

## 【Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research】

### Humanities and Social Sciences



Title of Project : Japanese Electoral Studies 2012-2016

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Research Area : Political Science

Keyword : Electoral Study, Voting Behavior, Political Attitudes, Power Transition

#### 【Purpose and Background of the Research】

Electoral Studies are important node in social sciences not only because those have relevance in the real world by revealing the functions of elections as the core of democracy, but also because those are conducted by various approaches from different disciplines such as political science and sociology.

As such, extensive research has been conducted so far in Japan, and nationwide survey data on the voting behavior of citizens is one of Japan's few social scientific achievements in which researchers and practitioners around the world can be interested.

Especially, achievements from a seven-wave nationwide panel study of the JES II, a nine-wave nationwide panel study of the JES III, and a nine-wave nationwide panel study of the JES IV can be said to have consummated electoral studies in Japan.

Following a good tradition of previous election studies in Japan, the project, joined by three new researchers with new perspectives, aims at collecting nationwide time-series survey data as the JES V (Japanese Electoral Study V).

#### 【Research Methods】

The main method employed in this study is a nationwide panel study using face-to-face interviews for general voters. Randomly selected nationwide respondents will be visited and interviewed by trained interviewers. And, mail surveys will be conducted to ask questions on factors supposed to precede voting at a certain time before an election. This will also help reduce the length of the election-time questionnaire. Moreover, to ensure a multi-method perspective, internet surveys are planned to be conducted. Internet surveys are advantageous in that they not only enable us to conduct various social scientific experiments, but by examining the validity of this technology through comparison of its results with those of more traditional personal interviews and mail surveys, we can also widen the perspective of the study.

#### 【Expected Research Achievements and Scientific Significance】

First, this project succeeds a good tradition of previous nationwide panel election studies in Japan, and will maintain the good international reputation of Japanese voting behavior data produced for research communities in Japan and abroad. Through this effort, the study will also help establish a foundation for the study of elections and Japanese politics nationally and internationally.

Second, this project deepens the analyses of wide varieties of research topics included in the study of voting behavior. It is also expected to integrate findings from sub-disciplines within the study of voting behavior, and show a comprehensive sketch of Japanese voting behavior through meaningful research collaboration.

Third, this project reveals how Japanese voting behavior has been altered in accordance with social and political changes in a medium span, and shows what Japanese democracy is heading toward, influenced by path dependency.

Fourth, this project locates electoral studies in a broader context of the study of political processes by considering voting behavior not only as a dependent variable but also as an independent variable.

#### 【Publications Relevant to the Project】

- Yoshiaki Kobayashi, *Malfunctioning Democracy in Japan-Quantitative Analysis in a Civil Society*, Lexington Books, 2011.
- Masaki Taniguchi, "The Electoral Consequences of Candidate Appearances on Soft News Programs," *Political Communication*, Vol.28, No.1, pp.67-86, 2011.

【Term of Project】 FY2012-2016

【Budget Allocation】 115,000 Thousand Yen

#### 【Homepage Address and Other Contact Information】

<http://www.res.kutc.kansai-u.ac.jp/JES/>