

Toward compulsory subject Geography in senior high school education

ASAKAWA, Toshio^{1*}

¹Saitama Prefectural Urawa Girls' Upper Secondary School

The increase of Natural disasters, economic globalization and the decline of local community have become hot topics. All of these topics are included in geography education. Therefore geography is very important in today's society.

However currently Japanese high school national geography-history studies curriculum only requires World History as compulsory. Geography and Japanese History are elective. Because of this, only half of the students learn Geography.

Subcommittee of Geography and History Education in high school, Science Council of Japan, announced a proposal *Creation of new high school* at August 2011.

The proposal emphasizes the following three points.

First; Geography should be a compulsory subject with History.

Second; it should focus on developing practical skill such as map and atlas use..

Third; Provide students with geospatial information. We should develop a curriculum that is skill-based rather than knowledge-based.

The proposal showed a draft of the new compulsory subject "Fundamental Geography". Researchers and teachers in cooperated to create the draft. The content of Fundamental Geography is shown below.

I . Features and issues of the modern world

1. Modern World from a Global Perspective
2. Diverse Natural Environments and Cultures of Different Regions
3. Global Economy/Society and Various Issues

II . Features of communities and local area development

1. Features of communities
2. Various local geographic issues and local area development

Two schools have been conducting research of Fundamental Geography.

In Nihonbashi Jogakukan High School studies were performed in 2011-2013.

Four main problems have been revealed.

- (1)How often should field research be included in a syllabus.
- (2)What kind of additional training teachers need.
- (3)What method and evaluation criterion are necessary to assess inquiry learning such as local area development project.
- (4)How elements of regional geography should be included.

Further research has been carried out by Kobe University attached Secondary School.

Keywords: Education in senior high school, New geography subject, National Curriculum Standards, Becoming a compulsory subject