

“Contemporary” Problems of Poverty and Issues on Education Security
—With Focus on Education Allowance/School Expense Subsidy Institutions—

(1) Realities of Guardian’s Expenditure for Raising Children (Burden of Child Support + Educational Expenses)

① **Appreciation in expenditures for raising children** — part of the reason for the society with fewer children?

Cf: ”Estimation Results by AIU Insurance Co.”

Birth Trend Basic Research (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research)

② **Index showing an increase in poverty group**

Ratio of family on the daily life protection subsidy: 1 in every 1000 households in 2003
Number of households on the daily life protection subsidy, being record-high, at 941,270
(increases in old-age-single households, and mother-children households, etc.)

(2) Education Allowance and School Expense Subsidy System

① **Schemes of Education Allowance and School Expense Subsidy**

1) The education allowance is based on “Daily Life Protection Law” (May 4, 1950) to meet the purpose of securing for all citizens a minimum life and assisting an autonomy by providing a required protection in compliance with poverty level, established on the ground of Article 25 of the Constitution that secures for them “the right to live a minimum level of healthy and cultural life”. In addition to the allowance for livelihood and housing, etc., a subsidy for expenses necessary for compulsory education is provided to protected homes with children/pupils in ages for compulsory education (Welfare office under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Health and Welfare)

2) The school expense subsidy = an education allowance for households of more moderate level of poverty than ones on the daily life protection subsidy (Education board under the jurisdiction of MEXT)

*Households on the daily life protection subsidy

Disparity by region: Tokyo Pref. in average	1.49 per 1000 households
Ota Ward	1.66
Setagaya Ward	0.67

*Number of children/pupils on the education allowance and school expense subsidy:

1,250 thousand across the nation in 2003

Cf: Shibuya Ward “Information on School Expense Subsidy”

(1) Standard for the quasi-supplement security income (school expense subsidy)

(Unit: Approx. JP¥ in 10,000)

Number of Persons in Household	2	3	4	5	6/over
Elementary School	279	347	419	460	+55 per additional person
Junior High School	296	364	430	500	+55 per additional person

(2) Subsidy content (○ to indicate items applied to households on the quasi-supplement security income)

- School and school-commuting supplies
- Supplies for fresh enrollment (new first-grader)
- School lunch

Out-of-school activities, excursion (junior high school), participation in guidance class (lodgment), club activities, illness/medical care in school, club camp (junior high school)

(3) Subsidy amount (annual amount per household on the quasi-supplement security income)

(Unit: JP¥ in 10,000)

	1st Grader	2nd Grader	3rd Grader	4th Grader	5th Grader	6th Grader
Elementary School	7.8	6.1	6.1	6.6	7.1	8.6
Junior High School	11.4	9.1	14.6			

② Problems on Institutions of Education Allowance and School Expense Subsidy

- 1) To curb the take-up ratio by “aptitude” measures for the supplement security income
→ Information: “Narrowing Protection of ‘Fair Entitlement’”
- 2) Low welfare payment
- 3) Both education allowance and school expense subsidy being limited to compulsory education
→ Problems for children of households in poverty to proceed to and attend high school and college

(3) Problem on Advancing to High School from “Household on Supplement Security Income” and Trial on “Education Endowment Insurance”

① Case Background

② **Assertions by Both Sides and Court Decisions** (the first trial at Fukuoka District Court in 1995, the second trial at Fukuoka High Court in 1998, and Supreme Court in 2004)

③ **Aftermath of the Supreme Court Verdict**

–Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, *Special Committee on the Modality of Supplement Security Income Institution: Report* (December 14, 2004)

(4) Modality of Education Assistance

In case children from households on the supplement security income go on to high schools, under the current system, the welfare gets granted only when they can cover education expenditures by scholarship, money endowed for school attendance, and own income. But from perspectives of a general hike in the ratio of high school attendance and a prevention of the “reproduction of the poverty”, advancing to high schools is considered to be an effective means of letting children become independent and go to work. Accordingly, in view of assisting an independence of households with children on the welfare, the study should be made for the supplement security income to accommodate expenditures for high school attendance.

(5) Modality of Asset Utilization

ア Bank deposits and postal savings

Regarding the amount of deposits and savings possible to retain (worth 1/2 of the minimum livelihood expenditure, at present), its increase is likely to result in the independence in an early stage, looking from the viewpoint of its requirement as an operation fund right after receiving the welfare and a benefit of voluntary husbandry. A specific limitation on the amount possible for the retention can be considered, in view of the new Bankruptcy Act, up to the three-month worth of the minimum livelihood expenditure. But there were opinions against such perspective because of a balance with general households, national sentiments, and financial burdens on autonomous bodies, etc.

With respect to the retention of deposits and savings generated by the management of welfare payments while receiving those payments, as indicated in the verdict on the Fukuoka education endowment insurance lawsuit, it is appropriate to accept the retention of what has been originated from the protected money and valuables in compliance with purposes and embodiments that meet the theme and purpose of Daily Life Protection Law. In this case, with due attentions to the securement of social fairness and the balance with general households, considerations should be made, including the utilization of deposit systems, to ensure that the retained assets get dispended on applications/uses that count towards assisting independence.

(6) Contemporary “Poverty” and Issues on Education Security

–Amendment of Equality of Educational Opportunity Theory–

Even today, there are sharp conflicts of opinions over ways and systems to guarantee rights for people with various handicaps including economic poverty.

There exist the following thoughts behind operations of the current education allowance/school expense subsidy institutions:

Firstly, based on the understanding the poverty is defined as a state below the margin of bare subsistence (starving poverty), basically such poverty has been liquidated in today's society. The gap in education levels has been narrowing down attributable to rising education standards and desires for advancing to higher education, which are based on the increase in family incomes, and those "poverty" homes incapable to finance private education expenses by themselves have become a minority of exceptional beings. Thus, specifying the target for relief is necessary to ensure education for them, and such aid ought to be kept under the levels of life and education of average citizens in view of the general public's morals ("Principle of Less Eligibility"). These notions, most likely to transform the education security institution for handicapped homes/children to a kind of poor-relief system for a specified minority who is separated from ones in general conditions, cannot become an institution that is equipped with an essence to adequately cover the handicaps.

There are many to offer criticism to opinions described in the above. Against an assertion that the increase in family incomes and the expansion in educational opportunities have narrowed down the gap in education levels, some point out that, under such circumstances, intensive educational "discrimination" to children of low-income bracket gets fixed and the gap widens among hierarchies. In this indication, the "poverty" is understood, not as a state below the margin of bare subsistence, but as a condition where a standard lifestyle, i.e. an average lifestyle, is deprived and unconsolated, and "unacceptable disparities" among disparities existing in individuals and groups comprising a society are defined as a contemporary poverty (Deprivation= being deprived of rights). And the opinion lays down that such disparities are problems broadly related to the socio-economic structure, and clearly claims administrative (correction) responsibilities of the government. From such perspective, improvements with special considerations are requested since the continued low rate of advancing to high school from households on welfare demonstrates a variety of education problems, which is regarded as an educationally deprived situation, i.e. that of being deprived of the right to education. This type of thought to secure the equality of educational opportunity has been developed as such forms including a compensatory education or an aggressive differentiation policy in Europe and USA since the 1960s.

(7) Emergence of Compensatory Education Policy

- "Battle against poverty", "Cleanup of poverty" → Emphasis on education as one of the

means of social policies to cut off “vicious circle of poverty” → To correct educational disparities among social stratification and races

- Civil Rights Acts established in 1964 = To contain provisions to conduct researches and to report to the Congress within two years whether or not there were “insufficient points in every level of domestic public educational institutions based on reasons for races, colors of skin, homes, and countries of origin regarding the equal use of educational opportunities by individual”
- “Research on Equality of Educational Opportunity” under “Civil Rights Acts” → The committee headed by James Coleman (Johns Hopkins University) officially announced “Report on Equality of Educational Opportunity” (Coleman Report).

→ Content of Coleman’s Report and Its Social Impact

- In terms of various conditions of schools, disparities among races and regions are not significant;
- Schools function to enlarge social stratification disparities rather than to correct them (Gap in academic competence widens as grade advances.);
- More than schools, homes/regional educations/cultures have basal influences.

⇒ New Approaches to Policies on Equal Opportunities for Education (Compensatory Education Policy and Head-Start Project)

In the background that the compensatory education has been adopted as a political issue in Europe and USA since the 1960s had been criticisms and revisions regarding conventional policies on equal opportunities for education. Namely, the theory of the equal opportunities for education in a liberal society through traditional schools became discredited due to the reality that schools were “ineffectual” in disparities among social stratifications and the correction thereof. In other words, there was a strong correlation among opportunities for education, educational achievements, and socioeconomic stratifications, and because of that relation, schools were ineffectual to remedy social inequity—so went the conclusion. These criticisms and revisions have come to pave the way for the compensatory education policy and the head-start project, etc., which approve preferential investments to people and classes in socioeconomically and culturally disadvantageous positions, to be justified and promoted.

(8) Criticism on Compensatory Education = Criticism of Merit System, and “A Theory of Justice” by J. Rawls

- ① Criticism that the compensatory education does not deny but “sanctifies” competition of merit system
- ② Development genealogy of “liberty and equity” by Rawls

- (1) **Natural Aristocracy** = Moral responsibility possessed by privileged people with natural and social capabilities over those underprivileged. Such disparities in capabilities are accepted as they are and no restriction is imposed.
- (2) **System of Natural Liberty** = Survival of the fittest in a capability-driven free (market) race is approved right, and no consideration is made on disparities in capabilities or unfairness in racing.
- (3) **System of Liberalistic Equality** = Modified version of (2) in the above; no change from (2) in approving survival of the fittest in a capacity-driven free (market) race; but this position considers to rectify disparities in capabilities and unfairness pertaining to races, if any, and to originate a field for fairer races. = the compensatory education, the head-start project, etc.

*Problem Area → It is impossible to completely rectify social/natural accidents and various conditions that generate disparities in capabilities.

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- (4) **System of Democratic Equality** = Proposal to supplement in full strength disparities and unfairness generated by social/natural accidents if these accidents cannot be eliminated

- ③ With respect to decisions on rights/duties of society, social benefit, and allocation of social resources, Rawls makes his assertion in “A Theory of Justice” that influences exerted by social/natural accidents such as birth and capability of an individual should be minimized, and that, with serious considerations on an individual’s diversity and uniqueness, sacrificing personal freedom/right for the promotion of socioeconomic interest of all should not be permitted.

*To establish a conception of social welfare as right in pursuance of the logic of a social contract by society members in a primordial condition