at our school we guide them, if possible, in a way that, if possible, we guide in order for them to not go that way." (*Interview, head teacher career guidance, metropolitan technical senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 04/27/2017*)*[52]

Preventing their graduates from taking up irregular employment is a common narrative which I have come across during the interviews at metropolitan senior high schools as well as during my participant observations with the NPO. As mentioned in chapter 5, one of the goals the LMCS strives to accomplish with their workshops is to warn students

[52] 一つは、やっぱり一つの会社に勤めきれていないところの、やっぱりスキルは未発達な部分があるので、そうするとやはり日本というのはどちらかというと、一人の人間に様々な能力を求める場合があるわけですよね。ところが非正規雇用というのは一つの職種にたいして募集だけなので、そうすると、そういったところ辞めた者に非常につきやすい。ということがあって、非正規雇用に流れる子は多いようですね。ただ、本校の指導としてはなるべくそっちに、なるべくいかないように指導はしています。でも残念ながら、現実は行っちゃっている子いるよね。

about the underlying dangers and the long–term consequences of taking up irregular employment after graduation.

Teachers and NPO staff repeatedly voiced their concerns about their students' career trajectories after graduation in connection with the recent developments on the labor market. They were especially worried about the students' general cluelessness with regard to their future. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the close contact with fully–fledged members of society is basically limited to their parents and their teachers. This stresses the importance for schools to provide opportunities where students can get into contact and engage with people who are employed in different companies and professions.

> *"I think, there is hardly [a chance] to talk to each other, to listen to the story of somebody who works at some university or is currently working at a company, a fully–fledged member of society. To talk to a fully–fledged member of society besides one's own parents or teachers is a very meaningful thing, I think. (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)*[53]

Especially to provide a basic understanding of different type of work and link this to the aspirations of the students, in order for them to form a clearer picture of their future, is the main concern of teachers. Here Kuijpers et al. (2011: 28–29) have shown with their study in the Netherlands that only in schools where a dialogue with students about concrete experiences and future goals takes place, career competencies amongst students are fostered. It is, therefore, important for Japanese teachers to broaden the horizon of their students and give them new perspectives on the subject of work, the labor market, or their academic future.

[53] お互い話すっていうことはなかなかないかもしれませんけれども、その大学で働いたり、実際に企業で働いている人から話しを聞くということは、社会人を、自分の親、先生以外の社会人と話するということはとても有意義なことだと思います。

> *“Yet not surprisingly, they do not have an image of job–hunting or career after the three years [of high school] whatsoever, which is a characteristic of the students that enter our school. Well, not only our school, probably all the children of the current generation are like that, I think. They have no point of view concerning job–hunting or entering further education […] students who do not understand this at all are now entering technical senior high schools. […] We try to broaden their horizon, from different angles, introduce things to them, show our students, that is how we guide them.“* (*Interview, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan technical senior high school, 04/27/2017*)[54]

The teachers try to help the students find their place in society and reduce misconceptions about the professions they want to enter.

> *Well, because students do not know a lot about society, for example they think in a way that they have to go to the economic faculty to work in a bank. But nowadays, well, or come from the faculty of law […]. So it is not about profession but how they want to contribute to society, that is what they have to think about and what we try to make happen more often, especially with first year students.* (Interview, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 05/18/2017)[55]

[54] でもやはり、全く 3 年後の就職・進路先ってどんなものなのかというイメージが全くついてないのが、本校に入った生徒の特徴なんですね。ま、本校だけでなく、たぶん今の世代の子供たちは皆そうだと思います。就職か、ま、進学は視野にないと思うんですけれども、その中で、「じゃ、就職ってどういうものがあるの」というのは全く分からない生徒たちが今工業高校に入ってきておりますので。ですから、どういうものがあるっていうことを、まずその視野を広げるために、我々、いろんな視点から、ことを紹介して、生徒たちに知らしめるという指導をしています。

[55] あの、生徒はあまり社会を知らないので、例えば銀行に勤めるためには経済学部いかなければいけないという風に思ったりします。でも現実には、ま、あと法学部出てなければいけないとか。[…] 職業ではなく、どういうことをして社会に貢献したいか

The teachers also pointed out that university education might be overrated and a career choice by actual aptitude or a rough idea of what the student wants to do is preferable.

> *"In reality the name of the university is not important, it is about what you want to study. But career guidance is changing gradually. In the past you asked what job you want to have later in life and with regard to that one checked at which university one had to study. Now it is not the future employment wish but […] what content, so not the profession but the actual activity one likes. For example, if you want to produce something or if you like to help people […].* (Interview, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 05/18/2017)[56]

The socioeconomic background of the child still seems to be the most limiting factor in acquiring tertiary education. Yet, through the decline in overall student numbers and consequently university applicants, many (private) universities tend to make it easier for applicants to enter.

> *"If you have to pick any university nowadays, it has become a time where everybody gets in. But university fees are expensive, you have to take up a student loan, in other words go into debt, then go to university and after you do job hunting you have to pay back the debt. So if you cannot do that, children for whom it is difficult, they graduate from high school, do job hunting right away, I think, but when they do job hunting after graduating, if you ask me whether they get the job they*

ということを考えていかなければいけないって言う話を今は多くするようにしています、特には一年生ですね。

[56] だから本当は、まず大事なのは大学の名前ではなく、何の学問・分野ということなんですね。ただそこも今はちょっとずつキャリア教育のなかでかわってきていて、昔はどんな職業につきますか。で、そのためにはどの学びが必要で、この学部はこの大学にある。[…]今は職業ではなく、どういう[…]内容、どういう事柄、どういう仕事ってではなく、たとえば、もの作りが好き、または何か人を助けてあげることが好き[…]。

> *are wishing for, I would think that they don't."* (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)[57]

For students who choose to enter the labor market – out of choice or influenced by their socioeconomic background – teachers try to provide career guidance and job offers which do not put them in (further) precarious situations.

> *"Students who come from us are hard–working so we have a good reputation, I think. […] The students are interested in wages and holidays etc., but we [as a school] pay attention to turnover rates, we look at how many quit after they got a job there or, if possible, that little people quit, then it must be a good company, I think, such companies we recommend or provide guidance while looking at the job offerings [together]. […] Students are concerned with their whole life, so it is not only wages and holidays but they make sure whether it is a company where they can work securely for a long time. […] We choose companies where they can work properly as regular employees.* (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)[58]

Despite the reforms, the focus of schools, especially secondary education, still lies on reaching the next school form (*shingaku*), entering (prestigious) universities (Bjork 2011: 165) or the successful transition

[57] 今の大学は選ばなければ、全員入れる時代になっています。だけれども、学費は高く、奨学金を借りて、つまり借金をして、大学に通い、就職してもその借金を返さなければいけない。ですから、それができないちょっときつい生徒は高校卒業してすぐ就職になると思うんですが、就職する場合に、その自分が希望する職につけるかというと、それはかなり限られると思います。

[58] うちから行った生徒たちは一生懸命働くので評判はいいと思います。[…]生徒たちはお給料だとかお休みを気にしますけど私たちとして離職率、一旦就職してもどれぐらい辞めてしまっているのか、できたらやめる人が少ない会社がきっといい会社だろうなと思いますので、ま、その会社を勧めたり、求人票を見ながら相談しています。[…]生徒たちは自分の一生にかかわることなのでお給料とかお休みとかそう言うことだけではなくて、やはり長く安定して働ける会社なのかどうかというか見極めています。[…]正社員としてしっかりと働ける会社を選ぶ。

into the labor market (*pipeline link*) (Takayama 2011: 256). This form of screening at the school level leads to a segregation of students and their chances in future employment before even entering the labor market. As mentioned in the literature review, there is an extensive body of Japanese literature dealing with inequality and its connection to the education system.

However, when talking about chances of future employment one should not neglect what companies nowadays look for in a future employee and what the employers expect the educational system to equip their graduates with.

In this regard, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry has developed the so called fundamental competencies for working persons (*shakaijin kisoryoku*). They are a catalog of skills that working members of society require to actively participate in a globalized information society.

A survey carried out by the METI in 2009 revealed a big misconception on both sides – university students and companies– about the abilities required and needed for successful employment. When students were asked about skills they should "acquire beforehand" (*sudeni mi ni tsukete iru*) the majority chose "perseverance" (*nebaritsuyosa*) and "teamwork skills" (*chîmuwâku ryoku*) while actually the companies expected, amongst others, the proper "manners for the business world" (bijinesu manâ). When asked about skills students were lacking, the students themselves saw a lack of skills in the area of "foreign language proficiency i.e. TOEIC" (*gogaku ryoku TOEIC nado*) and "specialized knowledge about the business world" (*gyôsai ni kansuru senmon chishiki*). Yet, companies did not share the students' perceptions and saw deficiencies regarding "independence" (*shutaisei*), "perseverance" (*nebaritsuyosa*) and "communication skills" (*komyunikêshon ryoku*). This shows the big discrepancies in awareness of required skills that graduates regard as essential for work life and the companies' expectations. (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2009: 4)

The FCWP are essential part of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" (*daiyonji sangyô kakumei*) and the "Era of a 100 year life span" (*jinsei*

100 nen jidai) (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2018a). While the former is concerned with changing the business environment (*jigyô no henka*) in times of labor shortage (*hitodebusoku*) as well as globalization (*gurôbaruka*) and "human resource strategy" (*jinzai senryaku*), the latter addresses the change and diversification of work style (*hatarakikata*) and participation in society (*shakai sanka*) (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2018c: 5).

In 2018, the FCWP were renamed "fundamental competencies for working persons in an era of a 100 year life span" (*jinsei 100 nen jidai no shakaijin kissoryoku*) although the content remained the same (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2018a).

The original FCWP were defined by the METI in February 2006 at a committee made up specialists and intellectuals from the business world and universities. It was chaired by Suwa Yasuo who was at that time professor of the Graduate School of Political Science at Hosei University, specializing in employment policy with a macro level, regional, and comparative focus. He described the FCWP as "*the basic abilities required in working together with various people in the workplace and in the local communities*". They consist of three competencies subdividing into a total of twelve competency factors (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2007):

1. The "ability to step forward (action)" and to act persistently even if one fails. This competency encompasses "Initiative", the "ability to influence and involve others", and "executive skill" in order to set goals and execute plans with conviction.

2. The "ability to think through (thinking)" subdivides into the "ability to detect issues" in order to analyze situations and classify issues, "planning skills" to be able to clarify procedures and solve emerging issues, and "creativity".

3. The "ability to work in a team (teamwork)" contains six competency factors: The "ability to deliver messages in order to explain one's opinions clearly, the "ability to listen closely and carefully", "flexibility" in understanding and discussing different opinions and perspectives, the "ability to grasp situations" in order to comprehend

relationships to other people as well as one's surroundings, the "ability to apply rules and regulations" to comply with social rules, and the "ability to control stress", which should help one to deal with the original cause of stress. (For further information refer to Illustration 10)

These FCWP form the basis of most workshops of the LMCS described in Chapter 5.

The programs of MEXT and METI found applications in many programs and reforms on the level of the Tokyo Board of Education. I will elaborate on them in the following sub–chapter, since these various applications build the framework for career guidance in the institutions in which I conducted fieldwork.

7.3 Programs of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education

Shortly after the development of the FCWP by the METI, the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education (TMBE) shifted its attention towards MEXT and METI programs and implemented them in the high school curriculum. The demand for actors outside the traditional educational system to "stimulate the awareness of occupational self–reliance" (*shokugyôteki jiritsu ishiki no jôsei*) – especially in the context of career guidance – was repeatedly stressed. Cooperation with companies and NPOs, which possess specialized knowledge and experience, was regarded as imperative. By tapping into these resources, students were to be taught necessary skills in order to successfully participate in labor market and society. In addition, the necessity to reform the average–level general high schools (*futsûka chûkenkô*) with regards to further education (*shingaku*) and career guidance was accentuated (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2011a: 3–4).

As early as 2005, the TMBE realized the necessity to strengthen the networks between the local community (*chi'iki*) (represented by residents as well as businesses and NPOs etc.) and schools (including schools that offer special needs education (tokubetsu shien gakkô)). This was then

set in stone with the “revision of social education” (*shakaikyôiku hôkaisei*) in July 2008 (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2011c: 2).

In 2006 the TMBE created a column called “Report for collaboration lessons with enterprises and NPOs” (*kigyô NPO to no korabo jugyô repôto*) in their publication which specifically described programs and activities carried out by enterprises or NPOs in cooperation with metropolitan schools (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2006: 6).

Around 2007 they had started to introduce the so called “support coordinator for metropolitan senior high schools” (*toritsu kôkô kyôiku shien kôdinêtâ*) whose role was, as described in one of the TMBE’s publication *minna no shôgai kyôiku* (lifelong learning for everybody), to support the cooperation between an NPO which offered activities related to environmental protection and community service and a metropolitan senior high school (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2007: 5). Reports about joined programs of NPOs and schools as well as new programs being developed to incorporate the civil society more into the realm of education were mentioned in almost every of the TMBE’s publications starting from around the end of 2006.

In 2010 the TMBE held the “Forum for Educational Support Coordinators” (*kyôiku shien kôdinêtâ fôramu*) to present successful collaborations in the past and give educators and actors from enterprises as well as NPOs the possibility to strengthen their networks and develop new projects (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2010a: 2–4).

Another way to facilitate the process of cooperation between metropolitan schools and civil society actors was the so called “career education coordinator” (*kyaria kyôiku kôdinêtâ*) which were created to be active on all school levels from primary to senior high school. Like the local community coordinator (*chi’iki kôdinêtâ*), which is part of the “Project for the Promotion of Voluntary School Support Activities” (*gakkôshien borantia suishin kyôgikai jigyô*), its role is act as a bridge between school and local community/society as well as raise the educational capability of local community and society alike (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of

Education 2013a: 77; 2014b: 75). They are professionals certified[59] by the METI to support career education on all school levels by linking educational resources of the local community and the school in order to produce a locus (*ba*) and opportunities in which children can "develop various abilities" (*tayô na nôryoku wo katsudô suru*). Many of the coordinators at the LMCS have acquired such a qualification.

In a rapidly changing society, the educational system – or rather the TMBE – has come to the conclusion that regular teachers, although still central to the students' education, need to use the resources provided by the local community, companies, business groups, NPOs, and NGOs to successfully tackle new challenges and provide a wide variety of educational content and experiences for the students. The TMBE is aware of a still deep–rooted feeling of reluctance among some schools and teachers towards "programs run by enterprises" (*kigyô no puroguramu*) but are certain that with the help of the career guidance coordinators these prejudices will disappear over time (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2011b: 2–5). All the above mentioned efforts are not only implemented in the regular elementary, junior and senior high schools but also in schools for children with special needs to ensure their active participation in later life and prevent school drop–out (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2014a: 3). The education sector has to adjust to a rapidly changing society with new challenges and rightly asked itself:

> *"What are we going to hold dear from now on, how are we going to live, and what can we do to create a happy world?" (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016d: 3)*[60]

[59] Before becoming a certified career education coordinator, applicants have to receive formal training in the "coordinator training and study program" (*kôdinêtâ yôsei kenshû puroguramu*), pass a written test and undergo practical training. Study materials are published in form of the "official career education coordinator text" (*kyaria kyôiku kôdinêtâ ikusei kenshûkôshiki tekisuto*).

[60] これから何を大切にして、どのように生き、そしてどのようにして幸せな世の中にしますか。

Here the new subject and same–titled text book “people and society” (*ningen to shakai*) is another example for the ongoing reform aspirations with regard to career guidance. After a test run in 2016, this subject had been implemented in the curriculum of all Tokyo metropolitan senior high schools by 2017. The development of this new subject already started in 2007 when the subject “service [to society]” (*hôshi*) was revised and integrated into the new concept of “people and society” to “nourish morality” (*dôtokusei wo yashinau*) and improve the “determination criteria/sense of values” (*handan kijun/kachikan*). By means of hands–on activities (*taiken katsudô*) and exercises (*enshû*) it combines moral education (*dôtoku kyôiku*) and career education (kyaria kyôiku) (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016a: 48). Even the company Recruit[61] in its magazine “career guidance”, which provides a large variety of articles about career guidance education for senior high schools, has featured an article about the new textbook and its impact on the students education and the “teaching of leadership” (*rîdâshippu kyôiku*) (Recruit 2016: 22–23).

In detail it can be imagined as follows: One lesson period of 50 minutes will be used for this subject every week, amounting to about 35 periods in a school year. 16 of these will be used for studying exercises (*enshû*). In these lessons at least four themes (*têma*) of the text book will be covered in the form of formal academic learning while teachers are encouraged to use so called “active learning methods” to engage the students with the learning content. Lesson content reaches from “building human relations” (*ningenkankei wo tsuku), “thinking about one’s role and responsibilities” (yakuwari to sekinin wo kangaeru)* to “*meaning of working as a team*” (*chîmu de katsudô suru koto no igi*).

The learning process is divided into three steps:

1. “Learning activities which are concerned with the introduction of fundamental content” (*dônyû tangen no kihonteki naiyô nikansuru kakushu*). Here students develop questions regarding given problems

[61] Recruit is a Japanese company which provides integrated human resource services with three major business segments: HR Technology, Media & Solutions, and Staffing (https://recruit–holdings.com/).

according to the lesson content, look for examples or answers which help them to comprehend the lesson content and engage in discussions. The exchange of opinions and formation of a personal opinion about the subject at hand is the focus of this first stage.

2. “Learning activities which further develop the formed standard of judgment” (*keisei sareta handankijun wo takameru gakushû*). Here the students deepen their understanding of the value of exchanging opinions and consider the importance of their own opinions with regard to their sense of values.

3. “Assuming the different loci of life and learning about the power to choose and act” (*jisen no shobamen wo sôtei shi sentaku kôdô suru chikara wo ikusei suru gakushu*). In the final stage, based on their developed sense of values, the power to choose and act upon these decisions is further developed. While thinking about their own way of life, they integrate these skills into the skill set and knowledge they have acquired in other subjects or apply them to content from other subjects.

To provide an example: The third theme of the text book is “significance/meaning of work” (*hataraku koto no igi*). Questions that arise from this are concerning the meaning of work besides pay, personal development, and hardship. In the textbook students are encouraged to think about their parents or their teacher to answer various questions and engage into a discussion about the meaning of work and the contribution of said work to society. To further develop these thoughts and opinions they are given the example of somebody’s brother and his experiences after entering employment. In their following task they have to discuss the case of somebody being transferred by their company to a small city and the implication for this person’s life as well as this person’s responsibilities to the company. They have to discuss in a group what they would do in the person’s situation and sum up their results in a comprehensive way. When relating it to their own aspirations and career wishes, they have to decide how they want to live in the future and what they have to do to achieve their goals (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016d: 16–19). By learning about such matters, while working in groups and sharing their opinions, they are supposed to deal with

essential questions regarding their future career but also future decisions regarding further education. The overall aim is to cultivate social as well as professional independence (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016c: 2–3).

This theoretical approach to the subject is then followed by another 19 lesson periods with practical experience (*taiken katsudô*) (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016c: 2). When examining the text book it becomes apparent that, depending on the chapter, one or more of the FCWP are represented in the overall themes. The content of this new textbook as well as the LMCS workshops are closely modelled on the FCWP designed by the METI.

The text book itself has to be purchased by the students under article 9 of the School Education Law (*gakkôkyôikuhô*) for the price of 151 yen. (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2016c: 1).

The TMBE sees the use of the expertise of NPOs and companies as imperative to improve practical learning among senior high school students and provide them with hands–on experience (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2015a: 37; 2015b: 4–5, 2016b: 9). The focus of these programs especially lie on general senior high schools which struggle the most with the challenges created by a rapidly changing society. The close connection to the FCWP program of the METI can be understood as an attempt to equip these graduates with the skills – deemed necessary by the government – to realize their full potential on the contemporary Japanese labor market.

7.4 The role of the school in the transition process

In the following chapter I will analyze the career guidance programs of three metropolitan general senior high schools which I visited during my fieldwork in 2017. All three schools have invited the LMCS in the past to carry out NPO–led career guidance workshops and are currently relying on their services. The schools are situated in the two special wards Toshima–ku (henceforth called “school A”) and Itabashi–ku (henceforth

called “school B”) as well as in Higashi–Kurume–shi (henceforth called “school C”), a city in the western portion of the Tokyo Metropolis.

I visited school A for an interview with the head teacher of the career guidance department (05/18/2017) and about one months later together with the LMCS for an NPO–led career guidance workshop (06/12/2017).

School B I visited for an interview with the principal (06/20/2017) and school C together with the LMCS for an NPO–led career guidance workshop (07/07/2017). Later in the same year, I visited school C again for an interview with a young teacher of the career guidance department (09/22/2017). The NPO as a common denominator, the average academic level, and the urban setting of each high school led to the choice of these three particular schools for a more detailed analysis.

All three schools are metropolitan general senior high schools with a *hensachi* between 46 and 56. This makes them the average every–day senior high school in a suburban neighborhood of Tokyo. School A as well as school B have a part–time high school program (*teijisei*), each with less than 100 students in total, in addition to the regular all–day school program (*zennichisei*).

First I will give a short description of the school and the neighborhood it is situated in to provide some context for the reader. Then I will describe and analyze in detail the career guidance program of each school. Here I will pay special attention to the planning and aim of school–led events, the role of teachers in this institution, and the role of the NPO–led career events. The teachers’ perception of the impact of career guidance on their students will also central in this analysis.

The data for this sub–chapter consist of interview data, field notes from participatory observation during NPO–led career guidance workshops, collected print materials from each school (pamphlets, brochures, reports etc.), and internet documents available on the websites of each school. To ensure the privacy of the schools, the material will be listed anonymized in the references.

7.4.1 Career guidance program at General Senior High School A (Toshima–ku)

School A looks like a typical school in a Tokyo suburban area. A U–shaped complex of buildings built around a big multi–purpose sports field. The complex is surrounded by a high fence as well as some trees and bushes. The main building is three stories high, beige, and is only about a story taller than the surrounding residential buildings consisting of single–family houses and small apartment complexes. The next subway station can be reached on foot within 5 minutes and some little parks are in the surrounding area. The school has a *hensachi* of 56 and can be considered slightly above–average concerning academic ability of the students.

The school was founded – as an all–girls school– more than 80 years ago, which the principal mentions on the schools homepage in the first sentence of his introduction, pointing out the long history and tradition of facilitating the transition into further education (*shingaku*). The focus of the school is to facilitate fundamental knowledge (*kisoteki na chishiki*) in the first two years of high school and provide the students with a broad range of information and experiences in order for them to make an informed choice for their future educational career in the third year (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2015).

The school clearly states in its brochure which universities graduates could enter by letter of recommendation (*shiteikô suisen*) (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2017: 7). This especially appeals to the parents of future students who see in the school's connection to universities a possibility for their children to easily enter tertiary education. This is considered common practice by many schools and universities in Japan, the career guidance teacher told me in an interview.

> *„If possible, we try to guide [our student in a way] that they do not use a letter of recommendation. If they get in by letter of recommendation, well, especially if I say letter of recommendation I mean the AO system […]. Normally,*

> *what is called normal, is to go to the university, take a written test and pass it. That is the most orthodox […] style. The center test [National Center Test for University Admissions] is of course also a popular form. Yet, another one is to get certain grades at school, get a letter of recommendation from the school, well, if you have a recommendation from the principal you get admitted that way. And yet, the universities make this condition very clear. And you can apply like that from the beginning. After that then, principally there is an interview at the university, they do interviews or a small test, and sometimes a presentation, that is what is done. And up to this point it is ok.“* (Interview, 27.04.2017, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 04/27/2017)[62]

Yet, in the eyes of the career guidance teacher at school A, such paths should not be used by students on a regular basis for various reasons. In her opinion, the decreasing number of high school students in contrary to a large number of private universities has led to the change in admission policy at (private) universities. Even if students do not excel in any course or extra–curricular activity, they are recommended as “*students who are always putting in effort*” (*kimochi no aru seito*) or “*students with heart*” (*kokoro ga aru seito*). These students who might be described as unmotivated or lazy then have a safe and easy path into university on which they all too gladly rely. A big factor in this context are the mothers of these students:

[62] なるべく推薦制度を使わないようにという風に指導しています。推薦で決まってしまえば、ま、特に推薦というのもＡＯシステム[…]普通、一般といわゆるのは大学に行って、筆記試験を受けて、合格する。これは一番オーソドックスな[…]スタイルですね。センター試験はもちろん、ま、これもポピュラーなかたちです。もう一つは学校で一定の成績を持っていて学校の推薦を受けて、校長先生の、ま、レコメンデーションがあってアドミットされて、でなおかつ、その大学が提示した条件・コンディションをクリアしている。で、それで初めてアプライできる。で、その後は大学が面接主にインタビューでだったり、スモールテスト、時にはプレゼンテーションだったりなんっていうことでやっていく。ここまだはまだよいのですが。

„The ones who nowadays worry a lot are the mothers. Especially mothers who have daughters feel peace of mind if they [their daughters] get in [that way]. And the examination fee ends after one [entrance exam]. Normally you apply at a number of universities. That will cost you tenth of thousands of yen. But if you only apply at one, it ends with one. […] Especially mothers say 'How about trying via AO? How about you try via letter of recommendation?', that is the tendency. But by doing that, not surprisingly, after that they [the students] stop studying and […] in Japan the autumn or winter is totally mental for senior high school students, it is tough. But that is a valuable experience! " (Interview, 27.04.2017, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 04/27/2017)[63]

During many informal talks with young and older teachers I noticed that they think that hardship during the last year of high school forms the character. It is supposed to lead to students developing personality traits that will help them in later life. This line of thought seems to be still very dominant at Japanese schools. School A is no exception.

Depending on the person, in their youth this is a very special time for taking entrance examinations and such […]. But if studying continues there are also many enjoyable parts and it is useful for their future, they should just take part in these normal written examinations, try it. This is what makes their hearts strong. (Interview, 27.04.2017, head career guidance

63 現状結構困ることはお母さんたち。娘さんを持ったお母さんたちはそれで受かれば安心できます[…]そして、受験料も一回で済みます。受けるための受験料は、普通で受ければいくつの大学受けますね。何十万もかかります。でも一回で受かれば一回で済みます。[…]特にお母さんたちが「ＡＯで受けたらどう？推薦で受けたらどう？」とこういう傾向があります。でも、それではですね、やはりその後勉強しなくなりますし、[…]日本の高校生は三年の秋・冬とてもメンタルですね、ほんとにきついです。でもそれは、貴重な体験だよ。

teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 04/27/2017)[64]

She pointed out that especially nowadays companies prefer not to hire students who entered university by letter of recommendation. It is a tendency that has been pointed out by many teachers to whom I spoke during my field work. It is perceived that such students do not advance during their time at university, that they do not have a backbone, and do not know how to put effort into something. With regards to private universities, there is not much the teachers can do if the universities increase the numbers of applicants who can enter by either letter of recommendation or AO. Universities seem to even target not only students but their parents in order to attract more applicants. At school A about two thirds of the students aim for a four year university after graduation.

> *Nowadays it is very different from the past, mothers go to Open Campus events together with their children. When they do that the people at the university are very clever. They are very skilled at advertising. […] They are first and foremost trying to appeal to the mothers. Even if the homeroom teachers say something like 'your daughter is very good, she should try to get into this kind of university [by taking the entrance exam]. How about she tries here?', [the mother then replies] 'No, this is the kind of university I want.' It does not move forward. That is the difficult point. Fathers want their children […] to have a challenge. There are also these kinds of fathers. Mothers are really difficult. Mothers themselves want peace of mind."* (Interview, 27.04.2017, head career

[64] 人によっては青春の大事な時期を受験などというもののために、[…] でも勉強も進んでいけば面白い部分がたくさんありますし、将来に役立つこともありますし、とにかくその普通の筆記試験で取り組む・トライする。ということが本当に心強くする。

guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Toshima–ku, 04/27/2017)[65]

In March 2015, 275 students had made up their mind about their future. The overall “rate for having decided once future path” (*shinro kettei ritsu*) for that year was 85.8% (93.2% for female and 77.5% for male students). In 2015, 189 graduates (86 female/ 70 male) (68.7%) wanted to enter a four–year (in most cases private) university. Out of these students, 15 (ten female/ five male) were supposed to do so with a letter of recommendation (*suisen*) and 18 (13 female/ five male) by admission office (AO). Furthermore, 13 graduates (4.7%) aimed at entering a two–year college (*tanki daigaku*). All these graduates were female and two were to enter by letter of recommendation, five by AO and the remaining six by normal admission. Another 29 students (10.5%) planned to continue their education at a vocational school (*senmon gakkô*), one female student by letter of recommendation, five male students by AO and the remaining 11 (four female/ seven male) by normal admission. The remaining 44 graduates (16%) either wanted to try getting into an institute for further education in the next year and became *rônin* (total of 39 students, ten female/ 29 male) or to enter employment as public servants (three male). (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b: 29).

To provide a more comprehensive picture of the development of career choices in the recent years, I have designed a graph depicting the career choices of students at the time of graduation from 2012 to 2016 (Graph 7) While the student number fluctuate to a certain extent, the career choices of third year students at graduation remained stable in the past years.

[65] 今はやはり昔と違ってお母さんたちが生徒と一緒にオープン･キャンパスに行くことがあります。そうすると大学の人たちはとてもお上手です。うまいです宣伝が。[…]お母さんがまずもうアトラクトされちゃうんです。いくら担任の先生が「お嬢さんはもっとこちらがいいと思いますよ。」ここに挑戦するのはいかがですか。「いいえ、こういうな大学がいいです」となかなか動きません。難しいところです。[…]お父さんたちは結構子供に[…]チャレンジをさせたい。そういうお父さんたちもいます。お母さんたちはなかなか難しいです。お母さんたちは自分が安心したいんです。

In the following, I will give an overview of the 2016 career guidance plan (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b: 44) which was used during the time I did my fieldwork at school A. For each month of the school year different events, activities, and tests are planned and carried out for first–, second–, and third–year students. I will focus especially on events for first–year students because the workshops I visited together with the LMCS are mostly aiming at the first year of senior high school.

The department for career guidance has developed eight steps which comprise the career guidance program of school A over the time period of three years (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b: 1–2):

1. “Establishing fundamental living habits” (*kihonteki seikatsushûkan no kakuritsu*), which includes a structured day, politeness, punctual attendance of classes and extra–curricular activities (bukatsu) as well as maintaining one’s health.

2. “Establishing studying habits” (*gakushûshûkan no kakuritsu*). Regardless of the students future profession a fundamental education is a prerequisite for any employment. Attending all classes and putting effort into them is imperative.

3. “Understanding oneself” (*jibun wo rikai suru*) involves understanding and analyzing one’s personality, character, academic abilities, skills, and hobbies etc. This way the students get a clearer picture of their interests and aptitudes.

4. “Thinking about one’s way of life” (*ikikata wo kangaeru*), which includes not only picturing one’s life as an adult but also students are also learning from fully–fledged members of society how to achieve their goals.

5. “Investigating about occupations” (*shokugyô nitsuite shiraberu*). To contribute to society in the future, students in Japan have to choose – according to the school brochure – among more than 35,000 different professions and occupations. The engagement in activities which help students learn about work life is an important process in deciding their own future.

6. “Collecting, understanding, and arranging Information” (*jôhô wo atsume rikai shi seiri suru*) means taking the skills and information attained during step one to five, arranging them in a structured fashion, and combining the results in order to:

7. “Construct a study plan according to one’s [future] life course” (*shinro ni awaseta gakushûkeikaku wo tateru*). Here the student has to choose his or her future study course according to his or her desired career trajectory to be in the position to:

8. “Decide his or her [future] life course by him–/herself” (*jibun no shinro ha jibun de kimeru*) at the end of the senior high school education.

These are the steps the students will go through during their three year senior high school education. In theory this should enable them to make an informed decision regarding further education and/or the choice of their future occupation.

Career guidance for first year students (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2014, 2016a) has the objective to support them in understanding their own attitude towards a certain occupation and the way they want to live after graduating. The information and concepts introduced to first year students are rather basic and aim at giving them an overview of possible career trajectories.

Starting from April, the beginning of the Japanese school year, to the beginning of June short one–on–one interviews (*mendan*), a general aptitude test (*tekisei kensa*), and a career survey (*shinro chôsa*) are the main focus of career guidance teachers. A broad range of information material covering all sorts of possible career or academic trajectories is provided by the school in order for the students to get a rough idea of professions they are interested in. Starting from June, the parents are involved in meetings between students, parents, and teacher (*sansha mendan*). In June the NPO–led workshop carried out by LMCS is a central event in the career guidance plan to give students the possibility to get into contact with actual fully–fledged members of society other than their teachers or their parents. For several years, the NPO–led workshop “interview with a working members of society” has been carried out at school A and will also be an essential part of the career guidance

program of school A in the future. The career guidance teacher told me this after the interview when she saw me to the school gate (personal communication, head career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school Toshima–ku, 05/18/2017).

Before the Open Campus events of universities and other educational institutions in August, students take an academic ability test (*gakuryoku tesuto*) and a second general aptitude test. Around this time of the year, students are also introduced to the various fields of study and their upcoming decision between the liberal arts course (*bunkei*) and the science course (*rikei*) and how this will influence their further studies and career or academic possibilities. This continues until October when the second career survey and another round of one–on–one interviews takes place. Until the end of the year there is another round of parent–teacher–student meetings and yet another academic ability test. The year closes with special guidance lesson for students who are interested in public employment (*kômuin gaidansu*) (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2014, 2016a).

The time from January to March is dominated by events aiming at university admission, like the “center challenge” (*sentâcharenji*) a mock version of the “National Center Test for University Admissions” (*daigaku’nyûshi sentâshiken*), another academic ability test, and a third career survey. Additionally, they have had a so called “life planning course” (*raifu puranningu jugyô*) carried out by a daughter company of a major provider of consumer electronics. During this event, students learn about how decisions in the course of their academic life influence their future career. A professional who normally supports people who want to enhance their career or business runs this event at the school. According to the head career guidance teacher, the company has been doing this as a part of their corporate social responsibility program at junior and senior high schools for a couple of years. After looking through the homepages of other companies that provided similar services, they decided to let them run this event about three or four years ago. Other contacts or proven relationships to private companies, especially with regard to job placement, do not exist at school A.

During the second year, students are encouraged to form a more concrete image of their future career and develop plans of how to reach their occupational goals. While the overall structure of the career guidance program remains the same during second year, the school has more info events about university education or institutes that offer vocational training. The information about the content of university education compared to a two–year college or a vocational school are also described in detail in the career guidance booklet. This booklet is handed out to the students at the beginning of their first year at the school (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b: 4–25).

Concerning job hunting and entering employment after graduating, there is only basic information in the booklet and most events with regard to direct labor market entry aim at introducing public employment to the students (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b: 26–28).

While this continues in year three there are several open time slots in the autumn and winter where no career guidance events take place due to the entrance examinations for various universities almost all students take part in. During that time period, students ought to have already developed a definite career plan and work towards realizing their future life course (General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016b2, 44).

According to the career guidance teacher, all these events, tests, and interviews are supposed to help the students translate the knowledge and experiences into skill sets, which will develop a strong character, help them achieve their goals, and make an informed decision concerning their future career.

Career guidance at School A can be considered as comprehensive and having been adapted to the changing needs of the students over the past decade. Due to a slightly above average academic ranking of the school, it sends more students to university than the other two schools I will describe later in this chapter. School A gives their students numerous occasions in which they can engage with the subject of work, their future academic or professional career, and their surrounding community. They offer a variety of programs in collaboration with members of the

community, the business world as well as civil society groups like the LMCS. This is in accord with the guideline of the TMBE which encourages schools to provide a wide variety of different experiences and learning content. By using the services of the LMCS and their NPO–led career guidance workshops, they also incorporate content of the FCWP program of the METI in their career guidance curriculum. In the case of school A, the highly motivated teachers in the career guidance department under the leadership of a “veteran” teacher, which I interviewed in May 2017, seems to be the decisive factor in the overall success of the career guidance program. This is a narrative which came up in my interviews quite often. When addressing the subject in personal communications with teachers and NPO members alike they stated that career guidance always depended on the human component, hence a motivated teacher or group of teachers.

7.4.2 Career guidance program at General Senior High School B (Itabashi–ku)

School B is an average metropolitan general senior high school with a *hensachi* of 48. It is situated in a quiet residential area in the Itabashi ward in the west of Tokyo. Most students live in the ward itself or in neighboring wards quite close to the school. In the school year 2016 there were a total of 816 students studying at school B. 717 were studying in 18 classes in the “all–day system” (*zennichisei*) and 99 students were studying in four classes in the part–time school system (*teijisei*) (General senior high school B 2017a: 4).

In the all–day system roughly 50% of students enter university after graduation, about 10% move on to a two–year college, about 25% continue their education at a vocational school and the remaining 15% dived themselves almost evenly into students who aim at entering employment or those who have not made up their mind yet.

At the end of the school year 2015, 237 students had had chosen their future career. 123 graduates (74 female/ 49 male) (51.9%) wanted to enter a (private) four–year university. Furthermore, 21 graduates (19

female/ two male) (8.9%) were to enter a two–year college (*tanki daigaku*). Another 54 students (42 female/ 12 male) (22.8%) planned to continue their education at vocational schools (*senmon gakkô)*. Another 20 graduates (15 female/ five male) (8.4%) entered employment and 19 students (five female/ 14 male) (8%) had not made up their mind by the end of the school year (General senior high school B 2017b: 66). I have provided a graph depicting the development of career choices of third–year students at graduation for the time period 2013–2017, however, there is little change in career choices within that time period (Graph 8).

The school motto[66] of school B – an excerpt from the analects of Confucius – emphasizes knowledge, virtue, growing up healthy, and the proud feeling of being a member of this very school (General senior high school B 2014a).

> *"In my opinion, the most important part [of high school] is moral education. Because greeting, politeness and furthermore, well, to be polite is connected to being on time, furthermore, carrying out tasks in a systematic fashion, I want them to have the proper attitude towards such problems. So it is not about relaxing and [consequently] not gaining the next thing but I want them to find the [ability] to pile up constant efforts, I think*." (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school and evening school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)[67]

The school lies within walking distance to a train station of a private railway company and can also be reached by various city busses. The school opened in 2007 as a result of two schools in the area being closed and "combined" into one. Both previous schools emphasized tradition

[66]徳不孤　必有隣 (とくはこならず　かならずとなりあり). "With virtue there is no solitude, there is always company."

[67] 私は一番大切なのは、徳育だと思います。なので、挨拶、礼儀ですね、礼儀正しいこと、それから、ま、それに関係しますけれども、時間を守ること、それから、計画的にものごとを進められること、そういう問題に対する姿勢を、正しい姿勢をもってほしいと思います。なにか楽をして、次のこと勝ち取るんではなくて、地道な努力を重ねていくっていうことを身に着けてほしいと思っています。

and the possibility for the students to study in a relaxed atmosphere. This trend continues at school B.

The building complex is modern, white and with many glass elements letting in a lot of natural light. The class rooms are well equipped and contain new furniture as well as modern media equipment. The modern sports facilities are situated next to the school. The buildings only reach from ground level to the second floor and do not dwarf the surrounding greenery and trees, which give the whole area a tranquil atmosphere. Just like in the surrounding residential area there are a number of cherry blossom trees on the school grounds. This tranquility is also taken up in the concept of education at this school. To reduce stress for the students, the three core subjects Japanese, Math, and English are taught in classes – different to other senior high schools – with a smaller number of students than usual.

At the beginning of the first year, students are divided into these smaller classes by an aptitude test. In the following years, the class they visit is decided by the grades in each subject at the end of each semester. Two normal classes á 40 students – the current average class size at senior high schools in Japan – are divided, according to their ability and focus, into three smaller classes: “Practical application class” (*ôyô kurasu*), “standard class” (*hyôjun kurasu*) and “basic class” (*kiso kurasu*). For the subject English this means for example that in the “practical application class” 90%, in the “standard class” 70% and in the “basic class” 50% of the lesson content is taught in English language while the rest is explained in Japanese (General senior high school B 2016: 3).

The school puts emphasis on international education with extra–curricular programs set in different prefectures focusing on English conversation abilities but also exchange programs and class trips to other Asian countries (General senior high school B 2016: 10). Furthermore, the school has been a “model school for the advancement of active learning” (*akutibu râningu suishinkô*) for three years in a row at the time of my field work. This not only includes the use of modern information technologies in the learning process but also innovative teaching methods by the teachers.

Students visit the school on Saturdays for intensive courses (*doyô tokkun*) in the three core subjects and all three grades also visit preparation classes and study groups for advancement into further education during summer and winter holidays. To underline the commitment to tradition and academic advancement, students practice their hand writing every morning during the “3 minute penmanship” (*asa no sanpun shosha*). In these three minutes they are supposed to visualize and write down – in good handwriting – their goals for the day. By doing so, it improves their focus on the academic tasks ahead of them (General senior high school B 2016: 2–3).

Like the core subjects, the career guidance is also individualized. It aims at paying more attention to the individual and his/her needs. For this, the school has a career guidance system called “career examination meeting” (shinro kentô kai). In this system, there is not only one or a few teachers[68] responsible for each student and their career guidance but all the teachers work as a team. To make sure that every student gets sufficient attention, each of the students has a so called “career card” (*shinro karute*). On this card all relevant information about academic ability, test scores in all subjects up to the current point in their senior high school history as well as test scores from facilities outside schools (cram schools (*juku)*, language tests etc.), their preferred career after graduation, academic goals, and a graph depicting their advancements are collected and evaluated throughout the course of their three years of senior high school education. The data is stored in form of an excel file and an updated printout is handed to the students on a regular basis during one–on–one meetings with their teachers or upon request of the students. The system is designed in a way that the students can always approach the teachers responsible for them – in most cases, they approach their home room teacher first – with questions about their future career wishes or university education. Based on the data collected on these cards, different teachers are responsible for their career guidance. For students who aim at tertiary education at a university, there are so

[68] In most schools I visited, the homeroom teacher of the student and one of the career guidance teachers were responsible for students who came to them for guidance.

called career advisors (*shinro adobaizâ*) from whom students get support according to the students' university wishes and departments of choice but also according to the competence area of the teacher e.g. subject, his experience, or his university education. They provide information about the universities, prepare the students for the entrance examinations, and give them an idea about possible career trajectories after graduating from university.

> *[…] at our school we have the so called career advisor system, the home room teacher or the teacher of a subject, for example, if one wants to study art, wants to study design, they have the possibility to go to the art/design teacher to ask [about it]. If somebody says, ' I want to study math in the future', they can go to the math teacher etc. According to their career [wish], different teachers offer advice. Because we provide this so called career advisor structure, because we provide these opportunities, if one has some interest about something there is time to ask the teachers for advice.* (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school and evening school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)[69]

The school also has a special support program which prepares the students for employment in a medical profession. This applies for students who want to study medicine at a university, visit a vocational school to become e.g. a nurse in order to find employment in a hospital or a similar institution. School B has a network of vocational schools, hospitals, and universities they can access to provide further information for the students where the teacher, due to his professional limitations, might not be able to provide adequate support. In addition to the medical

[69] […] 本校には進路アドバイザーというシステムがありまして、ホームルーム担任だとか教科担任とか、例えば自分は美術系に行きたい、デザイン系に行きたいっていうときに美術・デザインの先生に聴きにいく機会があるんですね。「私は将来に数学勉強したい」って言ったら数学の先生のところに聴きに行ったりとか。自分の進路に応じていろんな先生がアドバイスする。そういう進路アドバイザーっていう仕組みを設けているので、そういう機会も設けて、自分が少し興味があるものについて先生と相談する時間があります。

field there is a special career support course which prepares a number of students for the various tests they have to face if they seek employment in the public sector. Students meet in weekly study groups to go over the content necessary for the examinations. While the intensive courses on Saturday for first and second year students focus on the core subjects, third–year students use this time to prepare them for the specific content of their entrance examinations.

Academic achievements are regarded as important as extra–curricular activities like sports or cultural courses at school B. In order for the students to take part in these events as well as the Saturday intensive courses, the latter are held from morning to lunch time so that the time slots do not collide. That way, there is enough time for sports and the like in the afternoon (General senior high school B 2014b, 2016: 8).

On average, about 55% of the students at school B visit a four–year university, 24% a two–year college or vocational school and about 15% find employment after graduation. When entering a university they are told that, on average, they will become a fully–fledged member of society at 22 years of age and their average income when entering employment will be 2,030,000 yen (approx. 17,000 EUR/19,000 USD). When visiting a vocational school or two–year college, the average age at time of graduation goes down to 20 and the average income at the time of first employment amounts to 1,770,000 yen (approx. 14,500 EUR/16,500 USD). When they decide to enter employment after graduating from senior high school they will be on average 18 years old and their first income will be about 1,610,000 yen (approx. 13,250 EUR/15,000USD). This information, taken from the survey on average income carried out by the MHLW in 2016 (*heisei 28nen chingin kôzô kihon keikaku chôsa*)[70], was provided by the school in the 2017 career guidance booklet to give the students an idea of the impact their academic decisions have on their future and their position on the labor market (General senior high school B 2017b: 2).

[70] https://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/itiran/roudou/chingin/kouzou/z2016/index.html

In addition to the career guidance program, students are given detailed information about different trajectories, the requirements for their chosen career, and financial factors in form of this career guidance booklet, which is updated every year. Compared to other booklets and brochures concerned with career guidance which I collected during my fieldwork at other senior high schools, at school B the emphasis was not only on detailed information of every possible field of study and the various ways via which the students can enter said educational institutes but also the costs of each chosen trajectory. For each field of study, whether the student choses e.g. a private or public university, entrance fees, semester fees, and other connected costs are presented in a comprehensive way (General senior high school B 2017b: 3–51).

> *Because the problem is, whether you look for a job or continue your education, it costs money, in the end, in order to advance to further education, the parents have to pay the sum for the entrance fees, not surprisingly the parents have also strong inclinations. However, when looking at the parents and children, well, while we let the children make their decision independently, we offer various advice. But sometimes, I think, they [the parents] also say [to the child]: 'Well, our household finances are like this so if possible go to this kind of place!'"* (Interview, principal, metropolitan general senior high school and evening school, Itabashi–ku, 06/20/2017)[71]

Factors like this might be especially decisive for the student with a low socioeconomic background when choosing his or her future.

The career guidance program at School B – just like the teaching methods – is comprehensive and closely tailored to the individual needs of the students. It has been adjusted over time to changing needs as well

[71] 就職するか進学するかいずれにしてもお金がかかわる問題なので、最終的に保護者に入学金を払ってもらえないと進学できませんから、やはり親の意向というのも強くあります。ただ、本校の親子さんを見ていますと、ま、子供に主体的に決めさせながら色々と相談して。「ま、うちの家計はこうだから、なるべくこういうところに行って」ということも言ってると思うんですね。

as to changes in society and consequent demands on the students. This seems to be mainly due to the effort of teachers and the principal and their commitment to the students' comprehensive education. Career guidance at school B does not have a special position but matches the overall goal to target the holistic education and development of each student on an individual level. To achieve this, all teachers engage in student support according to their experience and regardless of whether a student actually attends their class or not.

The career guidance program has been consistent, yet was adapted over the years according to new ideas and programs which were introduced by the TMBE. Quite recently, the NPO–led career guidance workshops were introduced and school B will continue the partnership with the LMCS for the future.

7.4.3 Career guidance program at General Senior High School C (Higashi–Kurume–shi)

School C is located in a quiet residential area in a western city in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area. It takes about an hour's train ride from major railway stations like Ikebukuro or Shinjuku to the school. However, the majority of the students live in the direct vicinity of the school. Most of them come to school by bicycle. The school has a *hensachi* of 46 and, therefore, ranks slightly below school B.

Regarding post–graduation trajectories there is little difference to school B. The only exception is that more students continue their education at vocational schools. In my interview at school C, I was told that on average 40–45% of students enter university after graduating from senior high school. Approximately 5–7% % continue their education at a two–year college and about 35–40% move on to a vocational school. Only 3–5% enter employment directly after graduating. The remaining 5–10% have no clear trajectory when leaving senior high school. This includes students entering provisional, irregular, or no employment at all.

In March 2015, when the graduates (224 students in total) left school, 86 graduates (29 female/ 57 male) (38.4%) entered a four–year

university. While there is no data concerning what type of university they entered, the career guidance teacher told me that they almost exclusively enter low–ranking private universities. 14 female graduates (6.3%) moved on to a two–year college (*tanki daigaku*). 95 students (59 female/ 36 male) (42.4%) continued their education at a vocational school (*senmon gakkô)*. Employment was the choice of nine graduates (five female/ four male) (4%) and the remaining 20 students (four female/ 16 male) (9%) had not chosen a career path at that point of time (General senior high school C 2015). As with the other two schools, there is little change in the proportion of students choosing certain future career paths, at least not within the five–year time period from 2013 to 2017 (Graph 9).

> *"At our school, children who aim at university […] are not that common. It's more like, they find out here what university could be like, plus now that the Japanese society is changing, when you think about it, the society which is focused on the academic background is becoming apparent when you do not go to university. […] So bearing that in mind, the school should encourage their students to go to university, that is maybe better, I think."* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[72]

The young teacher I interviewed at school C, I had previously meet during the NPO–led career guidance workshop "Values and work interest" earlier in the summer of 2017 (see chapter 3.4.1). He has been a teacher for about eight years, four of which he has spent at the present school. He has been a career guidance teacher while being a home room teacher for about one year at the time of the interview. Including him and the head of the career guidance department of school C, there are six teachers in

[72] うちの学校の中では、やっぱり大学を目指す子はそんなに多いわけではない。[…] 学校でやっぱり大学ってこういうこと、ま、やるんだよ、プラス今の日本の社会を考えるとどうしても学歴社会が出てきていて、大学行っていないと就職とか生涯賃金の部分でも差は出てくるということ考えるとやっぱり学校側は大学にまず行くというのは促してあげて方がいいのかなというのがあります。

total responsible for career education. While, according to him, the number of career guidance teachers is completely sufficient for this school, he also talked about experience at the school he started his career as a teacher at.

> *"The school I was working at before was one of the lowest ranking schools in Tokyo. Completely different school culture. In first year there were only 20% who wanted to go on to further education, 30% wanted to go to a vocational school. And 50% were going to do job–hunting. It was 'that' kind of school."* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[73]

He continued that teachers at this school, especially young teachers like himself with little experience, were not prepared for this situation. He recalled that up to one third of class time was used for disciplinary measures or the resolving of some problem. While this led to almost every teacher being behind on the educational content they had to teach, it left little to no room for career guidance. The most influential factor for a student's career choice at his previous school was the student's peers and their socioeconomic background. Compared to School C, where university education is considered a possible option by the students, the students at his former place of employment where only talking about finding employment as soon as possible after graduation. To him it felt like they were just not accustomed to academic learning at all.

> *"As I said before, the [influence of the] household is strong. Another important factor is the atmosphere among their peers. When they are all talking about what to do, they all said 'I will do job–hunting.' And because the majority said so the others thought, 'Well, then I will*

[73] 私は、前の学校だと全然別なんですけど。ちょっと私もなんかカルチャーショックというか。[…] 実は一番低いといわれているぐらいの学校に初めて赴任したところだったんで、もう全然そこの文化が、こういう高校もあるんだなーという。大学進学者も最終的に 2 割ぐらいですが、専門に行く子が 3 割、で 5 割が就職。という学校でした。

> *do job–hunting as well.' It were those kinds of conversations."* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[74]

In the teacher's opinion, the experiences students made in junior high school shape their attitude towards learning and studying in general. At his first school most students did not enjoy learning at all. At school C the trend is not as bad. While their academic abilities upon entry are average at best, they tend to improve during their three years of senior high school, yet not enough to motivate them to go on to further, purely academic education. Entering employment soon is still the proclaimed goal of most students.

When asked about any connections to companies, the teacher replied that there were none in the old sense; proven relationships that promised students secure employment after graduation (*jisseki kankei*).

Like in every other school I visited, the homeroom teacher is considered to be the person closest to the students. The homeroom teacher is the first adult students contact with questions regarding their future career. Due to the deteriorating networks of the school and little to no ties to the community, students at school C have little to no contact to other fully–fledged members of society with the exception of their parents and their teachers. The school just recently started the LMCS workshops and also invited private organizations like Recruit to conduct career guidance events or other events that support the students in preparing them for direct labor market entry. In this context, programs often focus on how to choose secure employment. This was decided upon by the school due to the recent rise in irregular employment in Japanese society. Again, family background is an important influence on the students' choices and shapes their perception of work and their possible career trajectories in the future.

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[74] 一つはさっき言った、家庭の影響は強いと思います。もう一つは、その同世代の雰囲気はあるとお思います。前の学校はもうどうするって皆で友達の会話をするときに「俺は就職だよ、就職で」それは多数派を占めるので、「じゃ、俺も就職でいいか」っていう会話がやっぱりあるっていうこと。

> *“When the parents make a living by part–time work or as a freeter, well, we do not have many of those kids [with parents making a living as a freeter], if there is such an environment in the family, these kids [might feel] it is not necessary to become a regular employee. So not paying money and going to university but find a job and work for one’s living, that is the way they think.”* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[75]

Of course this also influences the perception of the value of university education and quality of tertiary education.

> *Children from this school do not really go to good universities. Even if you are at the top with your grades at this school, the parents are not really interested in university. They have the impression it is better to get a job than to go to university, I think. (*Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[76]

While the parents, according to the teacher, take an interest in their children’s future they do not interfere with the teachers or complain when problems arise. A lot of parents send all their children to school C for the simple reason that they live close to it or have visited the school themselves. The teacher is convinced that the students who graduate from school C will do so as well and sent their children to the school as well.

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[75] 例えば、親がパートかフリーターで、ま、うちの子は少ない方なんですけどね、それで生活してきている環境が家庭であればその子も正社員にわざわざなる必要はない、わざわざお金払って大学行く必要ではなく就職すぐしたほうが金が稼げるという考えになるだろうなと思うんですよね。

[76] この学校がいい大学行くためにはという名声はあまりないですよね。例えば、この学校で上の方の成績取ったとしても親は大学にそんなに興味がなかったりすると別にそれとなく大学行ったり、就職して、無難に生活できればっていう感覚を知ってるからなのかなと思います。

> *"Our graduates will get children and they will come to our school, it is a generational school, or for people from the neighborhood"* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[77]

Here career guidance could function as a decisive factor to stop the inheritance of work biographies from parents to their children. However, comprehensive career guidance has not yet been implemented in school C due to a lack of interest among older teachers. They felt it was not necessary and therefore nobody felt responsible.

> *"So it can be said that career guidance at our school was broken. Last year a homeroom teacher, who had a class for the last three years, entered the career guidance department […] so starting from last year the system changed drastically and finally career guidance is happening in a systematic, step–by–step fashion. Actually, it is supposed to be like this at all the schools but because you have rotation of teachers in metropolitan schools, when the 'leader' is rotated away, there are not many who can fill the gap." (*Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[78]

The "new" career guidance program of school C has been running since 2016. Special emphasis is put on the third year of high school where most events take place (General senior high school C 2016b). A program for students who look for employment in the private sector (*minkan shûshoku*

[77] ここの卒業生が子供産んでその子供がここに来て、親子でここに来ているとか地域の学校なので、かなり。

[78] うちの学校の進路がやっぱりぼろぼろだといわれて、で去年から三年の担任を終わった先生が進路部に入って、一年間の、ま、三年間流れの進路を、分かった先生が今の進路されているので、やっぱり去年・今年はガラッとシステムが変わって、でやっと系統的に進路が段階的に動くというのは形になってきました。本当は、それぞれの学校そうあるべきなんですけど、都立高校はやっぱり移動があるので、そうするとそのリーダーの先生も移動されると代わりにだれがそのリーダーのポジションに入れるかというとあまりやっぱりいないんですよね。

kibôsha) has been developed. It consists of so called readiness tests (*redinesu tesuto*) before and after guided study tours, which are supported by members of Hello Work (harôwāku)[79] or visited by lecturers from various companies to which the students can listen to (General senior high school C 2016a).

The career guidance program for 2018 (General senior high school C 2018c) is completely identical to the previous year (General senior high school C 2017) suggesting that the head career guidance teacher has not changed yet but there has also not been new input by other teachers. In most schools I visited the program is reviewed every year and – at least – some small changes are made.

The current career guidance program – although still underdeveloped – is supposed to provide a broad view on society and possible careers for the students within their three years of high school education (General senior high school C 2019). Career guidance is also conducted according to the new text book “people and society” and teachers make use of actors outside the traditional education context to ensure more comprehensive education. They try to reconnect with the surrounding community and help prepare the students for the demands society will have on them after they graduated. “Hello Work” officials will also visit the school to hold career guidance events to support the teachers in their responsibilities (General senior high school C 2018b). Additionally, students are provided with short statements of former students who moved on to further education or found employment (General senior high school C 2018a). These “stories”, so the career guidance teacher told me, are important to motivate the current students and give them an idea what is waiting for them after high school. There is little to no contact to former students at school C but the career guidance department tries to establish these contacts in order for the future third–year students to benefit from the experience of their so called *senpai*. Because peer influence also seems to be strong at school C, the teachers have, therefore, recently started to try to involve former

[79] Hello Work is the name for the Japanese government's Employment Service Center.

graduates in the career guidance program. However, it is still too early to see any concrete results.

During their first year of high school there are not many events; the program consists of a survey at the beginning of the school year (*shinro kibô kensa*), general career guidance (*shinro gaidansu*), a career survey (*shinro tekisei kensa*), and an aptitude test (*jitsuryoku shindan tesuto*) near the end of the academic year. For students in their second year there are three major explanatory meetings (*setsumeikai*) at which point people from universities, two–year colleges, and vocational schools visit the school. They take place at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the academic school year. Career guidance in the third year consists of a number explanatory meetings for the actual entry of an educational institution like a university or vocational school. Here entering by letter of recommendation or AO is integral part of the program (General senior high school C 2017).

As mentioned before, since 2016 a new comprehensive career guidance plan has been developed and implemented by a team of six teachers. According to the young teacher I interviewed, it was due to the input of the new head teacher of the career guidance department which led to a recent stability within the career guidance program at school C. He continued to point out that especially in Tokyo there is a lot of rotation; teachers are changing schools after a rather short period of time. In his experience, teachers change metropolitan schools within three to six years. After coming to the school, it takes about one to two years to get acquainted to the workplace and their responsibilities. Then these teachers get their own class which takes up another three years. When they start to get involved in e.g. the career guidance department there is not much time left to introduce any big changes in the program before they leave for their next place of employment. In the young teacher's opinion, this is one of the main reasons why at all average– to low–level metropolitan senior high schools the quality of career guidance programs is rather low. While there are certainly able teachers who introduce some new ideas to the career guidance program, it all falls apart when these teachers leave the school and the new or remaining teachers have to

start from scratch. Another decisive factor is the attitude of the principal towards career guidance.

> *"It depends on the principal's plan of action. Totally. The current principal tells us to do career guidance, the former principal told us to put more effort into extra–curricular activities. Something like that. There are different types of people."* (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017)[80]

This was a common narrative in most conversations with teachers or NPO staff during my field work. While there only exist vague requirements concerning career guidance at this schools, schools are encouraged by the TMBE to conduct innovative career guidance events. However, the principal at school C has the last say when it comes to the implementation of such activities in the school's career guidance curriculum.

> *"Interviewer: Will there be more NPOs providing career guidance in the future?*
> *Teacher: They will become more. [..] Fundamentally, it is a good thing, I think. To lift the burden of the teachers. If people understand that it is necessary from the schools [shoulders], that would be a plus, I think. But isn't that a bit strange, that is the peculiar thing about the Japanese, the school is a closed system, the classroom is your class, your kingdom. The school is a kingdom of its own. It is easy to refuse people coming in from the outside. For example, that [private] prep schools involve themselves in schools is very recent. […] In the last school that was unthinkable. And to involve the public sphere is something that is a no–go among teachers.*

[80] 校長の方針次第で、全然、ま、この校長先生は結構進路やりなさいって、前の校長先生の中では「部活やりなさい」みたいな感じで、どっち向きの人もいるんですよね、高校で。

> *[…] Personally, if it is done in a way where the result is for the students, I felt that it is a good thing*." (Interview, career guidance teacher, metropolitan general senior high school, Higashi Kurume–shi, 09/22/2017) [81]

The career guidance program of school C was non–existent or fragmented at best in the past. Due to the favorable situation created by the new principal and a group of motivated teachers with new ideas it is in the process of improving. If it had not been for these factors, one is safe to assume that no changes would have been made at school C.

The career guidance department has only recently started to pay more attention to students' career trajectories and, therefore, it is too early to assess if the measures introduced will remain in the career guidance plan. The strong leadership of a "veteran" teacher marked the turning point for the school's program but according to the young teacher I interviewed this might easily change when the head teacher of the department rotates to another school or the next principal has little or no interest in career guidance. Because there are no strict guidelines imposed by the TMBE concerning career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools, it is easy for teachers and principals alike to dismiss this essential part of the students' education.

When the school does not take responsibility for guiding their graduates into employment or further education it is not surprising that they might look for alternative ways to enter the labor market.

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81 インタビューアー：ＮＰＯとか校外のコーポレーション今から増えていると思いますか。
先生：増えていると思いますね。[…] 基本的にいいと思います。その教員の負担の部分とか、進路指導部においてもどこかが、全部の学校ではないですけど、都立高校の知りたいことっていうのを把握して、学校に還元してくれるというのはすごく教員とってプラスだなとは思いますけど。いや、でもなんか不思議なもんですね。やっぱり日本の多分、日本人の変な部分だと思うんですけど。すごく学校やっぱり閉鎖的な考え方が、教室は自分のクラス。自分の王国。学校は学校自分の王国みたいな、自分たちの。外部からの刺激っていうものを拒みやすい傾向にもあるんですよね。例えば、塾とかが学校に参加するっていうのもつい最近。[…] やっぱり前の学校では考えられないことですよね。民間の感覚を入れるっていうのが教員会の中ではないことをなので。[…] 個人として、そういう風にやって結果が生徒のためになるのであれば、いいのかなの気がしたんですけど。

7.5 Alternative transition patterns

While the transition process into the work force is still expected to be provided for by the school, "*the transition system unique to Japan has become increasingly untenable*" (Honda 2004a: 111). When taking into account the unfavorable labor market conditions and the "*educational upgrading of the labor force*", senior high school graduates might also chose to postpone university entry for one year and try to enter their favored university after a year of intense studying. This is, however, not an option for youth with a weak socioeconomic background. Their parents cannot afford to finance their child/children for one year of *rônin (Brinton 2010: 126)*. So other options than tertiary education are more realistic for these students. If students do not find employment, so called "Youth Trial Employment" programs implemented by the Ministry for Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW) in 2002 try to "*increase opportunities of contact between jobless youth and employers through trial employment, with the hope that they will led to regular employment*." To intervene before youth find themselves without employment after graduation MHLW, MEXT, and METI have been developing and promoting "work–based learning programs".

Internships and other "work–based learning programs" have increased in the portfolio of senior high schools and universities since in 1997 the Cabinet decided to promote such measures. Yet, these programs differ from e.g. the German vocational system – which is an apprenticeship system – and are comparable to models typical for the US. Like in the US, the short time period the students spent in a company and the lack of formal qualifications after completing such a program are the major difference between the Japanese and the German system. Furthermore, there are no formal contracts between students and employees (Honda 2004a: 112). Government programs, introduced by MEXT or METI, try to enhance the employability of graduates by skill development which is individual–based. Depending on the school or educational institution this is more or less successful. When looking at the current development, two decades after the introduction of said programs, it is hard to say whether these programs have had any

considerable impact or effect. In the case of senior high schools with a vocational focus or elite institutes like national colleges of technology there might be a measurable impact. However, at an average senior high school level, based on the observations I have made, I argue that the negative trend is continuing. Such programs only benefit already advantaged youth while excluding risk groups like socioeconomically weak students. More than a decade ago Honda (2004a: 113) stated that "*the Japanese transition system at present has lost not only its former position but also its future direction*".

In a job market with shrinking possibilities in order to smoothly transition van Ommen (2015: 98) suggests that long–term participation in school and club activities (*bukatsu*), which are linked to the educational institutions, have been overlooked in the process of job attainment. Brinton (1998: 448) has found similar evidence in the past. Not only academic performance but participation in school and club activities is considered an important evaluation factor for students. In contrast, Chiavacci (2005) has demonstrated at university level that institutional connections through OB networks etc. have become smaller due to the fact that companies seemed not to have been satisfied with the quality of new employees who have bypassed the official screening process by means of these networks. Building on the work of Umezaki (2000), van Ommen sees participation in *bukatsu* as embodied cultural capital after Pierre Bourdieu. Due to its specific mode of speech, norms, and habits it helps young graduates to find their place in a hierarchically structured society like Japan (99–100). I have come across similar views during my fieldwork, especially so at school B.

> *"In bukatsu you learn about hierarchy. Senpai and kohai. You learn from your senpai as well as to teach the things you learned to your kohai. If you understand this hierarchy when you become a member of society, what kind of things you get taught from you senpai, how to pass it on to your subordinates or kohai, for this it is a good training, I think."* (Interview 20.06.2017, Principal,

metropolitan general senior high school and evening school, Itabashi–ku)[82]

During my interview at a metropolitan technical high school which I visited in spring 2016, I asked about the influence of academic grades and participation in *bukatsu* on job attainment. The head career guidance teacher had a similar take on the subject of extra–curricular activities.

> *"[…], if you try very hard at bukatsu, you can say that learning and bukatsu co–exist. That is the way we raise our students. But we also try to combine goals students set for themselves in durig bukatsu with normal academic lessons. That is how I think about it."* (Interview 27.04.2017, head teacher school affairs department, metropolitan technical senior high school and evening school, Toshima–ku)[83]

He continued:

> *"Students who have done three years of bukatsu are able to see something through to the end, to hold that thought. Then of course hierarchy, the relationship between senpai and kohai, that system is taught as well. That way it is easier to 'raise' them in the company. There is also that viewpoint. Especially with students who were in a sport bukatsu, they have this tendency."* (Interview 27.04.2017, head teacher career guidance department, metropolitan technical senior high school and evening school, Toshima–ku)[84]

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[82] 部活動で縦の関係ができます。先輩や後輩。先輩から学んだり、あるいは自分は学んだことを後輩に伝えたり。そういう縦の関係をできることは社会に出たときに、先輩の人からどういう教え受けて、自分の部下・後輩にどう伝えていくかということの練習になると思います。

[83] […]部活動を一生懸命に取り組むことで、学業と部活動に取り組むことですね、両立っていうことで今指導の方はしているんですけれども、で部活動、勉強もそうなんですけど、部活動を取り組んで、目的・仕組みを持ってしなさることで、それが勉強に取り組むことに結び付きさせるような形ということで考えておりますので。

[84] 部活動を三年間やった生徒というのは非常に重宝されるんですね。やはり、継続できるという、その思念と。後は、先輩・後輩という縦系列に非常に教育ができている

Besides the membership to a sports–related school network, there are yet some additional transition patterns which have been mentioned by teachers in personal communications during my participant observation. Due to the advancement of the information society students nowadays also find information about employment on the internet. Application processes are sometimes online and cut out the school as a middle man completely. The teachers I have spoken to viewed this with mixed feelings. On the one hand, it frees students from the rather rigid system still in place in many schools, on the other hand, students and their parents seem still reluctant to use these channels. The path through the official channels of the school not only promises greater success but also a higher level of security. The senior high school is still perceived to be the facilitator for smooth transition into secure employment or tertiary education which promises greater payoffs in later employment.

8 Discussion

The transition from senior high school to the labor market or further education is to this day one of the most decisive moments in the life of a young person. Here the quality of the high school education as well as the socioeconomic background of the student strongly influence career trajectories. Due to wide–ranging changes and developments on the labor market in Japan, the once exemplary school–to–work transition system has lost its ability to facilitate a smooth transition into secure employment. Crucial components for this system were and still are macro–economic and demographic factors which directly influence the demand of industry and labor market for new employees. On the supply side of new graduates, due to deteriorating school–company networks, average–level general senior high schools are not in the position anymore to ensure secure employment for their students after graduation.

During the period of high economic growth there was an abundance of high school graduates which were highly sought after by companies,

ということで、会社が育てやすいということもありまして。やはり、特に運動部の生徒たちを非常に重宝する傾向にもあります。

especially the manufacturing industry, and accommodated the demands of a strong economy and growing nation. Nowadays, the educational reality at the senior high school level is quite different. While high–ranking senior high schools still cater to prestigious universities and schools with e.g. a vocational focus can still guarantee the transition to at least small and medium sized businesses, average– to low–level general senior high schools struggle the most to facilitate a smooth transition. By making use of actors from outside the formal context of schooling they try to overcome this handicap.

With this dissertation I provided ethnographic data which allows the reader a better understanding of the involvement of civil society groups like NPOs in the Japanese education system. At the level of metropolitan senior high schools I have shown in what way and with which limitations an NPO like the LMCS can make an important contribution to a comprehensive career guidance curriculum and support the teachers in their efforts to prepare the students for transition into the labor market.

Teachers, principals, and NPO members alike pointed out a general unpreparedness of the students with regard to labor market entry. They were especially concerned about underdeveloped communication skills and the lacking ability to work in a team. These shortcomings are at the center of the recent programs and policies of the MEXT and METI, around which the workshops and educational content of the LMCS were designed. They target these underdeveloped abilities and skill sets in order to improve the students' readiness and chances to not only transition into the labor market successfully but also find secure and meaningful employment in order to actively participate in the Japanese society. Here both the education system and civil society actors have developed programs and educational content to specifically try to prevent students from taking up irregular employment. This being said, at a metropolitan senior high schools level it depends on whether or not the teachers and/or principals accept what is offered to them.

Teachers at the schools I visited together with the LMCS have in some cases neither the experience nor the time – even if they are highly motivated – to conduct comprehensive career guidance for every

individual student due to the excessive workload and their numerous responsibilities.

I observed that inconsistent career guidance programs posed a major problem to teachers at most general senior high schools. While the TMBE has developed programs which are supposed to help the schools – especially those of average to low academic level – to overcome the mentioned shortcomings, they have yet not been consistently implemented by the metropolitan senior high schools. The decisive factors with regard to the success of career guidance at the schools I visited were, on the one hand, the experience and motivation of the teachers involved and, on the other hand, the support of the principal and his attitude towards career guidance in general or the implementation of new and innovative elements in the school's career guidance program. At a school where a motivated, experienced group of teachers under the guidance of a "veteran" teacher and supported by the principal conducted career guidance, the students benefited from a comprehensive and diverse career guidance curriculum with innovative elements like NPO–led career guidance workshops but also from lecturers from local companies or the community as well as other (private) providers of educational services. This is in line with the suggestions and programs of the MEXT and the TMBE.

The schools mostly struggled to facilitate such a comprehensive career guidance program due to a lack of time and resources. The demanding curriculum and the extensive extra–curricular activities at senior high schools do not leave much time for teachers to prepare and conduct experience–based learning about the subject of work. Furthermore, budget is allocated by performance of the school and metropolitan senior high schools – especially those of average to low academic level – are not as generously funded as private senior high schools. Due to their larger budgets private schools can allocate more resources towards activities that provide their students with information about and skills for the labor market but also enhance the students' chances for successful transition into secure employment or onto institutions of further education.

Teachers at metropolitan senior high schools have alternating roles within the school. Due to their numerous responsibilities as homeroom teacher, teacher responsible for career guidance, or their supervision of various club activities, there is not enough time to collect enough experience at a certain task. This is one of the main reasons for the past and present inconsistency in most programs of the schools I have visited.

Additionally, the teachers' employment at metropolitan senior high schools is rotational. Rotation to another school, which on average takes place every 5 to 8 years, limits the teachers' and the school's ability to establish a consistent career guidance program and build and maintain long–lasting relationships with the local community, companies, or institutions for further education. Whenever a "veteran" teacher, who has built up a functioning program or has established and maintained a beneficial relationship with a company or an actor from outside the formal context of schooling, gets assigned to another department inside the school or leaves for another school, the teachers who take over the career guidance department have not sufficiently been trained to continue this task at the same level of quality. In many schools I visited, the narrative of the experienced "veteran" teacher who developed or refurbished the career guidance program has often been mentioned by the teachers or NPO members.

The rotation of principals to a new school, which also happens on a regular basis, poses yet another challenge for career guidance. The school might in one year have a principal who is in favor of a comprehensive career guidance program and who encourages teachers to invite third sector groups to the school. However, a new principal might focus on a completely different area, which would led to him disregarding suggestions of motivated teachers concerning new career guidance events. Such factors can either lead to new input and chances for innovative educators to try new programs and teaching methods but also completely thwart existing motivation or ambitions of young teachers because the principal might just not support their plans. In such a case it is very difficult for teachers to inspire change in existing programs, let alone build them from scratch.

Here I found the NPO I observed during career guidance workshops at various metropolitan general senior high schools to have a stabilizing effect on the career guidance programs of the schools. Due to the consistent content, which is partially modelled on the FCWP designed by the METI, the NPO offers a cost– and time–efficient way for schools to integrate these new competencies in their career guidance curriculum. The planning and execution of events was almost exclusively done by the LMCS with minimal effort on the side of the school or the teachers involved. It would have been even possible to conduct the workshops without e.g. a homeroom teacher being present.

The NPO not only offers an innovative, up–to–date repertoire of different workshops which are designed according to the current labor market situation and its demands, but also a vast network of WMS lecturers from all kinds of professions and companies. The NPO members, who either support these lecturers during the workshops or conduct workshops by themselves, have almost all a background in career consulting or a similar profession. Some of the NPO members are also certified educational support coordinators (*kyôiku shien kôdinêtâ)* or career education coordinators (*kyaria kyôiku kôdinêtâ*). These new actors were introduced by the TMBE around the beginning of this decade. Over their career, the NPO members have collected experience and knowledge about the labor market, which they now can pass on to the senior high school students.

A network of the size and the vast variety of different professionals the LMCS possesses could not even be upheld by a highly connected and prestigious (private) senior high school. Due to the large number of WMS lecturers with a wide range of occupations and the specialized NPO members who act as coordinators and facilitators, the NPO is in a much better position to provide career guidance and teach knowledge as well as skills which should, according to MEXT, METI, and the TMBE, be encompassed in a comprehensive career guidance curriculum. The schools can tap into and profit from the vast network of the LMCS without having to invest precious resources in form of money, staff, and – most importantly – time to build and maintain such a network. The schools

simply choose a workshop the LMCS offers. The workshops have been developed according to MEXT and METI programs, have been refined over time due to growing experience, and are taught by professionals with a high level of expertise in the regarding sector. This can then be tailored to the school's academic level and disposition and even has room to encompass individual requests from teachers.

In the following I would now like to come back to the research questions which I developed during my fieldwork and the subsequent analysis.

1. How has the practice of career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools changed over the last three decades?

Especially average–level general senior high schools nowadays struggle with the task of providing a smooth transition into the labor market due to deteriorating networks with companies and the local community. After the economic downturn in the 1990s, following the period of high economic growth, the general senior high schools have lost what Brinton (2000) calls their institutional social capital. During my fieldwork and the subsequent analysis of my collected qualitative data I have come to a similar conclusion. However, the deteriorating networks of the schools not only decrease the students' chances to find employment through the networks of their schools but also the ability of the schools to teach necessary skills and knowledge to support the students in making informed career choices.

Macroeconomic factors and developments on the labor market have led to a lasting change in the school–to–work transition system. Around the 1980s, job placement guidance was conducted in a fashion that aimed at the labor market of the same period. The supply of graduates by the schools matched the demand of the labor market and growing economy. As the economic conditions changed after the burst of the bubble, the labor market diversified due to the progressing globalization. More specialized knowledge and employees who can learn new skill sets faster were needed by the employers to stay competitive on a global market. According to the fluctuations of the market, Japanese businesses increased the share of irregular employees in their workforce

and decreased the hiring of regular employees. This puts graduates with a senior high school diploma at a disadvantage. Not only have the chances to find secure employment been decreased for this group of graduates due to changing labor market conditions, the ability of the schools to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market has also been weakened substantially.

Nowadays, the type of job placement guidance, which was built upon proven relationships between schools and companies in the past, is far less dominant than it was three decades ago. The organization of job placement guidance is strongly influenced by the regional labor market situation for senior high school graduates. It effects the programs within the school as well as the transition process into the workforce. With an economic situation which is completely different from the period of high economic growth, it has become exceedingly difficult to facilitate job placement guidance against the background of education and labor market policies based on presumptions from the 1980s (Hori 2016: 170–171).

Most metropolitan senior high schools I visited had little to no proven relationships with companies and, due to the educational expansion, tried to facilitate – if feasible – a transition into further education in order for their students to find secure employment on a diversifying labor market. Here the outsourcing of central elements of the senior high school curriculum (e.g. career guidance) to third sector groups can be seen as an approach initiated by the MEXT and the TMBE to support schools in making up for the shortcomings in the education system which have developed over the last three decades. They are making use of the vast resources and expertise of the civil society sector.

2. Why is there such variety in how metropolitan senior high schools have implemented government policies and programs?

While career guidance is part of the school curriculum at every senior high school throughout Tokyo, the program content is decided by the principal and the teachers at every individual school. The level of involvement of teachers in career guidance strongly depends on the

teachers' motivation and the general guidelines of the principal concerning this matter.

When the TMBE first started to introduce third sector actors like NPOs from outside the context of educational institutions to schools around the middle of the 2000s, it was mostly for extracurricular or volunteer activities. Since the beginning of this decade, senior high schools – as well as other school levels – have started to make use of such groups in central parts of their curriculum. In this context, the legitimizing function of the government is not to be underestimated. While the LMCS offered workshops at some metropolitan high schools around the end of the 2000s, it was only after the TMBE introduced the new programs which encouraged metropolitan schools to collaborate with companies or civil society actors (cf. Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2011a: 2, 2011b: 2–5, 2013b: 2–5) that more metropolitan senior high schools made use of the workshops offered by the LMCS. Before, the NPO had almost exclusively catered to private senior high schools.

Additionally, the rotation of the teachers within and between the schools often hinders the development of comprehensive career guidance programs. The principals, who are also subject to this kind of rotation, are yet another decisive factor that influences these programs. They can have a positive, neutral, or negative effect on career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools.

3. What is the current role of nonprofit organizations in career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools?

The use of civil society actors like NPOs give schools the opportunitie to compensate for the deteriorating school–company relationships and weak community ties in form of a networks which not only provide knowledge but also a rich pool of experienced professionals to support the metropolitan senior high schools in their tasks.

In the case of the LMCS, each workshop can be tailored to the academic level and disposition of the school at hand while the overall program has the approval of the TMBE and has, therefore, been legitimized by the state. This gives the NPOs the authority to conduct

events in an otherwise highly regulated and closed setting. Again, the (local) government still has control over which groups engage in e.g. career guidance at metropolitan high schools. If the group or program is not legitimized by the TMBE e.g. by building a partnership with it and including it in its portfolio of groups and organizations that are recommended to metropolitan schools, the group is restricted in their possibilities to enter such schools for career guidance. If a group were not to be granted legal status at all, it would make it next to impossible for such a group to act in the formal context of senior high school education.

While the LMCS is conducting lessons that could in some way be attributed to what Okano (2016a) calls *nonformal education*, it clearly does not completely fall into this category. The LMCS works at the intersection between formal and *nonformal education*; by working in an institutional context (e.g. the school, a class room, during integrated studies etc.) but teaching content that is – to that extend – not normally included in the career guidance curriculum of an average senior high school. The workshop content, the teaching method, and the location where the teaching activity is taking place has to be taken into consideration when establishing the NPO's locus within the framework of *nonformal education* described by Okano. The actual contribution to the students' education and the enhancement of their skill sets still is much greater than with a program that is exclusively taught by high school teachers.

4. What are the consequences, chances, and possible risks that arise from a stronger involvement of civil society in the educational sector?

While the LMCS does not fit either of Ogawa's (2014: 53) NPO categories completely, I would rather classify it as a form of what he calls social enterprise (*shakaiteki kigyou*) because the LMCS delivers its "*services to the end user.*" It is definitely not government–led nor was its foundation inspired by the government, therefore, it cannot be called a GoNPO. However, it also does not act purely parallel to the government but has embraced policies and programs like the FCWP and made them

central to many of its workshops. Yet, it cannot exclusively be regarded as a government sub–contractor because it already had a solid standing within the sector of private senior high school education and some metropolitan schools before it expanded its activities through the TMBE program. Just like with Okano's (2016) flexible locus between formal and informal education, the LMPS does not fit in either of Ogawa's (2014) categories.

Different NPOs tackling different shortcomings of the educational system have great potential to solve current and emerging future problems in a cost– and time–efficient way while making use of their networks and that way benefiting society as a whole. However, for NPOs that provide services in a sector that has been controlled rigidly by the government over the last decades, it is essential that groups do not lose their independence and do not get coopted by the government in order for them to contribute to a healthy discourse and pluralism in the contemporary Japanese civil society (cf. Ogawa 2009: 142–143).

9 Conclusion

I went into this research project with the aim to investigate past and current developments in career guidance at metropolitan senior high schools and the effect of the NPO "Labor Market Cram School" on the career guidance programs at the schools I conducted fieldwork at. I chose the two qualitative research methods of semi–structured interviews and participant observation to collect rich data on the micro level.

By having used Thornberg's (2012: 255) concept of *informed grounded theory*, I have situated my study and its results in the current base of knowledge and the ongoing academic discourse. I was able to incorporate previous knowledge and theoretical concepts into my fieldwork and subsequent data analysis to produce rich data and contributed to the academic discourse by extending the theoretical concepts of *institutional social capital* by Brinton (2000), Okano's (2016a) concept of *nonformal education* as well as Estévez–Abe's (2003) *state–*

society–partnerships and Ogawa's (2009) *NPO–ization by the government*. This allowed me, in combination with my collected qualitative data, to paint a more holistic picture of NPO involvement in career guidance at municipal senior high schools.

By presenting individual cases of different career guidance programs at three municipal general senior high schools as well as the ongoing implementation of policies to enhance the skill sets of senior high school graduates in order to successfully transition into the labor market, I have provided ethnographic data which allows a better understanding of the educational reality at the micro level.

Schools nowadays struggle not only to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market due to deteriorating schools–company networks and school–community ties, but also teachers are not able to provide their students with information, knowledge, or skill sets in order to make an informed career choice and find meaningful employment in later life. The inconsistencies in the career guidance programs at the metropolitan senior high schools are a major contributor to this problem. The quality of career guidance strongly depends on the experience and motivation of the teachers in charge of career guidance as well as the overall support of the principal. At schools with a motivated body of teachers and a principal who supported a comprehensive and innovative career guidance program, the quality of career guidance and the implementation of programs designed by the TMBE, MEXT, or METI was far greater than at other schools with a similar academic ranking where these conditions were not given.

The nature of the job rotation system for teachers and principals alike at metropolitan senior high schools poses another threat for meaningful career guidance. Here the NPO at the center of this dissertation had a stabilizing effect. It provided the schools with a vast network of professionals and expertise while also offering workshops designed according to MEXT and METI concepts. These workshops could then easily as well as cost– and time–efficiently be integrated into the current career guidance program.

While I found answers to the research questions I developed during my fieldwork and answered them in the previous chapter, the study at hand does not come without limitations. Although I covered a range of different schools regarding academic level or specialization and conducted participant observation at numerous workshops at a quite substantial number of metropolitan senior high schools, I only covered a small area of civil society engagement in the educational sector. To have a frame of reference, I also visited a private senior high school, yet this data does not allow an adequate comparison between the private and the public sector of senior high school education. However, it serves as a stimulus for further inquiries.

Furthermore, the impact of NPO–led career guidance events on skill sets and knowledge that can be used in the labor market or the actual job attainment of graduates is also not possible. For this, further data of graduates who took part in the NPO–led workshops and found employment after graduation would have to be collected.

The LMPS has only been active for a decade and most metropolitan senior high schools have made use of their workshops for not more than a few consecutive years. To measure the long–term impact on particular career guidance programs, a more thorough investigation at a smaller number of schools over a much longer period of time would be necessary.

As I have encountered during my fieldwork, the mere location of a school has noticeable effects on the students' perspective on life and their engagement with their future career. Although I visited almost exclusively metropolitan general senior high schools, which all were more or less of average academic level, the differences in career guidance programs and the teachers' involvement in such were surprising. I would have expected a more conclusive career guidance curriculum due to the guidelines of the TMBE programs as well as the new subject of "people and society".

Finally, Tokyo might – due to its high density of different schools – be a good starting point to conduct efficient fieldwork and generate a substantial amount of data in a short period of time but it does not provide information about the educational reality in more rural settings. Even the

difference between schools within the 23 special wards of Tokyo, let alone the Tama–area, was significant. Career guidance programs in the neighboring prefectures might demonstrate a greater contrast to Tokyo and show a completely different educational reality closely interwoven with the surrounding industry and community.

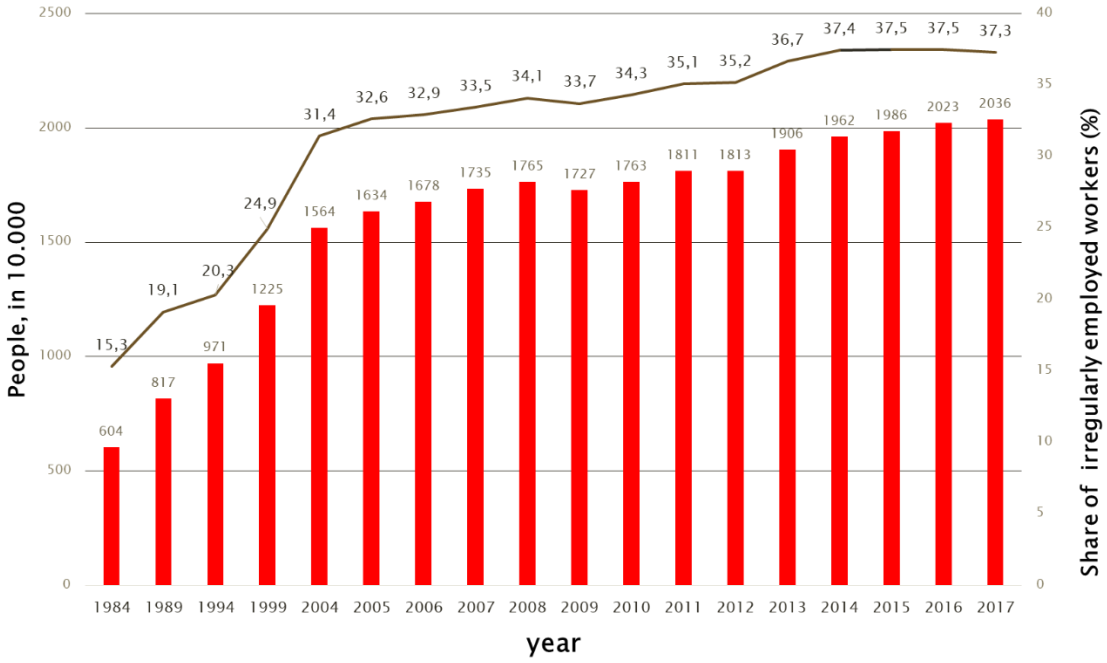
With my dissertation I have established a solid basis for further investigation into the subject of career guidance supported by civil society actors like NPOs and provided a good starting point for further research.

Subsequent research regarding an urban–rural comparison as well as comparing the differences between career guidance at private and public schools would be a fruitful further direction to produce findings that can enhance the knowledge and understanding of career guidance in the contemporary Japanese education system.

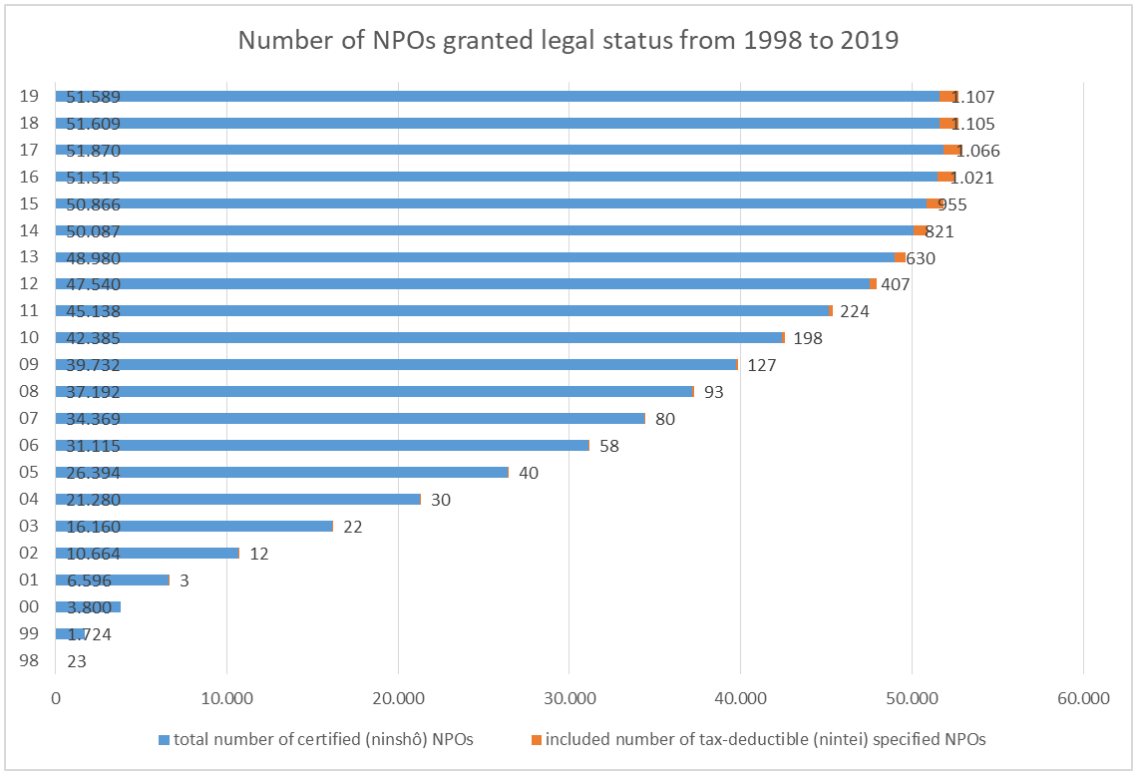
The participation of civil society actors in central sectors of the government has increased rapidly over the last decades. In the educational context there are already numerous areas within formal and nonformal education where civil society organizations are contributing to society.

The ever–growing importance of the civil society sector and its ability to tackle emerging (social) problems in a cost– and time– efficient way has become apparent. The government has been making use of the expertise and resources of this sector in various ways and the benefits and chances for society, possible limitations in state–society partnerships as well as dangers for the independence of civil society on a whole offer an interesting field for further investigation on the macro– and micro–level.

10 Appendix



Graph 1 Irregularly employed people (in 10.000 and percent), Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (2018) (edited by author)



Graph 2 Number of NPOs granted legal status from 1998 to 2019 (up to May 2019)

source: Cabinet Office 2019a (edited by author)

No.	Category of activity	Number of NPOs (single registration) (1); (2)
1	Health, medical treatment, welfare	5,650
2	Promotion of social education	7,769
3	Community development	8,918
4	Tourism	8,150
5	Promotion of rural and intermountain regions	6,528
6	Science, culture, arts and sports	4,697
7	Environment	3,166
8	Disaster relief	2,063
9	Community safety	1,363
10	Human rights, promotion of peace	923
11	International cooperation	633
12	Gender equality	521
13	Healthy nurturing of children	272
14	Information technology	190
15	Science and technology	146
16	Economic activities	73
17	Vocational expertise	304
18	Consumer protection	42
19	Administration and organization	159
20	others	42
Total		**51,609**

Table 1 Number of NPOs by category (one NPO registered to a single category) (as of March 2019), source: Cabinet Office 2019b (edited by author)

Note: (1) For category No. 14 and 18: number shown for NPOs registered and approved after the revision of the NPO Law (05/01/2003);
(2) For category No. 4, 5, and 20: number shown for NPOs registered and approved after the revision of the NPO Law (04/01/2012)

No.	Category of activity	Number of NPOs (multiple registration) (1); (2)
1	Health, medical treatment, welfare	30,238
2	Promotion of social education	24,818
3	Community development	22,741
4	Tourism	2,913
5	Promotion of rural and intermountain regions	2,465
6	Science, culture, arts and sports	18,350
7	Environment	13,684
8	Disaster relief	4,177
9	Community safety	6,186
10	Human rights, promotion of peace	8,690
11	International cooperation	9,366
12	Gender equality	4,778

13	Healthy nurturing of children	24,057
14	Information technology	5,729
15	Science and technology	2,826
16	Economic activities	9,100
17	Vocational expertise	12,872
18	Consumer protection	3,072
19	Administration and organization	23,987
20	others	262

Table 2 Number of NPOs by category (multiple registration) (as of March 2019), source: Cabinet Office 2019b (edited by author)

Note: (1) For category No. 13 to 17: number shown for NPOs registered and approved after the revision of the NPO Law (05/01/2003);
(2) For category No. 18 to 20: number shown for NPOs registered and approved after the revision of the NPO Law (04/01/2012)

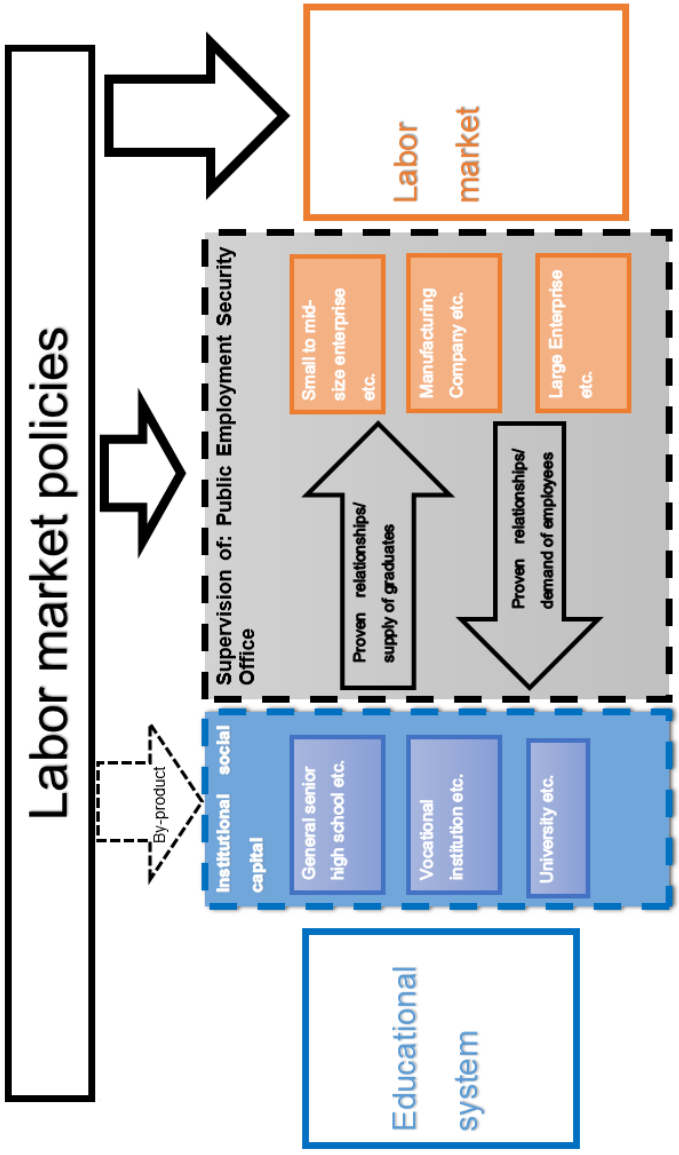


Illustration 1 Institutional Social Capital (Brinton 2000) (edited by author)

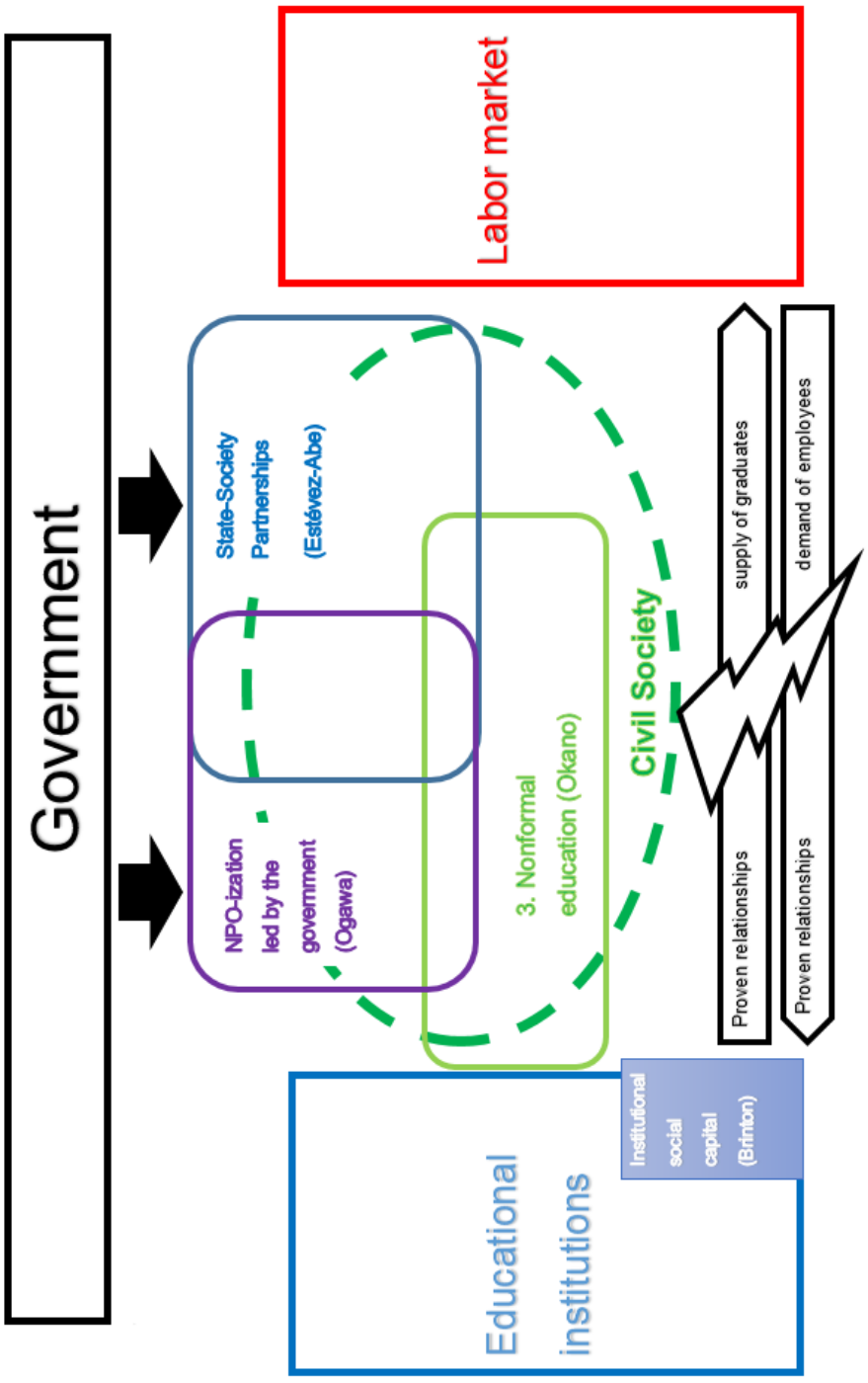


Illustration 2 Comprehensive Theory Modell (Brinton2000; Estévez–Abe 2003; Ogawa 2009; Okano 2016) (edited by author)

School system	*Special wards*	*Tama–area*	*Islands*
All–day system	105	61	7
Part–time system	40	13	2

Table 3 Number of senior high schools in Tokyo by area, 2017 (edited by author)

Type of school	*All–day*	*Part–time*	*correspondence*
General (futsûka)	124	30	3
Agricultur (nôgyôka)	5	4	
Technic (kôgyôka)	18	10	
Commerce/trade (shôgyôka)	12	5	
Home economics (kateika)	3		
Welfare (fukushika)	1		
Art (geijutsuka)	1		
Sports (taiikuka)	2		
International (kokusaika)	2		
Joined/merged (heigôka)	3	2	
Industrial (sangyôka)	2	1	
Media/IT (jôhôka)		1	
Integrated studies (sôgôgakka)	10	7	
Total (1)	**183**	**60**	**3**

Table 4 Number of schools by specialization and type in Tokyo, 2017 (edited by author)

(1)Total number of schools excluding those which are categorized as "joined": 186 senior high schools.
Source: Heisei 29nendo tôkyô toritsu kôtôgakkô nado ichiran (Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education 2017)(edited by autor)

初めまして。

ヴィンセント・レシュと申します。ハンブルク大学アジア･アフリカ研究所の日本学博士課程の学生です。

現在、ドイツ日本研究所の奨学生として日本の教育制度と労働市場について研究しております。４月の初めから８ヶ月間かけて、高等学校と高等専門学校で行われる教育の活用の実態や卒業後の進路について研究をしております。特に、各学校で行われるキャリア教育や先生方が生徒の卒業後の進路についてどのように考えているか、また先生方の職場での経験について関心を持っています。日本の教育システム、特に各学校や授業における実践について理解するために、学術論文の研究や文部科学省のデータだけを参考にするのではなく、現場の先生方との対話を通じて研究を進めて参りたいと考えております。

もし、私のことについてさらに情報が必要であれば、ドイツ日本研究所のホームページをご覧ください。私の履歴書や研究についての情報がございます。

https://www.dijtokyo.org/ja/people/vincent-lesch/

つきましては、お忙しいところ大変恐縮ではありますが、先生方のお知恵やご意見をお聞かせ頂ければありがたく存じます。可能であれば貴校を訪問し先生方にお話を伺うか、私にインタビューを許して頂きたいと考えておりますが、可能でしょうか。

よろしくご検討のほど、お願いいたします。

ヴィンセント・レシュ

Illustration 3 Letter: Interview request and explanation about research project

ドイツ-日本研究所
〒102-0094
東京都千代田区紀尾井町 7-1
上智紀尾井坂ビル 2F
ヴィンセント・レシュ　様

2017 年　　月　　日

学校訪問について：

○ はい、学校訪問を受け入れます。
2017 年　　月　　日、　　時　　分に学校に来てください。

○ はい、学校訪問を受け入れますが、日時についてメール・電話などで連絡してください。連絡先・時間・担当者など：_____

_____

_____

○ 残念ながら、学校訪問は受け入れられません。

もし質問または不明な点がございましたら、いつでもメールで（lesch@dijtokyo.org）ご連絡ください。

その他：

Illustration 4 Letter: Interview request answer sheet

成人被験者用同意書

研究責任者：Vincent B. Lesch、MA

リサーチプロジェクト名：高等学校または高等専門学校に行う教育の活用と卒業後の進路

私は，＿＿＿＿年 ＿＿＿＿ 月 ＿＿＿＿ 日、ハンブルク大学アジア･アフリカ研究所または ドイツ日本研究所 から以下のリサーチプロジェクトがどのように執り行われるかについて、また私が参加するにあたっての条件について説明を受けました。

この研究は高等学校または高等専門学校で行われる教育の活用や卒業後の進路についてです。特に、高校で行われる進路指導や先生方が生徒の卒業後の進路についてどのように考えているか、また先生方の職場での経験について調査しています。日本の教育システム、特に各学校や授業における実践について理解するために、対話を通じて研究を進めて参りたいと考えております。

1. インタビューへの参加は任意です。
2. 不明又は不安なところがあったら、参加者はいつでもインタビューを中止できます。
3. インタビューへの参加は無報酬です。
4. インタビューは30分から1時間ほどです。
5. インタビューは記録のため録音しています。
6. インタビューの調査は無記名であり、ご記入いただいた内容については、統計的に処理し，個々の調査票を公表したり、調査の目的以外に使用することは一切ございません。調査の結果はドイツのハンブルク大学に提出される博士論文に使用されます。

私は20歳以上であり、このリサーチプロジェクトへの参加の範囲とその性質、上記に示されているリスクの可能性について十分に認識しています。また私は、いかなる権利の侵害あるいは不利益な対応を受けることなく、いつでも同プロジェクトへの参加を辞退できることを理解しています。私はここに同リサーチプロジェクトに参加することに同意します。

名前：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

日付： ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

住所（任意）：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

被験者は本同意書２枚に署名し、１枚を保存、１枚を研究責任者に提出してください。

【お問い合わせ】
Vincent B. Lesch
Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien (DIJ)
ドイツ日本研究所
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東京都千代田区紀尾井町７－１
上智紀尾井坂ビル２Ｆ
Tel:+81-(0)3-3222-5077
メール： lesch@dijtokyo.org

Illustration 5 Informed consent sheet (interview)

Interview Guideline

Role of High school

Concerning the career path after graduation: Which career do the students of your school aim for?

卒業後の進路についてですが、卒業生はどのような進路を目指していますか。

How does the graduation from your high school influence their future work life?

御校での教育は就職活動または進路にどのような影響がありますか。

Based on what factors is the future career path of a student decided? How much can the school actively influence the student's future?

どんな要因に基づいて、生徒は将来・進路をきめますか。学校はどこまでそれを左右できますか。

Although the high school plays a major part in preparing students for the entrance examinations of universities, vocational schools etc. its sole function is not only preparing them for tests. What role does the High school play concerning future career trajectories of graduates?

例えば、大学などへの進学は高校教育の一つの目的であるものの、生徒は他にも三年間で色々な事を学んでいると思います。個人のお考えとして、進学や就職といった生徒の将来にとって学校はどのような役割がありますか。

How high is the advancement rate to the labor market and other educational institutions?

御校の卒業生の就職率または進学率はどのぐらいですか。

Does the HS have relationships/connections with (local) companies or enterprises? How is their involvement in the job placement guidance classes?

御校はどのタイプの企業との接続がありますか。進路指導に企業が参加することはありますか。

Due to the deregulation of the labor market, the job situation has become increasingly difficult. How does that influence the role of the high school?

労働市場の非正規化の影響で労働状況がどんどん悪化してきました。その影響で高校の役割が変化しましたか。

Illustration 6 Interview guideline (1/2), senior high school

Student's consumption of education

How are academic achievements and job chances/career trajectories related to each other?

成績や部活動は進路にどのような影響がありますか。

How are their perceptions regarding their career trajectories/future? When do they start thinking about their future?

生徒は自分の進路についてどのように考えていますか。いつから高校を卒業してからの進路について考えているでしょうか。

How high is the involvement of parents in their children's education? Do they voice their preferences concerning their children's education? Do they intervene if "things do not go according to plan"?

保護者はどのように、そしてどの程度生徒の教育に参与しますか。望ましくない結果や問題が生じた時、保護者はどうやって反応・対策しますか。

Do students actively ask teachers for advice?

生徒が進路について先生に積極的に助言を求めますか。保護者も先生たちに連絡しますか。

Role of job placement guidance

Who becomes a job placement guidance teacher? What makes a good guidance teacher, what are the necessary skills? In your own words: What is their role/purpose?

どうやって進路指導の先生になれますか。資格は何ですか。個人のお考えで進路指導の先生の役割は何ですか。

How much time in general is devoted to each individual student when considering his future career trajectories?

進路指導において、個人の生徒にどのぐらいの時間を使えますか。

How does career guidance influence the future career trajectories of students?

進路指導は生徒の将来にどのような影響がありますか。

Illustration 7 Interview guideline (2/2), senior high school

About the NPO and its role

What type of events do you conduct?

どのようなイベントをしますか。

What kind of schools do you work with?

どのような学校と一緒にイベントを実施しますか。

In your own words, what is the role of these events? How do they influence their future work life?

NPO がやっている進路指導イベントは就職活動または進路にどのような影響がありますか。個人のお考えで進路指導のイベントの役割は何ですか。

Do schools actively ask you for advice? How do schools contact you?

各学校が進路指導のサポートについて NPO に積極的に助言を求めますか。どうのように学校と接続しますか。

Does the NPO have relationships/connections with (local) companies or enterprises? How is their involvement in the job placement guidance classes?

NPO はどのタイプの企業との接続がありますか。進路指導に企業が参加することはありますか？

Concerning the career path after graduation: Which career do the students of your school aim for?

卒業後の進路についてですが、学校によって卒業生はどのような進路を目指していますか。

Illustration 8 Interview guideline (1/2) NPO members

About the students future and the role of the Highschool

How are their perceptions regarding their career trajectories/future? When do they start thinking about their future?

生徒は自分の進路についてどのように考えていますか。いつから高校を卒業してからの進路について考えているでしょうか。

Do you think schools devote enough time to each individual student when considering his future career trajectories?

進路指導において、学校が個人の生徒に十分の時間を使えますか。

Based on what factors is the future career path of a student decided? How much can the school actively influence the student's future?

どんな要因に基づいて、生徒は将来・進路を決めっていると思いますか。学校はどこまでそれを左右できると思いますか。。

Although the high school plays a major part in preparing students for the entrance examinations of universities, vocational schools etc. its sole function is not only preparing them for tests. What role does the High school play concerning future career trajectories of graduates?

例えば、大学などへの進学は高校教育の一つの目的であるものの、生徒は他にも三年間で色々な事を学んでいると思います。個人のお考えとして、進学や就職といった生徒の将来にとって学校または進路指導はどのような役割がありますか。

Due to the deregulation of the labor market, the job situation has become increasingly difficult.労働市場の非正規化の影響で労働状況がどんどん悪化してきました。個人の考えでそのことについてどう思いますか。

How does that influence the role of the high school?

労働状況の影響で高校または進路指導の役割が変化しましたか。

Illustration 9 Interview guideline (2/2) NPO members

Interview date	**Alias**	**Function**	**Notes (work experience etc.)**
06/22/2017	Mr. Morita	Founder/ Coordinator	Founder and chairman of the board of directors. Previously employed at major Japanese company for consumer electronics.
06/22/2017	Mrs. Morita	Founder/ Coordinator	Co–founder and member of the board of directors. Also founder of in NPO which is concerned with lifelong education with a focus on senior citizens.
08/18/2017	Mrs. Satô	Coordinator /Facilitator	Work experience at LMCS: three years. Licensed Career consultant. Work experience at university career center and as a business consultant. Married, with children
08/18/2017	Mrs. Watanabe	Coordinator /Facilitator	Work experience at LMCS: three years. Previously worked as a freelance workshop consultant. Married, children in senior high school age
08/18/2017	Mrs. Nakamura	Coordinator /Facilitator	Work experience at LMCS: five years. Previous employment: Teacher at a school for English conversation (*eikaiwa*). Married, with children
08/22/2017	Ms. Tanaka	Facilitator	Work experience at LMCS: two years. Also freelance workshop designer; career counselor (CDA); licensed career consultant
09/21/2017	Ms. Itô	Coordinator /Facilitator	Work experience at LMCS: five years.

		Also self–employed: career counselor (ICDS); business consultant for small and medium sized companies (*chûshô kigyô handan shi*); marketing analyst (*maruketingu kaiseki shi*)

Table 5 List of Interviews and information about NPO staff members at LMCS

Date	School type	Hen–sachi	Tokyo area (ku/shi)	Participant observation/NPO–workshop (coordinator/facilitator)
06/12/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	56	Toshima	Interview with a “working members of society” (Coordinator and facilitator: Ms. Satô)
06/24/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	56	Nerima	Team consensus (Coordinator: Mrs. Morita; facilitator: male facilitator)
06/28/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	50	Edogawa	Team consensus (Coordinator: Mrs. Nakamura; facilitator: Ms. Watanabe)
07/07/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	46	Kurume–nishi	Class with a working member of society: Values and work interest (Coordinator: Mrs. Satô; facilitator: male facilitator)
07/10/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	46	Fuchu–Higashi	Interview with a “working members of society” (Coordinator: female coordinator; facilitator: female facilitator)
07/11/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	63	Itabashi	Interview with a “working members of society” (Coordinator: Mrs. Morita; facilitator: female facilitator)
07/12/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	42	Higashi–Murayama	Left side of the brain, right side of the brain (Coordinator: Mrs. Morita; facilitator: female facilitator)
07/13/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	53	Hachiôji	Fundamental competencies for working persons (Coordinator: Mrs. Nakamura; facilitator: Ms. Itô)
07/14/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	51	Itabashi	Interview with a “working members of society” (Coordinator: Mrs. Itô; facilitator: female facilitator)
07/18/ 2017	Private general SHS (all–boys)	69	Nakano	working member of society seminar (two presentation) (Coordinator: Mr. Morita and Mrs. Nakamura; facilitator 1: Ms. Tanaka; facilitator 2: female facilitator)

07/19/ 2017	Metropolitan general SHS	61	Hino	Fundamental Competencies for working persons (Coordinator: Mrs. Watanabe; facilitator: Mrs. Satô)

Table 6 List of schools and NPO–led workshops

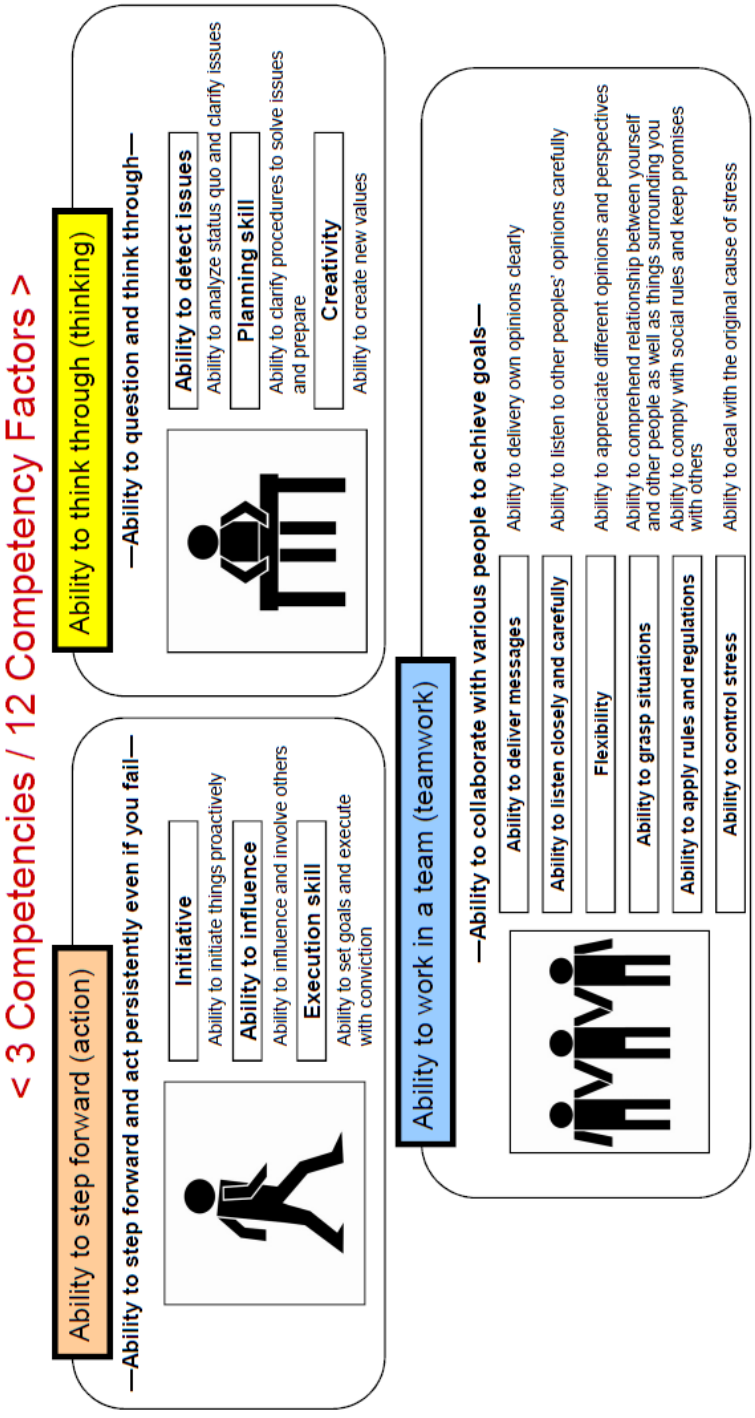


Illustration 10 Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons (FCWP)

Source: (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry 2007)

やり方
①今自分が大事だと思う言葉を5つ選ぶ
②自分の好きな色の色鉛筆を選んでください
③左手（利き手が右手の場合）を白紙におき色鉛筆で手をなぞる
④手形の指に選んだ5つの言葉を書き
⑤その周りに選んだ理由を書く

【価値観ワークショップ】

自由が好き	自立する	平和である	達成する	仲間を大事に	生きがい	家族が大切	社会のために	道徳的に	学び続ける
目標を持つ	名声を得る	お金を儲ける	心の豊さ	大きな実績	自己表現	趣味に生きる	人とつながる	愛情を持つ	いつもみんなと
健康的に	自然にする	今を大切に	成功する	文化的な	豊かな食べ物	挑戦する	能力を発揮	やすらぎ	礼儀正しい
思いやる	創造的に	仲良く	役割をになう	情熱を持つ	競争に勝つ	最先端な	理想を持つ	発明する	自分らしさ
勇気を持つ	夢を持つ	海外で活躍	研究する	誠実な	世界を相手に	自己主張	個性豊か	感性を大事に	努力する
親を大切に	いつも新しい	安定した	起業する	おだやかに	一番になる	革新的な	協調する	評判になる	地元で

Illustration 11 Values and work, worksheet 1 (short statements)

●職業興味チェックシート　　年　組　番 氏名

質問事項	○ 2点	△ 1点	× 0点	点数	
1. 友達と何か一緒にやりたいことがあると、自分から声をかけて誘う					E
2. 決められたルールがある場合は守るのが当然だ					C
3. 人と何か協力してするより、機械を操作するほうが好き					R
4. 正解が必ず出る数学、算数がすき					I
5. 本や映画、ドラマなどによく感動する					A
6. 機械の取扱説明書を読んで理解するより、よく知っている人に聞く方だ					S
7. 一人でコツコツするより、みんなで何かをする方が好き					E
8. 自由に思い通りにしてよいと言われると、とまどってしまう					C
9. 手先が器用でモノを組立てたり修理したりするのが得意					R
10. あいまいなことより理屈がきちんとしていることが好き					I
11. 自分の気持ちを文章にしたりイラストを描いたりするのが好き					A
12. 友だちから悩みを相談され解決できると、自分のことのようにうれしい					S
13. 何かをする時は指示されるより指示するほうだ					E
14. 文章やメールを書き終えたらいつも間違いがないか読み直す					C
15. 頭でいろいろ考えるより身体を動かすほうが性に合っている					R
16. ネットでいろいろ調べたり雑誌などで情報を見つけてくることが好き					I
17. 今までと違う方法や新しいアイデアを考えることが好き					A
18. 人から感謝されると、とてもうれしい					S
19. リーダーとなって、みんなで何かを達成することにやりがいを感じる					E
20. 自分の部屋や机の中はきちんと整理している					C
21. 現実をきちんと見すえることが大切だ					R
22. 物事が起きた原因を調べたり分析するのが好き					I
23. デザインすることが好き					A
24. 人と話し合ったり、知っていることを友達に教えたりするのが好き					S
25. 自分はわりと自信家だと思う					E
26. 自分のお金の使い方には細かいほうだ					C
27. 動物の世話をするのが好き					R
28. 一人でコツコツと何かを作ったりするのが好き					I
29. 絵を描いたり、音楽を聞いたりするのが好き					A
30. 友達や他の人の話しを聞くのが好き					S

■集計の方法

1、各項目の質問に答えて○△×欄にチェックをつける「ぴったり：○、少しあてはまる：△、違う：×」

2、○は2点、△は1点、×は0点で、それぞれの点数を横の欄に記入する

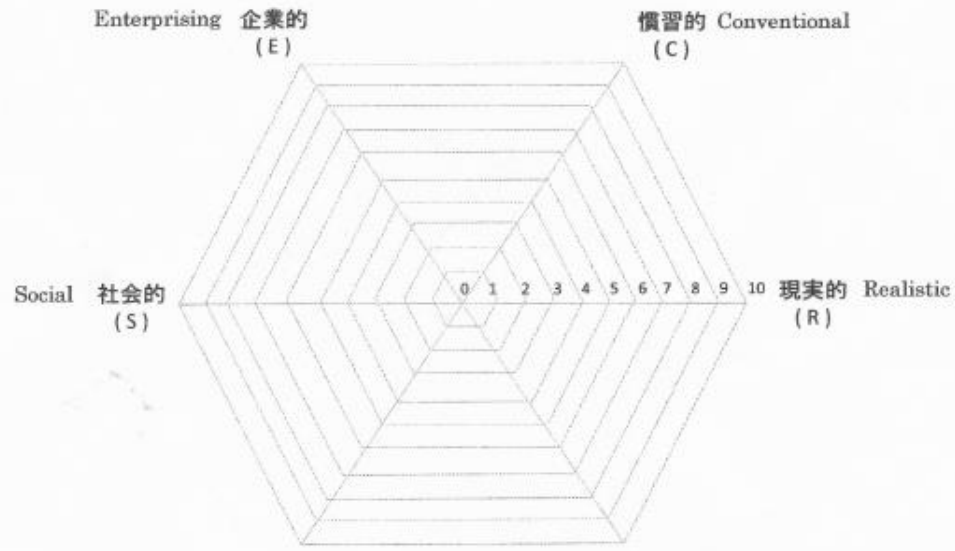
3、E,C,R,I,A,Sの同じアルファベットの合計を下記タイプの欄に記入する

	E	C	R	I	A	S
タイプ						

Illustration 12 Values and work, worksheet 2 (category circle, triangle, X)

職業興味レーダーチャート　　年　組　番 氏名

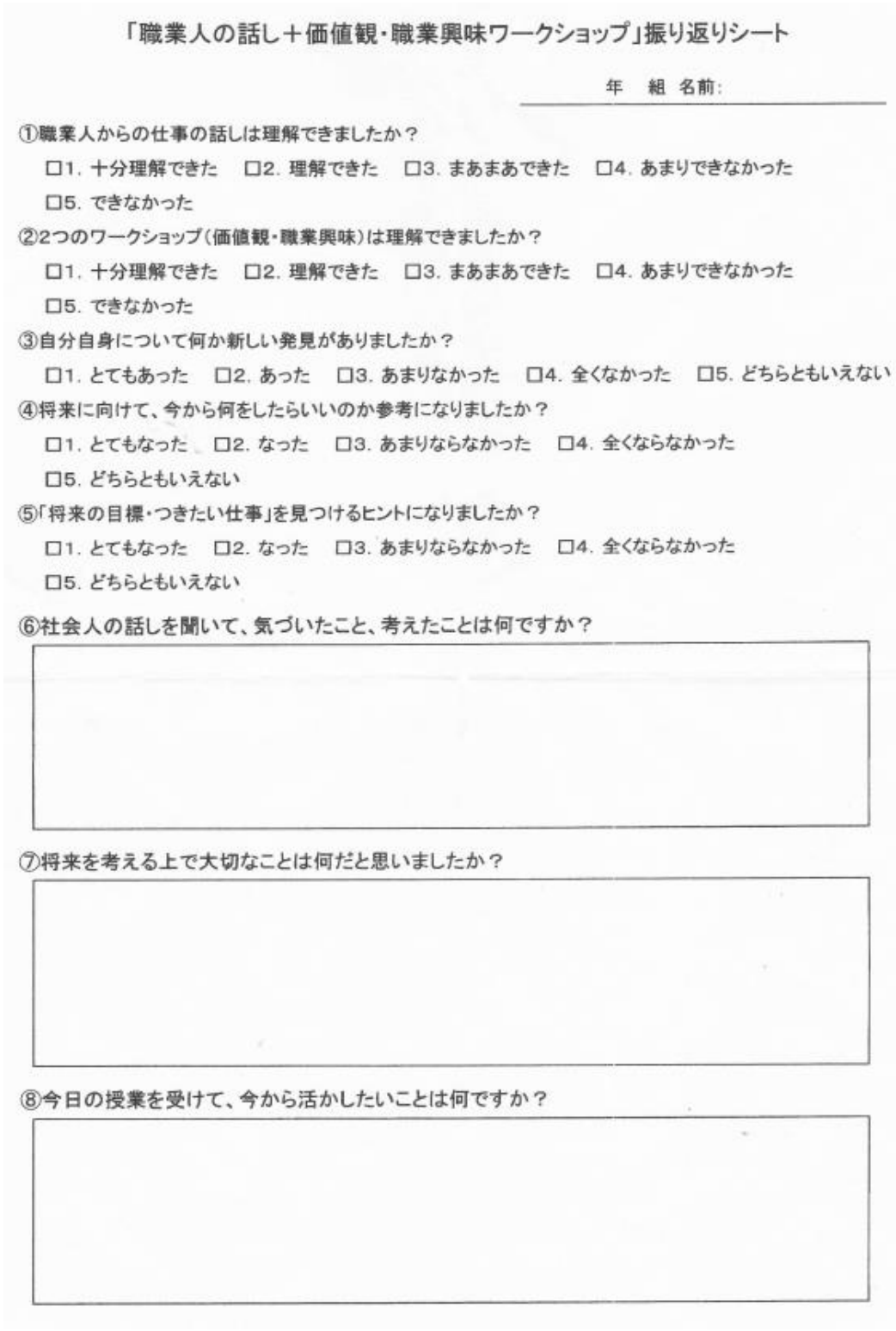
タイプの得点結果を、下のレーダーチャートの点数欄に点（●）を付け、点を実線（ー）で結びなさい。



●ワールド・オブ・ワークマップ

A マーケティング：営業/販売/マーケティング
B 経営管理・企画：管理職/店長/経営企画/人材開発 政治家/プロデューサー
C 記録・通信：一般事務/専門事務/秘書/受付
D 金融取引：経理・会計/金融事務/財務/資金運用
E 保管・輸送管理：貿易物流/運行管理/倉庫管理
F OA 機器操作：OA 機器オペレーション
G 輸送機械操作・修理：運転手/ドライバー/整備
H 建設・補修：建設/電気工事・設備保守
I 農業・天然資源：農林水産/動物/植物/環境
J 工芸および関連サービス：調理師/パターンナー/インテリア/ものづくり職人
K 家庭用機器・ビジネス機器修理：家電修理
L 産業機械操作・修理：産業機械の運転・操作/産業機械の修理・保守/技能工/生産ライン
M エンジニアリングおよび関連技術：IT/開発・設計/バイオ・化学/測量・分析
N 医学および医療技術：医療技術/医師/薬剤師
O 自然科学・数学：自然科学研究者
P 社会科学：アナリスト/エコノミスト
Q 応用芸術：デザイナー/建築家/写真家
R 創造・舞台芸術：歌手/タレント/演出家
S 応用言語：広告プランナー/記者/作家/編集者 弁護士・裁判官
T 医療および保険・介護：看護師/栄養士/臨床心理士/介護福祉師
U 教育および関連サービス：教師/トレーナー
V 社会・行政サービス：公務員/警察官/消防士
W 個人サービス：飲食サービス/美容師/保育士/フライトアテンダント/司法書士

Illustration 13 Values and work, analysis sheet (radar chart)



「職業人の話し＋価値観・職業興味ワークショップ」振り返りシート

年　組　名前:

①職業人からの仕事の話しは理解できましたか？

□1. 十分理解できた　□2. 理解できた　□3. まあまあできた　□4. あまりできなかった

□5. できなかった

②2つのワークショップ（価値観・職業興味）は理解できましたか？

□1. 十分理解できた　□2. 理解できた　□3. まあまあできた　□4. あまりできなかった

□5. できなかった

③自分自身について何か新しい発見がありましたか？

□1. とてもあった　□2. あった　□3. あまりなかった　□4. 全くなかった　□5. どちらともいえない

④将来に向けて、今から何をしたらいいのか参考になりましたか？

□1. とてもなった　□2. なった　□3. あまりならなかった　□4. 全くならなかった

□5. どちらともいえない

⑤「将来の目標・つきたい仕事」を見つけるヒントになりましたか？

□1. とてもなった　□2. なった　□3. あまりならなかった　□4. 全くならなかった

□5. どちらともいえない

⑥社会人の話しを聞いて、気づいたこと、考えたことは何ですか？

⑦将来を考える上で大切なことは何だと思いましたか？

⑧今日の授業を受けて、今から活かしたいことは何ですか？

Illustration 14 Values and work, evaluation sheet

年　組　名前

右脳・左脳ワークショップ　自己診断シート

どんな考えで行動するのが好きですか？XかYのどちらかにチェックしてください

	X		Y	
1	きまりやマナーに従う方だ	☐	☒	他人がどのように感じているかが分かる方だ
2	考えるときは情報をこまかく分類、整理してから考えていく方だ	☐	☒	考えるときは全体像から考える方だ
3	正確なデータを知りたがる方だ	☐	☒	雰囲気やリズムに乗りやすい方だ
4	難しい問題を論理的に考えながら答えを見つけるのが好きだ	☒	☐	実行する前にきちんと計画を立てる方だ
5	自分の感情をコントロールできる方だ	☒	☒	自分で考え、新しいものを作り上げることが好きな方だ
6	普通の人が考えつかないようなことを思いつく方だ	☒	☐	自分の感情を表に出す方だ
7	感覚を大事にする方だ	☐	☒	考えることが好きな方だ
8	人と接するのが苦にならない方だ	☐	☒	世の中の様々な出来事を一連の流れとして関係づけ、整理するのが好きな方だ
9	神秘的なものに興味を持つ方だ	☒	☐	自分で考え、新しいものを作り上げることが好きな方だ
10	物事のこまかなところまで十分にチェックする方だ	☒	☐	個別のことよりも全体のことを先に考える方だ
11	アイデアを良く思いつく方だ	☐	☒	アイデアが実現可能かどうか確かめたくなる方だ
12	どちらかと言えば温かく友好的に人と接する方だ	☒	☐	物事はこまかい点から考えていく方だ
13	空想をめぐらすことが好きな方だ	☒	☐	物事は決まった順番に従って処理するのが好きな方だ
14	普通の人が考えつかないようなことを思いつく方だ	☐	☒	新しいものより古くとも実績があり信頼できるものを選ぶ方だ
15	自分で考え、新しいものを作り上げることが好きだ	☐	☒	理論的に考えることが好きな方だ
16	自分の感情をコントロールできる方だ	☒	☐	自分の感情を表に出す方だ
17	雰囲気やリズムに乗りやすい方だ	☒	☐	物事のこまかなところまで十分にチェックする方だ
18	2つ以上のことを同時にこなすことができる方だ	☒	☐	他人がどのように感じているかが分かる方だ
19	人とのコミュニケーションを大切にする方だ	☒	☐	簡単そうな事柄でも難しくとらえ、いろんな可能性を考える方だ
20	科学やテクノロジーに関することを理解したり、技術を習得することが好きな方だ	☒	☒	人を大事にする方だ
21	世の中の様々な出来事を一連の流れとして関係づけ、整理するのが好きな方だ	☐	☒	論理的に考えることが好きな方だ
22	規則やルールを破るのはきらいな方だ	☐	☒	物事を何かにたとえて表現することが得意な方だ
23	計画を決めてもらうと安心する方だ	☒	☐	数学的なものを好む方だ
24	科学やテクノロジーに関することを理解し、応用することが好きな方だ	☐	☒	自分の考えに従って仲間を動かすのが好きな方だ

Illustration 15 Right brain, left brain, worksheet 1 (category X and Y)

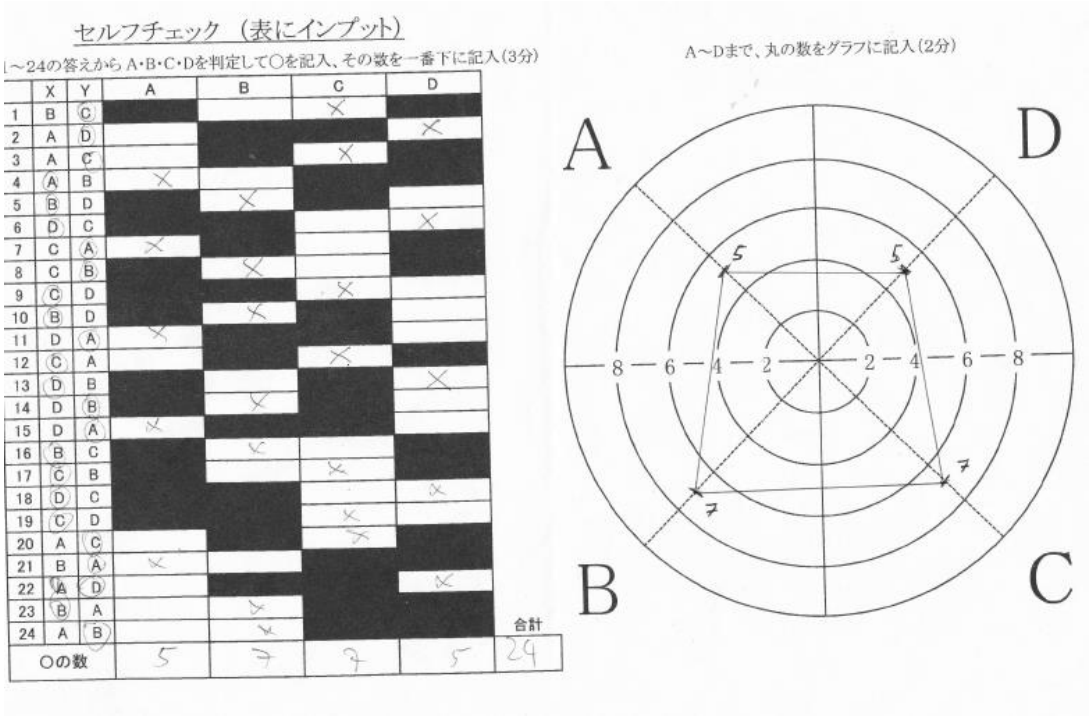
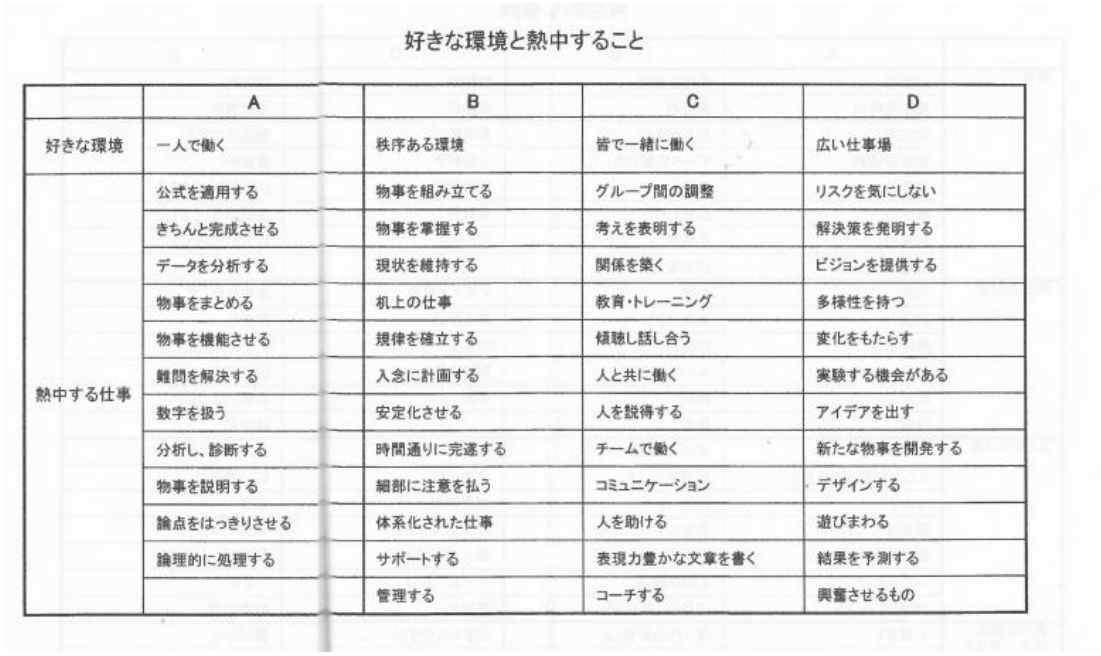


Illustration 16 Right brain, left brain, worksheet 2 (radar chart)

典型的な傾向

	A	B	C	D
性格	分析的	明確な表現	情緒的	芸術的
	権威主義的	保守的	直感的	全体論的
	批判的	抑えがきく	音楽的	創造性に富む
	事実重視的	データ収集好き	小説好き	直感的
	論理的	詳細な	精神論的	同時進行ができる
	数学的	系統だった	象徴的	空間感覚に富む
	数量的	手順的	話し好き	総合的に考える
	合理的	技術本好き		
得意な仕事	分析	管理	アイデア表現	変化を起こす
	財務	実施・施工	対人関係	概念化
	問題解決	組織的	教える	アイデアを出す
	科学	ルールを守る	訓練する	統合する
	統計	規制	手紙	直感を信じる
	技術	監督		視覚化
よく使う口癖	分析すると	本によれば	人材	とにかくやってみよう
	こんな問題があるかも	習慣をつける	人の価値	広い視野で
	つまり	法律・ルール	相互作用	概念
	要点は	安全に	参加型	優位
	結論は分かっている	自制	個人の成長	革新的
	～によれば	ものの順序	チームワーク	アイデア
	分解してみよう	過去はこうやった	家族的	相乗効果
長所を別の視点で見ると	計算ずく	選り好みが激しい	だまされやすい	夢ばかり
	冷たい	枠にはまり過ぎ	神経過敏	空想家
	数字ばかり	余計な仕事を作る	育くさい	向こうみず
	権力を欲しがる	自分の考えがあまりない	同情ばかり	非現実的
	面倒見が悪い			常識はずれ

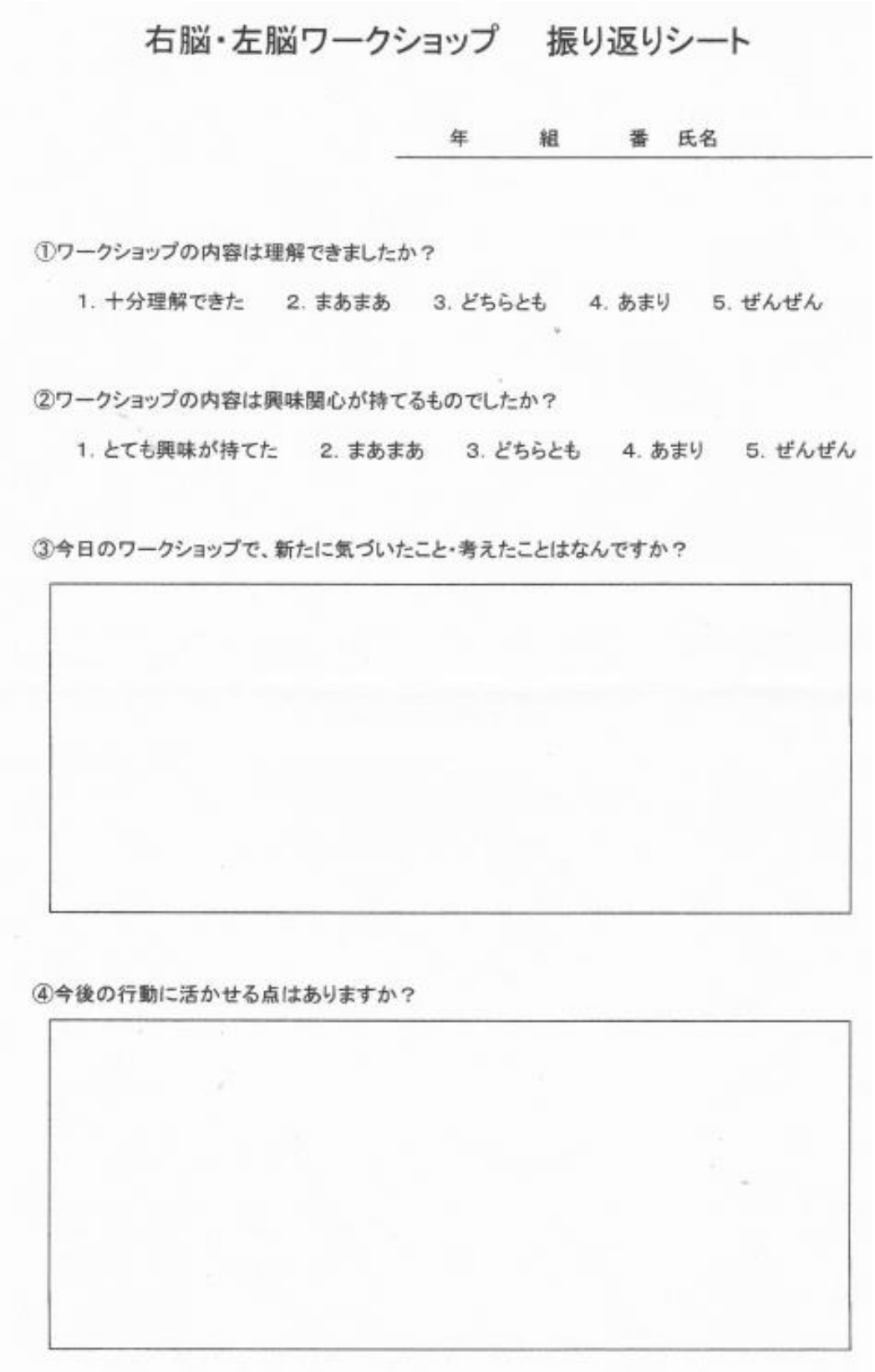
Illustration 17 Right brain, left brain, analysis worksheet 2 (category A, B, C, D)



好きな環境と熱中すること

	A	B	C	D
好きな環境	一人で働く	秩序ある環境	皆で一緒に働く	広い仕事場
熱中する仕事	公式を適用する	物事を組み立てる	グループ間の調整	リスクを気にしない
	きちんと完成させる	物事を掌握する	考えを表明する	解決策を発明する
	データを分析する	現状を維持する	関係を築く	ビジョンを提供する
	物事をまとめる	机上の仕事	教育・トレーニング	多様性を持つ
	物事を機能させる	規律を確立する	傾聴し話し合う	変化をもたらす
	難問を解決する	入念に計画する	人と共に働く	実験する機会がある
	数字を扱う	安定化させる	人を説得する	アイデアを出す
	分析し、診断する	時間通りに完遂する	チームで働く	新たな物事を開発する
	物事を説明する	細部に注意を払う	コミュニケーション	デザインする
	論点をはっきりさせる	体系化された仕事	人を助ける	遊びまわる
	論理的に処理する	サポートする	表現力豊かな文章を書く	結果を予測する
		管理する	コーチする	興奮させるもの

Illustration 18 Right brain, left brain, analysis worksheet 2 (category A, B, C, D)



右脳・左脳ワークショップ　振り返りシート

年　組　番　氏名

①ワークショップの内容は理解できましたか？

1. 十分理解できた　2. まあまあ　3. どちらとも　4. あまり　5. ぜんぜん

②ワークショップの内容は興味関心が持てるものでしたか？

1. とても興味が持てた　2. まあまあ　3. どちらとも　4. あまり　5. ぜんぜん

③今日のワークショップで、新たに気づいたこと・考えたことはなんですか？

④今後の行動に活かせる点はありますか？

Illustration 19 Right brain, left brain, evaluation sheet

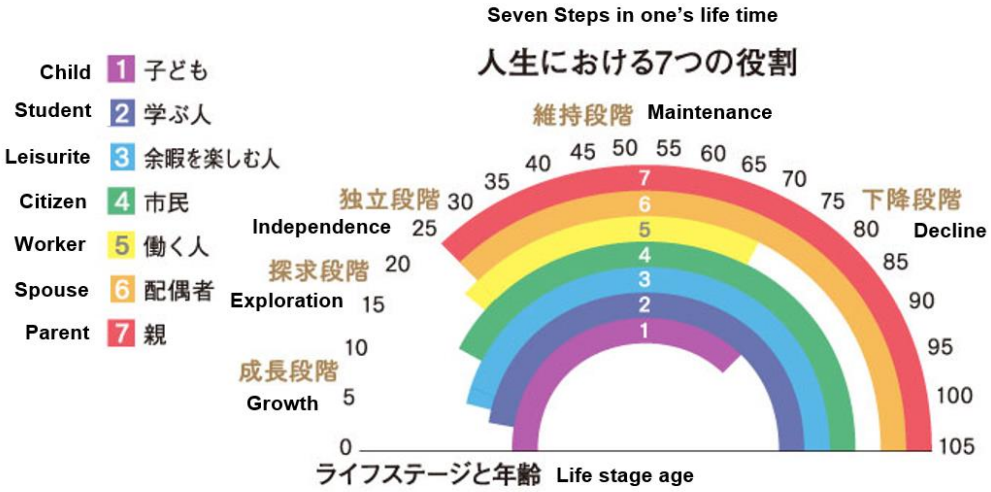


Illustration 20 Life career Rainbow (after Donald E. Super), LMCS worksheet (edited by author)

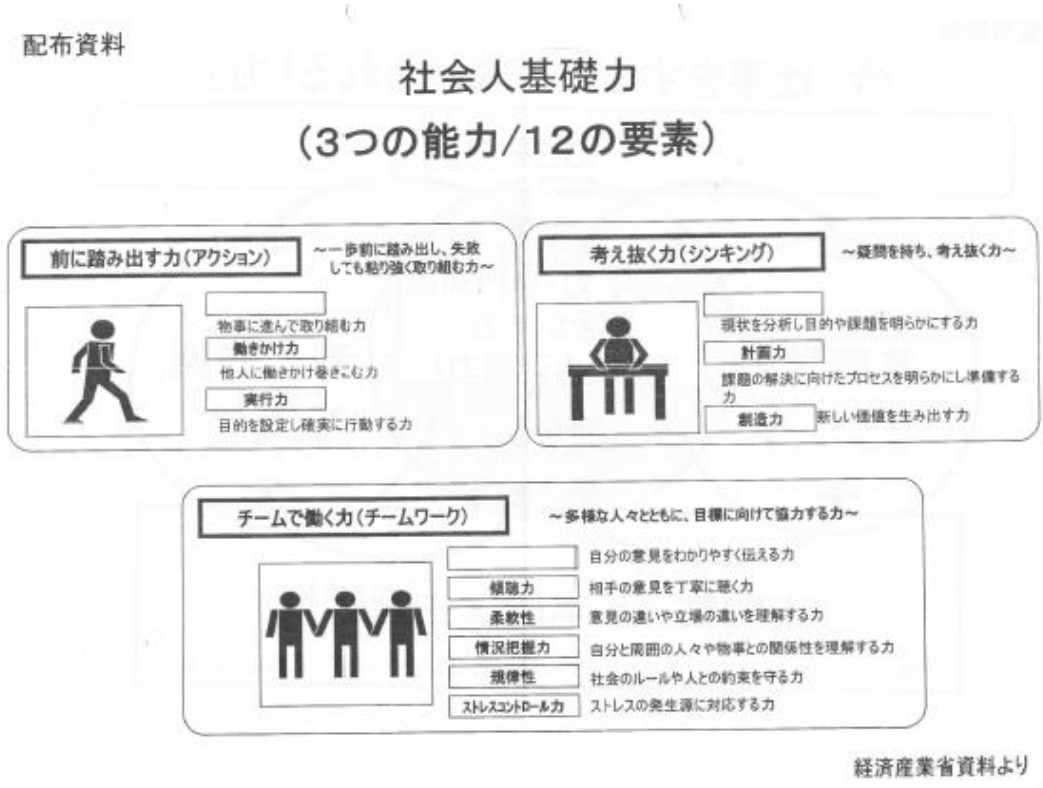


Illustration 21 Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons, worksheet 1 (FCWP)

配布資料

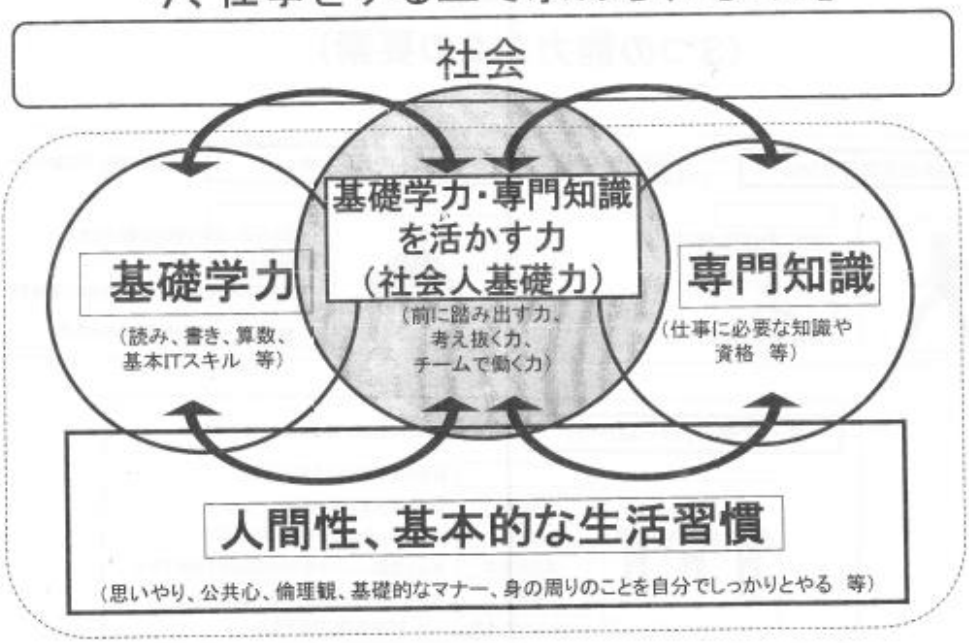


Illustration 22 Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons, worksheet 2 (info FCWP)

Illustration 23 Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons, analysis sheet 1 (list)

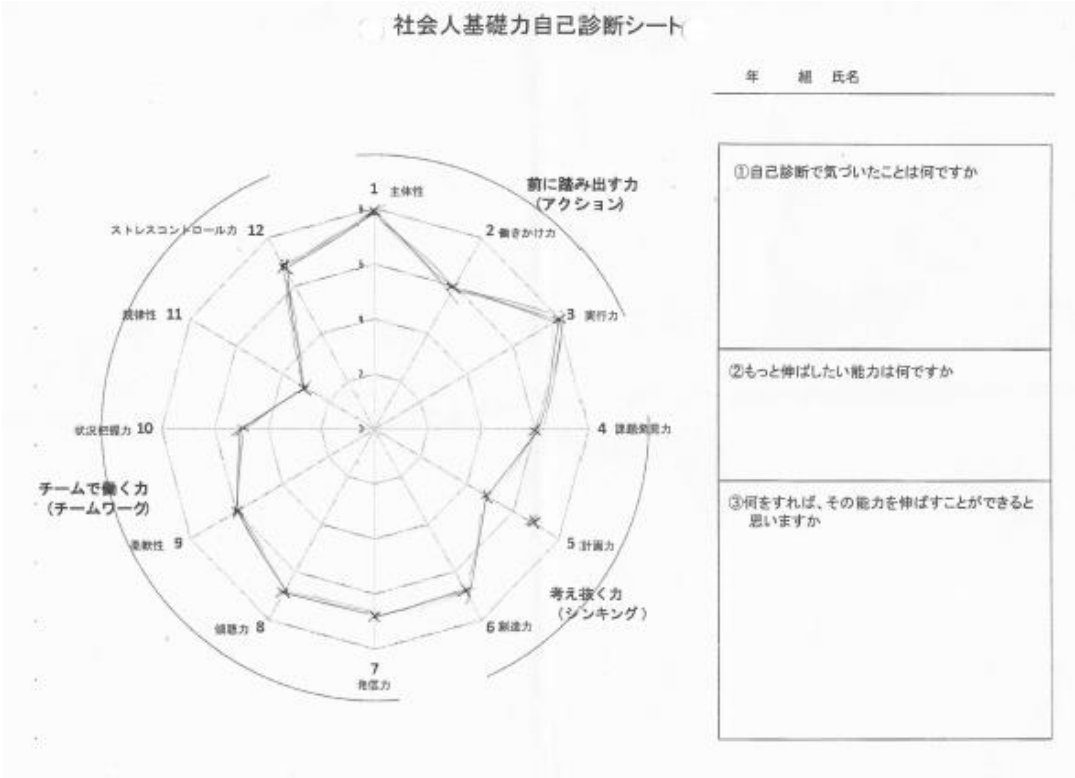
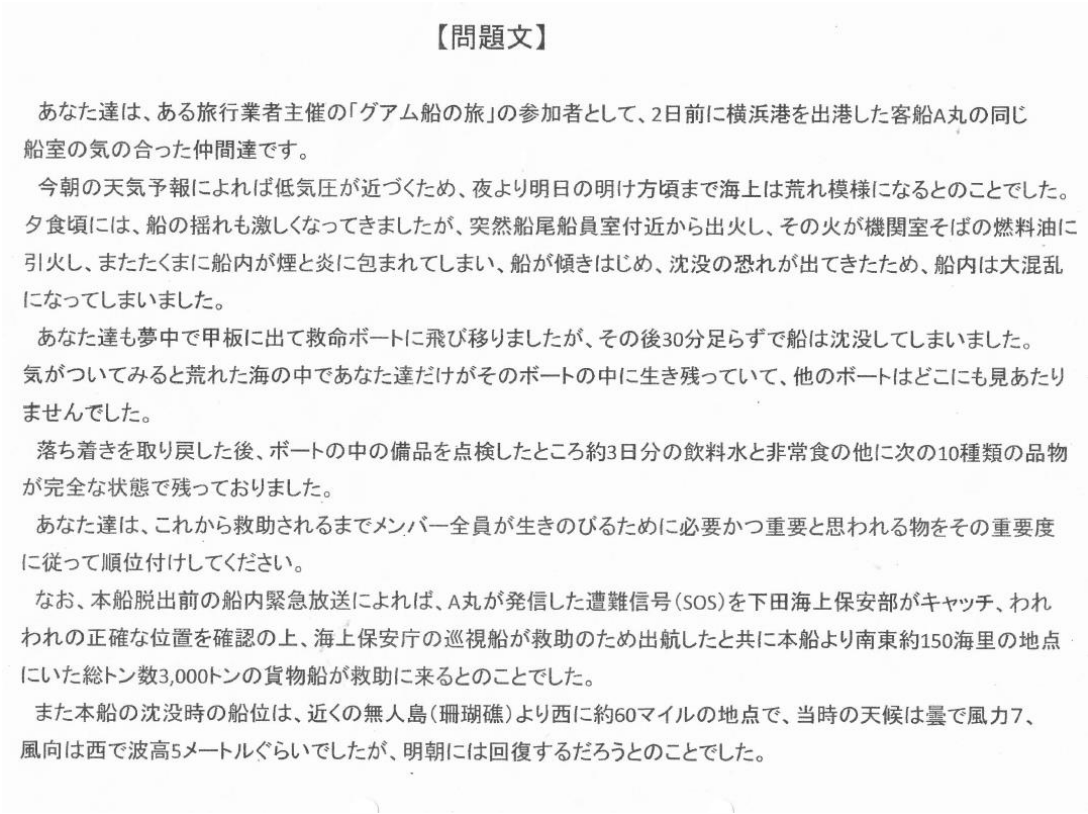


Illustration 24 Fundamental Competencies for Working Persons, analysis sheet 2 (radar chart)



【問題文】

あなた達は、ある旅行業者主催の「グアム船の旅」の参加者として、2日前に横浜港を出港した客船A丸の同じ船室の気の合った仲間達です。

今朝の天気予報によれば低気圧が近づくため、夜より明日の明け方頃まで海上は荒れ模様になるとのことでした。夕食頃には、船の揺れも激しくなってきましたが、突然船尾船員室付近から出火し、その火が機関室そばの燃料油に引火し、またたくまに船内が煙と炎に包まれてしまい、船が傾きはじめ、沈没の恐れが出てきたため、船内は大混乱になってしまいました。

あなた達も夢中で甲板に出て救命ボートに飛び移りましたが、その後30分足らずで船は沈没してしまいました。気がついてみると荒れた海の中であなた達だけがそのボートの中に生き残っていて、他のボートはどこにも見あたりませんでした。

落ち着きを取り戻した後、ボートの中の備品を点検したところ約3日分の飲料水と非常食の他に次の10種類の品物が完全な状態で残っておりました。

あなた達は、これから救助されるまでメンバー全員が生きのびるために必要かつ重要と思われる物をその重要度に従って順位付けしてください。

なお、本船脱出前の船内緊急放送によれば、A丸が発信した遭難信号（SOS）を下田海上保安部がキャッチ、われわれの正確な位置を確認の上、海上保安庁の巡視船が救助のため出航したと共に本船より南東約150海里の地点にいた総トン数3,000トンの貨物船が救助に来るとのことでした。

また本船の沈没時の船位は、近くの無人島（珊瑚礁）より西に約60マイルの地点で、当時の天候は曇で風力7、風向は西で波高5メートルぐらいでしたが、明朝には回復するだろうとのことでした。

Illustration 25 Team consensus, work sheet 1 (story)

Illustration 26 Team consensus, work sheet 3 (items)

A

重要度順位付けワークシート（個人）

クラス　　名前

どうしたら生きのびられるのか	使用するアイテム		なぜ必要なのか・順番の理由
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		

完全な状態で残された10種類のアイテム

■**オール** ： 船を漕ぐ道具　■**海図** ： 方位や水深を記した海の地図　■**石油缶**： 光ったブリキの缶、中の重油は取り出し可能

■**マグネットコンパス** ： 東西南北の方位を指す道具　■**布製バケツ** ： 丈夫で折りたためる　■**防水トランジスタラジオ** ： 予備電池付き

■**防水シート** ： オレンジ色の水に強い大きなシート　■**手鏡** ： 手で持てる鏡　■**クレモナロープ** ： 船用の丈夫なロープ

■**防水懐中電灯** ： 予備電池付き　※数量に関しては別途、参考画像を参照

Illustration 27 Team consensus, work sheet 2 (list)

C

「チームコンセンサスワークショップ」誤差集計シート　　年　組　番　氏名:

アイテム	グループの誤差	グループの順位	専門家の順位	個人の順位	個人の誤差
ロープ			1		
布製バケツ			2		
石油缶			3		
オール			4		
防水シート			5		
懐中電灯			6		
手鏡			7		
コンパス			8		
ラジオ			9		
海図			10		
誤差の合計					

◇記入のしかた

1、「グループの順位」に「Bシート(グループ)」で選んだ順位を記入しましょう。

2、「グループの誤差」を記入しましょう。例えば、オールを1位に選んだ場合は、オールの「グループの順位」に1と記入。
選んでいないアイテムは空欄のままでOK
「専門家の順位」と「グループの誤差」を計算して記入。オールを1位に選んだ場合、4−1＝3なので　3　と記入。

3、「個人の順位」に「Aシート(個人)」で選んだ5つの順位を記入しましょう。

4、「個人の誤差」を記入しましょう。
「専門家の順位」と「個人の順位」の差を計算して記入。

5、5つの「誤差の合計」をそれぞれ記入しましょう。
(注意)**個人とグループの合計する数(選んだ順位の数)を合わせる事。**
例えば、「個人の順位」を3位までしか選んでいない場合は、「グループの順位」も3位まで合計すること。
「個人の順位」を5位まで選んでいるが、「グループの順位」を3位までしか選んでいない場合は、「個人の順位」も3位までの合計で計算すること。

6、「個人の誤差」と「グループの誤差」を比べてみましょう。

Illustration 28 Team consensus, analysis sheet

D

「チームコンセンサスワークショップ」個人振り返りシート　　年　組　番　氏名:

○「グループでコンセンサスをとること」について気付いたことや考えたことはなんですか？
○今日の授業でがんばったことはなんですか？
○今日の経験を今後どのように活かしたいですか？

Illustration 29 Team consensus, evaluation sheet

社会人授業＋インタビューワークショップ

7クラス

2017年6月12日（月）14：15～15：05　15：15～16：05

（ねらい）

社会人講師からの授業により仕事に対する理解を深め，更に生徒自身がインタビューをすることで授業へ参加を促し，より仕事や働くことへの興味を持たせる。社会人から直接仕事について話しを聞くことで，生徒自身の将来を考えるきっかけをつくる。また，インタビュー体験をすることにより，人との関わり方や見知らぬ大人，異世代の人との話し方を学ぶ。

（担任の先生への事前準備等のお願い）

- 可能なら生徒さんの机は授業開始前に廊下に出しておいてください。（半分でも）
  ※机はナシで生徒は椅子だけにする
- 椅子は教壇に向かい弧を描くように配置し，事前にグループを決めた場合は，座った前後で一つのグループでまとまるようにしてください。（グループの数は6グループ）
- 事前に各グループの代表を1名決めてください
- 生徒さんには筆記具と，机がない状態でメモが取れるように下敷きやノートなど台紙になるものを準備しておいてもらってください。
- 携帯電話の電源は授業中切っていただきたくお願いいたします。
- 授業の妨げになる生徒，体調の悪い生徒等への対応は，先生にお願いいたします。
- 授業開始と終わりの挨拶は先生にお願いいたします。

（準備いただくもの）

- ワークシート2種（メモ，インタビューのポイント）・振り返りシート，計3種の印刷
  （生徒数+先生，見学者の分）
- プロジェクターとスクリーン（スクリーンがない場合模造紙等でもよい）
- 教壇に講師用の椅子を1脚
-

＊ PCは講師または団体で準備します。
＊ 付箋は団体が準備します。

クラス	社会人講師	ファシリテーター
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Illustration 30 Interview WMS sheet 1

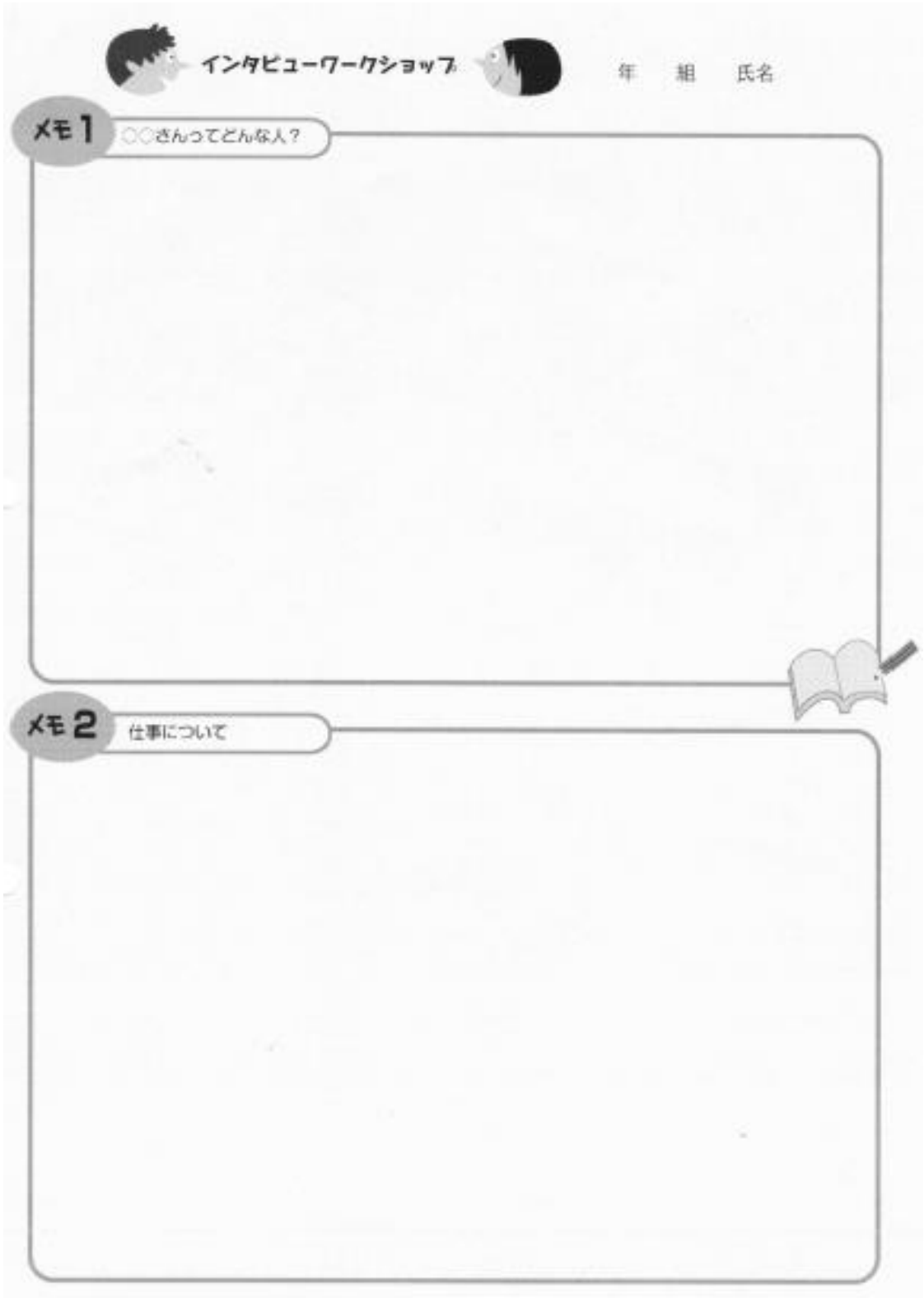


Illustration 31 Interview workshop, memo sheet

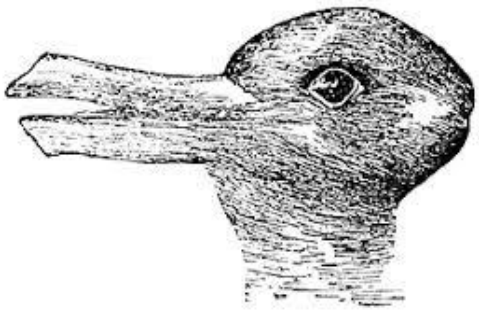


Illustration 32 Ambiguous image

Source: work sheet LMCS

◎授業進行タイムスケジュール

時間	講師&ファシリテーター（F：ファシリ）	備　考
1時間目 <8分>	先生からの紹介後。 F：自己紹介　授業についての説明 講師を紹介	・講師の会社名とお名前を黒板に書く。 ・メモのプリントを配る。
<20分>	社会人講師よりプレゼン（内容：仕事の話） F：生徒にメモをとらせる。	・プレゼンが見やすいよう照明の明るさ調整。
<10分>	社会人講師とFでインタビューデモ（内容：主に高校時代から仕事につくまで。仕事の内容も含む）	
<5分>	F：インタビューデモの振り返り 「インタビューのポイント」配布 「インタビューのポイント」の説明	・「インタビューのポイント」プリント配布（付箋付）
<7分>	個人で講師への質問を考える。	

2時間目 <8分>	F：授業開始 グループで質問を考える。	生徒が質問を考えやすいように声かけ等
<18分> （1グループ×3分） <7分>	1回目のグループ質問 グループ毎に質問（グループも講師も立ってもらう） 全グループ質問。（講師には短めに答えてもらう。答えた事に対して再度質問するように促す） 全グループが終了し、時間があったら、講師に質問の答えで話足りない事を話してもらったり、2回目のグループ質問（挙手 or 指名）	
<7分> <7分> <3分>	F：振り返りとまとめ 振り返りシート配付、記入 講師のメッセージ（終わりのあいさつ） 先生より終わりの挨拶	振り返りシート、付箋の余り回収

Illustration 33 Interview workshop, WMS sheet 2

◇インタビューのポイント◇

1．事前にインタビューの目的を明確にしておきましょう

・必ず事前にインタビューの目的を決める。
・インタビュー時間の確認と聞きたいことの優先順位を決めておく。
（目的や聞きたいことを事前に相手に伝える場合もある）

2．最初のあいさつ：　初対面の人にお話しを伺う場合は最初の挨拶がとても大事！

・「私の名前は○○と申します。よろしくお願いします」
・「本日はお越しいただいてありがとうございます」
・「△△（その方のお仕事内容）についても、お聞かせください（予告編的に）」etc

3．相手に興味や関心をもちましょう

・相手や話しの内容に興味を持つ。
・疑問を持って、話を広げたり、ひとつの内容を深堀りしたりする。
（わからない事、知らない事が出てきたら話を広げるチャンス！）

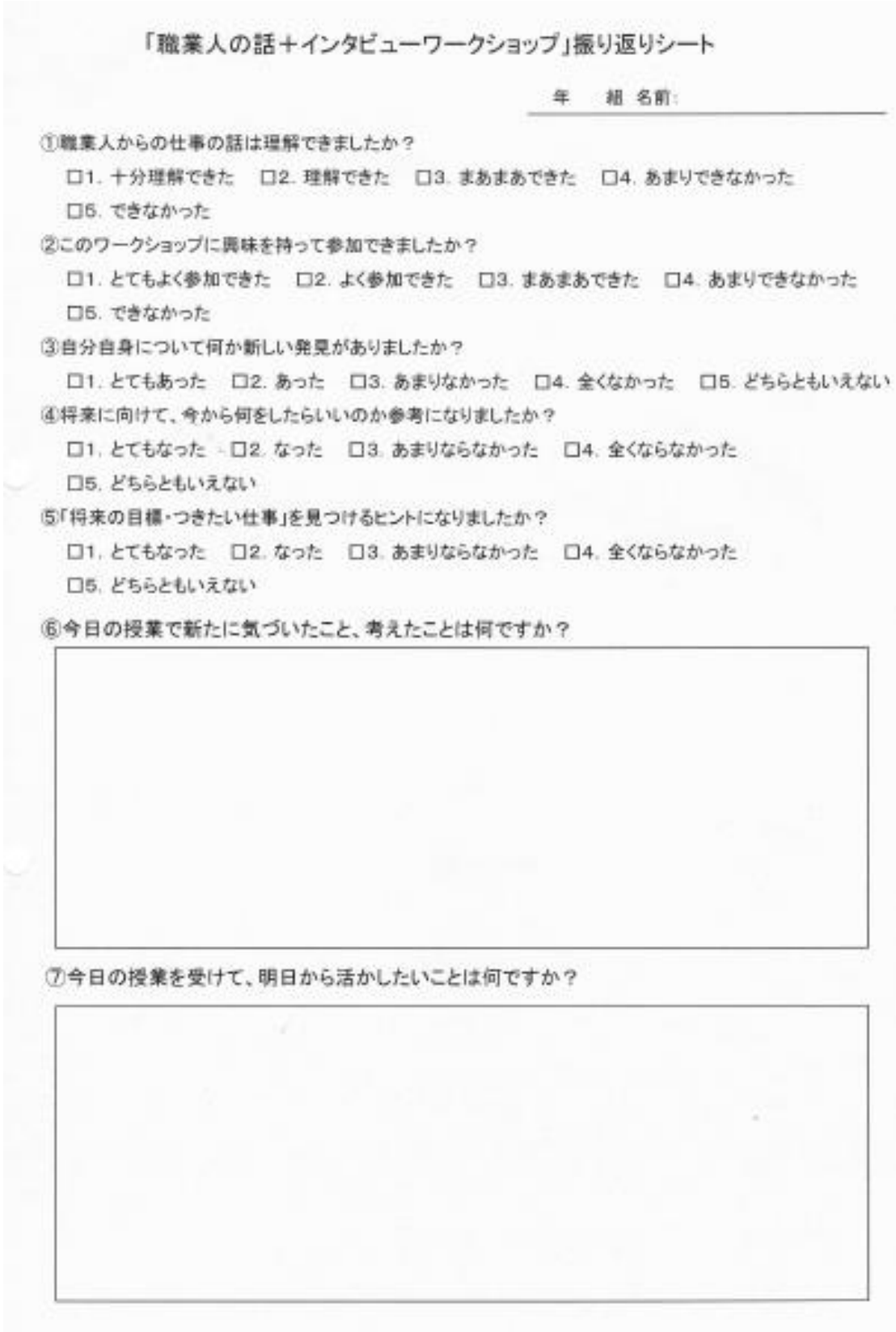
4．態度やふるまいも大事

・あいづちをうったり、相手の目を見るアイコンタクトをとる。
・柔らかい表情やしぐさで話しを促す。

5．聞く時の柱：　7w 2h　で考えてみましょう

・when　いつ：　タイムライン
（それはいつですか、いつ○○されたのですか、いつ頃○○になったんですか・・・）
・where　どこで：　場所・空間
（それはどこですか、どこでそうなったんですか、それはどのようなところですか・・・）
・who　誰が：　主役
（誰が○○したのですか、○○は誰ですか、誰がそうしたのですか・・・）
・what　何を：　モノとの関わり
（何をしているのですか、何が起きたのですか、どの○○でしょうか・・・）
・why　何故：　理由や動機
（なぜそうしたのですか、なぜそう思ったのですか、なぜそのように考えたのですか・・・）
・how　どのように：　プロセス・やり方
（どのようにしたのですか、どのように思ったのですか、どのような方法ですか・・・）
・whom　誰に：　相手役
（誰ですか、誰にしたのですか、誰に○○を感じるのですか・・・）
・which　どちらを：　選択
（どちらを選びますか、どちらが好きですか、○○と思うのはどちらですか・・・）
・how much/how many　いくらで / いくつ：　金額・数
（いくらでしたか、○○はどれくらいの数ですか、○○したのはどれくらいの人数ですか・・・）

Illustration 34 Interview workshop, example sheet



「職業人の話＋インタビューワークショップ」振り返りシート

年　組 名前:

①職業人からの仕事の話は理解できましたか？

□1. 十分理解できた　□2. 理解できた　□3. まあまあできた　□4. あまりできなかった

□5. できなかった

②このワークショップに興味を持って参加できましたか？

□1. とてもよく参加できた　□2. よく参加できた　□3. まあまあできた　□4. あまりできなかった

□5. できなかった

③自分自身について何か新しい発見がありましたか？

□1. とてもあった　□2. あった　□3. あまりなかった　□4. 全くなかった　□5. どちらともいえない

④将来に向けて、今から何をしたらいいのか参考になりましたか？

□1. とてもなった　□2. なった　□3. あまりならなかった　□4. 全くならなかった

□5. どちらともいえない

⑤「将来の目標・つきたい仕事」を見つけるヒントになりましたか？

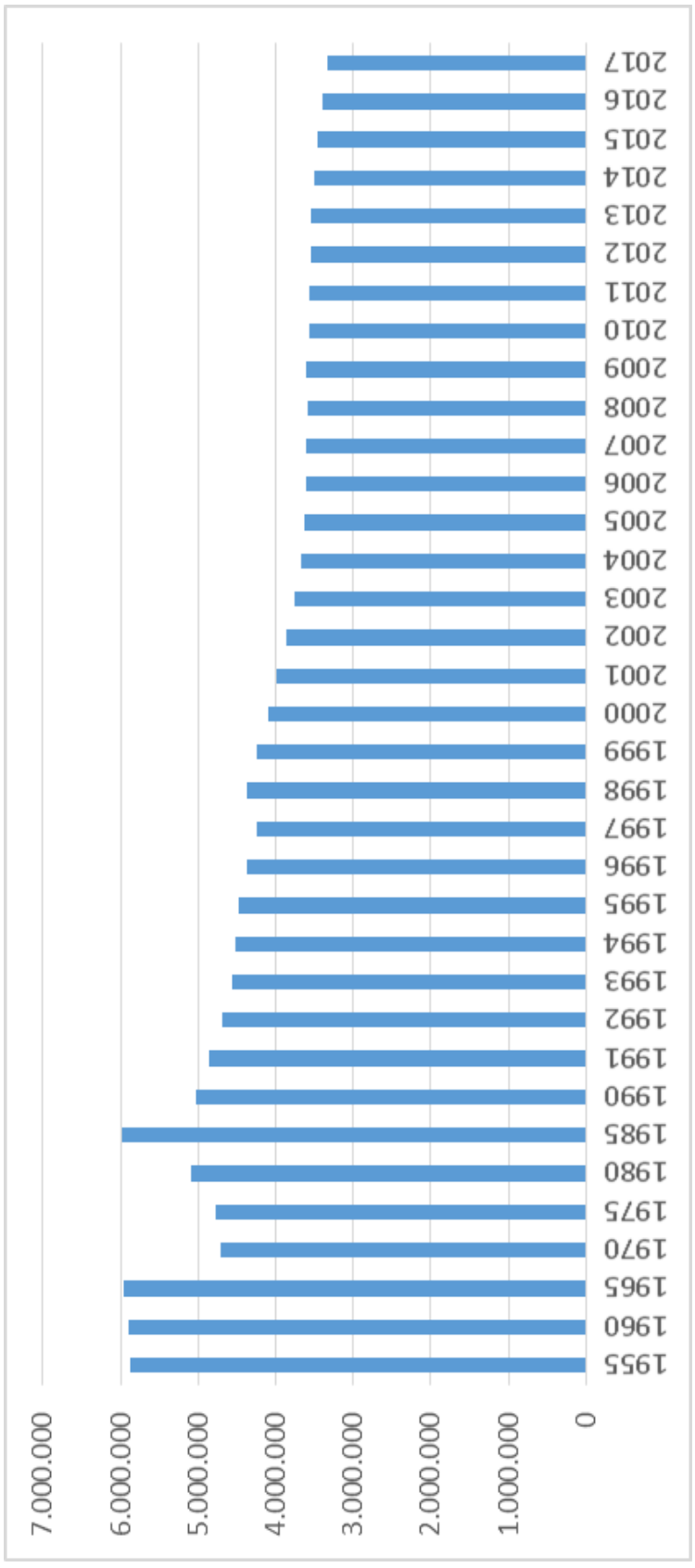
□1. とてもなった　□2. なった　□3. あまりならなかった　□4. 全くならなかった

□5. どちらともいえない

⑥今日の授業で新たに気づいたこと、考えたことは何ですか？

⑦今日の授業を受けて、明日から活かしたいことは何ですか？

Illustration 35 Interview workshop, evaluation sheet



Graph 3 Junior High School Students 1955–2017

Source: monbukagakusho tôkeiyôran (heisei 30nenban)
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/toukei/002/002b/1403130.htm

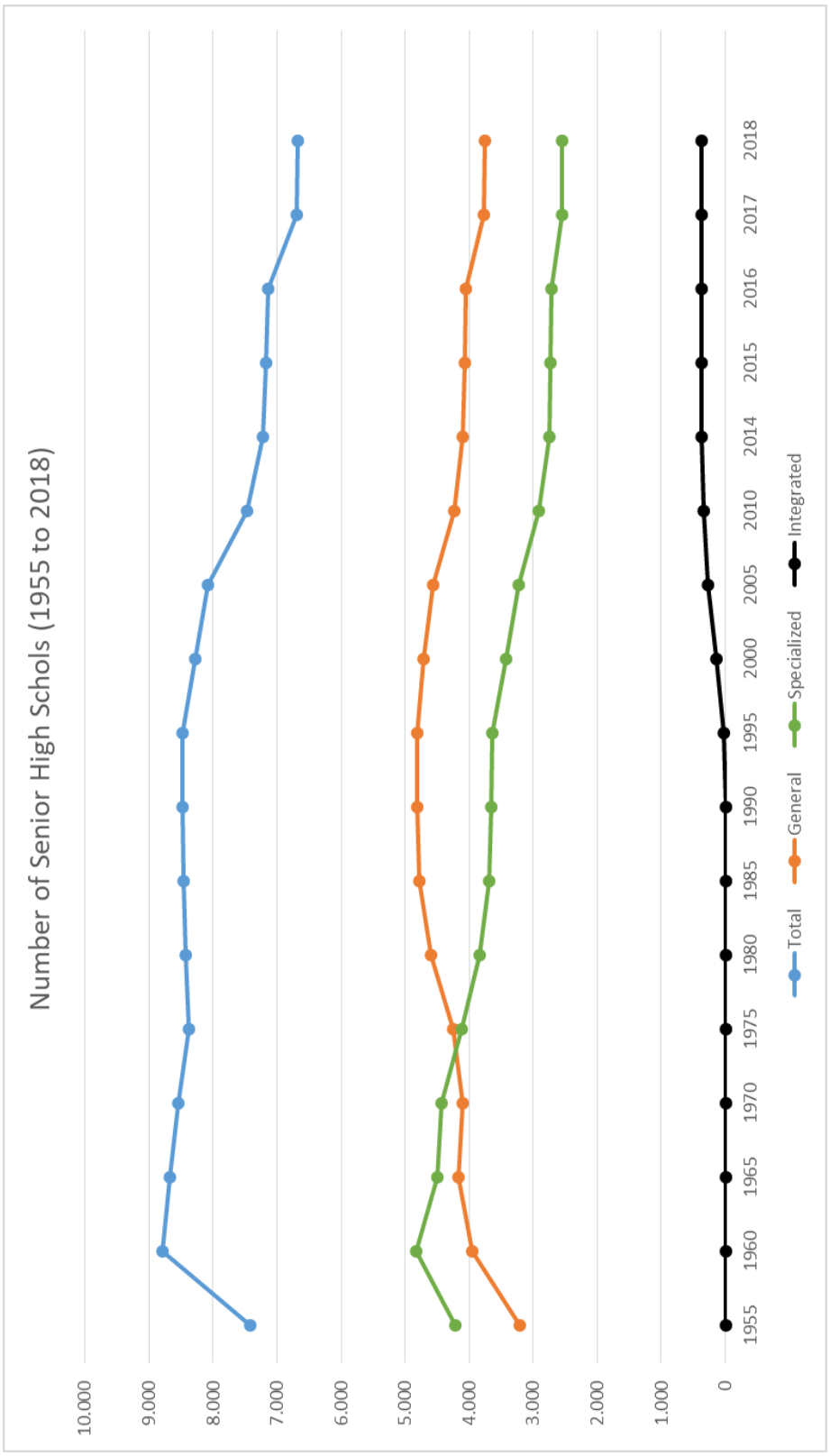
Date	School type	Hen–sachi	Number of students (male/ female)	Tokyo area (ku/shi)	Interview with:	Notes
04/20/2017	Metropolitan general senior high school	72	979 (approx. 50/50)	Chiyoda	Principal	Principal in the sixth year at current school, eight years as principal at previous school, before that biology teacher
04/27/2017	Municpal technical senior high school	37	443 (approx. 10%female) *56 (one female student)*	Itabashi	1. Principal, 2. head teacher career guidance, 3. head teacher school affairs	1. principal at current school for three years 2. About 15 years of experience as a teacher 3. About 20 years of experience as a teacher All three were graduates of a technical senior high school
05/08/2017	Metropolitan general senior high school	74	1000 (approx. 50/50)	Kunitachi	Vice–principal	Eight years at current school in current position. 27 years of previous teaching experience

05/15 /2017	Private College of Technology	51	Approx. 800 (under 20% female students)	Machida	Head teacher career guidance	20 years total experience as a teacher at current school, total of eight years as career guidance teacher, three years as head of the career guidance department. Worked in design department of a major Japanese car manufacturer before becoming a teacher at the college
05/18 /2017	Metropolitan general senior high school	56	Approx. 825 (approx. 50/50)	Toshim a	Head teacher career guidance	Total of 38 years of teaching experience as an English teacher, six at current school. Total experience of nine years as a career guidance teacher, six at current school

05/31/2017	National College of Technology	64–65	Approx. 1030	Hachiôji	1. Principal, 2. vice–principal	1. Principal at current school for one year. Before that public servant at the MEXT 2. Six year experience as vice–principal at current school. Worked at an electronics company before becoming a teacher.
06/20/2017	Metropolitan general senior high school	48	710 (308/402) *100 (50/50)*	Itabashi	Principal	Principal at current school for four years. Principal for three years at previous school. Experience as vice–principal at three other schools. 7th degree black belt in Kendo

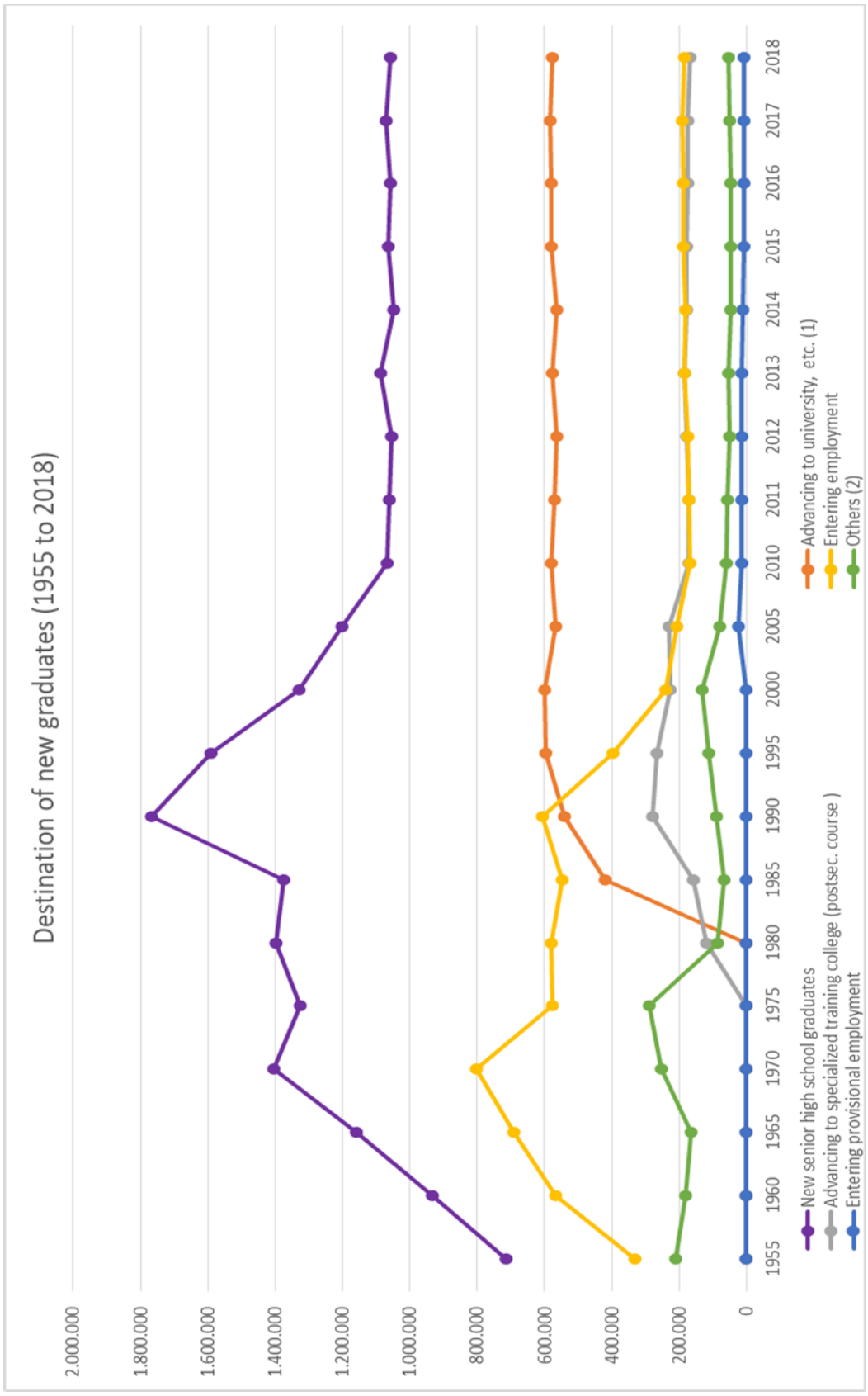
09/22/2017	Metropolitan general senior high school	46	Approx. 815 (approx. 50/50)	Higashi kurume –shi	Teacher career guidance	Total of eight years' experience as a teacher. For three years teacher at current school, for five years at low–ranking metropolitan general senior high school. 1 year experience as career guidance teacher at current school
03/07/2018	Metropolitan general senior high school	63	949 (approx. 50/50)	Itabashi	Head teacher career guidance	Total teaching experience of 30 years. Has been head career guidance teacher for 2 years at current school

Table 7 List of educational institutions and interview partners



Graph 4 Number of Senior High Schools by Specialization (1955 to 2018) (edited by author)

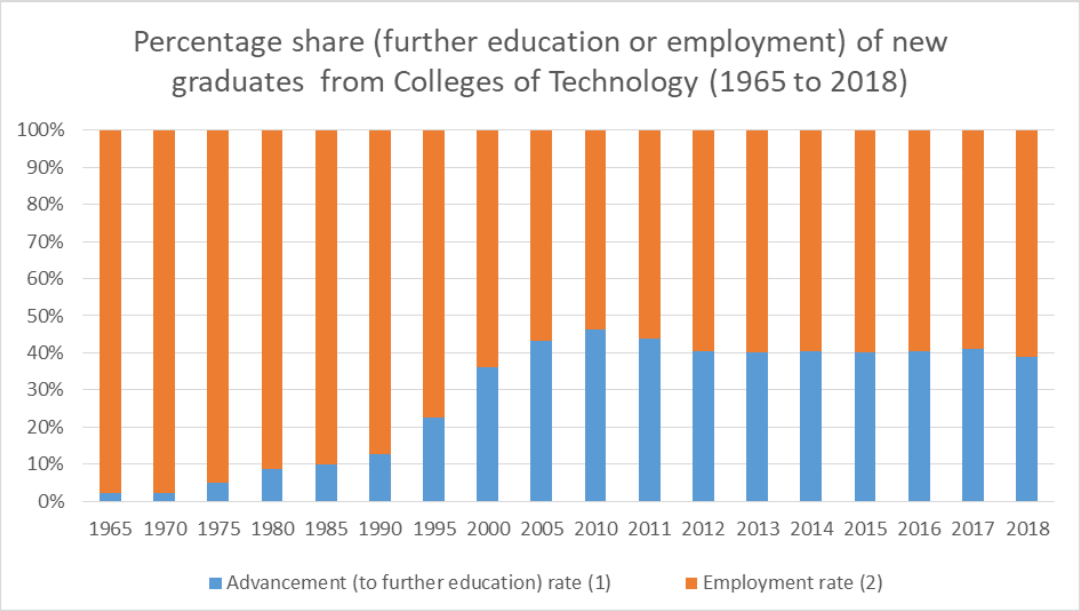
Source: (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2019)



Graph 5 Post–graduation trajectories for senior high school students (1955 – 2018) (edited by author)

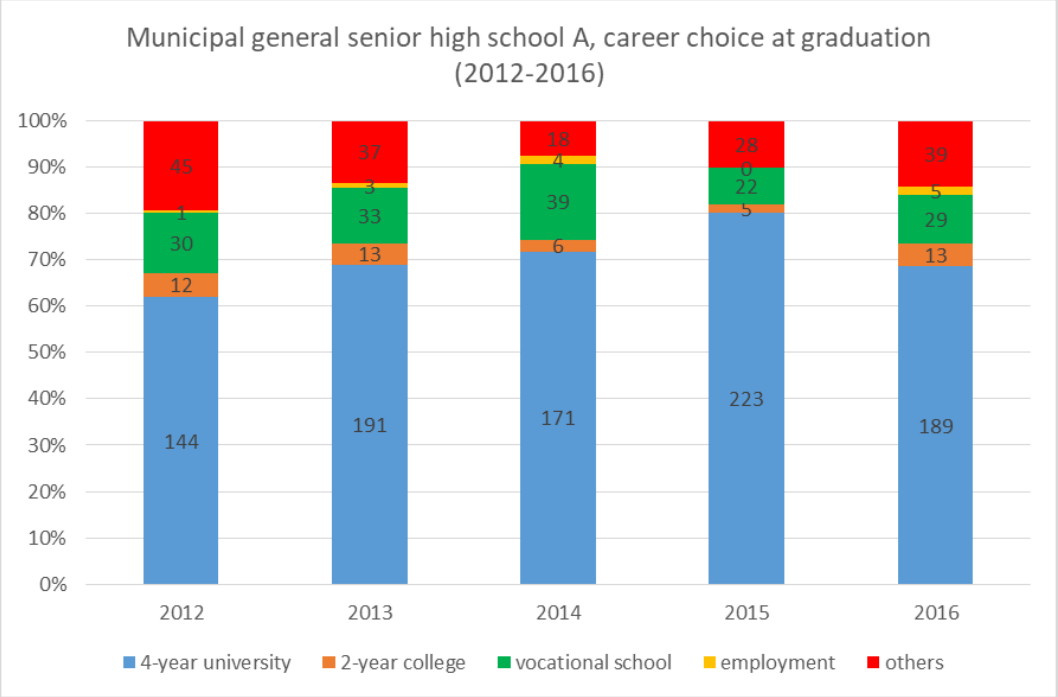
(1) "University, etc." indicates university (undergraduate, correspondence and short–term courses), junior college (regular, correspondence and short–term courses) and advanced courses of upper secondary schools (including those who entered higher–level institutes while being employed)
(2) Including those involved in household work, advancing to foreign university, etc.

Source: (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2019)



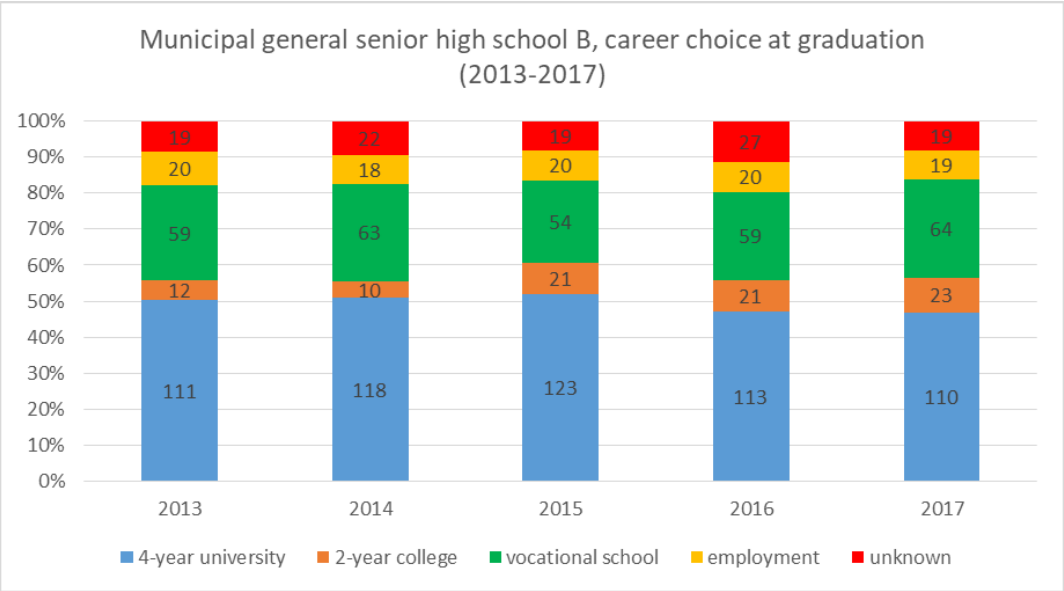
Graph 6 Percentage share (further education or employment) of new graduates from Colleges of Technology (1965 to 2018) (edited by author)

(1) Including those advancing to specialized training, college miscellaneous school, undertaking vocational training.
(2) Including those advancing to higher–level courses while being employed.
Source: (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2019)



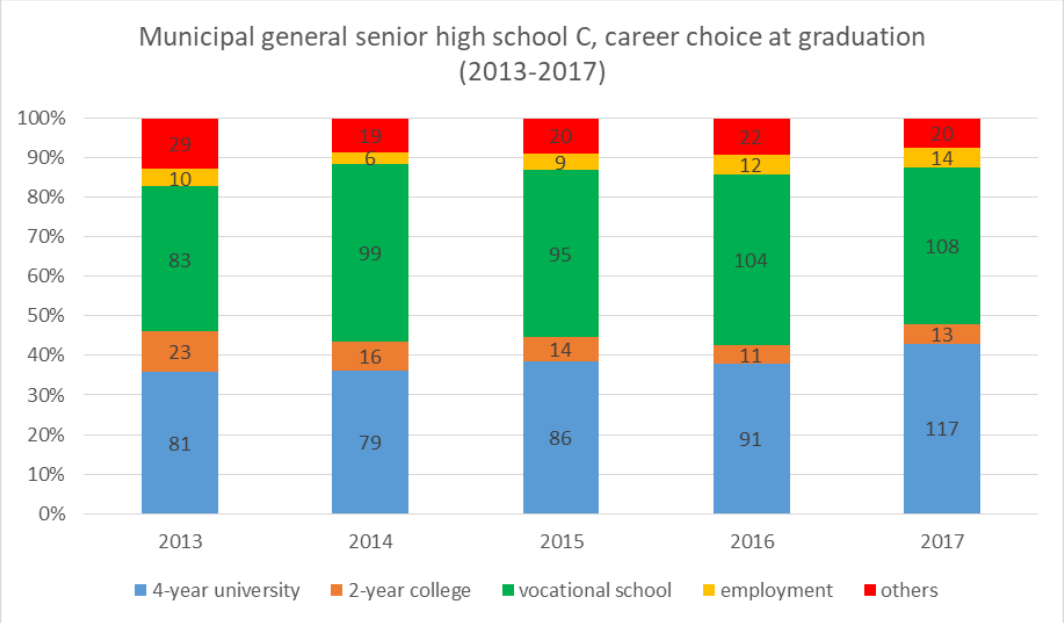
Graph 7 Metropolitan general senior high school A, career choice at graduation (2012–2016) (edited by author)

Source: General senior high school A (Toshima–ku) 2016a



Graph 8 Metropolitan general senior high school B, career choice at graduation (2013–2017) (edited by author)

Source: General senior high school B 2017b



Graph 9 Metropolitan general senior high school C, career choice at graduation (2013–2017) (edited by author)

Source: school website, school C

Abstract (English and German):

Nonprofit Education in Japan: NPO–led Career Guidance at Metropolitan Senior High Schools

The demand for education has changed rapidly due to social change and globalization over the last decades. Individual needs have become so diverse that the traditional actors of the Japanese education system can no longer satisfy them. Not only the private sector but civil society has an ever–growing role in the facilitation of knowledge and skill sets. (Okano 2016b: 1). This has serious implications on the role of formal schooling in contemporary Japan.

The following dissertation will shed more light on the interface between formal schooling, NPO–led career guidance, and labor market entry. It examines how and why the nature of career guidance has been changing rather drastically in the recent years and analyzes the consequences for the metropolitan general senior high school as an institution which by many is still considered to have the obligation to facilitate a smooth transition into the labor market.

I will provide ethnographic data which allows the reader to better understand the involvement of civil society groups like NPOs on the level of metropolitan senior high schools.

By combining the theoretical concepts of *institutional social capital* by Brinton (2000), Okano's (2016a) concept of *nonformal education* as well as Estévez–Abe's (2003) *state–society–partnerships* and Ogawa's (2009) *NPO–ization by the government,* I provided a framework which allows a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the current struggle of general senior high schools in providing adequate career guidance. Furthermore, I will show the benefits as well as limitations of NPO–involvement in career guidance at these institutions.

Data from extensive fieldwork in form of interviews at nine general metropolitan senior high schools as well as two colleges of technology and participant observation during NPO–led career guidance events at

eleven metropolitan senior high schools form the basis of the dissertation at hand.

On the institutional level of the Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education, the implementation of various programs promoted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Economics, Trade, and Industry has been proceeding over the last decade. However, at the micro–level of metropolitan general senior high schools, especially those which rank average to low in terms of academic performance, educators appear unable to facilitate neither a smooth transition into the labor market nor are they able to effectively teach skill sets and competencies described in the programs of both ministries. Here teachers and principals point out a general unpreparedness of the students with regard to labor market entry. They are especially concerned about underdeveloped communication skills and the lacking ability to work in a team. As a result, schools make use of third sector groups like the nonprofit organizations at the center of this dissertation to ensure comprehensive career guidance for their students.

Nonprofit Bildung in Japan: NPO–geleitete Berufsorientierung an städtischen Oberschulen

Die Nachfrage nach Bildung hat sich in den letzten Jahrzehnten aufgrund des gesellschaftlichen Wandels und der Globalisierung deutlich verändert. Die individuellen Bedürfnisse haben sich dahingehend gewandelt, dass die traditionellen Akteure im japanischen Bildungssystem ihnen nicht mehr gerecht werden können. Nicht nur der privatwirtschaftliche Sektor, sondern auch die Zivilgesellschaft haben eine immer größere Rolle in der Vermittlung von Wissen und Fertigkeiten (Okano 2016b: 1). Dies hat gravierende Auswirkungen auf die Rolle der formalen Bildung in Japan.

Die vorliegende Dissertation wird Licht auf die Schnittstelle zwischen formaler Bildung, NPO–geleiteter Berufsorientierung und dem Arbeitsmarkteintritt werfen. Sie untersucht, wie und warum sich das Wesen von Berufsorientierung in den letzten Jahren so drastisch

gewandelt hat und analysiert die Konsequenzen für die japanische Oberschule als Institution, von der immer noch erwartet wird, einen reibungslosen Übergang ins Berufsleben zu gewährleisten. Es werden ethnographische Daten präsentiert, die dem Leser ein besseres Verständnis über die Beteiligung von zivilgesellschaftlichen Gruppen, wie beispielsweise NPOs, auf der Ebene der städtischen Oberschule ermöglichen.

Durch die Kombination der theoretischen Konzepte von Brinton's (2000) institutionellem sozialen Kapital, Okano's (2016a) Konzept der nicht–formalen Bildung sowie der Partnerschaft zwischen Staat und Gesellschaft von Estévez–Abe (2003) und Ogawa's (2009) Ansatz zur NPO–isierung durch die Regierung entsteht ein Rahmengerüst, welches eine umfassendere und ganzheitliche Betrachtung der momentanen Problematik bei der Berufsorientierung an städtischen Oberschulen ermöglicht und Vorteile sowie Grenzen von NPO–geleiteter Berufsorientierung aufzeigt.

Die Daten wurden während umfassender Fieldwork in Tokyo in Form von Interviews an neun städtischen Oberschulen sowie Institutionen, die auch Berufsausbildung durchführen, sowie durch teilnehmende Beobachtung während NPO–geleitetem Berufsorientierungsunterricht an 11 städtischen Oberschulen gesammelt.

Auf der institutionellen Seite hat die städtische Schulbehörde in Tokyo die Implementierung von verschiedenen Programmen des japanischen Ministeriums für Bildung, Kultur, Sport, Wissenschaft und Technologie und des Ministeriums für Wirtschaft und Industrie in der letzten Dekade vorangetrieben. Jedoch auf dem Mikrolevel der städtischen Oberschulen, besonders unter denen, die bezüglich ihres akademischen Rangs nur als durchschnittlich oder unterdurchschnittlich zu bezeichnen sind, sind Lehrer oft weder in der Lage den reibungslosen Übergang ins Berufsleben zu gewährleisten, noch ist es ihnen möglich auf effektive Weise Fertigkeiten und Kompetenzen, die in den Programmen der Ministerien beschrieben sind, zu vermitteln. An dieser Stelle weisen die Lehrer und Schulleiter auf die fehlende Vorbereitung der Schüler bezüglich des Eintritts in den Arbeitsmarkt hin. Sie sind

besonders besorgt über die unterentwickelten Kommunikationsfähigkeiten und die fehlenden Fähigkeit im Team zu arbeiten. Resultierend daraus nehmen die Schulen die Angebote von zivilgesellschaftlichen Akteuren, wie beispielsweise der NPO, welche im Zentrum dieser Dissertation steht, wahr, um die umfassende Berufsorientierung ihrer Schüler zu gewährleisten.

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