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**INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY  
ON EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES  
IN LOWER AND UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS:**

**Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya in Japan, and Los Angeles in The US**

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## Summary

The objective of this research project is to clearly define the distinctive characteristics of support provided to students with learning disabilities in public lower and upper secondary schools in Japan and the US. In order to accomplish this objective, the Japanese side of the project surveyed a total of 12 districts, four districts each in three metropolitan areas (the Tokyo area, Osaka area and Nagoya area), and the US side surveyed four districts in Los Angeles County, California, and its surrounding areas. The subjects of the survey included school principals and regular class teachers, as well as teachers of "Tsukyu" instruction classes (called resource rooms in the US) and special classes. The project conducted the survey through respective questionnaires mailed to these types of educators. The questions asked of school principals concerned areas such as basic information concerning their respective schools, the special education services in their schools and their future concerns. As for the questions asked of teachers of regular classes, "Tsukyu" resource rooms and special classes, they concerned areas such as basic information concerning teachers, the state of their respective classes, the state of support inside and outside the classes, the needs and demands of the families of students and difficulties in providing instruction.

These surveys revealed that there were extremely high percentages of recipients of diverse types of support provided within schools in the US, when compared with Japan, regardless of whether it involved regular classes, "Tsukyu" resource rooms or special classes, or teachers, students or their guardians or lower or upper secondary schools. Regarding support provided outside the school as well, the surveys revealed that although this support was not as great as support within schools, nevertheless much more support was provided in the US compared with Japan.

The project also looked at the instructional experience of the teachers of the various types of classes. It found that, both in Japan and the US, regular education teachers had little experience heading other types of classes compared with special education teachers. However, a distinctive characteristic of US teachers was that special class teachers had an especially high amount of experience as resource room teachers.

Next, the project surveyed teachers on the in-service training (in regular education and special education) they received. It learned that compared with the situation in Japan, more US teachers have received more in-service training regardless of whether it is training in regular or special education, whether it involves lower or upper secondary school teachers, the type of class taught or the period during which the in-service training was received (whether to date or during last year). This difference between the two countries was especially great for in-service training in special education received by teachers of regular classes. The survey revealed that

in the US an extremely high percentage of regular education teachers have received in-service training in special education.

The survey also looked at teachers' feelings toward instructing students with learning disabilities. About the same percentages of teachers in Japan and the US indicated difficulties in instructing students with learning disabilities. However, the survey revealed that a considerable high percentage of US teachers replied that they were favorably disposed toward instructing students with learning disabilities, regardless of whether they were lower or upper secondary school teachers or of the type of class they taught. Furthermore, regarding the substance of difficulties in instructing students with learning disabilities, in Japan high percentages of both lower and upper secondary school teachers experienced difficulties in preparing individualized instructional plans or teaching academic skills. However, in the US, the highest percentages of both lower and upper secondary school teachers indicated difficulties related to problem behavior. This was followed by teachers experiencing difficulties in class management.

As the aforementioned indicates, this research project revealed the various distinctive characteristics of the responses to learning disabilities in Japan and the US. Based on these results, the project further added an examination of a number of the differences in the characteristics between Japan and the US.