

The Sixth Child Science Exchange Program in East Asia

Coordinating Preschool and Elementary School

— The Relation between Equality of Education and Quality

◆November 23-24, 2010

◆China Women's University, Beijing, China



Speakers and Presenters:

Noboru Kobayashi (Director, CRN; Professor Emeritus, The University of Tokyo)

Jiaxiong Zhu (Professor, East China Normal University)

Yoichi Sakakihara (Professor, Ochanomizu University)

Xiaoxia Feng (Professor, Beijing Normal University)

Kiyomi Akita (Professor, The University of Tokyo)

Ping Zou (Director, Dadi Early-Childhood Education Center, Beijing)

Yan Zhang (Professor, Beijing Normal University)

Lian Wang (Associate Professor, China Women's University)

Nianli Zhou (Associate Professor, East China Normal University)

Fang Wan (Professor, Beijing Normal University)

* In order of presentation; titles and affiliations as of November 2010

Child Research Net (CRN) and China Women's University co-hosted this series of seven lectures, two workshops, a public symposium with parents and teachers and the Good Toy Exhibition, which was attended by nearly 1500 people.

Day 1

Heredity and Culture: Two Forms of Information that Affect Child Development

Noboru Kobayashi

Genetic and cultural information both affect child development and growth. Genetic information evolves over a long span of time compared with the faster pace of cultural information. When designing future education, it is important to consider these characteristics of both information and their mechanisms.

Discussion of the Transition from Kindergarten to Elementary School

Jiaxiong Zhu

From 1990-1994, UNICEF and China's Ministry of Education conducted joint research on the transition from preschool to elementary school, which resulted in curriculum reform in both preschool and elementary school. Today, after twenty years, what issues remain? Professor Zhu stressed equality of education and equal access to educational resources.

The First Graders' Problem and Developmental Disorders

Yoichi Sakakihara

What is the cause of the "First Graders' Problem" in Japanese education today, which can make the transition to first grade so difficult? How does the present situation differ from the past? This talk considered the relation between the "first graders' problem," "children who show unusual behavior," and "developmental disorders."

Equality of Opportunity in Compulsory Education and Preparation for Entering School

Xiaoxia Feng

Equal opportunity in compulsory education is a major issue in China today, but research indicates that unequal access to preschool education results in disparity in school preparation and later academic performance. Professor Feng stressed the need for measures at the preschool stage.



The Cultural Transition from Early Childhood to Childhood Education

– The Experience of Children, Parents, and Teachers

Kiyomi Akita

How do children, parents, and teachers experience the transition from preschool to elementary school culture? This presentation introduced case studies on the approach of national and regional governments and preschools, differences, current issues, and actual programs in effect.

Workshop 1

Sharing Resources, Coordinating the Transition from Preschool to Elementary School, and Helping Preschoolers Better Adapt to Elementary School

This workshop, led by Ping Zou, Director, Dadi Early-Childhood Education Center in Beijing, introduced research on kindergarten models that integrate preschool and elementary education and help children make this important transition.

Day 2

Can Urban Cities Provide Basic Preschool Education to Migrant Children?

– Public Education is One Option to Achieve Equality in Education

Yan Zhang

As workers migrate to cities, the demand for preschool education is growing. With the government unable to adequately respond, unofficial preschools are springing up. NPOs are proposed as a third way to equal education. Together, parents, children, and teachers can provide education for migrant preschoolers.

Survey of Educational Expectations of Parents with Migrant Children and Current Education: Cases of Beijing and Surrounding Villages

Lian Wang

One goal of equal education is quality preschool education for migrant children. It is necessary to consider their parents' situation and provide support that will also improve the educational environment at home.

Workshop 2

On the Equality of Preschool Education

– A child development survey, targeting 1,000 children aged 37 to 48 months in the Hunan Province, China

Nianli Zhou

This survey indicated clear gaps between urban and rural areas in child development, particularly in linguistic, cognitive, and physical skills as well as the effect of family economic and educational background. Min Zou, China's Women's University, and Lina Shi, East China Normal University, reported on "A Survey on Migrant Children" and "Integrated Education for Children with Disabilities," respectively, and discussed equality in education from various perspectives.

Public Symposium on Child Raising

At this public symposium for parents and preschool teachers, Professors Fang Wan and Jiaxiong Zhu lectured on food education and early childhood development, respectively. Professor Yoichi Sakakihara joined the lively question-answer session as parents asked about early education and health issues.