

Non-Profit-Education:

Career Guidance at Municipal Senior High Schools

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While the labor market in Japan has become increasingly deregulated, we observe a shift from a credential society (*gakureki shakai*) to a learning capital society. For work-bound students compulsory education, especially in the middle segment, nowadays fails to equip them with the knowledge and necessary skills for a successful labor market entry. Once a defining characteristic of Japan's credential society, educational achievements no longer reliably translate into desirable occupational success. By making use of NPOs, among other measures, the government seems eager to reinstate the schools pivotal position in facilitating a smooth transition.

This ongoing research project re-evaluates the role of senior high school education and career guidance in the transition process into the labor market against the background of deteriorating job prospects. By examining career guidance programs provided by NPOs and, educational measures to promote skills relevant for the job market, this project seeks to illuminate how schools currently shape graduates' career trajectories.

Vincent B. Lesch is a Ph.D. candidate at the department of Japanese Studies at the Asia-Africa-Institute/University of Hamburg, specializing in the Japanese educational system and labor market. In 2016, he took part in a joint project with the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies /Waseda University funded by GSAPS and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) dealing with the labor market situation in contemporary Japan. From April 2017 onward, while receiving a scholarship from the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ Tokyo/Max Weber Foundation), he conducted field research at municipal senior high schools and NPOs involved in educational and career guidance services in the Tokyo metropolitan area. Since December 2017, he continues his research as a Visiting Researcher at the Institute of Comparative Culture/Sophia University.

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