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| The Entrance Exam System in Japan |
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[Abstract]

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In Japan, high school students have to take entrance exam to enter university. Those who pass entrance exam must have the ability to study and learn at university. However, some students at university of Tsukuba seem to have difficulty in studying and learning. In this essay, I will think what problem the entrance exam system in Japan has and what it should be.

What is the outline of the entrance exam system in Japan? As shown by Guest (2008), high school students take the National Center Examination for University Admissions (hereafter *Senta Shiken*), which have a great impact on determining which university exam they will take. If you score well, you will be more likely to succeed in second stage (*Niji Shiken*).

Dose the entrance exam system select high school students who will be able to learn and study at university? Mori (2002) tells that the universalization of higher education started to take place in Japan. In Japan, there have been less and less young people and it is possible for all high school students to enter university. Many universities admit high school students who did not score well on entrance exam into them. So, many students struggle with academic skills such as writing, reading and critical thinking. Universities are forced to do remedial education, focusing on academic writing, research skills, essay writing, public speaking and so on. Ikegashira, Matsumoto, and Morita (2009) referred to students being poor at English. Those who enter university through a recommendation are always not required to take English exam. In addition, while high school students mainly study grammatical points, very few have oral communication class. Thus, most of them have poor vocabulary and cannot write English sentences or communicate effectively.

What influence does entrance exam system have on high school students? Kojima, Murakawa, and Kurokami, (n.d) proved that about what students who are preparing for university or college entrance exams tend to be worried. The comments about worries posted on a mobile phone site were categorized into 13 topics and analyzed by grade to identify tendencies. The number of worries about “way of learning” stood out in every grades. Also, third-year students have many more worries about “health” than those in other grades. They have difficulty in balancing studying and sleeping and want to feel less stressed. On the other hand, as *The Japan Times* (2009) pointed out, teachers feel stressed, too. Teachers try to get as many high school students as possible to pass entrance exam and some of them take leave because of psychological and physical problem.

The entrance exam system in Japan has some problems. It does not play a role in selecting high school students who are able to learn and study at university. How good a university is depends on how good students at the university are. So, universities should carry out entrance exam to select high school students who have high academic skill so that they could become better. Also, the entrance exam system has big pressure on both high school students and teachers. Big pressure on high school students seems to let them concentrate on studying and prevent them from thinking other important things and their future. I think that if big pressure on high school students is relieved, they become to acquire culture by reading new books and novels, which is likely to be required to study and learning at university. The entrance exam system in Japan had better be for both university and high school students.

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