

CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAM BASED ON A MULTISTAGE MODEL FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN JAPAN

KUMIKO INAGAKI

Meiji University
E-mail: kinagaki@meiji.ac.jp

Abstract - The era of the “100-year lifespan” has arrived in Japan. This development will require people to restructure their lives away from what has been the standard lifestyle for the Japanese: namely, the “three-stage life model” of “education, work, and retirement.” In this study, we developed a career guidance program based on the “multistage model for life” proposed by Gratton and Scott, in which individuals experience various stages of life in their own time, depending on their circumstances. The program was implemented for university students in a class setting, and its effectiveness was verified. The classes consisted of workshops designed to raise students’ awareness through active learning and interaction with each other. To measure the effectiveness of the class, a questionnaire survey was administered both before and after the class. The results revealed a statistically significant improvement in scores. The class addressed the students’ mindset, creating awareness regarding how they could live through a 100-year lifespan in a positive manner. These results suggest that the class achieved its intended effect.

Keyword - 100 Year Lifespan, Career Guidance, Japan, Life Stage Model.

I. INTRODUCTION

The era of the “100-year lifespan” has arrived in Japan. According to one source [1] (see Fig. 1), a child born in Japan in 2007 is assumed to have a 50% chance of living beyond the age of 107.

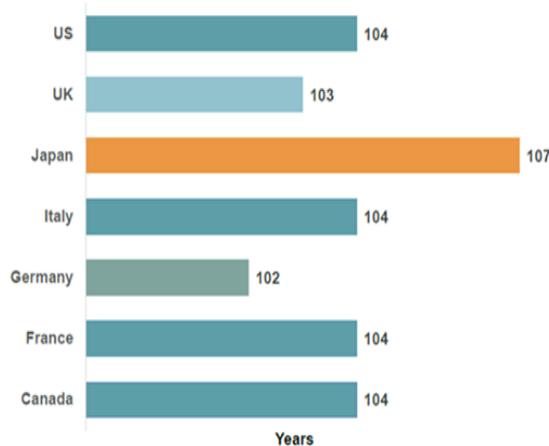


Fig. 1 Oldest age that is expected to be reached by 50% of all babies born in 2007
(Source: [1])

Entering the era of the 100-year lifespan will require people to restructure their lives away from what has been the standard lifestyle for the Japanese: namely, the “three-stage life model” of “education, work, and retirement.” Recently, Gratton and Scott proposed a replacement for the education-work-retirement life model: namely, the “multistage model for life,” in which individuals experience various stages in their own time, depending on their circumstances, throughout their lives, over a span of 100 years [2]. As we enter the era of the 100-year lifespan, it is indispensable to expand the minds of young people

using education that, in present-day Japan, urges career development by fostering the abilities and attitudes necessary for the social and vocational independence of each individual. Moreover, Japanese universities are required to support career development to ensure that students increase their career options, nurture the career self-reliance of each individual, and have a positive outlook in life. In this study, based on the “multistage model for life” proposed by Gratton and Scott in *The 100-Year Life* [2], a career guidance program was developed and implemented for Japanese undergraduate students. The present study verified the effects of the program.

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The program had two objectives: (1) helping students create an image of their lives, assuming that they will have a 100-year lifespan; (2) promoting students’ mindsets and making them aware of how they could live through a 100-year lifespan in a positive manner. In order to meet the program objectives, we conducted a 100-minute session that consisted of workshops designed to raise students’ awareness through active learning and interaction with each other.

Table I depicts the contents of the session. At the beginning of the class, students first learned about the “multistage model” through a lecture. Simultaneously, they also learned about the required tangible and intangible assets that constitute a person’s life. Further, they learned about three new ways of living: explorer, independent-producer, and portfolio-worker. After that, they participated in three tasks. The first task was to create an image of their lives by assuming the three stages of education- work-retirement. This task intended to make students aware that the conventional perception of a fixed career is not necessarily the only

option available to them, by making them consider their own careers and expanding on the idea of creating their identities. The second task was to create another image of their lives based on the multistage model, assuming that they would live to the age of 100. We hoped that students would understand both the conventional and new perceptions of careers, realize the limitations of the former, and increase their sense of ownership by independently forging their own careers. The third task was to think about the changes in tangible and intangible assets when living a multistage life. Doing so gave the students an opportunity to expand their self-perception of their careers by applying the new career concepts while simultaneously considering the use of both tangible and intangible assets. Finally, students wrote about their reflections, and stated their impressions regarding the program.

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| <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the “multi-stage model”? • Required tangible and intangible assets of life. • New ways of living: explorer, independent-producer, portfolio-worker. <p>1st Task: Create an image of life by assuming the “three stages of education-work-retirement.”</p> <p>2nd Task: Create another image of life based on the “multi-stage model,” assuming a 100-year lifespan.</p> <p>3rd Task: Think about the changes in tangible and intangible assets when living a multistage life.</p> <p>Reflection, Q&A Survey</p> |
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TABLE 1: Contents of the Career Guidance Program

III. METHOD

Participants included 32 first- and second-year college undergraduate students (24 male and 8 female) in

Tokyo, Japan. The program was conducted in December 2017. In order to evaluate the effects of the program, a questionnaire survey, prepared with reference to the Adult Career Maturity Scale (ACMS) [3], was administered both before and after the class. The Adult Career Maturity Scale assesses career maturity, measuring how mature an individual’s thoughts are about his/her career and way of life. The ACMS is widely used to evaluate the effectiveness of career-guidance intervention in Japanese universities. The questionnaire survey comprised of 8 items containing a 5-point response format: 2 items comprised the responsibility subscale, 3 items comprised the independence subscale, and 3 items comprised the ambition subscale. The items are shown in Table II.

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| <p>Q1. My life’s level of fulfillment depends on my will and responsibility. [responsibility]</p> <p>Q2. Most of what is lacking in my life is due to the surrounding environment. (reverse) [responsibility]</p> <p>Q3. I live my life independently. [independence]</p> <p>Q4. It would be nice if I could live my life according to my surroundings. (reverse) [independence]</p> <p>Q5. I am not afraid to act in my life, even if I do not know what the outcome will be. [independence]</p> <p>Q6. I would like to further extend myself and improve myself throughout my life. [ambition]</p> <p>Q7. I often think that it would be good if I had never been born. [ambition]</p> <p>Q8. I will continue to make efforts even if I fail in the future. [ambition]</p> |
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TABLE 2: Questionnaire Survey Items

IV. RESULTS

The comparison between pre- and post-test means, standard deviations, significance levels, and effect sizes are presented in Table III. Furthermore, the changes in scores from pre- to post-test are shown in Fig. 2.

| | Pre | | Post | | <i>t</i> |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | |
| Q1. responsibility | 4.28 | 0.72 | 4.59 | 0.61 | 2.99 ** |
| Q2. responsibility | 3.09 | 1.10 | 3.44 | 1.14 | 2.16 * |
| Q3. independence | 3.34 | 1.08 | 3.72 | 0.98 | 2.44 * |
| Q4. independence | 3.66 | 1.02 | 3.91 | 1.01 | 1.31 |
| Q5. independence | 3.34 | 1.13 | 3.84 | 0.97 | 2.78 ** |
| Q6. ambition | 4.25 | 0.61 | 4.59 | 0.65 | 2.16 * |
| Q7. ambition | 3.69 | 1.18 | 4.06 | 1.01 | 2.21 * |
| Q8. ambition | 3.59 | 0.82 | 3.97 | 0.88 | 1.98 † |

† *p* < .10, **p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

TABLE 3: Changes in Scores Between Pre- and Post-Tests

A t-test of the pre- and post-test scores revealed a statistically significant improvement. The class addressed the students' mindset, making them aware of how they could live a 100-year life in a positive manner. These results suggest that the class achieved its intended effect.

V. CONCLUSION

As we live in an uncertain age involving intense changes, our prospects are unclear. The knowledge and skills we have gained will certainly not remain useful throughout a life that might last 100 years. In order to live life in a successful manner, we need to be prepared for continuous self-innovation and have the ability to develop our own future without being afraid of taking action, even when the outcome of life is

uncertain. As we enter the era of the 100-year lifespan, we believe it is extremely important to develop the minds of young people using education, increase their career options, and nurture the career self-reliance of each individual.

REFERENCE

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