

Archived Information

Learning and Social Participation by Senior Citizens in Japan: Analysis of Major Issues from an International Perspective

Toshio Ohsako

UNESCO
Institute for Education

Introduction

The objective of this paper is to review from an international major issues and challenges concerning the concept of aging, learning, and social participation perspective of Japanese senior citizens (SCs), and the provision and support systems rendered to them, with particular emphasis on the age groups between 60–79. In writing this paper, the author quotes extensively from the results of the following two survey reports: “*International Comparison of Learning and Social Participation by the Elderly*” (ICLSE, see Annex I), published by the Training Center for Social Education of the National Education Hall in September 1997, and “*Integrated Study on Policy and Program Development for Lifelong Learning in the Aging Society*” (ISPPD, see Annex I–2), prepared by the National Institute for Educational Research of Japan (NIER). The former report is an international survey report based upon the results of the study conducted in Germany, Japan, Korea, Sweden, the U.K. (U.K.) and the United States of America (U.S.). The latter is basically a national report that contains some references to foreign countries on the theories, trends, policies, and practices of education and training for SCs. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), European Union (EU) publications, and other research papers were also used to review similar issues and problems in other countries. The present paper is also a contribution to the follow up to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Fifth Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V, Hamburg, July 14–18, 1997) which recommended creation of an educational environment supporting all forms of learning for older people.

Demography

In 1990, 14.9 million Japanese citizens above the age 65 constituted 12 percent of the entire population. The Population Census statistics in January 1997 predict that 27.4 percent of the entire Japanese population will be over 65 years of aged in 2025, and this age group will increase to 32.3 percent by 2050. Although aging is a general tendency among OECD countries, Japan is the most rapidly society in the OECD area (Hennsey 1994).

Japanese citizens’ mean life expectancy is 76.4 for men and 82.8 for women in 1995. This means that people on the average now have 15 to 20 years to live even after the age 65. This age group will constitute 32.3 percent of the entire Japanese population by 2050, although there are also noticeable regional difference in the make up of the elderly population.

As is the case with other countries, the Japanese aging phenomenon is the result of a low birth rate and low mortality. However, there are other social factors contributing to this phenomenon.

For example, in geographically isolated rural areas of Japan, the migration of young people to urban areas and the lack of brides also are causes of the aging of local communities. (Tanaka 1990).

In 1990, according to the report on lifelong learning and aging published by Yamamoto et al. (1996), nearly 90 percent of the elderly were living with their children (married or not married) in the same household, but this percentage decreased to 60 percent in 1990, 24.1 percent of the elderly live with their spouse and 10.9 percent live alone. But there are considerable regional differences in the makeup of older people. For example, 8 percent of SCs in Yamagata Prefecture (an agricultural area) live with their children while only 45.1 percent of SCs in Tokyo live separately from their children. Even if SCs live in the same household with their children, they are increasingly independent with their own facilities (entrance, kitchen, and telephones, TV).

Income, Consumption, and Employment

The above-mentioned NIER report indicates the average annual income of SCs over age 65 as 2,890,000 Yen (approximately 22,600 U.S. dollars). The total income consist of pension (56 percent), income from work (32 percent), income from property (9 percent), and contributions from family (3 percent). In addition, 3.8 percent of SCs have an income of more than \$78,000. Their income from work represents a significant portion of the income of Japanese SCs. Given the modest income of SCs in Japan, their expenditure on food is considerably larger than that of other generations on the same item. So called “social” expenses are also quite high (17–18 percent) as their seniority status demands numerous gifts to their children, grandchildren, their involvement in marriages, parties, and funerals.

The results of the survey, *Employment status of the elderly* (target age group 55–69), published by the Ministry of Labor in 1996, show that 76.6 percent of male SCs and 43.7 percent of female SCs were working. The population of SCs’ employers was also increasing (55 percent for men and 40 percent for women). Among the nonworking SCs, 50 percent of men and 30 percent of women expressed their wish to be employed. Thirty percent of the unemployed SCs whose age was above 55 was still seeking jobs.

Free time, Leisure, and General Life Satisfaction

The NIER’s ISPPD study attempted to compare the use of free time management and leisure activities between Japanese citizens in their twenties and those in their sixties. The data reveals that although the elderly citizens have more free time than the younger people in their twenties, SCs participation in social activities is lower that those SCs’ of this age group. However, SCs spend more time on TV, radio, and newspaper than the younger group. According to a longitudinal study conducted during 1975–1990 by the Institute for Integrated Research for the Aged in the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, there is a shift from passive ways to spend free time to active participation in sports and hobby activities. The report also indicates that the time spent by SCs in learning activities lags behind their participation in leisure and hobbies. The

same report also demonstrates a generally high degree of life satisfaction among SCs in Japan, but it questions whether this is because they are really happy or their feeling of happiness is due to the lowered expectation of SCs in their senior age. Culture may perhaps play a role in this perception.

Current Campaign

In June 1997, the Central Council for Education, an advisory body to the Minister of Education, published a report entitled *Japanese education in perspective of the twenty-first century*.

Underlining the importance of the issue of senior citizens, the report asserted, “how to create a society in which men and women participate equally in planning the future, a society in which opportunities are guaranteed for men and women, as equal constituents of society, to participate in all areas of their own free will.”

This report emphasizes “the realization of a society, in which senior citizens are to be encouraged to lead an independent life; yet to be cooperative with others and to recognize the diversity of values pertinent to their own self-actualization as well as that of others; and to be able to feel spiritual richness and fulfillment.”

In the above-mentioned ICLSE reports, several new lines of thought also emerge on the life of senior citizens in Japan.

First, to place the emphasis on self-actualization is to challenge the fatalistic pathological notion of the biological decay and gradual loss of intellectual and social functioning of the individual. The concept of active aging opens up the concept of senior citizens who can continue to grow healthier, wiser, and socially more active.

Secondly, the Japanese SCs are encouraged to take more initiatives in their activities and to engage in a more “individualized” mode of thinking, life style, and professional activities. This means that the elderly citizens are considered as important human resources capable of contributing to the socioeconomic and cultural development of the society, rather than portrayed as passive citizens who become social and economic burdens on society and its younger generations.

Thirdly, Japanese society places supreme importance on the individual citizen’s spiritual richness, sense of fulfillment and happiness as an ultimate goal of aging, from which the idea of Japanese SCs’ contributing to their country’s economy naturally becomes possible.

Fourthly, the gender aspect is explicitly and clearly recognized as a fundamental issue when dealing with all aspects of learning and social participation by senior citizens.

Senior Citizenship in the Context of Lifelong Learning

The concept of lifelong learning proposed by UNESCO and the OECD (recurrent education in the latter case) was introduced to Japan through the 1960s and 1970s (Okamoto 1990). The

National Council on Educational Reform, an ad hoc committee (1984–87), submitted a report, which emphasizes “the transfer of all education systems to a comprehensive lifelong learning system.”

The following are goals of the Council on Educational Reform for constructing a “lifelong learning society:”

- to overcome the “diploma-oriented society;”
- to provide learning opportunities to respond to the growing demand for leisure-oriented learning activities; and
- to continue learning to cope with social, economic, and technological changes.

In 1988, the Social Education Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Education was transformed into the Lifelong Learning Bureau, in which the Section for Social Education was established. This Section has since then been responsible for the education of the elderly.

The notion of learning for the elderly is deeply rooted in the Japanese concept of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning in Japan understood and practiced among the general public is very broad, as reflect in the above-mentioned goal. Lifelong learning reminds the Japanese of various cultural and sporting activities to be enjoyed by people with a view to improving the quality of daily life, filling their spare time, satisfying their intellectual curiosity, and just having fun and pleasure. For the Japanese, lifelong learning is basically consumption in economic terms but not investment (Okamoto 1994).

As Okamoto points out (1994), the above mentioned third goal of lifelong learning is understood as a theory, but the notion of linking lifelong learning to economic development is not a supported or accepted idea. The transformation of a predominantly leisure oriented notion of lifelong education to one, which is more, diversified, integrated, or economically gainful, is a big challenge for the Japanese. To grow up to be a senior citizen, which is healthy, professionally and economically active, and productive, and socially caring and fulfilled, is, at least conceptually, more and more understood by the Japanese. What is important in this process of transformation, however, may be not to lose sight of the traditional spirit of leisure or pleasure seeking. One may try not to go against the tradition but to use it to further develop an active aging theory, which simultaneously satisfies the individual’s desire for leisure and pleasure oriented activities, and social and economic needs.

Current and Future Challenges

Individual and Social Attitudes Towards Aging

It is often pointed out that the Japanese are age conscious. The reason for this is not simply that people are curious about other’s age, but by knowing the age of a person one can determine which social and communication codes to employ in dealing with people older or younger than oneself—how to address, how to greet, and how to treat them. Age carries a very strong message in Japanese society.

The first challenge is for senior citizens to develop a more positive image of aging itself. Perhaps this is not a problem that is unique to Japanese old people. How often do we hear people in every country saying: “Oh, I am too old to do this.” “I can’t beat my age.” or “This happened because of my age.” Whether old or young is not linearly correlated with one’s biological and physical changes. It is a well-known fact that the state of mind of the individual considerably affects one’s perception of age. Feeling is, to a great extent, a subjective matter. Self-felt oldness probably arises from our past learning. Do optimistic attitudes disappear as people age, or is a more or less persistent characteristic developed over years? Some longitudinal studies indicate that human personality remains remarkably stable (Sperry & McNeil 1996).

The second challenge related the attitudes towards aging to develop the capacity of SCs to prioritize the activities they wish to engage in. The elderly can optimize their level of functioning by concentrating their efforts on things that are important for them, and by seeking to regain some control over the direction of their lives in behavioral domains that are improbable (Bandura 1997). The ICLSE survey asked SCs what they consider their most important concerns were. Health was chosen most frequently as the most important concern by Korea, Germany, Japan, and U.K. (in order of percentage). Swedes and Americans chose “the future of their children/grandchildren” as their first priority concern, followed by health.

The management of free time by SCs in relation to their nonfree time (if they have jobs) seems to be one of the crucial factors determining the degree of their participation in individually and socially useful activities. But it is not the amount of available free time, which directly determines the participation of SCs, but rather the ways in which SCs perceive time and manage to allocate and use time over different activities. The ICLSE study demonstrates a significant fact that in almost all countries, SCs’ with a moderate amount of free time tend to participate in learning and training activities more frequently than those SCs who have plenty of free time.

Sense of efficacy through self-directed learning is particularly advantageous of SCs’ themselves: a sense of self-efficacy in controlling their contents of learning, the choice of methods of learning, and types of social activities. A sense of efficacy not only promotes health but also aids physical and social recovery from injuries common to older people (Bandura 1997). Both ICLSE and ISPPD reports treat this issue in relation to support and provision policies for the learning, training, and social participation of SCs. These reports recommend that SCs’ can benefit from learner-centered policy and support whereby individual differences (e.g., between beginners in learning, willing self-supporters, expert learners, and SCs’ in their eighties) are carefully taken into consideration.

Selective dependence can supplement self-directed learning and life management of their lives and SCs’ should not hesitate to seek for necessary and reasonable help from others. Dependency does not necessarily indicate helplessness (Baltes 1992). Bandura in his new book entitled *Self-efficacy* (1997) distinguishes between dependence on others and seeking help in areas of functional limitations to preserve one’s autonomy. (p. 206).

A sense of self-worth is a contributing factor to the lives of SCs’. The ISPPD report refers to a study conducted 10 years ago by an insurance company on couples married for 50 years: 80

percent of the male SCs' in this group report that they still enjoyed playing an executive role in city councils or other autonomous public bodies, and 70 percent of female SCs' said that they were still active chief housekeepers. Perhaps, perceived selfworth of SCs' and perceived efficacy are mutually facilitating factors for active aging.

Reducing social stereotypes associated with aging is another big challenge. The general public must be convinced of the groundless nature of some negative images associated with old age, such as being tired, cranky, sick, weak, forgetful, and withdrawn. The optimistic images of aging need to permeate society, treating aging as a normal developmental process, which enables people to continue to learn and to self-actualize, to produce and to contribute to the economic and social sectors of society.

Variations of Aging

OECD (1996) distinguishes between individual aging (people living longer), population aging (more older people as a consequence of "baby-boom"), and active aging (changes in how time is spent in different age groups). The Japanese ICLSE study focused on the third concept—active aging for which, according to the OECD, government policies can do much now to influence the way in which people allocate activities over their life time (OECD 1996).

With regard to individual differences in aging, major longitudinal studies have documented the notion of interindividual variability and heterogeneity (Baltes & Baltes 1990).

The Japanese ICLSE study, which employed a cross-sectional analysis of four age groups (60–64; 65–69; 70–74; and 75–79), demonstrates several interesting interage group variations among different age levels of SCs, such as the following:

- there is a tendency in all countries, which participated in the study for senior citizens' willingness to change decrease with age (particular from sixties to seventies);
- in some countries (Japan, Korea, Germany), the proportion of SCs reporting a sense of fulfillment and happiness decreases in their seventies, whereas among SCs in the U.S., the U.K. and Sweden, this tendency was not observed;
- the SCs in their sixties in all countries reported that they are more healthy than their counterparts in the seventies;
- the peak participation age by SCs in learning activities for all countries is between 60 and 64, except in Japan (65–69) and the participation rate decreases gradually with age (lowest between 75–79);
- there is an age-related steady decline in the rate of social participation of SCs for both job-holders and non-job-holders in all countries surveyed; and
- in response to the question "who should be responsible for the continued learning of SCs'," the answer "don't know" increases by age.

Policies addressing senior citizens can take both individual and interage group variations into consideration. The Japanese ICLSE, which is a cross-sectional study, indicates that senior citizens have more free time as they grown older. But they are less willing to change, less socially active and less healthy.

Moreover, the notion of active aging, designed to identify the most satisfying, effective and productive ways to organize and allocate time over different age groups of SCs squarely challenges senior citizens' resistance to change.

There is an age-related decrease in happiness and satisfaction in Japan, Korea, and Germany. This is not true among SCs in U.S., the U.K., and Sweden. This fact encourages thinking that people's feeling of happiness can be sustained.

Despite the fact that people are living longer, according to ICLSE study, Japanese SCs' peak participation in learning is between 65 and 69, whereas for SCs in other countries, it is between 60 to 64.

Gender Issues

The most recent report of the Central Council for Education in Japan, recommended "creating a society in which opportunities are guaranteed for men and women to participate equally in planning the future." Gender is clearly a priority policy for the Japanese government.

Gender differences in patterns of learning and social participation are greater in Japan and Korea than in European countries and the United States.

The following are some examples from the ECLSE report:

- more male than female SCs report that they are always "happy and fulfilled" in all countries (the difference is 5 percent in Korea, the U.K., and Germany);
- in all countries, slightly more men than women report they are healthy;
- there is a gender difference in the degree of interest manifested in social participation: more men scored more highly than women did in Japan and Korea, did, but this tendency was reversed in the U.K. In Japan and Korea SCs in their sixties are more interested in voluntary social and community affairs than their counterparts who are in their seventies;
- in all countries, men read more books and magazines and participate more in learning activities organized by workplaces and other professional bodies. Women participate more than men in group circle activities and lectures organized by local public centers and schools;
- as to the purpose for continuing learning, in all the countries surveyed, men tend to endorse professional skills, knowledge, and qualifications more than women;
- more men than women replied "yes" to the question—"Have you applied what you have learned for the benefit of others and the society?"

- the participation rate in social activities among male SCs' is generally higher than among female SCs'. The difference between the two sexes in the participation rate is the largest in Japan and Korea (15 percent each);
- in all countries, female SCs without jobs report more than their male counterparts that they do not participate in social activities: The difference between the two sexes is the
- largest for Japan and Korea (19.6 percent, 15 percent, respectively), but this difference does not exist in the United States, the U.K., and Sweden;
- in all countries which participated in the study, female SCs tend to participate more than their male counterparts in social work, health promotion, and medical care; and
- except in the United States, male SCs report more than their female counterparts that their social participation activities exert impact at local and societal levels. The impact upon themselves and their lives is, on the other hand, reported more frequently by female SCs.

To summarize the main findings in this section of the paper on gender disparity: male SCs exceed female SCs in: self-rating of happiness and fulfillment; participation in continuing learning for a professional purpose; frequency of learning and application of their skills and experiences in the society; and rating of impact of their social participation on society.

Special attention and care policies are needed for those women who are divorced, widowed, or have never married. Poverty is a real problem for them (OECD 1996). Poverty is an additional adversity for these women. In all the countries which participated in the Japanese study, a significantly greater number of women (30.45 percent) than men (18.45 percent) were alone either as a result of divorce or death by their spouse. Particular in Japan and Korea, the number of single women is more than four times larger than that of men.

In Japan, for women who have never worked outside the home, their husbands' retirement presents often a painful dilemma because of their permanent presence at home. In some cases, it ends up in separation or divorce of a couple.

With regard to the low birthrate, if Japan is to prevent a further fall, better provision of maternity leave and child caring facilities is an option (OECD 1998). Increased employment of the female population including female SCs' is also a measure to cope with the labor shortage due to the aging of the society in Japan.

Although life expectancy of women is greater, they tend at all ages to report higher numbers of illnesses in EU countries (Anderson 1992). The Japanese ICLSE study reported the same tendency in three EU countries (Germany, the U.K., Sweden) and in three non-EU countries, (Korea, Japan, and the United States). The ICLSE survey also indicates that the participation rate of female SCs' both in learning and social activities is lower than their counterpart male SCs'.

Korea where women's participation rate is lowest among the countries surveyed also reported significantly fewer women than men who said they are healthy. The relationship among several variables—gender, health, and culture, needs to be further clarified.

Happiness, Health, and Active Senior Citizenship

One of the significant results disclosed by the Japanese comparative study (ICLSE) is the close relationship between the perceived individual happiness and satisfaction of SCs and their participation in learning and social activities. In all the countries surveyed, the results indicate that active SCs participants are also have and fulfilled People.

The study clearly indicates the general tendency in all countries that healthy SCs are also active learning and social participants. In other words, the more actively SCs participate in learning and volunteer activities, the healthier they are result has an important implication for health care for senior citizens. The ICLSE study model predicts the possible reduction of medical care of 6,490 billion yen for this group with 5 percent increase of the SC population who participate in learning between age 60 to 79.

It may be argued that if good quality of learning programs and of social participation activities are ensured, the society can achieve two important goals simultaneously—increased happiness and fulfillment of the individual senior citizen and the reduction of public burden arising from pension and the medical care costs, which occupy a substantial portion of the national budget.

Time Availability

The availability of free time is an important factor affecting the degree of participation and non participation of senior citizens in learning, training, social, and volunteer activities. Among people who chose the response alternative “have a lot of time,” Japan ranked first (47.2 percent), followed by Germany (43.4 percent), U.K. (42.7 percent), United States (38.7 percent), Sweden (38.3 percent), and Korea (29.0 percent). Except in Sweden, men reported more free time than women. In all countries, SCs’ have more free time, as they grow older.

The free time available for SCs’ is a basic factor, but the activities and purposes contained in the so-called “free time” is even more important. It is imperative to maintain people in gainful activities longer. In order to achieve this objective, it will be necessary to ensure that educational and training policies are adapted to the specific needs of older workers (OECD 1996).

The Content of Learning and Training

The following response alternatives were given to SCs to respond to the question—“In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following learning activities?”:

- job-related learning activities;
- activities useful for family life (cooking or cleaning);
- health-related learning activities and sports;
- politics, economics, society;
- literature, philosophy, history, natural sciences, foreign language learning;

- arts;
- other hobby activities; and
- others.

The rank-order participation rate among the countries concerned are as follows: U.K. (61.7 percent); Sweden (53.8 percent); United States (44.3 percent); Japan (39.3 percent); Germany (25.4 percent); and Korea (24.7 percent).

Sports and hobbies are the most popular activities for Japanese and Germans and sports are most popular activities for Americans and Koreans. U.K. SCs' most practical activities are useful for the family life. Swedish SCs' most preferred those activities related to culture and science.

In all countries, “job-related activities” and those corresponding to “politics, economics and society” were endorsed more frequently by male SCs than by females. Except in U.S., on the other hand, women endorsed “arts” more frequently than men. In Japan, Korea, and U.S., “activities useful for family life” are more engaged by women than by men, but English men scored higher on this than their counterpart women.

The participation rate is higher for men than women in Japan, Korea, U.K. and Germany and the largest gender-attributed difference (25 percent) was observed in Korea. The learning participation rate decreases with age in Korea, United States, U.K. and Sweden. The peak participation age for the Japanese is between 65–69 (43.4 percent).

The survey correlated the participation rate with the number of years of education and training (ET) completed by SCs (less than 6 years; 7–9 years; 10–12 years; more than 13 years). The results show that there is a high positive correlation across the countries between these two variables—the longer the schooling, the more participation of SCs in learning activities. Swedish SCs with more than 13 years of schooling manifested 79.8 percent participation rate.

Contents of Learning and Previous Education and Training (ET)

The study also correlated the contents of learning and number of years of previous education and training (ET). It was found that, except in U.K., the most frequent learning activities held by SCs with more than 13 years of ET are job-related ones (20–30 percent). In Japan, Germany, and Sweden, the longer the ET of SCs, the less they are engaged in “activities useful for family life” “politics, economics, and society,” and “culture, and natural sciences” increases.

Methods of Learning

The questions concerning the methods of learning focused on the following aspects:

- learning and training activities organized at workplaces and by professional bodies (agricultural associations, unions);

- lectures and seminars organized by local public bodies and community centers;
- reading books and magazines;
- TV, radio programs, video;
- learning with friends, and colleagues, family members in group circles at the local level in workplaces and schools;
- private lessons;
- attending university courses (including correspondence courses);
- non-university correspondence courses;
- others; and
- “I don’t know.”

SCs in six countries were asked to select their top three methods of learning. Japanese SCs chose “group circle” activities as the most frequently used method. For the SCs in Korea, the United States, U.K., Germany, Sweden, reading books and magazines was their first choice. Especially, 89 percent Americans and more than 70 percent of Britons and Swedes chose this item as their first choice.

In all countries, men read books, and magazines, and participate more in learning activities organized in workplaces and professional bodies than women. However, women participate more in group circle activities and also in lectures organized by public offices and schools.

SCs in Japan and Sweden, as they grow older, engage themselves more in learning activities organized in workplaces, whereas their learning activities in group circles decrease. In Sweden, there is a remarkable age related increase for those SCs’ who read books and magazines.

From these findings, one may be able to infer that the longer the years of previous ET, the more SCs tend to participate in more activities organized by professional bodies.

Methods and Contents of Learning

There is a tendency among Japanese SCs to have sports and hobby activities as a group activity, and Americans and Britons tend to engage themselves in an individual mode of learning such as reading books and magazines. In general, reading is a typical individualistic activity. Japanese and Korean SCs’ engage in this activity much less frequently than their counterparts in European and North American countries. Japanese SCs’ read much less than their counterparts even when they engage themselves in cultural and science learning activities and those activities useful for family life, for which reading is an easily available mode of learning.

The Purpose of SCs' Participation in Specific Learning Activities

The SCs were asked to choose three of the following response alternatives in order of importance:

- for professional purposes and qualifications;
- to maintain good health and improved physical condition;
- obtain sense of well being, pleasure, and fun;
- for a better family life;
- for the acquisition of knowledge and better education;
- to gain acquaintances and friends; and
- for hobbies.

In most countries, male SCs learn more for professional and qualification and for better knowledge and education than female SCs. Men in Japan, United States, and U.K. tended to report, more than women, the item “for well-being, pleasure, fun. English and Swedish men endorsed more than their women the item “better family life.” Women in most of the countries had a high rate of endorsing “health” reasons.

Purpose of Learning and Previous Education and Training (ET)

In Japan, the longer the duration of ET, SCs tend to endorse the purpose “knowledge and better education” less than their counterparts who had a shorter period of education. This group with the longest duration of education (more than 13 years) also endorse less the purposes, such as health and friends. The longer the previous ET of American SCs', the less likely they endorse gaining friends as a purpose of learning.

The Relationship Between the Methods of Learning and its Purpose

SCs' tend to regard workplace as a place of professional training aimed at higher level of competence and qualification, and public centers and schools as a place for fun and pleasure. The high rate of SCs across the concerned countries indicated that “individualized” learning through books, magazines, TV, and radio, is mainly for fun and for the acquisition of better knowledge.

The SCs in Korea and Japan tend to regard activities carried out in group serving as a means to promote health, but European and North American SCs manifested a tendency to perceive group activities as fun and pleasure.

The survey results also show that among those SCs of U.K., Germany, and Sweden, who reported their engagement in practical activities useful for family life (but not those of Korea and Japan) tend to indicate pleasure, fun-seeking as the purpose of their learning, rather than the

utility attached to practical activities for the family life. It may be suggested that in these countries, when the practicality of activities are combined with fun and pleasure, SCs' learning can probably more efficiently be pursued?

The Application of Acquired Learning Experiences

There were four alternative responses to the question "Have you used or applied what you have learned for the benefit of others and the society?:" (1) Yes; (2) No, but I wish I could; (3) No, and I wouldn't do it; (4) I don't know.

The "Yes" answer appeared very high among United States and German SCs, followed by Sweden, U.K., Japan, and Korea. Both U.K. and Swedish SCs were also high in the third response "No, and I wouldn't do it."

In all countries, more men answered "Yes" than women to this question and men scored higher than women in the item indicating "I wish I could."

In all countries, the "Yes" answer for SCs with more than 13 years of previous ET was significantly higher than other SCs with shorter ET. But in Japan, an interesting fact is that a good number of this age group endorsed also "No, and I wouldn't do it" answer. In the Korean sample, there is a clear cut positive correlation between the duration of previous ET and the portion of SCs responding "Yes."

SCs of all countries reported that they have applied their acquired knowledge for the society. The 70 to 80 percent of the senior citizens surveyed in the United States, U.K., Germany, and Sweden reported the usefulness of their learning for their professional activities. It is also noteworthy that in the following categories of learning, SCs expressed their reservations for the application of what they have learned: hobby areas (Japan); political, economical, social cultural, and natural science areas (U.K.); and culture and natural science areas (Sweden).

The Reasons of Nonparticipation in Learning Activities

The reasons for non participation for the last 12 months were investigated. There were 12 alternative responses: (1) "don't like it;" (2) "no opportunity around me;" (3) "no friends to do things with;" (4) "too expensive;" (5) "no time;" (6) "don't know where to find;" (7) "no support from my family;" (8) "don't know what to do;" (9) "not healthy enough to learn;" (10) "other reasons;" (11) "no particular reasons;" and (12) "don't know."

Except SCs in Germany, SCs pointed out "no time" as a main reason for their nonparticipation. In particular, this rate amounted to 30 percent of the total nonparticipation responses.

In Japan, Korea, and the U.K., approximately 20 percent of SCs reported health reasons for non-participation. In Korea, the responses "don't know what to do" and "don't know where to find" are more frequently compared to their counterparts in other countries. Twenty five percent of Americans answered "don't like learning." More than 20 percent of German SCs endorsed each the categories of the following answers: "don't like it," "don't know what to do," and "no particular reasons."

To summarize the main findings on the participation of SCs in learning and training is as follows: there are significant gender differences in learning participation of senior citizens, male SCs participate more; they also participate in professional or job-related activities more than women; and they apply what they have learned more than women. Culture seems to intervene in the methods of learning: there is a tendency among Japanese and Korean SCs who prefer group sports and hobby activities, whereas their European and American counterparts prefer a more individualistic mode of learning, such as reading books and magazines; and Koreans and Japanese tend to regard group activities as a means to promote health, but their American and European counterparts regard it as an activity associated with having fun and pleasure. There is a clearcut tendency in all countries that the longer the previous ET schooling, the more active participation their SCs have. The main reason for nonparticipation is non availability of time. The time-management of SCs stands out as a crucial factor determining the participation of lifelong learning of senior citizens.

Types of Social Participation

What types of social and community volunteer work do senior citizens participate in? The following question was posed: “During the 12 months, have you participated in any social and community activities (excluding your job), which are useful to the society?”

There were nine alternative responses from which they could choose as many as alternatives: (1) clean the planet activities; (2) environmental protection and recycling; (3) cultural activities and sports; (4) social work, health, and medical care; (5) traffic safety, crime prevention, disaster prevention, disaster relief; (6) international exchange and activities; (7) other; (8) no particular activities; and (9) I don’t know.

The participation rate volunteer activity participation by countries is as follows: United States (52.8 percent); the U.K. (50.0 percent); Sweden (46.5 percent); Japan (41.7 percent); Korea (25.7 percent); and Germany (24.7 percent). These figures are based on multi-response of the above mentioned items.

“Clean the planet” and “environmental protection and recycling” are the most popular activities among SCs’ of all countries. Twenty-eight point seven percent and 33.6 percent of Americans endorsed these items, respectively.; 25.1 percent of Japanese SCs endorsed “clean the planet” and so did 26.5 percent of Swedish SCs.

The Relationship Between Learning and Social Participation

In all countries, the survey data show that the more learning activities a senior citizen engages himself/herself in, the more he/she is an active participant in social and community activities.

Particularly highly popular voluntary activities among active learning participants are cultural, social, health promotion, and medical care. In America, those active participants in learning were also active participants in “clean the planet” activities, but, on the contrary, the less active participants in learning have higher participation rates in this activity in Germany.

Previous Education and Training (ET)

In all countries; the longer the period of SCs' Previous ET, the more they participated in volunteer activities. There is a significantly large difference (25.8 percent) on the rate of social participation between SCs with 13 years or more education and training, and those with less than 6 years of ET. The Japanese and German data indicate that the rate of SCs participating in "clean the planet" activities decrease with longer level of schooling. On the contrary, in Japan, the United States, and Germany, SCs with more than 13 years of ET tend to participate more in activities associated with culture, social work, health, and medical care.

Job and Social Participation

Are nonjobholders more active volunteer workers than jobholders because they have more free time? No, there is a general tendency that SCs without jobs participate less in social activities than job holders.

However, the regional differences are large on this score. On the average 40 to 45 percent of SCs without jobs in Japan, Korea, Germany, and Sweden reported that they do not participate in social activities. On the other hand, no job holders in Sweden, the U.K., and United States reported less than a 30-percent rate of social participation (34.1 percent, 32.6 percent, 31.4 percent, respectively).

In all countries, female SCs without jobs reported more "no-participation" in social activities than their counterpart male SCs. On the other hand, among SCs in Japan and Korea having both jobs and participating in social activities, there is a large gender difference (the difference between females and males for the two countries: 19.6 percent, 15.5 percent, respectively), but there is almost no difference on this score among males and females in the United States, U.K., and Sweden. However, in all countries, as SCs grow older, there is a steady decline in both the job holders and nonjobholders' social and community work. In Japan, SCs social participation without jobs, however, start to increase in their late sixties and this tendency continues until their late seventies.

Sponsor of Social Work

Who was the sponsor(s) of your social work? The following list of sponsors was given to SCs: (1) public bodies such as community centers run by local public bodies—museums; (2) town councils or other autonomous bodies; (3) religious bodies; (4) voluntary bodies; (5) private sectors such as business firms; (6) on my own; (7) other; and (8) I don't know.

For Korean and Japanese SCs, town councils and autonomous bodies are their primary sponsors of activities, whereas, their American, German, and Swedish counterparts indicated that the primary sponsors were themselves (on their own). However, for Americans, public bodies were equally frequently reported as their sponsors.

The male SCs from Japan, Korea, and Germany tend to engage in activities sponsored by public bodies than their female counterparts. The rate of self-sponsored activities is higher among

female Korean and U.S. citizens than among their male citizens, but this tendency is reversed in the U.K.

Previous ET and Social Participation

In Japan, Korea, the U.K., and Sweden, the more ET they have, the more active they are in voluntary social activities. For those SCs in the United States and the U.K. with more than 13 years of ET, the participation rate in self-sponsored volunteer activities decreases.

Perceived Impact of Social Participation

SCs were also asked about their opinions on the impact of their social participation. There were three main levels: local and society level; level of family members and friends; and at the level of themselves.

In all countries, the impact at the local and society levels was the most frequent answer among SCs. But the Swedish and American SCs also reported a relatively high rate of impact at the individual level. Only 15 percent of Koreans and Japanese reported the impact of the level of their family members and friends, where as the rate of endorsement on this item among other countries ranged between 50 percent to 80 percent?

A gender difference was observed. Except in the United States, male SCs reported more the impact at the local and society levels than female SCs. The impact on themselves was selected more frequently by female SCs in most of the countries.

To summarize the following factors seem to be associated with active participation of senior citizens in volunteer activities: SCs with moderate amount of free time; SCs' who are healthy, socially interested, and open to change; SCs with active neighbor relations; SCs active learning participation; SCs who are married; SCs with longer ET; male SCs than female SCs; and SCs with jobs.

Finally, there are interesting cultural differences in the attitudes of social and community work between Japanese SCs and those from European and American counterparts. The Japanese SCs' indicated less preference for less individualized modes of activities and less individually initiated social work. The authors of the ICLSE report argues that the motive for social participation is more externally driven (e.g., importance of volunteer work) than individually driven (e.g., useful activities for SCs themselves). The ICLSE report defined the Japanese volunteer work as a "social service-oriented" model and its Western model as "self actualization" model. The focus of control of one's learning and social participation will probably occupy one of the priority concerns in the years to come in Japan.

SCs' Opinion on the Support System for Learning

In Japan in December 1995, the Fundamental Law for the Aging Society came into effect, followed by the publication of the General Principles for the Aging Society. A few European countries have now also legislation which supports the provision of adult education (Norton 1992).

Who Should Be Responsible for the Learning Activities of SCs?

There were five response alternatives: (1) governments (national and local); (2) private sectors; (3) partnership between government and private sectors; (4) volunteer service of senior citizens; and (5) don't know.

Thirty-six point five percent of Japanese SCs asserted that learning should be their own responsibility (volunteer service), followed by the partnership formula by the government and private sectors (24.8 percent). In the United States, and Sweden, the partnership is the most preferred option (35.3 percent and 44.5 percent, respectively). The first choices of Korean and U.K. citizens was governmental responsibility (34 percent for both countries).

There is a general tendency among SCs of all countries who endorse the partnership scheme between the government and private sectors more than among those SCs who do not participate in learning at all in all countries. The Japanese active participants in learning who supported it significantly higher (the difference is 13 percent). Twenty-four point five percent of Japanese non-participants of learning gave "don't know answer."

In their late seventies, the U.K. SCs' preference for governmental responsibility increases (41.8 percent) for the support of their learning. In all countries as SCs grow older. Particularly in their seventies, the reply "don't know" increases.

In Japan, SCs with more than 13 years of ET choose most frequently volunteer service as their first choice. In the U.K., as SCs grow older, the opinion of the government as sole responsible body for learning decreases and the idea of partnership increase. For the U.S., SCs with less than six years of schooling, their best choice is governmental responsibility (55.6 percent).

What Do SCs Expect from the Support System (Priority Concerns)?

There were ten alternatives for this question: (1) availability of training programs and lectures; (2) easy access to information and to counseling; (3) availability of insurance for injury and damage of properties; (4) good transport and easy access to facilities; (5) social recognition of the results of activities; (6) financial aid to cover minimum expenses; (7) financial aid to the activity circles and bodies; (8) cooperative participation among the members of activity groups; (9) others; and (10) don't know.

The top two choices of each country were as follows:

- Japan: cooperative participation; and easy access to information and to counseling;
- Korea: good transport; and financial aid to the activity circles and bodies;
- Germany: good transport and easy access to facilities; and social recognition of the results of activities;
- Sweden: easy access to information and to counseling; and cooperative participation;

- United States: good transport facilities; and availability of training programs and lectures; and
- U.K.: easy access to information; and good transport to facilities.

The results indicate that good transport and easy access to information and facilities are crucial factors determining the level of participation of SCs in learning.

In Sweden and Japan, the longer SCs previous ET, the more they endorse such items as: the availability of programs, easy access to information and co-operative participation. Extremely high among American SCs (75 percent) with less than 6 years of schooling is “good transport” as their first choice.

SCs’ Opinions on the Support Systems of Social Activities

A question was raised: Who do you think should be responsible for promoting the social participation of senior citizens at the local and societal levels? In Japan, the United States, Germany, two major replies—partnership or volunteer service—equally divided the opinions of SCs. Swedish endorsed more strongly partnership approach rather than social participation being initiated by SCs themselves (52.7 percent vs. 17.4 percent). In Japan, U.K. and Sweden, in their seventies, the choice of partnership decreases and the choice of the government’s responsibility tends to increase.

In most countries with longer periods of previous education and training, the rate of endorsing partnership option increases. In Korea, the United States, and Sweden, the choice of governmental responsibility decreases.

In all countries, the partnership option is endorsed more by SCs who are active in social participation than those who are not. On the contrary, in Korea, the United States, and U.K., the governmental option is more endorsed by nonsocial participants than by participants.

In summary, according to ICLSE study, individual volunteer service, government, and private organizations are main bodies responsible for the provision and support for the learning of SCs. Partnership is more strongly supported by those active participants of learning than those nonparticipants. In the United States SCs with less than 6 years of ET indicated a strong preference for governmental responsibility. Accessibility to facilities and information and to guidance services, good transportation means, are crucial factors affecting the participation of SCs in learning activities.

In the sphere of social participation of SCs in social activities, the availability and accessibility to information and service facilities are important factors substantially affecting SCs social activities. Partnership between the government and private sector is a preferred approach to advance social participation, and the support for this approach increases with longer previous ET. In some countries, as SCs grow older (in their seventies), the governmental option increases. A healthy and more active citizen with good neighbor relations and family members are socially active.

Current Programs and Strategies for Active Aging

These programs can be described from four main angles:

1. Networking and information databank;
2. Use of existing infrastructure and opportunities;
3. Interactive intergenerational education and training; and
4. Partnership approach to promote active aging.

Networking and Information Data Banks: From Awareness to Action

The ICLSE demonstrated that active aging is a liable and beneficial option in Japan. Active aging helps older people to enjoy life activities in general, better health, a greater degree of well being, and psychological satisfaction. Above all, active citizenship benefits all age groups in society and makes significant contributions to the society, economically, and socially.

Lifelong education is well understood and rooted idea in Japan. Thanks to the concerted campaign over the last 2 decades by the government, researchers, institutes, voluntary workers and various lifelong and adult learning bodies, active aging scheme is also capturing the mind of Japanese people. However, the strategies of how to conceptualize and contextualize active aging in the framework of lifelong education must be further clarified and developed. Information development and dissemination to SCs on this topic as well as to all age groups is an important step to understand this theme.

Active aging campaigns are now facing a new challenge, the one which is moving from basically an awareness-building stage to collection and dissemination of a more usable information gathering, in order to empower SCs with all the necessary skills—professional, social, health, and technology.

One of the most successful ongoing networking projects is so called “Volunteer data bank for lifelong learning,” supported by the Ministry of Education within the framework of its support program for the promotion of volunteer activities for lifelong learning. Education and training activities for the elderly in Japan often build in various volunteer projects.

The volunteer bank, intended for mutual information support among SCs and the concerned bodies and individuals, is used to disseminate the registered names of SCs volunteers and bodies, information on coordination centers, and information on the sponsors and organizations, which provides learning activities and voluntary social and community work for SCs. The networks created by volunteer data banks can also have a role of the social network for SCs. The NIER’s ISPPD report points out the tendency of Japanese SCs increasing need for affiliation with others, and, in fact, the social network can meet such a need. This is one of the reasons for the importance of training programs in computerization for SCs because the computer (e.g., how

to use Internet) is a useful means not only for obtaining information in general, but also for strengthening social connections, encounters, and interaction of SCs', which can go beyond local, regional, and national boundaries.

The lifelong education research team at the National Institute for Educational Research (NIER), headed by Yamamoto, upon review of users opinion on the data bank, reported the following future tasks in order to improve the project (1997):

- need for more publicity;
- need to stimulate local needs and to develop a wider range of data bank users;
- need for more courses, programs, and activities sponsored by public bodies;
- reinforced training for the registered volunteers;
- need for a more selective registration of volunteers in order to obtain good quality volunteers and users;
- more information production designed to stimulate autonomous activities of volunteers; and
- schools should be more encouraged to use locally registered volunteers.

Finally the Yamamoto team endorses the need for the networking of volunteer center at different sectors which currently spread out in prefectural and municipal boards of education, various social welfare centers, public community halls, universities, and enterprises. This is one of the future priorities of the information activities to promote active aging in Japan.

Use of Existing Infrastructure and Opportunities

The existing schools, universities, learning centers, and conference rooms of companies are offered for the education and training for the elderly learners, and the number of such facilities is steadily increasing. The courses are offered for SCs in school classrooms and higher education extension courses are provided to the elderly as universities are willing to agree with increased enrolment quota for elderly students. There have been some key factors which determine the degree of participation of SCs in university extension courses: flexible attendance hours (part-time, and night courses); modest tuition; easily available transport; the availability of correspondence courses; easy access to the facilities; understanding teaching staff; availability of quality information and guidance service to meet the needs of the elderly; and availability of interesting and relevant programs to SCs. The community resources and infrastructures are used for the education and training of SCs.

Local experts and specialists are participating in it. The Community Learning Centers (Kominkan), run by the municipal education authorities and supported by the national/prefectural education authorities is the largest. Seventeen thousand Kominkans are established in all municipalities and attended by 7.5 million people per year covering more than 50 percent of all public education supplies in Japan (Okamoto, 1997). There are also other centers run by NGOs, enterprises, foundations, clubs, and cultural centers.

The use of and cooperation with existing infrastructure and opportunities to promote learning and social participation is economically advantageous in view of mobilizing local resources. Another advantage of creative and flexible use of existing infrastructures and resources is the partnership it can create among the formal education sector, nonformal education sector (Shakai Kkyoiku), and private and public sectors. It is a means to promote various local and regional cooperative programs to promote SCs' learning and social participation throughout the nation.

Interactive Intergenerational Education and Training

One of the growing ideas in Japan about the education and training of SCs is reflected in the programs designed to promote intergenerational relationships. We are witnessing millions of SCs volunteer tutors working in public schools in the United States and similar other innovations from other countries seem to convince us that older people and young people can effectively interact with each other.

One of the most successful innovations receiving considerable attention from the public is an interactive intergenerational method of learning and teaching which was originally arranged by the Fukuoka Prefecture (south of Japan). The main scheme of "senior-citizen as a voluntary teacher" project is to have graduate degree holders of SCs teacher at elementary and junior high schools. During 1993–94, 75,000 SCs with a graduate university degree participated in the project as teachers. In this intergenerational program, the travel expenses are borne by the concerned. Prefectural bodies but teaching involves no remuneration. The majority of participating teachers are aged 60–80, but a few teachers in their eighties joined this project.

This project has been evaluated by the Yamamoto team (1997) to indicate the following advantages:

- SCs' enjoys teaching, interaction, and communication with younger generations;
- pupils enjoy learning with elderly teachers who possess expertise and life experiences;
- pupils from a nucleus family (without grandparents) can learn from the elderly experts;
- young teachers particularly profit from SCs' teachers' life and professional experiences, particularly from their knowledge on historical and cultural aspects of the local community; and
- utilization of local community human resources.

The Yamamoto team (1997), upon their extensive review of the "senior citizen as a voluntary teacher," suggested the following suggestions to future improvement of the project:

- improved coordination with the overall school curriculum and reinforced;
- efforts should be made with a view to enlightening teachers about lifelong learning, voluntary activities and the meaning of "open" schools; and

- methods of teaching and guidance by the elderly teachers to promote the pupil's self-direction and initiatives in learning activities.

There are a large number of institutions, community centers, and business enterprises that offer similar programs such as the ones offered in the University of Third Age in Europe and U.S..

“Volunteer Learners University” established in 1985 in Shimizu City (neighbor Prefecture of Tokyo) is an interesting innovation. The University lectures are given mostly in Public Community Halls (Kominkan). In this scheme, the volunteer professor makes a proposal pertaining to the course content and plans of teaching in general. Once the teaching proposal is approved by the University authorities, it is up to him/her to determine the teaching methods and learning experiences for SC learners. There is no age limit both for professors and students. The majority of the male students are in their sixties but there are more and more female students who are in their seventies. The majority of students are women. The male-female enrollment ratio is 1 to 4. Most of professors are in their sixties but the age range of professors vary between forties and eighties. The University received a Prime Minister's Award for its outstanding contribution as a volunteer higher learning institute. This University is popular because: it imposes no age limit; requires low tuition; learning is conducted at an individual pace, free class atmosphere; motivated volunteer teaching staff; and abundant opportunity to make friends.

The “Silver University” in Tochigi Prefecture, whose President is the Governor, offers courses on the society in general, hobby and family life, health, social welfare, local, and community work.

Utsunomiya City (near Tokyo) is actively engaged in supporting the learning activities of SCs. This city possesses a Social Welfare Center, a Lifelong Education Center offering courses for SCs, a Federation of Associations for the Elderly, a “Silver” Human Resource Development Center, and several cultural centers run by private business enterprises. The Municipal Boards of Education of Utsunomiya City is providing these educational and social activities for the elderly, and the free provision of the courses for SCs' is realized and efforts have been made to improve the facilities and equipment built-up for the elderly learner.

Partnership to Promote Active Aging

This partnership is involving different levels and types of cooperation and role structures. Among public authorities, this process involves coordination and role distribution among the national education authorities, the schools, the prefectural education authorities and the municipal education authorities. There is an issue of cooperation and coordination between the public and private sectors working in the field of education and training for SCs.

As regards the coordination among different bodies of lifelong learning in municipalities (cities, towns, and villages), the NIER report by Yamamoto reveals that only 5.6 percent of the municipalities possess such coordinating mechanisms and 16.8 percent of them have future plans to establish. There is also interministerial coordination and cooperation. Each level of the public authorities forms partnership with the private sectors—private enterprises, private cultural centers, and associations and clubs. The report also stresses the great potential of NGOs and

nonprofit organizations, particularly its role as agent to identify consumer needs of SCs (which is usually a low priority for industries) for the promotion of commercial products for SCs. The final report prepared by a team from NIER (Yamamoto) on their study on volunteer data banks can give the following concrete example of partnership between different levels of the public authorities.

The Ministry of Education provides funds to different Prefectural Boards of Education, coordinates their work through the project promotion committees and the establishment of main objectives and main line of work and strategies. The concrete activities carried out by the Prefectural Boards of Education under this partnership are: identification and registration of users of volunteers; volunteer bank establishment and dissemination of information and consultant service for voluntary activities and volunteers; development of the volunteer curriculum and its dissemination to the concerned bodies; training of volunteers; and establishment of volunteer centers for lifelong education.

Referring to the public-private sectors cooperation, the NIER's ISPPD report stresses the public sectors' financial and material support for the establishment of the infrastructure of education and training facilities, but the content and methods of learning and social participation should be largely left in the hands of adult education communities, associations, and industries and individual SCs. Strong "volunteerism" manifested as a motive of learning among Japanese SCs' reported in the ICLSE report can also be sustained through this approach.

Finally, there is the industry-education sectors cooperation. A most important issue relating to this type of cooperation is how to effectively identify needs of SCs consumers. The NIER report argues that marketing by business firms can be aided by lifelong education research, which can provide a broadly based consumer psychology of SCs. Research indicates, for example, that SCs choice of consumer goods is often influenced by the opinions of their family members. Business investment and production of consumer goods, hardware, and software for SCs is growing fast.

It is, in this sense, an advantage for industry sectors, if it is to satisfy a multiple-faceted need of senior citizen consumers—psychological, economic, social cultural, health, and sports, to form an alliance with the lifelong education and training sector.

Looking to the future, the ISPD report recommends: the need for strengthened partnership between the public authorities and individual volunteers and their bodies; the need for volunteer centers (currently the half of the Prefecture is equipped) and the coordinator for these centers; networking of voluntary centers; multifaceted assessment system of volunteer activities; volunteer insurance and remuneration for volunteer work; and promotion of volunteer activities at home, school, and local community and the linkage and networking between these agents.

Conclusion

The seriously alarming pressure on government budget for pension benefits and medical costs must be taken seriously in adult education for senior citizens. To reduce this budget pressure, OECD (1998) proposed some measures in economic terms: prolonged retirement scheme (60 to 65); private-sector investment of the state pension funds; reduced pension benefits and reduced contributions; more private contributions from the income of the elderly and to their health and nursing care expenses; and increased birthrate through better provision of maternity leave, improved child care facilities.

Active aging scheme, in which individual differences and needs of SCs' are fully taken into consideration, is a major option for Japan. The ICLSE and ISPPD studies demonstrated some key factors to be taken into consideration in order for SCs' themselves and their partners to effectively support learning and social participation of individual citizens.

The following implications can be drawn, particularly in view of the current Japanese efforts to meet the learning requirement of SCs in the changing world:

- Education and training is an investment, which can help to reduce the budgetary pressure on pensions and medical care of the aging society. Education and training (ET) for SCs' involves ET for all about senior citizenship among SCs themselves, all generations, and all partners (government, NCIOs, Community Centers, the general public);
- ET for SCs' in Japan needs to be built in their philosophy and practices of lifelong education, which is a major guiding principle of Japanese education: ET about and for senior citizenship can start early in life as an integral part of the human developmental scheme of learning and teaching;
- ET for senior citizenship needs to be focused on the unique need and empowerment of the individual learner: each senior citizen is unique and may aspire to different needs, and when each senior citizen feels empowered with self-efficacy, self-direction, and self-control, ET for SCs' become an effective course of action. The policies, support systems and other helping efforts of partners for active senior citizenship can be geared towards satisfying the individual needs of SCs;
- SCs' and younger generations need more opportunities to learn about the importance of self-management of free time with and without employment: techniques of how to use and apply multimedia technologies to the benefit of their life, work, leisure, and social activities. Developing learning and social networks with the aid of such technologies opens up unlimited horizons of their life;
- While meaningful and enriching partnerships between women and men are essential ingredients of active aging, gender disparities in learning and social participation of SCs can be narrowed, particularly by encouraging more the participation of female SCs in higher level of education, employment, professional training, and health management.
- The childcare facilities should be improved and other institutional obstacles can be removed to make both female and male SCs' learning and social participation easier and more accessible;
- ET about and for health is an important priority concern for active aging. Self-directed ET for health care starts early in life and can be sustained throughout life. People are more and more convinced by the idea that active learning and social participation do improve our health, which, in turn, make possible more active learning and social participation of SCs;

- Effective and flexible partnership and resource mobilization efforts among different individuals, bodies of SCs, different public bodies and ministries, between national and local bodies—is a key to promote acting aging scheme of the society and any assessment attempts of such partnership and coordination must be learner focused; and
- Current practices and innovations designed to promote intergenerational interactive communication and cooperation, pleasurable and mutually beneficial intercommunity programs, curricula, and learning opportunities, are key ET issues for active senior citizenship.

Finally, international comparative studies, exchange, and dissemination of information is a useful means to promote, stimulate, and review innovations and practices of senior citizenship of one's country from a global perspective.

References

- Albert, S. and Cattle, M. 1994. *Old age in global perspective*. New York: Human Relations Area Files, Inc.
- Anderson, R. et al. 1992. *The coming of age in Europe*. London: Age Concern England.
- Bandura, A. 1997. *Self efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: WH. Freeman and Company.
- Bengston, V. (ed). 1996. *Adulthood and aging: Research on continuities and discontinuities*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- BaIts, B and Baits, M, (eds). 1990. *Successful aging: Perspective from the behavioral sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Belanger, P and Valdivielso, S. (eds). 1997. *The emergence of learning societies: who participate in adult learning?* Oxford: Pergamon and Hamburg, UNESCO Institute for Education.
- Belanger, P. 1992. L' Education *des adultes et le vieillissement des populations: tendances et enjeux*. Revue internationale de pedagogie, 38(4), 343–362, Hambourg: Institut de l'UNESCO pour L'education.
- Central Council for Education. 1996. *The model for Japanese education in the perspective of the 21st Century*. First report.
- Durkin, K. 1995. *Developmental social psychology*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Japanese Association for Lifelong Education. 1990. *Shogai gakushu jiten* (Dictionary of Lifelong Education). Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki Publishing Ltd.
- Keith, J. et al.1994. *The aging experience: Diversity and commonality across cultures*. SAGE Publications: London & New Delhi.
- Midwinter, E. (ed). 1997. *Older adults as helpers in learning processes*. Barcelona: Report of the European Association for the Education of Adults.
- Rowe, J.W. and Kahn, R.L. 1998. *Successful aging*. Pantheon Books.
- Sperry, L. and Prosen, H. (eds). 1996. *Aging in the twenty-first century: a developmental perspective*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- National Education Hall. 1997. *Koreishakai no gakushu shakaisanka katsudo no kokU.S.i hikaka* (International Comparison of learning and social participation by the elderly).
- OECD. 1996. *Aging in OECD countries: A critical policy challenge*. OECD Social Policy Studies No.20.

- OECD. *Japan population aging*. Observer No. 209, December 1997/January 1998.
- Aging populations and government budgets*. Observer No. 197, December 1995/January 1996.
- Who looks after the elderly?* Observer No. 188, June/July 1994.
- Okamoto, K. 1994. *Lifelong learning movement in Japan*. Tokyo: Sun Printed Ltd.
- Senuma, Y. (Ed). 1990. *Network ka no chosen* (Challenge of networking). Tokyo: Gyosei Publishing Ltd.
- Tanaka, Y. 1990. *Semarikuru chokorei shakai to gakushu network* (Emerging aging society and learning network) in Senuma Y. (Ed). *Challenge in networking*. Tokyo: Gyosei Publishing, Ltd.
- UNESCO. *The Hamburg Declaration & the Agenda for the Future*. Fifth International Conference on Adult Education 14–18 July 1997.
- United Nations. 1994. *Social aspects and country reviews of population aging*. Economic Studies No.6, Report of UN Economic Commission for Europe and UN Population Fund. New York: United Nations.
- Yamamoto, Y. 1997. *Shikuchoson ni okeru volunteer bank no kaseika ni kansuru kenku* (Field empirical study on the vitalization of data banks of lifelong learning in local communities). Tokyo: Report of the National Institute for Educational Research of Japan.
- Yamamoto, Y. et al. 1996. *Korei shakai ni taio shita shogaigakushu no seisaku program no kaihatsu ni kansuru sogoteki kenkyu* (Integrated study on policy and program development for lifelong learning to cope with aging society). Tokyo: National Institute for Educational Research.
- Walker, A.(Ed). 1996. *The new generational contract*. London: UCL Press Limited.
- Weil, A., 1996. *Spontaneous healing*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- World Health Organization. 1998. *Aging and Health Program*. Geneva: Rev.1/February.

Annex I

1. The survey “International Comparison of Learning and Social Participation by the Elderly” (ICLSE) commissioned by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture and was conducted during 1995–1997 in Germany, Japan, Korea, Sweden, U.K., U.S.. The project interviewed individuals (age group: 60-79, N=approximately 1,000 in each country) and also surveyed the public bodies responsible for education and training for SCs in the following cities responsible for public policies and facilities for education and training for the elderly.

- Germany: Frankfurt
- Japan: Utsunomiya city
- Korea: Seoul City
- Sweden: Stockholm
- U.K.: Leicester County
- U.S.: Phoenix

2. Sampling, interviews, and data analysis were conducted by:

- Germany: MARPLAN
- Japan: New Information Center Co., Ltd. (Shin Joho Center)
- Korea: Korea Survey (Gallop) Polls Ltd.
- Sweden: SIFO Research AB
- U.K.: BMRB International
- U.S.: Kane, Parsons, & Associates, Inc.

3. The report “Integrated Study on Policy and Program Development for Lifelong Learning in the Aging Society” (ISPPD) was based upon a survey conducted during 1994–1996, commissioned by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture by the lifelong education group of National Institute for Educational Research of Japan (NIER-Chief Researcher Yoshihiro Yamamoto). This research employed interviews with the elderly, individuals, and bodies responsible for education and training for the aged, systematic review of statistical data on aging, policy, and project review both in Japan and a selected number of foreign countries, expert meetings.