Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education in Japan

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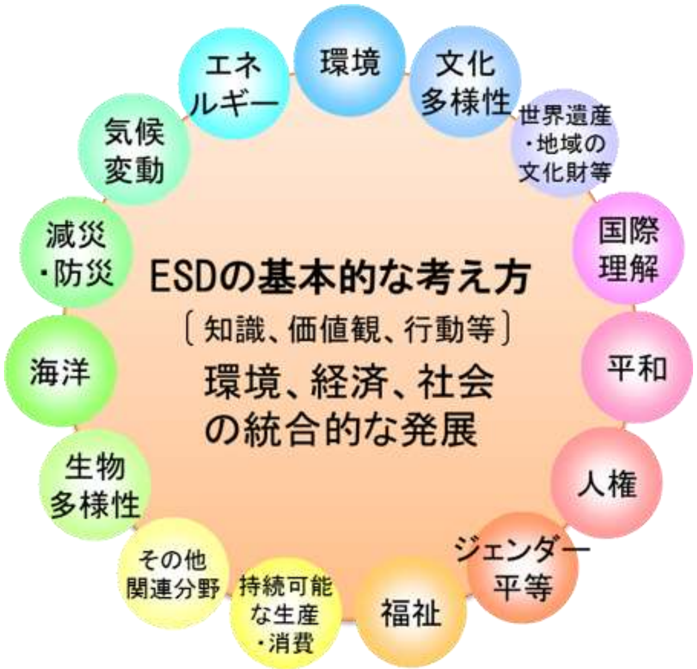
What is Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)?

ESD stands for Education for Sustainable Development.
Today, the world faces various problems stemming from human development activities, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, resource depletion, and expanding poverty. ESD is learning and educational activities aimed at fostering new values and behavioral changes that lead to solving these problems. It encourages people to proactively recognize these contemporary societal issues as their own, to take action starting locally (think globally, act locally), and to work towards realizing a sustainable society where humanity can ensure a prosperous life for future generations.
In other words, ESD is education that nurtures creators of a sustainable society.
(Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology website)

What is Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)?


ESDの基本的な考え方
〔知識、価値観、行動等〕
環境、経済、社会の統合的な発展
環境
文化多様性
世界遺産・地域の文化財等
国際理解
平和
人権
ジェンダー平等
福祉
持続可能な生産・消費
その他関連分野
生物多様性
海洋
減災・防災
気候変動
エネルギー

As shown in the figure on the right, the fundamental concept of ESD is the integrated development of the environment, economy, and society. The target areas encompass a wide range, including the environment, energy, cultural diversity, climate change, world heritage, disaster prevention, international understanding, peace, and human rights. In other words, ESD is not education focused on specific subject areas, but rather a term describing an approach to education based on the value of sustainable development.

What is the characteristics of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)?

〈Characteristics of ESD〉

① It is education that aims not only for knowledge acquisition but also for changes in values and behavior.

② It is educational activities conducted with the goal of realizing a sustainable society.

In other words, it is defined as education that aims not only for the growth of individual qualities but also for the realization of the society expected through individual growth.

From Global Education to Global Citizenship Education
Citizenship Education

(1) Definition of Global Education: Cultivating individuals who can perceive matters on a global scale and tackle various problem-solving challenges

(2) From the late 1960s to the 1970s, following defeat in the Vietnam War and a reevaluation of American-centered perspectives, global education began to be advocated in the United States.

(3) Two Meanings of Global Education

⊖ Position prioritizing national interests: Cultivating globally minded individuals for national strategic purposes

⊜ A stance prioritizing the prosperity of global society as a whole: Cultivating global talent capable of thinking and making judgments on a planetary scale, transcending national boundaries

(4) It refers not to education with specific content, but to an educational movement.

The Establishment of Global Education in Japan

(1) The Establishment and Development of International Understanding Education

① After World War II, UNESCO spearheaded the promotion of international understanding education to achieve peace.

② From the 1970s onward, issues like North-South disparities and global environmental problems gained attention, leading to the inclusion of development, environment, and disarmament in international understanding education content.

③ Around the end of the 20th century, the perspective of sustainability began to be incorporated.

(2) Diversification of International Understanding Education and the Establishment of Global Education

① International understanding education diversified into areas such as development education and environmental education.

②Global education was proposed as a concept encompassing this diversified international understanding education.

③ Unlike international understanding education, which presupposes the nation-state, global education aims to realize a multicultural coexistence society unconstrained by national boundaries.

From Global Education to Global Citizenship Education

(1) The Introduction of Citizenship Education in the UK:
㊀ The "Crick Report" (2002) by political scientist Bernard Crick
㊁ Establishment of the Subject "Citizenship"

(2) Background of Citizenship Education
㊀ Globalization of Society
㊁Increase in Young People Not Participating in Society

(3) Introduction of Citizenship Education in Japan
㊀In the 2000s, pilot programs were implemented at national university-affiliated schools and MEXT-designated educational development schools
㊁ Implementation at Ochanomizu University Elementary School
⊛Shinagawa Ward Integrated Elementary-Junior High School, Tokyo

(4) From Global Education to Global Citizenship Education

With the globalization of society, citizenship education set against the backdrop of a global society—global citizenship education—has

What is Citizenship Education?

(1) Definition of Citizenship Education

Education that cultivates members of society capable of independent thought and judgment

(2) Background of Contemporary Citizenship Education

⊖ Societies composed of diverse races and ethnicities
⊜ Youth who are indifferent to society
⊛ Complex personal identities

(3) Diverse approaches to citizenship education

Type 1: Inquiry-based (Acquisition of scientific knowledge)
Type 2: Discussion-based (Debate on public issues)
Type 3: Social participation-based (Action to solve social problems)

3.2 Qualities Expected of Global Citizens

(1) Scientific Knowledge

(2) Ability to Discuss Issues

(3) Attitude to collaborate with others and strive to solve societal problems

The graduate students' theses

１. Name　GAO Yu（高雨）

２. Title

A Study on the Significance of Global Leadership Development Programs in Japanese High Schools: Based on Interviews with Learners

the Super Global High School (SGH) program from 2014

the Super Global High School (SGH) program from 2014:

The purpose of the SGH project at the high school level is to foster the development of global leaders who can contribute to society through education. This involves cultivating students�much interest and deep understanding of social issues, as well as enhancing their communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and global competencies. The goal is to equip students with the qualities necessary to succeed on an global scale in the future.

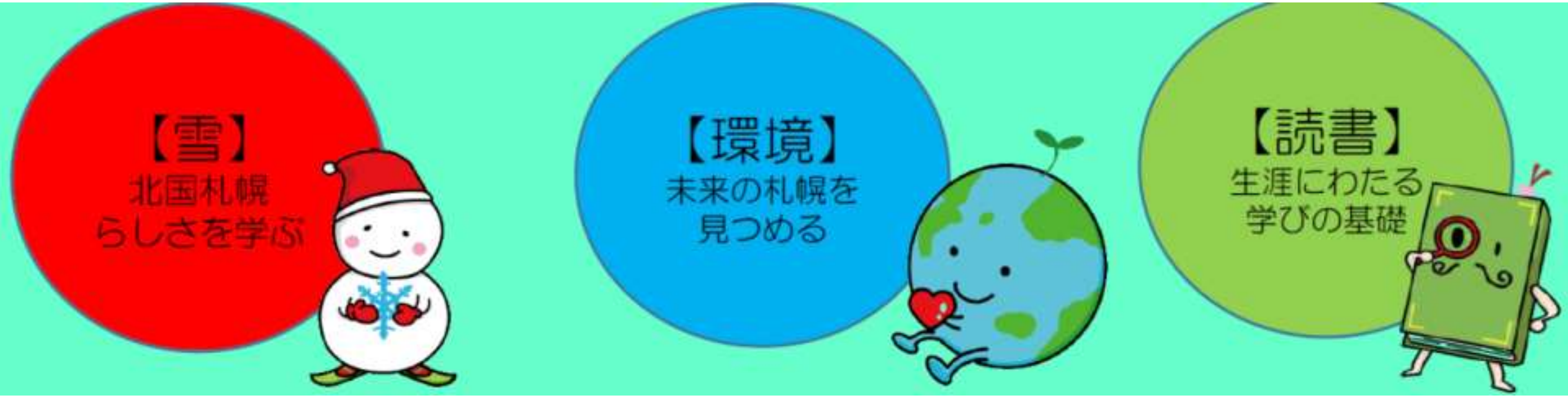
the Super Science High School (SSH) program from 2002

the Super Science High School (SSH) program from 2002:
The purpose and objectives of the SSH program are to nurture future science and technology talent capable of thriving on an international stage. However, as previously mentioned, this program goes beyond the individual development of students. By designating specific high schools, it aims to develop a system for cultivating science and technology talent. A key feature of the program is the establishment of a framework where designated SSH schools collaborate with administrative institutions to promote advanced science and mathematics education.

SGH Case Study (1)
—Sapporo Kaisei Municipal High School—

1. Theme: Cultivate active global citizenship that enables thinking globally and acting locally.

2. Approach: Connect local issues to global problems and explore them from the perspectives of "snow," "environment," and "reading."


【雪】
北国札幌
らしさを学ぶ
【環境】
未来の札幌を
見つめる
【読書】
生涯にわたる
学びの基礎

Sapporo Kaisei Municipal High School Program

1st Year: Foundational Inquiry Stage
Students research the characteristics of their community and explore its appeal and challenges through experiential learning and group activities.

2nd Year: Project Work Stage
Students form groups and collaborate with companies or universities to carry out research projects.

3rd Year: Self-Directed Inquiry Stage
Individual students undertake personal projects through overseas training and fieldwork.

SGH Case Study(2)
Okayama Gakugeikan High School

(1) Theme
Developing a curriculum to nurture leaders who can contribute to a global society

(2) Approach
Breaking the cycle of poverty through education

The Program of Okayama Gakugeikan High School

Global Inquiry Challenge

1st Grade
Research the cycle of poverty in developing countries.

2nd Grade
Take action to address the cycle of poverty in Cambodia.

3rd Grade
Review and improve your action plan, then report on it.

What is Global Citizenship Education？

Citizenship education is education that cultivates members of society. In the past, people naturally became members of society through interaction with others as they grew up. However, with developments like transportation making it easier for people to move around, and as people’s perspectives diversified with more valuing personal happiness over society, society itself has had to actively engage in educating people to become its members. Against this backdrop of societal change, citizenship education has gained prominence. Furthermore, there is now a demand for global citizenship education—an education that cultivates members of a global society, viewing the entire planet as one community, rather than merely members of local communities or nations.

Conclusion

ESD and global citizenship education in Japan were introduced into school education from the late 20th century to the early 21st century, primarily through government or UNESCO initiatives. In that sense, it could be said that neither was introduced proactively by schools or teachers themselves. ESD and GCED took root in Japan through a top-down approach, not a bottom-up one. Consequently, it is also true that many teachers do not necessarily have an interest in them. While this is deeply regrettable, on the other hand, there are schools actively engaging with ESD and GCED with the support of the government and UNESCO. Teachers working in these schools have undergone significant changes, not only in their skills but also in their mindset. ESD and GCED are gradually spreading through such teachers, reflecting the current state of Japanese schools.

Thank you for your attention.