

【Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research(S)】
Humanities and Social Sciences (Social sciences)



**Title of Project : Empirical Study of Associational Transformations
between Social Stratification and Social Psychology
in Contemporary Japan**

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Research Area : social science, sociology

Keyword : social research, stratification, social psychology

【Purpose and Background of the Research】

Although it is clear that Japanese peoples' appreciation of wealth and social position (class consciousness) has recently been greatly transformed by rising poverty and inequality, academic studies of this change are inadequate.

This research project will fill gaps in our understanding of this important social issue by using social surveys and mathematical model-based experiments to reveal the mechanism of associative change between social stratification and social psychology.

From 1970 through the 1980s, interest in social stratification in Japan was drawn to the "Mass Middle Class." However, thereafter, with the arrival of the "bubble economy," the exploration of the relationship between actual social status and class identification was deemed a thing of the past.

But following the Lehman Shock in 2008, increasingly fluid employment and the difficult living conditions of lower class once again began to be the object of a critical public debate. Now, in the wake of the Great Tohoku Earthquake, we confront again the need to rethink inequality, social stratification, and abundance.

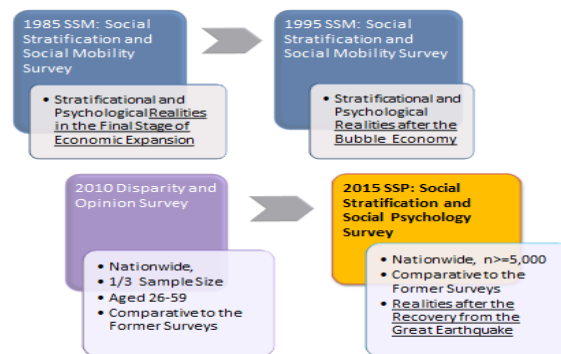
In the quarter century of Heisei, the structural tendency of Japanese society has shifted from "generally middle class" to "generally unequal." Understanding the relationships that enabled this change is a meaningful sociological task.

【Research Methods】

The main purpose of this study is to design and carry out the 1st SSP (Social Stratification and Social Psychology) Survey in 2015. This is a nation-wide, face-to-face interview survey. The sample size in design will be 10,500. The SSP Survey will have strict comparability with 1985 and 1995 SSM (Social Stratification and Social Mobility) surveys. Both of them are known as reliable data sets in social stratification research.

Further, we will utilize experimental simulations in order to elaborate socio-psychological hypotheses. Plausible

mechanisms derived from the process will be examined in the SSP Survey.



The Stand-point of the SSP Survey

【Expected Research Achievements and Scientific Significance】

We will obtain empirical materials that will enable us to theorize the newest trends in social psychology related to social stratification. Establishing the SSP Survey will also contribute to the improvement of social research methodology under uncooperative current social environment.

【Publications Relevant to the Project】

Kikkawa, Toru. 2009. *The Educational Disparity Society*. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 229 pages. (in Japanese).

Kikkawa, Toru, ed. 2011. Transformation of Psychological Functioning: Analysis of the Work and Personality Follow-up Survey in Japan. Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 244 pages. (in Japanese).

【Term of Project】 FY2011-2015

【Budget Allocation】 111,600 Thousand Yen

【Homepage Address and Other Contact Information】

<http://ssp.hus.osaka-u.ac.jp/>

<http://srdq.hus.osaka-u.ac.jp/>