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# From School to Workplace

## —Current Status and Problems of Employment of High School Graduates—

## (Summary)

The Japan Institute of Labour

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## I. Background of and Issues Dealt with in Research

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) jointly established the Research Commission on Entry of High School Graduates into Vocational Life (chairman: Hiroki Sato) in 2000. To assist the discussions of this body, the Japan Institute of Labour (JIL) also organized a research commission with the same name in 2000, and conducted a fact-finding survey targeted at high school graduates regarding their working life after graduation. JIL compiled the results and reported them to the ministries' research commission.

Based on the results of this survey as well as other surveys it carried out by itself on high school students, the research commission established jointly by the MHLW and MEXT created a report titled "Final Report: Research on Entry of High School Graduates into Vocational Life" in March 2002 before disbanding in the same month.

However, since the report did not contain detailed analysis of the survey results, it was decided that the research commission established by JIL (chairman: Hiroki Sato) would take over the analytical work.

The reason why the MHLW and MEXT jointly established the research commission was because the ministries became aware that the situation surrounding high school graduates entering working life had changed drastically in recent years and that such entry no longer proceeded as smoothly as before. The research commission was therefore set up with the aim of grasping the actual situation and examining measures to promote employment for new high school graduates as well as other issues.

This report basically discusses the same issues. However, it is distinctive in that it attempts to understand the current status even more deeply and accurately through detailed analysis implemented on the basis of a wider perspective. In other words, through a comparative analysis study based on a wider time span and space—for example, how the awareness of future courses and behavior of individual high school students change over time through graduation, advancing to higher education, and other occasions; how the awareness and behavior of high school students living under significantly different labor market conditions, such as the Tokyo metropolitan area and outlying regions, differ; or how current high school students differ from those of one generation earlier—this report attempts to understand the situation more deeply than other studies based on analysis at one particular point in time. By first deepening our understanding in this way, we can begin to reconsider effective support measures for high school graduates.

## II. Outline of Surveys

In this report, the following four individual and one school surveys conducted by JIL and the MHLW, among others, are used for analysis.

(1) MHLW "Survey on Higher Education/Career Decision by High School Students"—The first survey targeted at second graders (February and March 2001)
(2) As above—The first survey targeted at third graders (February and March 2001)
(3) As above—The second survey targeted at third graders (October and November 2001)
(4) JIL "Survey on Vocational Life after High School Graduation"—Survey targeted at high school graduates (October and November 2001)

(5) MHLW "Survey on Higher Education/Career Guidance at High Schools"—School survey (February and March 2001)

The respondents of survey (1) were the subjects of survey (3), and likewise some of the respondents of survey (2) were used again as the subjects of survey (4). In other words, surveys (1) and (3), as well as surveys (2) and (4), were conducted in effect as panel surveys targeted at the same fixed groups of respondents.

Table 1 shows the targets and the responses obtained in each survey. For the actual questionnaires used and simple tabulation results, refer to the attached materials. It should be noted, however, that these attached tabulation results are only for those who responded to either surveys (1) and (3) or (2) and (4).

**Table 1. Outline of surveys analyzed**

| | Survey period | Target | Response | Distribution and collection method | Conducted by |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Survey on Higher Education/Career Decision by High School Students (first survey targeted at second graders) | February and March 2001 | 8,201 second graders | 7,993 (97.5%) | Distributed and collected via schools | MHLW |
| (2) As above (first survey targeted at third graders) | February and March 2001 | 8,157 third graders | 4,082 (50.0%) | Distributed via schools and collected via mail | MHLW |
| (3) As above (second survey targeted at third graders) | October and November 2001 | 8,887 third graders consisting mainly of respondents of first survey | 8,000 (90.0%) | Distributed and collected via schools | MH |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (4) Survey on Vocational Life after High School Graduation (survey targeted at high school graduates) | October and November 2001 | 1,026 graduates who indicated their address in the first survey and did not advance to higher education | 446 (43.5%) | Distributed and collected via mail | JIL |
| (5) Survey on Higher Education/Career Guidance at High Schools (school survey) | February and March 2001 | From each of 8 prefectures selected according to employment and unemployment rates of high school graduates, 6 general, 2 commercial, and 2 technical high schools (80 in total) showing wide variations in colleges and careers chosen after graduation | 74 (92.5%) | | MHLW |

Note: The attached tabulation results are only for those who provided data to surveys (1) and (3), or (2) and (4), making collation possible.

In this report, the following two surveys are reanalyzed for comparison purposes:

(1) JIL "Survey on Higher Education/Career Decision by High School Students" (January 2000)*[1]
(2) JIL "Survey on Initial Career of High School Graduates" (November 1988)*[2]

## III. Major Analysis Findings and Policy Proposals

### 1. Changes in desired higher education/career and employment of high school students

We have analyzed changes over time in the higher education/career (full-time work; advancing to university, junior college, or professional college; becoming a "free arbeiter (or *freeter*)" or part-time worker; still considering; have never considered) desired by high school students and how these changes affect their success in obtaining the first-phase *naitei*, or unofficial offer of a job. The major findings are as follows:

(1) Many students have the same particular higher education/career in mind from spring in the first grade to autumn in the third grade. When patterns of change in desired higher education/career are arranged in order of the number of respondents, those with no change rank high. For example, in the case of students at schools where the ratio of new graduates advancing to higher education is less than 25%, patterns with no change in desired higher education/career occupy the top four positions, accounting for 25% or more of all the samples.

(2) As regards the difference between boys and girls, the ratio of boys who wish to go to

university is greater than that of girls, while the ratio of girls who wish to go to professional college or find full-time employment is greater than that of boys, in or after spring in the second grade. In terms of type of school, students at commercial high schools tend to prefer professional colleges to universities, whereas in contrast, students at technical high schools are more likely to wish to advance to universities than professional colleges, presumably reflecting the difference in the ratio of boys to girls at each type of school.

(3) The desired higher education/career shows little change throughout the school years, with the average frequency of change being, for example, 1.5 for students at schools with a higher education advancement ratio of less than 25%. In terms of the average frequency of change, the following relationships are observed: girls > boys, and general > commercial > technical high schools. The average frequency of change for boys as well as students at technical high schools who have decided to enter full-time employment from the beginning is lower than 1, and shows little fluctuation.

(4) However, students who have never considered what to do upon graduation until spring in the first grade, as well as students who replied "*Freeter*" or "Not decided yet" in autumn in the third grade, often change their preference as to higher education/career. Their average frequency of change exceeds two times. The same tendency can be observed in the change patterns of desired higher education/career arranged in order of the number of applicable students.

(5) When students change their desired higher education/career, such a chance takes place most frequently during the period between spring in the first grade and spring in the second grade. Once students have changed their preference during this period, many tend to maintain it until graduation.

(6) When the characteristics of students are compared with their frequency of changing desired higher education/career, the frequency tends to be lower for ordinary and serious students who observe the rules and move up to the next grade smoothly, and particularly for students who are actively involved in club activities and study.

(7) Students who experience unease, dissatisfaction, or other negative feelings when selecting higher education/career, or students who generally have such feelings, tend to change their preference more frequently. On the other hand, students who feel little unease or dissatisfaction tend to maintain their decision stably once made.

(8) Based on our assumption that the frequency of changing the desired higher education/career affects the probability of obtaining a first-phase unofficial job offer, it can safely be said that one effective measure to increase the probability is to encourage students who are at least considering working upon graduation to determine specifically which career they will be engaged in at the earliest stage possible. To realize this, it is necessary to enhance students' awareness of vocations through guidance not only at high school but also during early education prior to entering high school. In this sense, vocational education from an early stage (elementary or junior high school, for example), whose necessity is being actively emphasized these days, will become

increasingly important in the future.

## 2. Actual situation and evaluation of higher education/career guidance

The following three points have been examined in connection with higher education/career guidance at high schools:

1. How higher education/career guidance is conducted at high schools.
2. How students (graduates) evaluate the higher education/career guidance received at high schools.
3. How higher education/career guidance at high schools affects students' selection of higher education/career.

The major findings are as follows:

(1) Although even students at commercial/technical high schools are increasingly advancing to higher education, differences between general and commercial/technical high schools in the provision of higher education/career guidance are still apparent. In comparison with general high schools, the commercial/technical types are more likely to implement filing of reports of graduates who have taken entrance exams or found employment, vocational research during a long homeroom class, vocational aptitude tests, lectures on vocations by officials from "Hello Work" employment security offices as well as by working people, additional classes and guidance for students to obtain a particular qualification, provision of opportunities to hear experiences of graduates who have taken entrance exams, visits to workplaces, special sessions to provide students with opportunities to hear experiences of graduates who have found employment, and seminars on basic manners that working people are required to learn.

(2) Higher education/career guidance activities can be divided into three types from the perspective of how they are carried out: the higher education-oriented type, inactive type (in which guidance implementation ratios are low in terms of both higher education and career), and ordinary type. The ordinary type can be further subdivided into the commercial/technical high school type and the general high school type. Schools for which the designated school job-opening-to-application ratio is less than 1 tend to adopt the commercial/technical high school type, while schools with a ratio of 1 or higher tend to adopt the general high school type. This indicates that the general high school type can be maintained when a relatively large number of job openings are offered, but has to be switched to the commercial/technical high school type when the designated school job-opening-to-application ratio becomes low.

(3) The majority of schools collect information on colleges and workplaces, try to create an atmosphere making it easier for students to meet and consult with teachers, and actively implement guidance activities. Only one out of every four schools encourages students to give up the search for work and instead advance to higher education due to insufficient job openings, prioritizes higher education institutions and workplaces before introducing them to students, or regards "*freeters*" as one option and gives guidance on

how to work, etc. Only a small number of commercial/technical high schools attach more importance to higher education than career, and many of them tend to place more emphasis on ensuring that every student will either advance to a college or enter employment upon graduation, improving the first-phase unofficial job offer ratio, actively cultivating new job opportunities, giving guidance on perspectives in relation to one's vocation, having students study various professions during long homeroom classes, etc., or making it a rule not to recommend students who have failed to achieve a certain level of results or attitude. The tendency at general high schools is contrary to that of the commercial/technical types described above.

(4) Higher education/career guidance can be divided into three types in terms of its characteristics: the selective matching type, open matching type, and higher education-oriented type. The selective matching type includes schools that make it a rule not to recommend students to colleges or workplaces unless they achieve a certain level of results and attitude, that prioritize higher education institutions and workplaces before introducing them to students, do not present jobs with poor working conditions to students, and actively cultivate new job opportunities. The open matching type is the opposite of the above selective matching type, but as a matter of fact there are no schools that actually refuse to recommend students who have failed to achieve a certain level of results and attitude or prioritize colleges and workplaces, and only a relatively small number of schools decide not to present jobs with poor working conditions to students. The higher education-oriented type means schools that attach more importance to higher education than career. General high schools account for more than 70% of the open matching type. Commercial/technical high schools, as well as schools with a lower ratio of students advancing to higher education, tend to adopt the selective matching type relatively more often than other schools. Three out of every four higher education-oriented type schools are general high schools, and schools where the ratio of students advancing to higher education is high account for more than 70%.

(5) Many graduates rate the higher education/career guidance given at their respective schools highly, with 64.3% replying that they could readily consult with teachers and 71.5% regarding it as a useful source of specific information regarding higher education/work". Graduates whose employment upon graduation falls into the category of either "Non-regular employment" or "Unemployed," as well as those whose classification is either "Non-regular" or "Unemployed since graduation," tend to have negative views on the guidance they were given. Guidance is evaluated more favorably by graduates of commercial/technical high schools than graduates of general high schools. In terms of the guidance characteristics, the higher education-oriented type is rated highest, followed by the selective matching type and the open matching type.

(6) The top three things that graduates wanted to know more from their schools are the type of job most suitable for them, useful knowledge and skills directly connected with work, and occupations available in society at large. Graduates who were once engaged in regular work but left it for some reason cited the type of job most suitable for them, precautions that need to be taken when choosing work, and internships as their requests,

while graduates who had been out of work since graduation specified the type of job most suitable for them, qualifications required for obtaining work, internships, and many other factors as items they wanted to know more about from their schools. In addition, graduates other than those engaged in regular work since graduation agree that their schools should have provided more information on part-time work.

(7) Schools adopting the selective matching type of guidance differ little from those adopting the higher education-oriented type in terms of the ratio of students graduating from school without work, but the difference between these two types and the open matching type is significant. Graduates from open matching type schools are less likely to obtain regular work (ratio of graduates finding regular employment: open matching type 64.5%, selective matching type 82.1%, higher education-oriented type 80.5%), and more likely to be out of work (25.0%, 9.0%, and 9.8%, respectively). This tendency can be basically observed irrespective of the type of school. The way in which guidance is given (the type of guidance adopted--open matching type, selective matching type, or higher education-oriented type) can affect students' decisions on higher education/career in a unique manner regardless of the school's attributes. There is a possibility that the open matching type may reduce the number of graduates finding regular employment and increase the number of those with non-regular work or no work.

### 3. Selection of career by student job seekers in provincial areas

Although the job-opening-to-application ratio is low in provincial areas, the ratio of high school graduates who are unemployed in such areas is actually lower than that in urban centers. This section clarifies how students wishing to work upon graduation in provincial areas select careers by comparing them with their counterpart in urban centers.

The major findings are as follows:

(1) The ratio of third graders who succeed in obtaining work by spring (graduation season) in provincial areas is higher than that in the Tokyo metropolitan area. When students fail to obtain work, those in provincial areas often opt to advance to higher education instead, while those in urban centers tend to become freeters.

(2) In the case of third graders who cannot make up their mind or have never considered what higher education/career they should choose even in spring, a little less than 50% in provincial areas find employment while one out of four in urban centers becomes a *freeter*.

(3) Students' commitment to their schools, as seen in the ratio of students involved in club activities, actively taking steps to advance to higher education or find work, and so on, is high in provincial areas. Students in the Tokyo metropolitan area who wish to work upon graduation tend to be more particular about what they want to do and jobs suitable for them.

(4) The power of schools to guide students to higher education or employment is weaker

in the Tokyo metropolitan area than in provincial areas.

These findings verify yet again the necessity of devising different countermeasures for each region. To be more specific, problems pertaining to high school graduates with no work are expected to become serious soon in provincial areas. Higher education/career guidance at high schools currently functions more effectively in provincial areas than in urban centers. Many students can also still opt to advance to higher education if they give up the search for employment. Needless to say, some criticism is heard that advancing to higher education in this way only defers a solution to the problem, but high school graduates probably have no other alternatives in the present severe employment situation.

However, in the case of regions having an excess supply of labor where job opportunities for high school students are so scarce that they have to find work in cities, corporations that have been accepting such graduates by preparing dormitories, etc. are now less willing to do so. Also, high school students themselves are less eager to move to and work in another region than before.

Although the number of students eager to work in another region is decreasing, an environment should be created that helps students who are seeking work but reside in a region with few job opportunities to find employment in another region. Employment security offices in cities should pay attention not only to local students but also students from provincial areas so that they can actively look for work.

For regions where full-time employment of high school students is becoming difficult, it may be necessary to offer them, if not employment, at least opportunities to participate in some form of social activity that will help them to find employment. To implement this approach, it will be more effective if specific measures are planned mainly by individual local governments, which are well aware of local conditions, rather than through policies at the national level.

On the other hand, there is still a need for cities to give stronger direction and guidance to students. In cities where numerous part-time jobs are offered, the income of a *freeter* often exceeds the starting salary of a high school graduate engaged in regular full-time work. However, although working as a *freeter* may be good as a form of work temporarily adopted while young, such work offers little future potential at the present time. Therefore, the benefits of entering full-time work rather than becoming a *freeter* upon graduation, the fact that something really rewarding can never be found in the work of *freeters*, and other realities of *freeters* should be repeatedly communicated to students during guidance.

## 4. Initial career of working high school graduates

As regards career after graduation, actions and awareness with regard to employment obtained or held by high school graduates during the first eight months after graduation have been compared with those of high school graduates in the late

1980s. The major findings are as follows:

(1) The number of high school graduates who are unemployed or become *freeters* upon graduation or, even when employed upon graduation, leave their job at an early stage and become unemployed or *freeters* has increased in comparison with the late 1980s. As regards actions taken after graduation by unemployed graduates, the number of those becoming full-time workers has decreased sharply in comparison with the late 1980s.

(2) The number of graduates who find employment in large corporations or become engaged in clerical or sales work has decreased. The changing conditions differ depending on gender, region, and type of school. The number of girls at commercial/technical high schools who are employed by large corporations or are engaged in clerical work has decreased, but less sharply for the latter. Girls at general high schools who are employed by large corporations are few in number as has traditionally been the case, while those engaged in production process or service work are increasing. Graduates who find work in large corporations have decreased drastically in both labor supply and demand regions, while the types of work that graduates become engaged in have changed greatly in regions where supply and demand are balanced.

(3) General tendencies with regard to working conditions are an expansion of the five-day week system, decrease in overtime work, and increase in monthly salary after tax. For overtime work, however, while the number of employees with no overtime work has increased, so has the ratio of workers compelled to work long extra hours. Working conditions are better in labor demand regions than in balanced regions, which are in turn better than in labor supply regions, regardless of the generation of graduates.

(4) Although data on training are limited, no tendency toward a decrease in opportunities to receive training is seen. Neither off-the-job training nor guidance by senior workers or superiors in the workplace shows any decrease. Moreover, there is no difference between the generations in terms of the severity of workplace control or interestingness of work.

(5) Attributes of the workplace influencing graduates to leave their job at an early stage include the scale of the corporation, working hours, training, and human relationships in the workplace. While there is a general trend toward shorter working hours, the ratio of graduates leaving their job at an early stage is high in workplaces with relatively long working hours. It seems that young people’s preference for shorter working hours, coupled with long working hours at some workplaces, are factors prompting graduates to leave their job at an early stage.

(6) As regards human relationships in the workplace, while no deterioration of the relationships with superiors or senior workers is observed, there are fewer opportunities to make friends within the organization. This is probably because graduates now generally find work in smaller corporations and become unable to form a group with other employees of the same age, which consequently prompts them to leave their job at an early stage. It is expected that small to medium-sized corporations will continue to be

important sources of jobs for high school graduates. To include young people as members of working society, it is indispensable to pay attention to their mental aspects. This is a problem that should be solved not by a company acting alone, but through cooperation with other companies.

(7) There is a relationship between the consciousness developed during high school days and actions of leaving or changing jobs after graduation. Those who have such opinions as “I want to experience as many things as possible while young” or “I don’t want to do any job that is not suitable for me,” as well as a positive view of *freeters* based on a belief that “seeking something really rewarding is a good thing,” are more likely to leave their job at an early stage even when they are employed as a full-time worker and become unemployed or a *freeter*. Such consciousness is normally developed while students are in the second grade and tends to be maintained consistently until graduation. Although it is not our intention to totally deny quitting or changing of jobs, if an unemployment or *freeter* period is unnecessarily long it will turn out to be disadvantageous for both the graduate and society. It is therefore necessary to devise measures to help students to connect their desire to seek something rewarding or expand their experience with realistic career pursuit while they are at high school, so that the prolongation of out-of-work or *freeter* periods can be prevented.

(8) The tendency of harboring excessively high expectations for *freeter* work as a good opportunity to seek something rewarding generally declines after graduation. If students develop a more realistic consciousness about the labor market while at high school, they can probably change the process of leaving a job and moving to unemployment/*freeter*.

We have seen how high school graduates leave or change jobs from the viewpoint of individual consciousness. However, it should be remembered that whether or not finding another job is possible depends largely on the balance between supply and demand of labor. Graduates in 1988 who left their jobs did so at a time when businesses were expanding and enjoyed good economic conditions, with overwhelmingly more abundant opportunities to find regular full-time work than those in 2001. We should not underestimate the economic environment as a factor influencing students to take different actions.

## 5. Career consciousness and patterns vs. family backgrounds

For high school graduates who decided not to advance to higher education, we have examined the relationships between their family backgrounds and career patterns/consciousness, as well as between their family backgrounds and the higher education/career guidance they were given at high school. Since the samples used for this analysis were small in number, the interpretation of the results requires extra caution. However, we were still able to discover interesting facts.

(1) For this analysis, only those who decided not to advance to higher education upon graduation were chosen as subjects, inevitably limiting the samples to a particular type of graduates. Even when taking this into consideration, it was discovered that the

father's profession at the time of graduation of students, one of the family background attributes, has the most important effect on students' career patterns after graduation. To be more specific, when a student's father is a professional or occupies a managerial position, the student tends to continuously work as a regular full-time employee, while students whose father is unemployed are more likely to become engaged in non-regular part-time work after graduation.

(2) While it is true that graduates with a less privileged family background are more likely to become engaged in non-regular work, this has nothing to do with low motivation, negligence, or other consciousness factors. As a matter of fact, no significant difference can be observed among graduates with different family backgrounds even six months after graduation in terms of their consciousness ("I want to find something to live for other than work," "I want to build up technical knowledge and improve skills," "I want to do a job that is helpful to others," "I want to lead a stable working life," etc.).

(3) As regards the consciousness toward and evaluation of activities that graduates were involved in or higher education/career guidance that they were given at high school, there is also no significant difference among different family backgrounds. The level of involvement in club activities or part-time work differs according to household economic conditions and family background. In addition, there is no tendency for students with less privileged family backgrounds to be discriminated against in terms of guidance, and no significant difference can be observed between different family backgrounds in terms of evaluation of guidance. It can safely be said that schools give fair guidance equally to all students regardless of family background.

(4) As regards views on *freeters*, again there is no significant difference between family backgrounds. The majority of students from each family background regard *freeters* as spiritless, but those who blame guidance given at school for the increased number of *freeters* account for only about 25% in each family background category. However, graduates with a less privileged family background are more likely to see *freeters* who are actively trying to realize their dreams as "cool" at the time of graduation, although all graduates with different family backgrounds end up having more or less the same views on *freeters* six months after graduation.

(5) When it comes to the desired form of working at the age of 30, although there is no significant difference among family backgrounds at the time of graduation, the views of graduates are divided revealing significant differences according to family background after a certain period has elapsed since graduation. This is probably because those with a less privileged family background generally change their views after actually entering the labor market upon graduation and experiencing disadvantages due to their family background. Even when those whose fathers are professional or occupy a managerial position prefer non-regular part-time employment or are reluctant to work at the time of graduation, they tend to change their mind six months later and express the desire to be working as a full-time employee at the age of 30. On the other hand, graduates with a less privileged family background generally tend to maintain the same view as that at

the time of graduation, and there are even some cases where those who express the intention to find full-time employment at the time of graduation become reluctant to work six months later.

(6) From these results of analysis with regard to the relationships between career patterns of high school graduates and their family backgrounds, we can see that the influence of family background becomes apparent once graduates who have decided not to advance to higher education enter the labor market, bringing about differences in career patterns and future prospects among them. However, since students are protected from this influence of family background while they are at school, it cannot be identified until they begin working. It is not clear from this analysis how family background influences decisions on whether a student should advance to higher education or find work.

(7) This analysis also reveals that career patterns, which differ according to family background, are not determined by the consciousness of students. Those whose family background is not so well off are not low in motivation or spiritless. The advantage or disadvantage of family background becomes apparent and has an effect on individual graduates only when they actually take action and attempt to find employment in a specific labor market, and therefore the lack of career consciousness or willingness to work cannot fully explain why the resultant different career patterns occur.

## 6. Future of high school graduate employment system

Lastly, we have reviewed the final report submitted by the Research Commission on Entry of High School Graduates into Vocational Life, which was jointly established by the MHLW and MEXT, based on our analysis findings. The following are our newly proposed support measures for high school students wishing to work upon graduation, which we have formulated during the review process:

(1) To create a mechanism that realizes a match satisfying both the job offering and seeking sides, the current job-finding assistance system, which allows each student to apply to only one company at a time, should be reviewed. It is essential for each student to be able to collect information on many corporations and select and apply to several corporations at the same time. For job offering corporations, this will mean higher recruitment costs in the short term, but it is our belief that the new system will benefit corporations greatly in the medium to long term because it will bring about higher retention rates and enable corporations to recruit students more suitable for them.

(2) To make it possible for each student to see many corporate representatives and directly collect information on each workplace so that they can apply to several corporations at the same time, there is a need to provide opportunities different from those for university students looking for a job. Regional job fairs held during the summer vacation, with many corporations participating, as well as joint employment interview sessions at weekends after the screening commencement date in autumn, are possible examples.

(3) Support for students making the transition from school to vocational life should not be concentrated on the period immediately before employment at high schools. It is necessary to begin developing students' consciousness of higher education/career on a continuous basis even before they enter high school. Appropriate career education should also be commenced when students are in the first grade of high school, and even after they graduate, they should be provided with mid- to long-term career support services. Toward this end, rather than making schools bear responsibility for all the support activities, we need to establish regional career support centers and other organizations providing information on career and consultation services for each region. In addition, it is also indispensable to establish cooperation between local corporations, economic organizations and schools when developing students' consciousness of higher education/career from an early stage at elementary or junior high school.

(4) When the transition from school to the workplace is discussed, only regular work has traditionally been considered. However, under the current circumstances where regular job opportunities for high school students are decreasing, it is necessary to develop various other future options. Such options may include employment only for a limited period rather than regular work, as well as volunteer activities rather than employment. Whatever they may be, these options must provide positive contact with society, as well as help students to improve capabilities useful for their future career and to develop the discipline required for working.

**Notes:**

*1: "Survey on Higher Education/Career Decision by High School Students"—Conducted in January 2000 on 7,930 high school third graders (effective response ratio: 86.4%). The target high schools were mainly those showing wide variations in colleges and careers chosen after graduation, selected by boards of education or public employment security offices in Tokyo as well as Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama prefectures upon JIL's request. The number of surveyed high schools was 52, and each school was responsible for implementing and collecting questionnaires. As a supplementary survey, the "Higher Education/Career Guidance Survey" was also conducted on teachers in charge of such guidance.

*2: "Survey on Initial Career of High School Graduates"—Conducted in November and December 1988 on persons who graduated from high schools located in Tokyo and five other prefectures in March the same year. The number of target respondents was 1,845, and questionnaires were either delivered in person or mailed to them (effective responses: 1,205, response ratio: 65.3%). All the respondents were those who responded to the three High School Student Surveys conducted by JIL while they were high school students. Tokyo and five other prefectures were selected according to the labor supply and demand situation. Two general, one technical, and one commercial high schools with many students opting to work upon graduation were chosen as samples from each prefecture.