

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

DIJ Social Science Study Group



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Shadow Education in Japan: the *Juku*-Phenomenon

The future career of a student is determined by the sum of investments in his or her educational pathway. This pathway is distinguished by a number of transitions to the next level of education. Following decision theory (Boudon 1974), social origin affects the decision-making processes for investments in education, especially at these transition points in educational attainment.

In Japan, the fierce competition in access to the next higher school type intensifies the impact educational decisions have on students' future careers. In addition to selecting a certain school, families are forced to decide whether or not an investment in supplementary lessons is needed. Thus, students' school life is often strongly affected by *gakkōgaikyōiku* – also referred to as “shadow education”. So far, socioeconomic background and parents' educational aspirations in conjunction with the students' academic standing were held responsible for the use of shadow education in Japan. However, not much is known about students' own influence on these educational decisions.

Using data of the 2011 Hyōgo High School Students survey, I find that high school students' decision for shadow education in Japan is determined by (1) students' socio-demographic background; (2) school's rank; (3) teaching quality at school; (4) students' engagement in other activities outside regular school lessons; and (5) students' educational aspirations. In addition, data of my own *Juku*-survey carried out from January to March 2013 show that students' motivation to participate in *Juku*-classes differs greatly, highlighting positive and negative aspects of the *Juku*-industry.

Steve R. Entrich is a research assistant at the Chair for Social Scientific Educational Research at the University of Potsdam, where he studied History and Educational Sciences. Following that, he studied Japanese Language at the Humboldt University of Berlin, before staying at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Dōshisha University as a “visiting graduate student”. Currently, he researches shadow education in Japan as a scholarship fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies.

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is organized by P. Holdgrün, B. Holthus, C. Hommerich.
All are welcome to attend, but registration (holdgruen@dijtokyo.org) is appreciated.

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