

TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES AND THEIR
OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE: BASED ON THE FINDINGS
OF A COMPARATIVE SURVEY ON TEACHERS
AMONG FIVE COUNTRIES*

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*Introduction: Our Perspective on the Research Project on
"Education Reform and the Teacher"*

The first draft of this paper was presented at a session of the International Symposium on "Educational Reform and Teachers — teachers in flux and their professionalism", on 12-13th Nov. 2005, at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, Japan, held by our research group, which was funded by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan. The theme is "The position and culture of teachers in the era of educational reform". Our research group has been conducting the research project for three years, which regards the present age as "the era of education reform" when the modern state school system, setting out in the nineteenth century, is facing a dramatic change together with economic and social changes. The project focuses on the "job and existence of teachers including their culture" in this reform era.

"Education Reform" is an important issue in Japan as well as in many other countries. In particular, the theme of "Teachers and Teacher Education" is one of the most focal points in "Education Reform" in almost every country.

The original perspective of our research is, as Kudomi (2005) wrote a year ago, to investigate the relationships between education reform and teachers, which has dual connotations in this era. One is the fact that the results and evaluation of education reforms are necessarily made on the basis of teachers' daily activities. The other is that one of the most characteristic features of contemporary education reform is that it makes schoolteachers "a target" of the reform. This is now having a big impact on the social status and existence of teachers.

During these three years of our research, one point has become clear, that is, such dual positions of teachers within contemporary education reform are now combined into one strong discourse. This discourse, "the professional development of teachers" has spread to almost all

* As mentioned in the Introduction, this paper was first presented at the 2005 international symposium as one of the reports of the Japanese research group, "Teachers' exhaustion, professional identity as a teacher, relationship among colleagues at school, occupational culture of teachers and contemporary educational reforms; An interim report of the comparative survey on teachers in five countries". This report was based on the long version of the comparative survey group, including ourselves together with Mr. Fukushima (Hirotsaki University), Mr. Yamada (Miyagi University of Education), Ms. Mahara (Hitotsubashi University) and Ms. Umekage (Hitotsubashi University). So this paper is also based on the same article. We are grateful to these colleagues who advised us on important points during our survey and allowed us to quote freely from the original long version.

countries where the government plans or is proceeding with education reform, as is the case in Japan and the four other countries under investigation. Discourse on “the professional development of teachers” includes some other discourses around it, such as “the effective teacher”, “effective teaching”, “teachers’ creativity in coping with a changing society”, “life-long learning of teachers”, “teachers who are not only teaching others but also learning themselves” and so on.¹

One reason that the discourse is very strong and is spreading is its legitimate, appealing feature of seeking a desirable education. Moreover, I here point out another reason for its strength and infiltration, which is that the “professional development of teachers” firstly answers the requirement to improve results and evaluation of educational activities by the qualitative improvement of teachers’ daily activities. So it relates to the first position, mentioned above, of teachers in the reform era, and it also provides a concrete image of motivation and improvement. Secondly, the discourse also gives the best, natural and clever reasoning for the legitimacy of the government to enforce teacher-targeted educational reform. It also relates to the second position of teachers, justifying the strengthening of such reform that is seriously affecting the social status and existence of teachers. The discourse thus combines the two positions of teachers in the reform era into a legitimate reform project on the side of the government.

The relationships are not simple, and there are many aspects to be investigated. We may also need to consider the possibility of combining the same two positions of teachers with the side of local stakeholders of schools.

I. *Professionalism, Professionalism and the Identity of Teachers*

We, the research group, considered two dimensions of the theme to be the first subject of inquiry. One is the issue around the professional nature of teaching work; that is, “professionalism”. The other issue is in the field of struggles where the teaching profession is socially recognized and established as “a professional”; that is, “professionalism”. We have learned the importance of the relation between these two dimensions in the articles of Geoff Whitty² (Whitty, 2002).

Of course, “the professionalism of teachers” is associated with “the professionalism of teachers”, but there are also relative differences between the two dimensions. Where these dimensions are similar or where they differ is the very issue that we attempted to clarify in the 2005 symposium and also in this paper. In addition, what “professionalism of teachers” is required or desired educationally, socially or politically in the reform era? This is the main focus of both the symposium, as you can see from its subtitle, “Teachers in flux and their

¹ In fact, we can see many such discourses in the collected papers of an international conference, “Preparing teachers for a changing context” 3-6 May 2006 in London, convened by the Institute of Education, University of London and Beijing Normal University.

² You can see a developed version of these points in the paper of Whitty and Wisby that will be put in the same volume as the Hitotsubashi Journal, our paper. Their paper was originally presented at the 2005 symposium. G. Whitty is the “Main Adviser” of our research project and suggested which countries we should select for our comparative study and whom we should contact for our research in the selected countries. We would like here to express our deep appreciation to Prof. Whitty.

professionalism”, and our research project and this paper.

When we consider these points, we should not forget the fact that it is not appropriate to see only one type of education reform in the current world. There are several differentiations in similar trends of the reform era, and so it is important to investigate the situations around education reform comparatively among several countries.

G. Weiner (2002) pointed out two different types of reform, the Anglophone type and EU type.³ This typification was an important indication for us to conduct the comparative study. L. Lundahl also investigated and presented similarities and differences of education reform between Sweden and England in the 2005 symposium. These situations are realized in her paper.⁴ During the research, we noticed the existence of a pair of types, the Western type and the East Asian type. However, like the differences between England and Sweden, there are important differences between South Korea and Japan although there are many similarities between the two countries compared with Western countries.

Such similarities and differences among countries show themselves not only in the field of education policy in the reform era, but also in several aspects of the existence and culture of teachers, and so at the conception of the professionalism and professionalism of teachers in each country. A constructive configuration of these several aspects together with their differences and similarities creates the social, economical, political and cultural character of teachers' identities in each country. In this paper, we investigate these configurations and characters on the basis of our comparative survey on teachers among five countries.

II. *The Focus of this Report on the Results of the Survey*

One of the main tasks of the research project, “The position and culture of teachers in the era of educational reform”, is a questionnaire survey on public primary and secondary teachers in five countries, Japan, Korea, the UK, Sweden and the US. Table 1 briefly shows the process from access to the respondents to the delivery and collection of the questionnaires in each country. It also displays the number of valid responses by the countries in each pair of parentheses ().

As a representative of the survey group, I will report what has become clear through the survey. First of all, I will provide a detailed outline of this report in advance.

- (a) There is a difference in the degree of teachers' burnout among the five countries. The lowest is Japan and the highest is the UK. → See Section 3
- (b) However, the difference does not result from teachers' recognition of the degree of difficulty that schools in the countries confront. → See Section 3
- (c) Identity as a teacher is composed of two relatively independent aspects: “stable professional identity (as a teacher)” and “disturbed professional identity”. “Stable professional identity” results from a sense that teachers can deal with their work and find teaching fulfilling and successful, particularly when they try to build a good teacher-pupil relationship and there

³ You will see a developed discussion of the point in Weiner's new paper, originally presented at the 2005 symposium (Weiner 2006), which will also be seen in the same volume as this paper.

⁴ You will also see Lundahl's paper (Lundahl 2006) in the same volume; see Note-3.

TABLE 1. OUTLINE OF THE SURVEY IN THE FIVE COUNTIES

Japan (Primary : 577 respondents) (Secondary : 436 respondents) (Gross : 1013 respondents)	The survey was conducted in 36 primary and 28 secondary schools in 9 cities or towns between summer and autumn 2004. The schools were asked to help in the survey by the local educational authority or teachers whom a member of the project knew well. The questionnaires were basically delivered to all the teachers in the schools except the headteachers, deputy headteachers, part-time teachers and school nurses. The schools were also asked to collect the filled-in questionnaires and to return them to the project members.
Korea (Primary : 180 respondents) (Secondary : 135 respondents) (Gross : 315 respondents)	Prof. Kang asked 4 primary and 7 secondary schools in and around Seoul between summer and autumn 2004. She visited the schools to hand or post the questionnaires to the schools. The schools collected the filled-in questionnaires, put them together and sent them back to her.
Sweden (Primary : 20 respondents) (Secondary : 83 respondents) (Gross : 103 respondents)	Prof. Lundahl and her assistant asked 1 primary and 4 secondary schools in the northern and middle part of Sweden to participate in the survey between November 2004 and March 2005. The questionnaires were handed or posted to the schools. The filled-in questionnaires were returned by post by the respondents themselves. However, the primary school teachers include two preschool teachers.
UK (Primary : 74 respondents) (Secondary : 42 respondents) (Gross : 116 respondents)	Beacon Research Consultant and Prof. Halpin assisted in the process of the survey in the UK, mainly London. The questionnaires were delivered to 11 primary and 4 secondary schools between autumn 2004 and spring 2005. The filled-in questionnaires were returned to Prof. Halpin by post by the respondents themselves.
US (Primary : 79 respondents) (Secondary : 29 respondents) (Gross : 108 respondents)	Prof. Gitlin helped in the survey in the rural and urban areas of Utah, the US. The questionnaires were collected from 4 primary and 3 secondary schools.

is substantial feeling of well-doing. “Disturbed professional identity” is a sense of doubt regarding the effectiveness of their own teaching and their wavering educational views and beliefs, which are caused by the difficulties in teaching that teachers feel that they cannot cope.

➔ See Section 4-(1),(2)

(d) By dividing professional identity into two dimensions (“stable” and “disturbed”) and regarding some difficulties in teaching as those that teachers cannot manage through their educational activities, teachers can keep at least one of the dimensions less affected by difficulties. Thus, teachers build a barrier around their problems so as not for their professional identity to be critically damaged by these problems. In this report, such a way of defending professional identity is termed “a dualising strategy” for the acquisition, ensuring and defence of professional identity. The strategy is grasped as an element of the occupational culture of teachers. ➔ See Section 4-(3)

(e) Japan has the most developed dualising strategy as an element of occupational culture of teachers among the five countries. The strategy helps Japanese teachers regard the difficulties that they confront with as those that they cannot manage to deal with. In doing so, teachers can maintain a “stable” aspect of professional identity although the “disturbed” aspect wavers in facing difficulties in pursuing teaching. Such development of the strategy is one reason for the relatively low level of Japanese teachers’ burnout. ➔ See Section 4-(2),(3)

(f) On the other hand, in case of UK teachers, their dualising strategy is less developed than the Japanese so that the difficulties that they confront in school life strongly affect the “stable”

aspect of their professional identity. UK teachers presumably tend to suffer from high stress caused by perceiving many matters in school as those with which they should be able to deal. This might partly account for their higher level of burnout. ➔ See Section 4-(2),(3)

(g) Professional identity is closely related to teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession concerning the way in which they experience their job as a teacher in their daily teaching practice. There are a number of similarities in the perceptions among the five countries. Among them, the perception that it is "Possible to take delight in spending time with children" closely correlates with the "stable" aspect of professional identity in every country, so connecting with children as the clients of teachers is an important factor helping the professional identity of teachers in the five countries to remain stable. In particular, UK teachers clearly show this tendency, so it is presumed that they can keep their professional identity stable by maintaining a positive stance or view of their clients despite the fragile "stable" aspect of their professional identity that is easily swayed by the difficult situations that they confront at school. ➔ See Section 5

(h) Compared with teachers in the two East-Asian countries (Japan and Korea), the fact that those in the three western countries (the UK, Sweden and the US) have distinct opinions on policies regarding school improvement and educational reforms is more likely to be an element of their professional identity. One reason is arguably that in the former countries, the process of policy on school improvement and educational reform tends to more strongly affect their position as a teacher and that this is reflected in their subjectivity. ➔ See Section 6-(1)

(i) As a matter of course, this can also be found in the difference among the five countries in the ways in which teachers evaluate policies on school improvement and educational reforms. ➔ See Section 6-(2)

III. *A Comparison of the Degree of Teachers' Burnout among the Five Countries: Why do Japanese Teachers Show a Lower Level of Burnout, While UK Teachers' Burnout is Higher?*

The questionnaire contains a set of questions, "burnout scale", which can measure the degree of each respondent's "burnout".

Burnout is a type of stress and is particularly derived from stress closely associated with human-related service jobs such as educationists, counsellors, doctors and nurses. Teaching is one of the jobs where one is likely to suffer from burnout. This is because, as much as (or more than) other human-related service jobs, it is difficult for teachers to clearly judge their outcome from the reactions of those who use their services like children and their parents, while teachers always have to pay attention to their customers. Teachers are also required to make sober judgment while they need to build an affective relationship between the children and their parents. Furthermore, those who undertake the service (children) originally do not always wish to learn. Thus teachers have their own specific difficulties.

A way to measure burnout is to grasp the degree of burnout of individual respondents, and the measuring method used in this survey was devised by Pines, an American psychologist.⁵ The burnout score indicates the respondents' degree of burnout. Respondents choose

⁵ See Pines (1981).

FIG. 1. BURNOUT SCORE BY NATION
(measured by Pines's burnout scale)

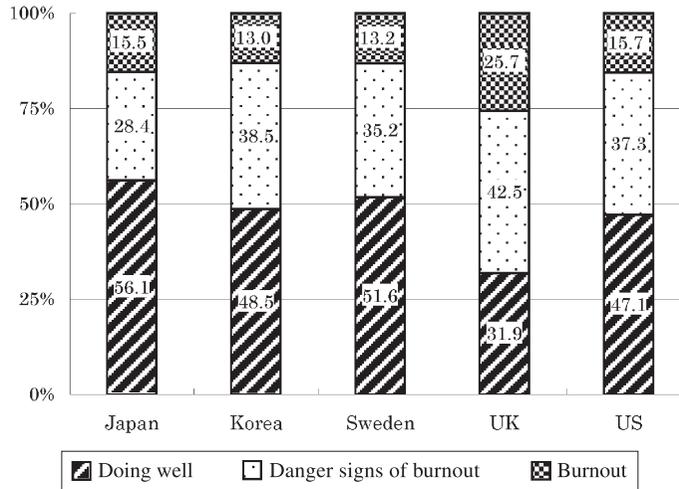


TABLE 2. BURNOUT SCORE

Nation	Mean
Japan	3.01
Korea	3.07
Sweden	3.12
UK	3.46
US	3.09

one among the seven alternatives from “never” to “always” in the twenty one question items such as “(1) Being tired”, “(2) Feeling depressed”⁶ and so on. Every alternative has a score; for example, “never” is 1 point, while “always” is 7 points. Then, the individual’s “burnout score” is the average of the points of the alternatives that the respondent chose, so a burnout score varies between 1 and 7, with score 7 being the most serious condition of burnout. According to Pines, from 1 to 3 is “Doing well”, above 3 to less than 4 is “Danger signs of burnout”, above 4 is “Burnout” and above 5 is “an acute state almost identical to clinical depression”.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of burnout scores by the five countries, and Table 2 shows the average burnout score of each country.⁷ By looking at them, the seriousness of English

⁶ The number in the parentheses in front of the question item shows the order of the question items. This can be applied to the following figures and text.

⁷ In Figure 1, 1 to 3 is marked as “Doing well”, above 3 to less than 4 as “Danger signs of burnout”, and above 4 as “Burnout”. The cross table shown in Figure 1 is statistically significant according to the chi-square test ($p < 0.001$), and are the average scores shown in Table 2 also according to one-way ANOVA ($p < 0.001$).

TABLE 3. A DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY IN SITUATIONS AT SCHOOL BY NATION

	Japan	Korea	Sweden	UK	US
(1) Pupils engage in their classes with enthusiasm.	1.44	1.60	1.69	1.28	1.34
(2) Pupils engage in school festivals or events with enthusiasm.	1.34	1.79	1.57	1.27	1.32
(3) Pupils help each other.	1.79	1.89	1.66	1.38	1.41
(4) Pupils actively participate in school / classroom management.	2.22	2.64	2.04	1.68	1.65
(5) Parents actively participate in site-based school management.	1.95	2.28	2.52	2.39	2.16
(6) Bullying among pupils	2.37	2.33	2.51	2.42	2.73
(7) Pupils cut class.	1.68	1.83	2.53	1.64	1.90
(8) Vandalism	1.88	2.35	2.33	1.93	2.07
(9) Physical conflicts among pupils	1.96	2.32	2.41	2.29	2.43
(10) Pupil intimidation and violent acts against teachers	1.27	1.56	2.14	1.63	1.70
(11) Pupil chronic absenteeism	2.46	1.89	2.20	1.96	2.74
(12) Pupil classroom disruption	1.61	2.21	2.90	2.49	2.84
(13) Overall poor academic achievement	2.80	2.76	2.46	2.27	2.63
(14) Large disparities among pupils in academic achievement	3.27	3.12	3.46	2.90	3.11
(15) Complaints from parents against school	2.54	2.24	2.23	2.15	2.27

teachers and the good condition of Japanese teachers can be guessed.

What make the difference between the burnout conditions of teachers in the UK and Japan? Moreover, what of the differences in the five countries?

A possible interpretation is the difference in the difficulties faced by the schools in the five countries. Table 3 shows the average score of responses to Questions (1) — (15) mainly concerning the condition of pupils (although (5) and (15) refer to the parents' condition) by country. The questions ask about the conditions of the school that the respondents work for, with four alternatives: "Often", "Sometimes", "Rarely" and "Never". The score is calculated by counting "Often" as 4 points, "Sometimes" as 3 points, "Rarely" as 2 points, and "Never" as 1 point. Thus, a lower score means a better condition. In the table, the best country in terms of the score is displayed in italics and the worst is marked grey.

Judging from this table, Japan shows the lowest score in more questions and the highest score in fewer questions; therefore, it can be understood that Japanese teachers tend to feel their schools' conditions are better than those in the other countries. However, the UK is the worst country in the fewest question items and the best country in the most question items. UK teachers appear not to feel that the schools that they work for are especially in trouble. Thus, the degree of teachers' burnout is not necessarily linked with the difficult situation that their school faces, so the burnout score of each country does not vary with the degree of difficulty that its schools face.

What does this mean? A possible interpretation is discussed below.

IV. *Professional Identity as a Teacher and Occupational Culture of Teachers*

(1) Two components of professional identity

The questionnaire includes the question group, "Teaching life", which asks the respon-

TABLE 4. A RESULTS OF PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS BY NATION: THE TWO

Questions about Daily Teaching Work		Japan	
		1st component	2nd component
(1) Pupils pay attention to my lesson.	Factor Loadings	0.061	-0.094
(2) I find developing instructional materials interesting.		0.175	-0.038
(3) I am knowledgeable about the subject matter that I teach.		0.155	-0.101
(4) I have effective teaching methods.		0.284	-0.137
(5) I am skillful in classroom management.		0.527	-0.215
(6) I am skillful in individual pupil support.		0.731	-0.067
(7) I am skillful in guiding pupils to follow school rules.		0.632	-0.137
(8) My personality endears me to my pupils.		0.682	-0.128
(9) I find teaching fulfilling.		0.688	-0.135
(10) I have found the teaching profession suitable for my personality.		0.761	-0.159
(11) I feel very busy with my work every day.		0.050	0.063
(12) I am overloaded with my current work assignment.		-0.055	0.100
(13) I have difficulty in managing problem pupils.		-0.009	0.538
(14) I am uncertain about what kind of knowledge and skills are relevant to my pupils.		-0.162	0.768
(15) When it comes to the effectiveness of my teaching, a sense of powerlessness overwhelms me.		-0.284	0.709
(16) My educational views and beliefs have become more uncertain.		-0.269	0.753
(17) When my pupils have problematic behaviour, I most likely attribute the cause to the inadequacy of my teaching.		0.123	0.535

Note: Factor Loadings above 0.3 is displayed in bold

dents about their behaviour, experience and consciousness while engaging in their teaching work. The question items might closely relate to professional identity, and teachers' subjective understanding of the self as a teacher. Then, the responses to the question group, "Teaching life", are analysed by principal component analysis.⁸

Professional identity means the way in which teachers understand themselves as teachers. If so, it is two components extracted from the principal component analysis that seem to mean the above-mentioned aspects of the occupational culture of teachers (see Table 4). These two are shown below:

(a) The first Japan component, the third Korea component, the third Sweden component, the second UK component, the second US component

(b) The second Japan component, the second Korea component, the second Sweden component, the third UK component, the first US component

⁸ Principal component analysis is used according to the country. All of the questions are designed so that respondents choose one from among four alternatives such as "Very much", "Much", "Not much" and "Not at all". The alternatives are counted as 1 point, 2 points, 3 points and 4 points, respectively, in the analysis. The components are chosen if their eigenvalue is more than one. The solution of the varimax rotation is used to interpret the meanings of the components. Five components are extracted from the data from Japan, Korea and Sweden, and six components are extracted from the data from the UK and the US through the principal component analysis.

EXTRACTED COMPONENTS REGARDING PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AS A TEACHER

Korea		Sweden		UK		US	
2nd component	3rd component	2nd component	3rd component	2nd component	3rd component	1st component	2nd component
0.016	0.225	-0.219	0.266	0.266	-0.180	0.306	0.362
-0.022	0.236	-0.044	0.292	0.126	0.180	0.208	0.217
-0.178	0.000	-0.078	0.068	-0.155	-0.186	-0.041	-0.062
-0.208	-0.031	-0.139	0.048	0.158	-0.141	-0.078	0.145
-0.142	0.161	-0.044	0.072	0.218	-0.224	-0.157	0.030
-0.119	0.305	-0.126	0.189	0.391	-0.194	0.061	0.199
-0.018	0.119	0.001	0.102	0.432	-0.036	0.148	0.032
-0.008	0.567	0.205	0.599	0.784	-0.017	0.095	0.610
-0.089	0.789	-0.059	0.871	0.828	-0.193	-0.184	0.829
-0.120	0.724	-0.250	0.731	0.808	-0.273	-0.151	0.837
0.066	0.096	-0.103	0.322	0.244	-0.113	0.168	-0.082
0.102	0.052	0.009	-0.057	-0.099	0.147	0.573	-0.047
0.498	-0.046	0.726	-0.043	-0.144	0.562	0.297	-0.131
0.739	-0.014	0.708	-0.136	0.088	0.475	0.316	0.237
0.738	-0.355	0.569	-0.097	-0.141	0.780	0.763	-0.082
0.755	-0.413	0.769	-0.058	-0.251	0.705	0.859	-0.114
0.601	0.273	0.549	0.091	0.112	0.426	0.098	-0.118

Component (a) represents a stable condition of professional identity to which “(9) I find teaching fulfilling” and “(10) I have found the teaching profession suitable to my personality” shows high component loadings in all the five countries. Component (b) regards conditions of disturbed professional identity where “(14) I am uncertain about what kind of knowledge and skills are relevant to my pupils”, “(15) When it comes to the effectiveness of my teaching, a sense of powerlessness overwhelms me” and “(16) My educational views and beliefs have become more uncertain” show high component loadings against this component.

According to the component analysis, there is a similarity among the five countries in that two different and relatively independent components, “stable” and “disturbed” professional identity as a teacher, can be found. Of course, professional identity is a complex phenomenon, and should therefore not be composed of only “stable” and “disturbed” components. However, it can be assumed that the very existence of these two components in each of the five countries shows some universal features of the constitution of professional identity beyond differences among countries.

TABLE 5. CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BY NATION: THE TWO COMPONENT LOADINGS REGARDING

		Japan	
		1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: Unstable Professional Identity
Situations in your current school	(1) Pupils engage in their classes with enthusiasm.	0.064	<u>-0.156</u>
	(2) Pupils engage in school festivals or events with enthusiasm.	0.102	-0.120
	(3) Pupils help each other.	0.029	<u>-0.153</u>
	(4) Pupils actively participate in school / classroom management.	0.082	-0.028
	(5) Parents actively participate in site-based school management.	0.055	-0.031
	(6) Bullying between pupils	-0.077	<u>0.165</u>
	(7) Pupils cut class.	-0.018	<u>0.185</u>
	(8) Vandalism	-0.008	<u>0.199</u>
	(9) Physical conflicts between pupils	-0.082	<u>0.193</u>
	(10) Pupil intimidation and violent acts against teachers	-0.013	<u>0.168</u>
	(11) Pupil chronic absenteeism	-0.041	0.106
	(12) Pupil classroom disruption	-0.013	0.258
	(13) Overall pupil poor academic achievement	-0.070	<u>0.179</u>
	(14) Large disparities among pupils in academic achievement	-0.067	0.128
	(15) Complaints from parents against school	-0.098	<u>0.194</u>

(2) Characteristics of each of the two components of professional identity of teachers: In terms of the relationship between professional identity and responses to the question group, “Teaching life”, and “Situations at school”

Table 5 shows the correlation coefficient by country between each component score of the two components and the answers to the question group, “Situations at school” mentioned earlier.⁹ Possible interpretations of professional identity from this table and former Table 4 are as follows.

(A) First see Table 4. Questions (5) — (8), which regard confidence in building a teacher-pupil relationship as not related to teaching itself, show positive loadings to the component, “stable professional identity”. The aspect of professional identity extracted as the component, “stable professional identity”, represents a sense of identity that teachers can have in dealing

⁹ (a) The principal component score is one of the components extracted from the component analysis by country mentioned Note-8.

(b) In the question group, “Situation at school”, one alternative is chosen among four: “Often”, “Sometimes”, “Rarely” and “Never”. The alternatives are counted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 point according to the degree of agreement.

(c) As mentioned in Note-8, this method of counting is also used on the occasion of the principal component analysis through which the two components of professional identity as a teacher are extracted.

(d) Thus, if the value of the figures in the table is plus, the degree of stability or disturbance of professional identity is stronger if the respondents more strongly agree with the item. If the value is minus, the opposite is the case.

(e) In the table, the underlined figure, the bold figure and the half-tone hatched mean that their absolute values are above 0.15, above 0.2 and above 0.3, respectively.

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION GROUP 'SITUATIONS AT SCHOOL'

Korea		Sweden		UK		US	
2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: Unstable Professional Identity
0.057	-0.064	0.232	-0.208	0.337	-0.323	0.248	0.037
0.108	-0.027	0.078	-0.160	0.215	-0.224	0.041	-0.009
0.146	0.046	<u>0.161</u>	-0.104	0.191	-0.128	0.225	-0.186
0.170	0.032	<u>0.175</u>	-0.142	0.486	-0.115	-0.006	0.074
0.015	0.073	<u>0.177</u>	-0.117	0.377	-0.025	0.080	0.094
-0.125	0.002	-0.004	-0.059	-0.223	0.096	-0.161	0.115
-0.184	0.038	-0.056	0.112	-0.224	<u>0.185</u>	-0.062	-0.022
-0.255	0.063	-0.108	0.095	-0.266	0.130	-0.014	-0.009
-0.232	0.085	0.006	0.015	-0.117	0.057	0.020	0.147
-0.249	<u>0.164</u>	0.001	0.204	-0.180	0.015	-0.107	<u>0.189</u>
-0.170	0.009	0.058	<u>0.190</u>	-0.257	0.006	0.009	-0.003
-0.121	0.095	-0.046	0.049	-0.257	0.062	-0.160	<u>0.159</u>
-0.144	0.251	-0.079	0.097	-0.041	0.037	-0.118	0.042
-0.192	0.242	-0.043	-0.008	-0.045	0.032	-0.026	0.058
-0.210	0.150	-0.060	-0.002	-0.141	0.022	-0.055	-0.054

with their work and finding teaching fulfilling and successful when they try to build a good teacher-pupil relationship and succeed in it in practice. Such characteristics of the "stable" dimension of professional identity, in terms of the values of the loadings of the 4 items, can be mostly applied to Japanese teachers, followed by teachers in the UK. On the other hand, this feature cannot be clearly found in teachers in Sweden or the US.

(B) Next, see Table 4 again regarding the component, "disturbed professional identity". Questions "(13) I have difficulty in managing problem pupils", and "(17) When my pupils have problematic behaviour, I most likely attribute the cause to the inadequacy of my teaching", show positive loadings to the component in Japanese, Korean, Swedish and British teachers. On the other hand, the loadings of these items to the component, "stable professional identity", are not very high. This result can be interpreted as follows. Pupils' "problem" and "problematic behaviour" in the two above-mentioned items are difficulties that teachers experience when they pursue teaching in relation with their pupils. If teachers regard these difficulties to be the result of their failure in teaching, the component, "stable professional identity", would show a strong correlation with the two items, but it does not. So one aspect of the component, "disturbed professional identity", is a sense of doubt regarding the effectiveness of their own teaching and their wavering educational views and beliefs caused by teaching difficulties that the teachers feel they cannot manage.¹⁰

¹⁰ If so, a sense of responsibility found in the response to the question item, "(17) When my pupils have problematic behaviour, I most likely attribute the cause to the inadequacy of my teaching" that correlates with the component of "disturbance" is presumably not a sense of teachers being unable to do what they feel they ought to be able to manage but one that they cannot do what they are obliged to manage.

(C) Next, see Table 5. Looking at the correlation between the component scores of each of the two components of professional identity and the answers to the question group, “Situations at school”, in the case of Japanese teachers, the “disturbed” aspect of professional identity depends on the ways in which the teachers perceive the situations of pupils and parents in their schools, while the “stable” aspect does not depend on it. Thus, based on what is mentioned in (B), Japanese teachers perceive the situations of their schools as those that they cannot manage to deal with, so that even if the effectiveness of their teaching and their views and beliefs are wavered by the difficult situations of their schools, cases are avoided where the positive sense of themselves as a teacher is wavered by it.

(D) However, in the case of teachers in the other four countries, perceptions of their schools’ situations affect not only the “disturbed” one but also the “stable” one. In particular, the “stable” aspect of British teachers is influenced by their perception of their schools’ situation.

In what ways can this result be interpreted? If we follow the above interpretation, teachers in the UK as well as in Korea, Sweden and the US believe that they can change their schools’ situations through their own efforts so that the “stable” aspect of their professional identity strongly depends on the perception of their schools’ situations. This opens the possibility that these teachers genuinely and vigorously tackle their schools’ situations, which they believe can manage. However, another possibility is that they suffer from high stress caused by perceiving many matters of their schools as those that they must deal with. This might relate to the high burnout score of British teachers as pointed out in (3).

(3) “Dualising strategy” as an element of the occupational culture of teachers

The teacher’s job includes a variety of practices such as teaching knowledge, skills or values to pupils, building a good relationship with the pupils, collaborating with other teachers and so on. Teachers have a certain perception of the ways that they should pursue these practices, coordinate them, work them out and grasp the facts regarding practice. The contents of the perceptions (=knowledge) may be or may not be clearly expressed in words. Some explicit or tacit knowledge about teachers’ practices can be shared among certain teachers rather than be individually learned through teaching experience. The occupational culture of teachers can be conceived primarily as such knowledge about the above-mentioned teachers’ practices although it is embodied in the perception of the teaching profession, ways of forming a group of teachers, “teacherish” patterns of behaviour and thinking concerning areas beyond their jobs. If the core image of the occupational culture of teachers can be understood in this way, what does teachers’ culture include?

As already mentioned in (2) of this section, the way in which professional identity is divided into two dimensions can be regarded as an element of the occupational culture of teachers. Thus, by dividing professional identity into the component of “stable professional identity” and the component of “disturbed professional identity” and by regarding some difficulties in teaching as those that teachers cannot manage through their educational activities, teachers can keep at least one of the dimensions less affected by difficulties. In this way, teachers can erect a barrier around these problems in their consciousness so that their professional identity does not critically waver due to these problems. Such a way of defending their professional identity could be termed a “dualising strategy” for the acquisition, ensuring and defence of professional identity.

According to this survey, it is clear that professional identity consists of two dimensions, “stable” and “disturbed”. The very composition of the professional identity of teachers with these two dimensions, in so far as these are seen in (2)-(A),(B), implies that teachers generally adopt a somehow dualising strategy and share this element of the occupational culture of teachers. However, in Japanese teachers, this is found most clearly. As seen in (2)-(C), in the case of Japanese teachers, such dualising of professional identity and their perception of their schools’ situation correspond to each other in a fairly clear-cut manner. Therefore, the dualising strategy is relatively more developed in Japan than in the other four countries. The lower level of Japanese teachers’ burnout mentioned in (3) might be partly because of they have the most developed dualising strategy as an element of occupational culture of the teachers among the five countries. On the other hand, in the case of UK teachers, their dualising strategy is less developed than the Japanese so that the difficulties that they confront in school life strongly affect the “stable” aspect of their professional identity as referred to in (2)-(D). This might partly result in their higher level of burnout. According to the discussion in (2)-(A),(B), neither the “stable” nor “disturbed” components of the professional identity of American teachers include what has been pointed out, so their professional identity does not seem to be clearly dualised in this sense.

V. Professional Identity and Perceptions of the Teaching Profession

Next, let us move on to the relationship between professional identity and perception of the teaching profession. The questionnaire includes the question group, “Perceptions of the teaching profession”. The seventeen question items in it concern the degree of agreement or disagreement regarding perceptions of the teaching profession suggested in the items. The responses to these questions represent the ways in which the respondents perceive the teaching profession in general on the one hand, and the ways in which teachers experience the teaching profession as pursuing their daily teaching practice on the other. In this way, these responses closely relate to professional identity.

Table 6 shows the question items as classified into three groups: <A: the items to which teachers’ responses in the five countries share a tendency; <B: the items to which the responses can be classified into subgroups; and <C: the items to which teachers’ responses in a particular country show outstanding features.

First of all, the items in Group A will be discussed below, and their results are shown in Table 7. The rates of positive answers such as “Strongly agree” and “Agree” to all these items are above 80% so it is possible to grasp the core perception of the teaching profession.

In the item, “(3) Requires a lot of mental energy”, there is a contrast in its response rates of “Strongly agree” between those in the western countries (Sweden, the UK and the US) and those in the Asian countries (Japan and Korea). The rates of the former countries range from 80% to 90%, while the rates of the latter countries are 40% or 50%. However, the total rates of positive answers are almost same in all the five countries, so teachers in all the countries perceive their job as burdensome.

On the other hand, more than 90% of teachers in the five countries find it “(4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children” and “(5) Worthwhile” so they give their jobs a positive meaning while regarding it as burdensome.

TABLE 6. THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE COUNTRIES ACCORDING TO THE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION ON PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

A. The items to which teachers' responses in the five countries share a tendency	B. The items to which the responses can be classified into subgroups	C. The items to which teachers' responses in a particular country show outstanding features
(3) Requires a lot of mental energy. (Sweden,UK & US>Japan&Korea) (4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children. (US>Japan,UK&Sweden>Korea) (5) Worthwhile. (US>UK,Japan&Sweden>Korea) (8) Requires highly specialized knowledge and skills. (US>UK>Sweden&Japan>Korea) (9) Plays an important role in social sustenance and development. (US>UK&Swedem>Korea&Japan) (16) Possible to connect with children in an emotional sense (US>Korea&UK>Japan&Sweden) (17) Distinguishable from other occupations for its emphasis on following and supporting the development of human-beings.	(1) Highly respected in society. (Japan,Korea.&US>UK&Sweden) (7) Possible to get the job done according to his/her own principles. (US,Sweden&UK>Korea&Japan) (15) Requires the development of interpersonal relations with other teachers and other community members. (US&UK>Korea, Japan &Sweden)	(2) Economically advantaged. [Japan] (6) Requires a sprit of self-sacrifice. [Japan] (11) Requires attitudes of respect for given rules and procedures. [Japan] (12) Possible to express his/her personality. [Korea] (13) Requires accountability for practical success. [Korea] (14) Requires commitment to the assigned role as a teacher. [Japan]

The teachers in the five countries share a perception of their profession and its social significance. Eighty or 90% of the teachers in all the countries agree with “(8) Requires highly specialised knowledge and skills” and “(9) Plays an important role in social sustenance and development” so most teachers in all the counties perceive their job as requiring high specialisation and as significant for the sustenance and development of society.

Finally, the shared views on the teaching profession among the five counties are that the central characteristic of the job is to have personal contact with pupils. The positive response rates to “(16) Possible to connect with children in an emotional sense” and “(17) Distinguishable from other occupations for its emphasis on following and supporting the development of human beings” account for about 80% or 90%, and this reflects the feature of the teaching profession as a human-related service job.

Table 8 shows the correlation coefficient by country between an individual's principal component scores of the two components regarding professional identity and answers to the question group, “Perceptions of the teaching profession”.¹¹ Among the items mentioned above

¹¹ In the question group, “Perceptions of the teaching profession”, the respondents choose one from four scale alternatives: “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree”. In addition to this, the method of answering these questions is the same as Table 5, so see Note-9.

TABLE 7. CROSS-TABULATION BY NATION; THE RESULT OF THE QUESTION ITEMS REGARDING PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION TO WHICH THE RESPONSES OF THE TEACHERS IN THE FIVE COUNTRIES SHOW A SIMILAR TENDENCY

item	answer	Japan	Korea	Sweden	UK	US
(3) Requires a lot of mental energy.	Strongly agree	53.8%	40.5%	91.1%	82.6%	84.9%
	Agree	43.0%	56.0%	8.9%	17.4%	15.1%
	Disagree	2.9%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly Disagree	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children.	Strongly agree	44.6%	26.0%	33.7%	40.4%	60.4%
	Agree	52.2%	63.0%	61.4%	50.9%	35.8%
	Disagree	3.1%	10.7%	5.0%	7.0%	2.8%
	Strongly Disagree	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	1.8%	0.9%
(5) Worthwhile.	Strongly agree	42.8%	27.9%	34.7%	55.7%	81.1%
	Agree	52.5%	64.3%	60.4%	40.9%	18.9%
	Disagree	4.3%	7.5%	5.0%	3.5%	0.0%
	Strongly Disagree	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(8) Requires highly specialized knowledge and skills.	Strongly agree	24.3%	19.4%	27.7%	49.1%	61.3%
	Agree	61.4%	66.3%	64.4%	42.1%	35.8%
	Disagree	13.9%	13.9%	7.9%	8.8%	2.8%
	Strongly Disagree	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(9) Plays an important role in social sustenance and development.	Strongly agree	33.0%	33.6%	50.5%	58.0%	74.0%
	Agree	57.5%	60.9%	48.5%	36.6%	25.0%
	Disagree	9.0%	4.9%	1.0%	4.5%	1.0%
	Strongly Disagree	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%
(16) Possible to connect with children in an emotional sense.	Strongly agree	20.0%	48.9%	18.4%	41.6%	61.0%
	Agree	63.4%	49.5%	72.4%	54.0%	37.1%
	Disagree	16.3%	1.6%	8.2%	3.5%	1.9%
	Strongly Disagree	0.3%	0.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.0%
(17) Distinguishable from other occupations for its emphasis on following and supporting the development of human beings.	Strongly agree	48.0%	58.8%	36.7%	46.9%	68.6%
	Agree	43.2%	38.6%	54.1%	42.5%	29.5%
	Disagree	8.3%	2.6%	8.2%	10.6%	1.9%
	Strongly Disagree	0.5%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%

to which more teachers in the five countries equally agree and which seemingly consist of the central image of teaching, the items, “(4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children” and “(5) Worthwhile”, most closely correlate with the “stable” aspect of professional identity in each country. Although it is natural that “(5) Worthwhile” is similar to one of the questions, which is used for extracting the component and shows high loadings, “stable professional identity”, it presumes that “(4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children” is a general experience among teachers when they fulfil their job as a teacher. Connecting with children as clients of teachers is one of the important factors helping the professional identity of teachers in the five countries to remain stable.

In particular, UK teachers clearly show this tendency so that they can presumably manage to keep their professional identity stable by maintaining a positive stance or view on their clients despite the fragile “stable” aspect of their professional identity that is easily swayed by the difficult situations that they confront at school.

TABLE 8. CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BY NATION BETWEEN THE TWO COMPONENTS PERCEPTIONS OF THE

item		Japan	
		1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: Unstable Professional Identity
Perceptions of the teaching profession	(1) Highly respected in society	0.296	-0.013
	(2) Economically advantaged	0.081	0.088
	(3) Requires a lot of mental energy	-0.048	0.129
	(4) Possible to take delight in spending time with children	0.383	0.003
	(5) Worthwhile	0.427	0.020
	(6) Requires a sprit of self-sacrifice	-0.090	0.170
	(7) Possible to get the job done according to his/her own principles	0.190	-0.082
	(8) Requires highly specialized knowledge and skills	0.139	0.163
	(9) Plays an important role in social sustenance and development	0.177	0.027
	(10) Requires a high ethical sense	0.143	0.080
	(11) Requires attitudes of respect for given rules and procedures	0.089	0.098
	(12) Possible to express his/her personality	0.318	-0.072
	(13) Requires accountability for practical success	0.086	0.089
	(14) Requires commitment to the assigned role as a teacher	0.070	0.056
	(15) Requires the development of interpersonal relations with other teachers and other community members	0.188	0.046
	(16) Possible to connect with children in an emotional sense	0.202	0.104
	(17) Distinguishable from other occupations for its emphasis on following and supporting the development of human beings	0.146	0.094

VI. Concerning Educational Reform

(1) Professional identity and agreement or disagreement with policies relating to school improvement and educational reform

Finally let us consider the relationship between professional identity and agreement/disagreement with school improvement and educational reform. Table 9 shows the correlation coefficient by country between an individual's principal component scores of the two components regarding professional identity and the answer to the question group, "Opinions on school improvement" and "Opinions on educational reforms".¹² Looking at the general

¹² In the question group, "Opinions on school improvement", the respondents chose their answer from among five alternatives: "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Want the maintenance of the status quo", "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree". These alternatives are counted as 5 points, 4 points, 3 points, 2 points and 1 point, respectively. The question group, "Opinions on educational reforms", include the alternative, "There is no such reform", and this is treated as "a missing value", and the other alternatives of "Agree", "Not applicable" and "Disagree" are counted as 3, 2 and 1 point, respectively. In addition to this, the method of analysis follows that in Table 5, so see Note-9.

OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND THE RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION GROUP ON
TEACHING PROFESSION

Korea		Sweden		UK		US	
2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: Unstable Professional Identity	1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: Unstable Professional Identity
0.399	-0.061	0.094	0.203	0.259	-0.019	0.129	<u>-0.176</u>
0.218	0.038	0.023	-0.024	<u>0.187</u>	0.094	0.037	0.107
0.134	0.049	-0.163	-0.026	0.096	-0.012	0.018	0.152
0.405	-0.051	0.376	<u>-0.156</u>	0.583	-0.094	0.395	0.077
0.464	-0.116	0.423	0.032	0.578	<u>-0.234</u>	0.404	<u>-0.158</u>
0.154	0.123	0.092	0.098	0.221	-0.028	-0.060	0.107
0.320	-0.066	0.096	<u>-0.170</u>	0.267	-0.085	0.243	0.050
<u>0.176</u>	-0.023	0.005	0.004	-0.027	<u>-0.244</u>	<u>0.159</u>	<u>-0.197</u>
0.253	-0.095	0.014	0.016	0.294	<u>-0.214</u>	0.143	-0.001
<u>0.195</u>	0.006	0.246	0.053	0.299	-0.023	-0.001	-0.034
0.126	0.143	0.042	0.015	0.295	<u>-0.158</u>	0.021	0.043
0.259	-0.039	0.052	<u>-0.245</u>	0.341	<u>-0.194</u>	0.207	<u>-0.244</u>
-0.113	<u>0.187</u>	0.092	0.024	0.107	-0.112	0.137	-0.106
<u>0.165</u>	-0.039	0.215	-0.034	0.380	-0.041	0.210	-0.051
0.265	0.082	-0.012	0.020	0.349	<u>-0.322</u>	<u>0.182</u>	-0.067
0.253	0.094	0.033	0.204	0.467	<u>-0.320</u>	0.228	-0.094
0.148	0.080	0.207	0.122	0.263	<u>-0.284</u>	0.099	0.063

tendency of the answers to these question item groups in the five countries, there is a stronger correlation between the conditions of professional identity and agreement/disagreement with school improvement and educational reform in the western countries (the UK, Sweden and the US) than in the two East-Asian countries (Japan and Korea). Thus, compared with teachers in the two East-Asian countries, the fact that teachers in the three western countries (the UK, Sweden and the US) have distinct opinions on policies regarding school improvement and educational reforms is more likely to become an element of their professional identity. One reason is arguably that in the former countries, the process of policy on school improvement and educational reforms tend to more strongly affect their position as teachers and that this is reflected in their subjectivity.

(2) How do the respondents among the five countries see current school improvement and state educational policies?

If so, such a tendency will be naturally reflected on the difference among the countries in how these teachers see on-going school improvement and education reform policies. Now, I briefly introduce our analysis of the teacher's comments on education reform collected

TABLE 9. CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BY NATION BETWEEN THE TWO COMPONENTS
OPINIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

		Japan	
		1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: UnStable Professional Identity
Opinions of school improvement	(1) Raising academic achievement among pupils	0.091	0.030
	(2) Upgrading curricular standards	0.109	0.042
	(3) More school festivals and events	0.168	-0.012
	(4) More extra-curricular activities	0.153	-0.014
	(5) Implementing tighter school discipline	0.101	0.065
	(6) Reducing class size	0.013	0.086
	(7) Reducing the number of classes required to teach	-0.107	0.060
	(8) Encouraging pupil initiative	0.059	0.041
	(9) Listening to pupils' opinions for school improvements	0.079	0.072
	(10) Listening to parental opinions for school improvements	0.095	0.034
	(11) Cooperating with external advisory or professional organizations	0.044	0.100
	(12) Enhancing the quality of school buildings and facilities	0.042	0.090
	(13) Enhancing teaching resources and materials	0.062	0.100
Opinions on Educational Reform	(1) National curriculum reform	-0.094	0.039
	(2) Reform of pupils' academic performance assessment	-0.123	0.083
	(3) More local control for each school's administration	-0.061	0.047
	(4) Increase in the power of external evaluations	-0.145	0.043
	(5) More control for the LEA as separate from the State	0.013	0.025
	(6) Open enrollment in public schools (parental choice)	-0.096	-0.024
	(7) Increasing parental and community involvement	-0.108	-0.015
	(8) Reform of pre-service training for prospective teachers	-0.151	-0.032
	(9) Reform of professional development for teachers	-0.084	0.004
	(10) Efficient operations of teachers' working hours	-0.065	-0.020
	(11) More control over teachers' professional work	-0.097	-0.035
	(12) Reform of performance evaluation systems for teachers	-0.130	-0.010
	(13) Improving school buildings, facilities and equipment	-0.125	-0.025
	(14) Reform of promotion system for teachers	-0.159	-0.041
	(15) Identification and dismissal of incompetent teachers	-0.209	0.020

through the open questions. The respondents' details are as follows: Japan 217 (21.4%), South Korea 42 (13.3%), Sweden 12 (11.7%), the UK 18 (15.5%), and the US 41(38.0%). These comments are classified according to their contents and then counted. In some cases, one reply is included in two or more classifications. A noticeable common feature among these five countries is that the number of disapprovals of current education reform overwhelmingly outnumbers the number of approvals.

How we classify these comments of Japanese teachers is showed in Table 10. As a whole, there are many commentaries on requirements for "Respect for the opinions of on-site

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AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Korea		Sweden		UK		US	
2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: UnStable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: UnStable Professional Identity	2nd component: Stable Professional Identity	3rd component: UnStable Professional Identity	1st component: Stable Professional Identity	2nd component: UnStable Professional Identity
-0.025	0.090	<u>-0.178</u>	0.230	0.160	-0.245	0.017	-0.209
-0.061	0.006	0.045	0.074	0.179	-0.226	0.082	0.031
0.034	-0.038	-0.043	0.005	0.236	-0.046	0.009	0.091
0.051	-0.029	0.044	-0.096	0.136	-0.115	0.079	-0.005
-0.094	-0.080	<u>-0.182</u>	0.133	<u>-0.169</u>	0.081	0.038	0.251
0.063	0.060	-0.121	0.062	<u>-0.184</u>	0.083	0.089	0.224
0.117	0.085	<u>-0.153</u>	-0.094	-0.112	0.316	-0.071	0.274
0.157	0.123	0.062	-0.068	0.181	-0.133	0.073	-0.097
0.195	0.084	0.183	-0.128	0.258	-0.079	0.181	-0.063
0.066	0.073	0.141	-0.011	0.212	-0.052	0.258	-0.006
0.136	0.044	-0.130	0.115	0.185	<u>-0.187</u>	0.213	-0.038
0.010	0.068	<u>-0.181</u>	-0.009	0.041	-0.096	0.113	-0.065
0.063	0.114	-0.092	-0.136	0.051	-0.061	0.024	0.025
-0.087	-0.051	-0.017	-0.052	-0.112	-0.011	0.170	0.102
-0.041	-0.014	-0.039	0.100	<u>-0.176</u>	0.189	0.120	<u>-0.169</u>
-0.145	-0.135	0.010	0.096	<u>-0.179</u>	<u>-0.176</u>	0.067	0.081
-0.050	0.029	<u>-0.174</u>	<u>-0.184</u>	-0.052	<u>-0.195</u>	-0.058	0.020
-0.118	0.116	-0.083	0.081	-0.126	<u>-0.181</u>	<u>-0.194</u>	-0.076
0.073	0.018	0.012	0.217	-0.080	-0.067	0.052	0.099
-0.090	-0.039	<u>-0.157</u>	0.061	-0.103	-0.017	0.045	-0.110
0.060	-0.037	-0.262	0.138	-0.073	-0.040	0.087	-0.040
0.012	0.038	-0.274	-0.109	-0.058	0.042	<u>-0.155</u>	-0.108
-0.060	0.021	0.056	0.088	<u>-0.188</u>	0.088	-0.008	-0.215
0.045	-0.035	0.107	-0.030	-0.285	0.070	-0.002	0.013
0.032	-0.006	-0.014	-0.240	-0.128	-0.060	-0.113	0.121
0.043	-0.021	-0.081	-0.136	-0.035	-0.119	0.091	<u>-0.178</u>
0.069	-0.056	0.146	-0.048	<u>-0.196</u>	0.122	0.088	-0.256
0.124	-0.073	0.001	-0.204	-0.115	-0.124	0.203	-0.026

teachers" (Classification 1), "Improvement of a teacher's work environment" (Classification 2-4), and "Abolition of tight management, respect for teacher's autonomy" (Classification 2-5).

Descriptions of disapprovals made by these teachers share similar discourses. They express the feeling of difficulty that most on-site teachers share, while analyzing rather objectively that their feelings and demands may not be understood or supported by the public. For example, a simple and clear agenda such as a reduction in class-size would be widely approved. On the other hand, it would be difficult to gain support from the public over more

TABLE 10. CLASSIFICATION OF JAPANESE RESPONDENTS' COMMENTARY ON ON-GOING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND EDUCATION REFORM
(Some comments are classified for 2 or more items) (total)

Approval (5)	About the school	Improvements of the outdated school system /Promotion of external evaluation and disclosure	2	5
	About the teacher	Rewarding efforts /Ability enhancement /Better teacher training /Increasing the sense of trust among parents and local communities	3	
Disapproval (270)	The method of "reform", and its basic stance			56
		Disregard for on-site teachers' opinions, top-down reform	34	
		Disregard for actual conditions of children and schools	8	
		Inconsistent change of reform policy, chaos at the school level	11	
		Fast-paced, short-duration reform	3	
	(2) Contents of education reform			194
	(2-1) Curriculum and academic evaluation			34
		New official curriculum guidelines (e.g. integrated subject study)	24	
		Disproportionate emphasis on academic performance and elitism	10	
	(2-2) School time schedule			14
		Five-day week system (Weekdays have become busier than before.)	9	
		Semester system	5	
	(2-3) School organization			6
		Disclosure (e.g. open school, external evaluation) /Lack of schools' discretion /Strengthening authority of the headteacher	4	
		School council system and school board system	2	
	(2-4) Teacher's work environment and work conditions			69
		Too many students in a class	23	
		Busyness and overwhelming workload	28	
		Teaching staff shortage	16	
		Lack of resources for 'Education for Special Needs'	2	
	(2-5) Professional autonomy			40
		Suppressed by tight control, Lack of autonomy and respect	10	
		Low trust in the teaching profession by the administration	7	
		Teacher evaluation system	17	
		Compulsory in-service training	6	
	(2-6) Educational budget and other resources			25
		Insufficient educational budget	14	
		Poor school facilities	9	
		Widening of regional gaps	2	
	(2-7) Other school issues			6
	Extra-curriculum activities in junior high-school	3		
	Teacher recruiting system	3		
(3) Other issues related to education reform			20	
	Difficulties in dealing with children, Sharing of educational roles	17		
	Irresponsible attitudes of the mass media	3		

complicated issues in terms of improving teachers' working conditions for better educational practices; respect, freedom, autonomy, etc.

We would like to summarize the features of each country. South Korean teachers frequently mention what are corresponding to Items (1), and (2-1)~(2-6) in Table 10. Compared with South Korean teachers, there are fewer Japanese teachers who regard relief from the severe entrance examination race to be a priority issue. Many Swedish teachers express concerns about defective educational finance devolution that may harm the quality of school education, and the mismatch between immigrant labour policies and educational policies. As for the UK, teachers often criticize excessive national examination opportunities, the pressure for higher academic achievement, the low trust in teachers and the excessive meddling in school by parents. There are, however, a few approvals for the current education reform where inspections by OFSTED could positively influence school improvements. Teachers in the US (the respondents are limited to only two school districts of one state) express negative views about the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), indicating concerns about the influence of tight education control by the Federal Government. Inclusion policies, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and the requirement for students' higher academic achievement are also unpopular among teachers due to the lack of resources and a too-heavy workload. An American teacher commented that teachers' performance could be improved if there were smaller classes, reduction of duties, more financial support and respect for teachers. Another noticeable point is that teachers in the US and Sweden often referred to immigrant-related issues.

Conclusion: The Possibility of Alternative Discourse in the Teachers' Field

As we can see in former Table 10, the discourses of teachers do not focus on the "professional development of teachers" that strengthens the reform power of each government. The discourses of teachers are spreading in several directions, criticizing contemporary education reform, and especially defending their status, position and professionalism.

However, their directions are also, particularly in Japan, oriented to the inner side of the teaching field, and their level of legitimacy is somewhat lower than that of the reform, "professional development of teachers" and so on.

We performed principal component analysis on teachers' "Opinions on school improvement (1)-(13)" in former Table 9 and found "the component of making a democratic school" to be first in every country, having the highest explanatory rate of all the data differentiation. It means that in every country, teachers are highly conscious of the issues of democratizing the process of school administration or school pedagogy, such as the participation of parents, students and the community in the process of administration or pedagogy.

In seeking an alternative discourse of teachers that is not weaker than that of the government side, it is necessary to put the professionalism of teachers in a more democratic context, which will allow the teaching profession to change the direction of its discourses from the inner to the outer and also to reclaim professional development for the local stakeholders of the school.

"Democratic professionalism" addressed by Whitty (2002) and Whitty & Wisby (2006) might realise the possibility of an alternative discourse in the Japanese reform context. The

teachers' field in Japan has reached a crossroads, and what and how the new phase of their culture and professionalism should be constructed must be determined.

[Hasegawa wrote Section 2-6, and Kudomi wrote the Introduction, Section 1 and the Conclusion]

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