

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The transition support system in Japanese special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities consists of two parts, i.e., career guidance and post-school assistance. Individualized transition support plans were introduced at special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities in Tokyo and at some other special schools in school year 2001 (Japanese Association of Special Education Schools Principals, 2002a; 2002b) in order to promote the students' vocational independence and collaborative practice among schools, families, and local agencies. Tokyo's individualized transition support plans propose two separate fixed forms; the individualized transition support plan (1) for career guidance, and the individualized transition support plan (2) for post-school assistance.

¹ The style and format for this study follow that of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.), by the American Psychological Association, 2001, Washington DC: Author, and *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th ed.), by K. L. Turabian, 1996, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Statement of the Problems

Partnership with Families in Transition Support²

In many cases in Japanese special education, while teachers listen to the desires of students and parents, it is the teachers who are ultimately responsible for the decision making in students' career selection and annual plans of career guidance. The failures of students' employment and internships at work-site have been reported, and it is thought that they were caused by inattention to the students' hopes (Sakai, 1994; Sekiguchi, 1994). However, it is difficult to carry out the students' hopes for their employment goals, especially when they do not appropriately understand their own capacity for employment. This is because students with intellectual disabilities may express extremely unrealistic dreams for their future (Mizutani, Ishida & Yanagimoto, 2003). Therefore, self-understanding is considered to be an important task for career education for the students (Hara, Utsumi & Ogata, 2002).

² Japanese special high schools provide transition support by career guidance and post-school assistance. Career guidance consists of career education, study units for experience (eg. internships, work-site visits, general study units), and career counseling (Tokyo Public Special Schools for Intellectual Disabilities Research Association for Promoting Employment, 2003). Vocational programs and occupational programs are also included (Sakai, 2000). Post-school assistance includes the follow-ups by teachers for graduates by regular/irregular visits at work/home, continuing education, and alumni parties (Koide & Ominami, 1984). Problems with post-school assistance are caused because no formal systems are established. Thus, some problems reported are vague budget allocation (Otsuka Shinro After Kenkyukai, 1999), difficulty in succession due to shifting of teachers (Matsuya & Utsumi, 1994), and difficulty in handling the cases because of the graduates' aging (Tezuka, 2000). Please see Table 1.1 for additional problems in practice.

Table 1.1. General Problems Found in Current Practice.

Takamura (2001) Tokyo Special Schools (2001)	Employment rate of students with intellectual disabilities is low.
Nishimura (1993) Tokyo Special Schools (2001)	Teachers must explore job-development for students by collaborative efforts with local agencies.
Hoshino (2002)	There is a gap in thoughts of teachers and employers on work skills.
Hara, Utsumi & Ogata (2002), Mochizuki (2002)	Students need to understand and value him/herself to make post-high school plans.
Koide & Ominami (1984) Rosaka (1993)	Common understanding among teachers, parents, and students should be reached for students' career selection.
Ishibe & Shibusawa (1982)	Increasing amounts of students stay home due to their profound disabilities and no appropriate services outside.
Hayashi (1995)	Teachers in charge of career guidance tend to carry too many issues themselves and feel isolated at school.
Mizutani & Fujita (2001)	Dismissal increase due to serious economic problems or there are many troubles caused by interpersonal relationships at work
NHK Project for Welfare and Culture (1996)	Graduates strongly hope to have normal life style such as independent living from parents or marriage.
Fujimoto (1999)	Problems in human rights such as low wages and harassment at work.
Otsuka Shinro After Kenkyukai (1999)	Budget allocation and roles by the teachers are not clear because post-school assistance is not regulated by any educational laws/regulations.
Tezuka (2000)	Schools that students graduated from cannot follow-up all graduates for post-school assistance because they tend to have longer life-spans.

Achieving mutual understanding of teachers, parents and students can be a problem in career guidance. This is because some parents may have as extremely unrealistic dreams such as students, or because other parents may hope their sons or daughters go to sheltered workshops instead of trying competitive employment or supported employment that may be more appropriate (Rosaka, 1993). A partnership of schools and families is one strategy to solve these problems. It is, however, not easy to obtain cooperation or understanding from parents who do not have enough information about a student's transition process. Thus, it is necessary for the schools to provide enough information to the families (Ichimura, 2003; Kumagai, 1995).

Problems in Development of Individualized Plans

There has been no systematic methodology for individualized education, although Japanese special education teachers have been providing individualized instruction for each student's needs (Miyazaki, 1997). In 1979, Masuda introduced what he called an "Individual Education Course (Kojin Kyoiku Katei)" at Zama Special School in Kanagawa Prefecture. Masuda's individual education course was uniquely developed, when there was an indication that systematic methodology for the individualized instruction was needed. There was also a strong influence of IEP, Individualized Educational Programs, in United States that was regulated by

the All Handicapped Children's Education Act of 1975 (PL 94-142) (Kawamura, 1991)³. In 1989, "Individualized instruction (Ko ni ojita shido)" was proposed as a goal of special education in the revised Japanese educational regulation⁴. Then, "Individualized Plans for Instruction (Kobetsu no Shido Keikaku)" were implemented in 1999⁵.

Individualized plans for instruction clarify the contents and methodology of instruction and evaluation individually (Tokyo Public Special Schools for Intellectual Disabilities Research Association for Promoting Employment, 2003). They also promote a common understanding between multiple teachers who are in charge of teaching students (Itagaki, 2000).

Tokyo Department of Education (1999) suggests that special education teachers should listen to the hopes of students and parents with the use of questionnaire or by daily communication to include those hopes of students and parents

³ The All Handicapped Children's Education Act also mandated "Free and Appropriate Public Education" for all students with disabilities in the "Least Restrictive Environment." The law strongly influenced realization of the concept of transition and inclusion because securing education for students with disabilities in regular classrooms with full support depended on their individual needs meant securing education that aimed for transition to community and students' adjustment in their normal environment.

⁴ Miyazaki (1997) described that individualized instruction was proposed because Japanese special education had not achieved its expected outcomes and also there were some influence from IEP in the United States.

⁵ Individualized plans for instruction were mandated for the units called independent activities (jiritsu katudo) and for students with severe and multiple disabilities. In contrast, individualized plans for instruction (kobetsu shido keikaku) or individualized education plans (kobetsu kyoiku keikaku) for academic subjects or career guidance have been made for students with intellectual disabilities (Japanese Association for Special Schools for Students with Intellectual Disabilities Principals, 2000).

in the individualized plans for instruction. It also suggests that they give good explanations to the parents after development of the plans to gain their consent. However, participation of students and parents in the planning process, which was the concept of the IEP⁶, would not be made the best use of, because students and parents are not included in the site of decision making for the individualized plans for the students.

Individualized Transition Support Plans⁷

Individualized transition support plans are one strategy for improving the above problems, and are practiced experimentally at the present as of year 2003⁸. The three main

⁶ The law did not define the student/parent participation (PL 94-142, 1975). Still, Section 4(a)602(19) "Definitions: Individualized education programs" stated students and parents had the right to develop and make decisions on IEP together when meeting with professionals. Section 5(a)615 "Procedural safeguards" also mandated information disclosure and every notice for students' placement or educational change to the parents, and consideration for parents' culturally/linguistically differences. It also provided all the details about due process. Parents gained these rights because they won the law suits (eg. Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of 1971, Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia). As a result of these cases, the special education began to be offered to all students with mental retardation and thus influenced the law (Abeson & Zettel, 1977).

⁷ Individualized transition support plans include transition services and goals for 3 years of high schools and 3 years after those (Please see Table 1.2). Individualized plans for instruction describe contents of instruction and goals in the learning situation and aim for achievement of transition goals (Japanese Association of Special Schools Principals, 2002a; 2002b)

⁸ "Future Direction of Special Education in the 21st Century" first proposed the individualized plans for employment (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2001a). Tokyo Board of Education (2001) then proposed the individualized transition support plans. The experimental practice of the plans began in school year 2001 by the special high school teachers' study group in Tokyo (Japanese Association of Special Schools Principals, 2002a; 2002b). The experimental practice is continued at the present as of year 2003.

Table 1.2. Current and Added System of Transition Support in Japan.

	Current System (1)	Added System		Current System (2)
form	Career Guidance	individualized transition support plans (1)	individualized transition support plans (2)	Post-School Assistance
student's age	15-18	15-18 (high school ages)	18-21 (post-school)	18- (depend on teacher/school)
purpose	career guidance	school-to-adulthood career guidance job-training job-placement	post-school assistance support coordination informed consent	post-school assistance
frequency of development	n.a.	once a year	once before graduation may be revised as needed	n.a.
persons involved	classroom teacher, teacher in charge of career guidance, parent (& student)	classroom teacher, teacher in charge of career guidance, may include student, parent & agencies	classroom teacher, teacher in charge of career guidance, may include student, parent & agencies	teacher in charge of career guidance graduates may include parent, employers, and agencies
domains	job placement job training vocational assessment	student's hopes parent's hopes job training evaluation	family life post-school life (work etc.) recreation/community life medical care/health roles of the school	work visit home visit alumni gathering continuing education recreation/club activities
other factors	collaboration with local agencies	goal/objective/tasks summary of meeting future guidelines	student profile responsible personnel hopes for the future life support needs date/signature	dismissal/replacement of work interpersonal relationship work attitudes

Note. Based on "Individualized transition support plans" by Japanese Association for Special School Principals, 2002.

issues for the future practice are described below.

Student and parent participation. As was described in "Partnership with Families in transition support" and "Problems in development of individualized plans" above, students and parents should participate in the planning process with professionals. Recently the Japanese social welfare has been shifting "from placement to selection," which means consumers have started to select services that they need in spite that they receive the services that public administration selects for them. Matsuya (2003) suggests that career guidance is also in a similar movement from "career guidance to career support," which means teachers support students' self-determined selection of their own careers, rather than instructing them in order to guide their career selection. Individualized transition support plans are proposed at the same time that those movements occur. The problem, however, is that it's not clear how students and parents can express their will in the planning process, which means that it is also not clear whether individualized transition support plans will empower them to utilize their decision making skills to participate in the society.

Accountability. Parent participation is an indicator to evaluate the individualized educational practice (Kanno, 2000). It is necessary for both Japanese schools and families participate in decision making in transition support as

described in above section. Tokyo Department of Education (1999) stated that accountability is one of the ideals for their individualized plans for instruction. The schools need more responsibility for the accountability to the families (Kubota, 1999). This must be improved when the individualized transition support plans are put into practice.

Self-determination. In Japanese special education, self-determination⁹ was first introduced as a concept in normalization in the 1970's¹⁰. Then, it gradually spread in the 1980's¹¹, and was discussed in practice in the 1990's¹². However, there seems to be problems in procedure with respect to the self-determination of students¹³ and parents in the development process of the individualized transition support plans¹⁴, just

⁹ In modern society, as long as there is no harm to people, self-determination is highly respected (Kato, 2001; Takahashi, 2001).

¹⁰ Nirje (1972) described that normalization means understanding unspoken hopes or motivation for the self-determination in individuals with intellectual disabilities and respecting them.

¹¹ "International Year of Disabled Persons" of the United Nations in 1981 influenced social welfare for Japanese individuals with disabilities in the 1980's. Full participation and equality were promoted through creation of employment opportunities and vocational education, and the aim of students' vocational independence became the standard (Ishibe & Shibusawa, 1982). In contrast, participation of students with intellectual disabilities was also thought to lead their self-determined independent lives as much as possible (Koide & Ominami, 1984).

¹² In 1994, two popular journals for Japanese special education teachers, "Education of Mental Retardation for Practice (Genba no Tame no Seihakku Kyoiku)" volume 35 and "Developmental Delay and Education (Hattatsu no Okure to Kyoiku)" number 440, featured topics on self-determination.

¹³ Takahashi (2001) assumed that the premise of making self-determined decision making was being adult. He also discussed that it would be a risk to allow self-determination for minors who had little experience to participate in the society.

¹⁴ Matsutomo (1994) described the premise of self-determination in individuals with intellectual disabilities to be the existence of supporters who have strong advocating skills and ethics or the existence of advocacy system.

as there are problems in decision making in minor patients who lose consciousness in medicine¹⁵.

Purpose, Methodology and Significance of the Study

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the dissertation study is to recommend better future practice of student and parent participation¹⁶ in the planning process of the individualized transition support plans. There were three reasons why the research was conducted on this topic: (1) it was felt that there was an urgent need to improve the current practice of transition support while the author was interviewing the career guidance teachers for the pilot study of Study 1, (2) it was felt that mutual understanding was not sufficiently achieved among students, parents, and professionals regarding the students' transition as described in the statement of the problems above,

¹⁵ Self-determination supported by the legal concept of informed consent is recognized in Japanese medicine presently. The lawsuit was brought by a deceased patient's family who claimed that the patient was psychologically damaged by a blood transfusion that was given to her even though she had rejected it due to her religious belief. The Tokyo Supreme Court ordered medical doctors to pay compensation to the patient's family because they didn't explain their treatment policy to the patient. The case demonstrated that self-determination by a patient is the most important factor in decision making for medical treatment (Kato, 2001). However, there is another case where parents refused a blood transfusion for the child with the religious reason and the child died. This case was critical because it was thought to violate the obligation of protection for a minor child and abuse of their parental rights (Tateyama, 2002). The issues are relevant to students with intellectual disabilities because of difficulties in self-determination.

¹⁶ Participation is generally defined as being included in decision making in an organization in psychology (Tao, 1991). Participation in this study, however, is the concept including involvement in decision making eg. attending the planning meeting, communicating opinions and hopes concerning goal-setting.

and (3) the appropriate procedure for student and parent participation in the planning process had not yet been examined.

Research Questions

The following questions were investigated in the empirical studies:

1. What are the characteristics and problems in student and parent participation in individualized plans for instruction and career guidance at Japanese special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities?
2. Do young adults with intellectual disabilities, their parents, and professionals have the same thoughts with regard to transition needs of the young adults?
3. How do the teachers and parents think about student and parent participation in transition planning process?

The above research questions were proposed, based on the need (1) to analyze current practice (Question 1), (2) to clarify the goals for implementation (Question 2), and (3) a follow-up on evaluations (Question 3) appeared to be necessary in order to achieve the goal of the study.

Methodology

Five empirical studies (Study 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) were undertaken to answer the three research questions above. Study 1 was designed to analyze current practice to answer Question 1. This was a national survey using self-developed questionnaire to investigate current practice of individualized plans for instruction and career guidance at 3 types of special high schools including special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities, special high schools for students with physical disabilities, and special high schools for students with other health impairments¹⁷. The reason for the investigation was because the individualized transition support plans were being discussed at the time that the author started this study. At that time, it was not known what types of special high schools would apply its practice.

Study 2 was designed to clarify the goals for implementation to answer Question 2. The case studies' data was mainly collected by semi-structured interviews focusing on transition needs. Differences in thoughts of young adults, parents, and professionals were investigated, and factors that might lead to their agreement were analyzed. The study intended

¹⁷ Graduates from special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities have experienced lower rates for going on to post-secondary education compared to ones from the other two types of special high schools (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2001a). Therefore, it is thought that unique problems at special high schools for students with intellectual disabilities would be identified by a comparison among three different types of schools.

for the individualized plans to be made only by professionals could reflect self-determination by young adults and parents sufficiently if the thoughts of young adults, parents, and professionals are in total agreement. The reason why the transition needs were investigated was because each participant could present their concrete thoughts about transition using the scale.

Study 3, 4 and 5 were designed to a follow-up on evaluations. They were questionnaire surveys investigating thoughts of teachers and parents about student and parent participation in individualized transition support plans. The reason why the studies were undertaken was that it might be too early to conduct an evaluation when the plans were still in experimental practice. Instead of an evaluation, the thoughts of teachers and parents were analyzed to lead to recommendations for practice.

Furthermore, results of Study 3 and 4 were analyzed by System 4 Theory (Table 1.3) proposed by Likert (1967; 1961)¹⁸ to discuss characteristics of (a) the communication process,

¹⁸ Likert (1961) described that his theory validly covered all areas of organized human activities such as schools, private organizations, hospitals, governments, and research institutes although the rationales were based on the industrial companies and their procedures and methods and the application might be different for each type of organization. Rensis Likert (1903-1981) was an American social psychologist who developed "Likert Scale" and, for later in his life, concentrated on studying behavioral science in business. Decision making has been well studied in the area of business and Likert's theory contributed to social psychology discussing a lot about human relations and education (Misumi, 1987). Tao (1991) categorized Likert's System 4 Theory as "psychology of participation".

Table 1.3. Organization and Performance Characteristics of Different Management Systems.

Adapted from R. Likert, *The Human Organization*, Prentice-Hall, 1967, pp.14-24.

Operating characteristics	Systems of Organization			
	Authoritative			Participative
	Exploitive authoritative	Benevolent authoritative	Consultative	Participative group
Characteristics of communication process	Top of organization expresses the opinions and information may come down	Top of organization mainly expresses the opinions and most information comes down	Some expresses opinions in lower hierarchy and information goes up	Any can express opinions in any hierarchy. Information goes up & down in both ways
Characteristics of decision making process	Bulk of decisions at top of organization	Policy at top, many decisions within prescribed framework made at lower levels	Broad policy and general decisions at top, more specific decisions at lower levels	Decision making widely done throughout the organization
Characteristics of goal setting	Orders issued	Orders issued, opportunity to comment may or may not exist	Goals are set or orders issued after discussion w/subordinates regarding problems	Except in emergencies, goals are usually established by means of group participation
Motivational consequences	Decision making contributes little or nothing to the motivation to implement the decision, usually yields adverse motivation	Decision making contributes relatively little motivation	Some contribution by decision making to motivation to implement	Substantial contribution by decision-making processes to motivation to implement
Productivity	Mediocre productivity	Fair to good productivity	Good productivity	Excellent productivity
Excessive absence/turnover	Tends to be high when people are free to move	Moderately high when people are free to move	Moderate	Low

(b) the decision making process, and (c) the goal-setting¹⁹.

Statement of Significance

Individualized transition support plans were just introduced in 2001 in Tokyo, and through a collaborative effort with schools, families, workplaces, and local agencies, aim to improve the practice of career guidance and post-school assistance for high school students with intellectual disabilities (Japanese Association for Special School Principals, 2002a; 2002b). Student and parent participation in the planning process has been a critical issue for the successful practice of the individualized transition support plans and the action research is being conducted (Tokyo Public Special Schools for Intellectual Disabilities Association for Research Promoting Employment, 2003). The survey for the present study was conducted before and in the experimental period of practice from year 1999 to 2002.

¹⁹ In this study, what Likert calls "organization" is a team to develop the individualized transition support plans including teachers, students, and parents. What Likert calls the "top of the organization" is the teacher since the individualized plans have been made by teachers. The top of the business organization were also replaced by the teacher in some previous studies in classroom administration (Nishiyam & Nishiyama, 1988). Four question items regarding the communication process (Method of integrating students and parents' hopes, roles of students, roles of parents, roles of teachers at career counseling meeting), 1 item regarding decision making (timing to fill in the planning form eg. before the career counseling meeting, during the meeting, and after the meeting) and 2 items regarding goal-setting (person responsible for goal-setting, and person whose hopes were referred to goal-setting) are inserted into the factors closely related to the explanation written by Likert (1967; 1961, See Table 1.3) for analysis.

There are few previous studies regarding individualized transition support plans because it's relatively new practice. Thus, this study is carving out significance in Japanese special education and there is a strong likelihood that it will contribute to the actual practice. Results of this study will provide the opportunity for student, parents, and teachers to clearly understand the significance of making individualized transition support plans in a collaborative effort with respect to each other's roles. The results of the study may contribute to developing more effective individualized transition support plans and to making relevant decisions regarding the preparation of students with intellectual disabilities transitioning from school to community.

Organization of the Record of Study

The record of study is divided into five chapters and has been organized in the following style: Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the study, statement of the problems, statement of purpose, research questions and methodology, and a statement of significance.

Three empirical studies were designed and conducted in order to reach the goal of the study. Chapter 2 contains a description of Study 1, which was a national survey of career guidance and individualized plans in Japanese special high schools. It presents an analysis of the current practice of

student and parent participation in individualized plans for instruction and career guidance.

Chapter 3 is a description of Study 2, case studies on the transition needs in young adults with intellectual disabilities. In order to clarify the goal of the study, the chapter examines similarities and differences in thoughts of young adults with intellectual disabilities, their parents, and the professionals. Case studies of six young adults are presented.

Chapter 4 includes descriptions of Study 3 and Study 4, a questionnaire survey regarding the thoughts of teachers and parents on student and parent involvement in individualized transition support plans, and Study 5, a comparison of thoughts of the teachers and the parents.

Chapter 5 is general discussion and recommendations for future research and practice. It presents the answers to the research questions, general discussion, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research and practice.

At last, Appendix 1 reviews the current practice of ITP, individualized transition plans, in the United States²⁰ focusing on student and parent participation.

²⁰ ITP was regulated as a statement of transition services for students with disabilities who are the age of 16 or above by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (PL 101-476) (Kawai, 1997; Mizutani, 2003; Mizutani & Yanagimoto, 2002). Wehman (1995) and his colleagues had been criticizing the IEP because it had not included the goals associated with students' careers and transition plans, and had been insisting that ITP must be developed separately from the IEP (Kim & Misawa, 1990).