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Educational Support for Child Disaster Victims

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Abstract

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, many entities such as nonprofit organizations have been engaged in support activities for child disaster victims. In this paper, the targets of the analysis will primarily be financial support in the form of cash payments to reduce the financial burden of children's education, such as cash grants in the form of scholarships; payments to individual disaster victims; and loans.

In order to swiftly and fairly take immediate action during times of disaster, when the number of children in need of financial support due to a disaster affecting their guardians increases, I believe that it is important to create national minimums for measures against child poverty and financial support for children's education even in normal times. I also believe it is important to build a system with as little disparity as possible between both the municipalities in which children live and the methods of support.

Key words : Great East Japan Earthquake, Financial Support, Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies

1: The Significance of Financial Support for Child Disaster Victims

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, many entities such as nonprofit organizations (NPOs) have been engaged in support activities for child disaster victims. In this paper, the targets of the analysis will primarily be financial support in the form of cash payments to reduce the financial burden of children's education, such as cash grants in the form of scholarships; payments to individual disaster victims; and loans.

The School Expense Subsidy System is an important system that deals with child poverty by having municipalities make cash payments equivalent to expenses for school lunches, supplies, commutes, field trips, and some medical expenses, to the guardians of school-age children who are deemed to have difficulty attending school for financial reasons¹. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, when greater numbers of children had financial difficulty attending school due to the disaster and it became necessary to expand support to respond to evacuation circumstances, the Child Disaster Victim School Expense Subsidy Program was established with special temporary subsidies to cover the school expenses of child disaster victims, and since then support has been given in the form of cash payments similar to those of the School Expense Subsidy System.

In fiscal year 2012, the rate of school expense subsidies² and the number of recipients in the three prefectures hit by the disaster (Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima) and the entire nation were as follows: Iwate, 10.3% (10,639 people); Miyagi, 10.9% (20,298 people); Fukushima, 10.5% (16,656 people); nationwide, 15.6% (1,552,023 people)³. Additionally, since the Child Disaster Victim School Expense Subsidy Program was focused on the three disaster-struck prefectures, if these are added together, the proportion of total public elementary and junior high school students receiving aid for school lunches and so on in fiscal year 2012 came to 14.1% in Iwate, 17.1% in Miyagi, and 15.6% in Fukushima.

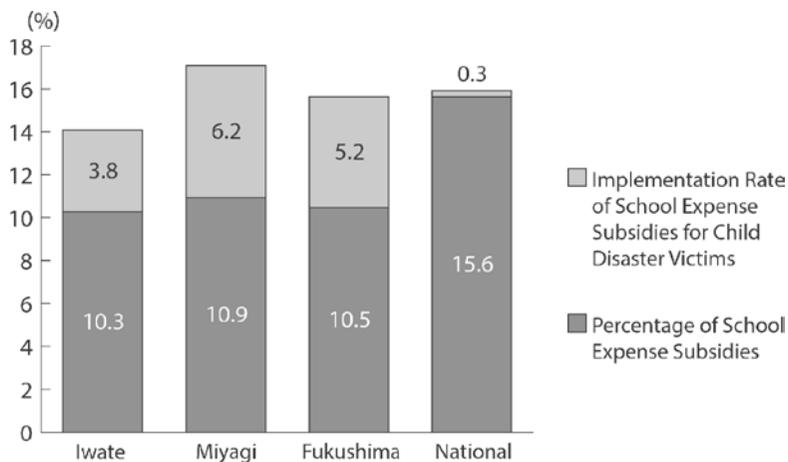
Recipients of subsidy program support in the three disaster-struck prefectures increased by 140-160%, and one in every six to seven elementary or junior high school students began to receive financial assistance. Financial support to reduce the burden of children's education on households affected by the disaster is crucial from the perspective of guaranteeing children equal access to education, even in the event of a large-scale disaster.

However, the overall level of school expense subsidies, including their rate of

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implementation for child disaster victims, in these disaster-struck prefectures has remained about the same as the nationwide average of 15.9%. When looking at this in relation to free school lunches, the rate of single-parent households, and the municipal economic power in these prefectures, it is conceivable that this situation developed because the disaster-struck prefectures' rates of school expense subsidies before the Great East Japan Earthquake were low relative to the national level (Gan 2013, pp. 25-26, 56-57). The overall level of school expense subsidies in these prefectures finally reached the national average thanks to special measures for full payment from the national budget after the disaster. If these measures had not been taken, it would have been very difficult for disaster-struck municipalities to implement school expense subsidies for child disaster victims at the current levels.

Figure 1 Percentage and Implementation Rate of School Expense Subsidies for Child Disaster Victims in the Three Prefectures Affected by the Disaster (Fiscal Year 2012)



Note: Regarding the percentages, children in need of protection or those in semi-need of protection (percentage of school expense subsidies), and children who became the recipients of school expense subsidies for child disaster victims, are the percentage accounted for, respectively, of the total number of children at public elementary and junior high schools.

Source: MEXT. “Heisei 24 nendo yohogo oyobi junyohogo jidou seitou ni tsuite [On the Number of Children in Need of or in Semi-Need of Protection],” 2014; and MEXT. “Hisai jido seito shugaku shien nado rinji tokurei kofukin, Heisei 24 nendo shikko jisseki [Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies for Child Victims of Disaster, Results of Services in 2012].” Prepared in 2014.

2: The Status of Financial Support

According to a report by the Japanese Business Federation, which I will cover in more detail later, cash donations as a part of the total assistance for people and areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake made by member businesses and organizations as of September 2011 were about ¥71.5 billion⁴. Included in the cash donations were ¥2.9 billion in scholarships and subsidies managed by members' own companies (or groups), as well as contributions sent to victims, aid money for NPO activities, etc. From the perspective of supporters, all of these cash donations were considered financial support, but in this paper, the main subject for consideration will be cash grants and loans to individual victims for alleviating the burden of children's educational expenses, in the form of scholarships and other payments.

Financial support for children can be classified by supporting body (public organizations like national and local governments, or nongovernmental organizations), by support target (age group, orphan status, etc.), and by support details (the distinction between loan payments, etc.). Below I will discuss the support targets, details, and methods for each of the two types of supporting body, national and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations.

3: Support by National and Local Governments

First, regarding support by national and local governments, I will discuss support for elementary and secondary education (up to high school) and that for higher education (university, etc.) separately. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) offered networking aid through the "Great East Japan Earthquake Children's Learning Support Portal Site," to mediate the exchange of information between the support offered by each group, whether public or private, and the needs of children in affected areas.

3.1 Support for Elementary and Secondary Education (up to High School)

Regarding the acknowledgement and provision of school supplies and lunch expenses to children in need because of the disaster, MEXT appealed to all boards of education for swift and flexible action⁵. Furthermore, the ministry created a Q&A document about the flexible operation of kindergarten attendance promotion programs and the flexible acceptance of child disaster victims into public schools, and distributed it to the relevant boards of education⁶.

However, immediately following the disaster, responses differed depending on locality, and under the Disaster Relief Act some municipalities prioritized the provision of school supplies, some had set up school expense subsidies prior to the disaster, and some decided their response after arrangements were made for revised subsidy budgets, which I will mention later (Suzuki 2012, p.125).

Furthermore, since no specific details were provided about the “swift and flexible responses to the greatest extent possible,” there were cases in which municipalities’ responses were no different than usual, even toward those who had evacuated as instructed with nothing but the clothes on their backs (National School Administrative Staff Institution Research Society 2012, p.133).

3.1.1 Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies for Child Disaster Victims

In order to support kindergarten and school attendance of children from households facing financial problems due to the Great East Japan Earthquake, in existing School Expense Subsidies programs, the new burdens on prefectures that were anticipated because of increases in recipients and costs, started being backed in total by the national budget. In the revised budget for the 2011 school year, “special school expense temporary subsidies for child disaster victims” (hereinafter “subsidies”) of about ¥41.1 billion were issued to the prefectures, and in order to make high school free of charge they were increased and the funds were managed separately from the “high school student support funds” already in place in the prefectures.

Thanks these funds, as of fiscal year 2014 the following support has been given: (1) kindergarten attendance promotion programs (kindergarten expense subsidy programs for child disaster victims) that reduce daycare and kindergarten enrollment fees; (2) school expense subsidy programs (school expense subsidy programs for child disaster victims)

that assist with costs of school supplies, commuting (including fees for school bus services operated by municipalities), and school lunches for elementary and junior high school students; (3) scholarship programs for senior high school students; (4) cost-reduction programs for tuition fees at private high schools; (5) school attendance promotion programs (school attendance promotion programs for special support education for child disaster victims) that assist with necessary costs for children attending special-needs schools; and (6) cost-reduction programs for vocational school tuition fees.

Thanks to special measures for full-sum payments by the national treasury through the establishment of funds, the municipal burden of supporting child disaster victims was alleviated. I brought up examples of school expense subsidies in Section 1, but to disaster-struck municipalities and child disaster victims, the special measures paid for in full by the national treasury were very significant. Furthermore, in addition to existing programs, it became possible to support general courses at special vocational schools and cost-reduction programs for vocational school tuition.

The reason that these were implemented in a fund system was that the Great East Japan Earthquake was an unprecedented disaster, and in the immediate aftermath it was difficult to determine the scope of the necessary programs to support child disaster victims. Furthermore, from the refugee situation in each prefecture, and in particular that caused by the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant accident, it was explained that the necessary sums for four years of program implementation via a fund system for urgent issues were secured in order to allow municipalities to unilaterally implement programs that guaranteed opportunities for education and school expense subsidies to children⁷.

In great disasters before the Great East Japan Earthquake, school expense subsidies were implemented through measures in the annual budget without needing a fund system; also, through the Disaster Relief Act, payment in kind for school supplies was available. For example, after the Great Kobe Earthquake of 1995, child disaster victim educational subsidies (52,940 subsidies, ¥1.74 billion) and special education funds for child disaster victims (466 funds, ¥350 million) were distributed from donated money⁸.

Regarding support this time around, about seven months after the disaster struck, the following issues were recognized by MEXT staff⁹:

- Municipalities themselves were victims of the disaster and some staff were missing; detailed information about program implementation policy was not disseminated smoothly.

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- After responding to initial demands from municipalities, the response to new requests to accompany changing needs did not go smoothly.
- Regarding the naming of “special school expense temporary subsidies for child disaster victims” and all kinds of notices about the school expense subsidies, it was unclear if “infants” and “kindergarteners” were included, and officials lodged complaints.
- Coordination between concerned departments and divisions that hold jurisdiction over the system is essential even in normal times.
- When implementing programs, it is necessary to adequately account for the assembly schedules of each municipality because approval is needed from their legislative assemblies.

However, they also acknowledged that “the practical application of existing systems for school expense subsidies had no major problems in municipalities, and was effective while also leading to swift responses.”

In the 2012 fiscal year budget, based on requests from municipalities that were expected to have insufficient funding during that year, the necessary expenses (about ¥330 million) were allocated, reaching a total of about ¥44.4 billion (full payment by the national treasury). According to MEXT, the results (preliminary figures) up to the 2013 fiscal year showed an implementation rate of 66.7%. The number of recipients was about 68,000 in 2011, 58,000 in 2012, and 52,000 in 2013, showing a downward trend. Of the three prefectures affected by the disaster, Miyagi’s implementation results accounted for, as a part of the total, 53.7% of recipients and 62.6% of implementation result financials sums, far surpassing those of Fukushima and Iwate Prefectures (see Table 1)¹⁰.

3.1.2 Assessment of Subsidy Program Contents

The “Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies for Child Disaster Victims” were featured in the “2014 Fiscal Year Reconstruction Agency Administrative Program Review Open Process” and received an assessment from outside expert committee members that stated that “radical improvement to the entire program” was necessary¹¹.

In the assessments of the program contents, the following comments were given:

- These are important programs from the perspective of guaranteeing school attendance opportunities in areas struck by the disaster, but in order ensure a soft

Table 1 Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies for Child Disaster Victims
(Records from 2011 - 2013 Fiscal Years) (Preliminary Figures)

Recipients by Location (Total Recipients from 2011 - 2013 Fiscal Years)

Program Title	Recipients	Iwate	Miyagi	Fukushima	(Number of People)
					[Preliminary Figures]
					Other Prefectures
Kindergarten Attendance Support Programs for Child Disaster Victims	31,365	842	21,118	5,266	4,139
School Expense Subsidy Programs for Child Disaster Victims	91,520	11,960	34,473	24,901	20,186
-Number of Recipient Children in Elementary School	60,185	7,177	21,991	15,992	15,025
-Number of Recipient Children in Junior High School	31,335	4,783	12,482	8,909	5,161
Scholarship Programs	20,702	573	16,197	3,873	59
Cost-Reduction Programs for Private School Tuition Fees	27,881	631	20,520	4,026	2,704
School Attendance Promotion Programs for Special-Needs Education for Child Disaster Victims	1,068	1	334	380	353
Cost-Reduction Programs for Vocational School Tuition Fees	5,891	381	3,260	634	1,616
Total	178,427	14,388	95,902	39,080	29,057
Percentage of Total		8.1	53.7	21.9	16.3

Total Implemented Amounts, Results for 2011-2013 Fiscal Years (in Millions of Yen)

Program Title	Total Sum Results of Implementation for FY 2011-2013 (Total Funds Used)	Iwate	Miyagi	Fukushima	Other Prefectures
Kindergarten Attendance Support Programs for Child Disaster Victims	3,525	96	2,467	550	412
School Expense Subsidy Programs for Child Disaster Victims	10,876	1,496	4,909	3,094	1,377
Scholarship Programs	4,978	143	3,884	934	17
Cost-Reduction Programs for Private School Tuition Fees	6,283	95	5,093	717	378
School Attendance Promotion Programs for Special-Needs Education for Child Disaster Victims	26	0.03	7	9	10
Cost-Reduction Programs for Vocational School Tuition Fees	1,678	116	765	108	689
Total	27,366	1,946	17,125	5,413	2,883
Percentage of Total Implemented Amounts, Results for 2011-2013 Fiscal Years	-	7.1	62.6	19.8	10.5

Source: Created by the author with reference to MEXT documents.

landing back to existing programs from a long-term perspective, they should promote a concrete review of support time periods and percentages. When doing this, it will be essential to establish indicators for not only the number of support recipients, but also ones that measure effective outcomes.

- Verification of the results that includes more qualitative aspects, such as relevant programs, relevant costs, and people that did not need support, is needed.
- They must accurately grasp the financial circumstances of target households, reduce the proportion of assistance when improvements are shown, and so on, to ensure a soft landing back to existing programs.
- If support will continue beyond fiscal year 2015, it will be difficult to come to a conclusion about the causes of poverty. They should closely consider the dangers of falling into a situation of repeated poverty in spite of temporary recovery.

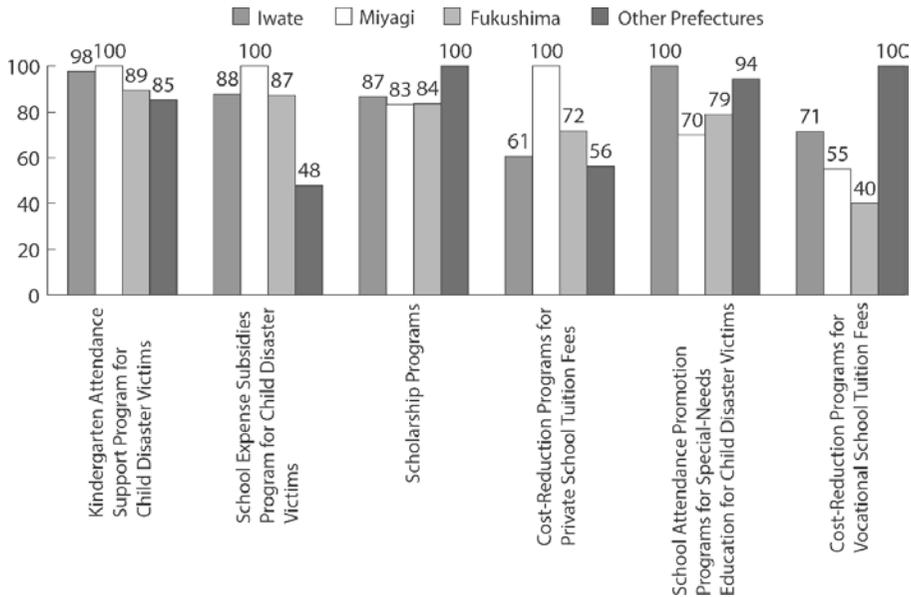
Consequently, a summary was made saying “these are programs having a high degree of necessity, but in order to determine their termination, it will be necessary to make an effort to inspect outcomes that grasp the circumstances of the households to whom support has been given.”

3.1.3 Assessments of Subsidy Program Methods

In the same open public process, regarding the methods of the programs, urgent issues accounted for the rise of implementation to 66.7%, and responses differed by prefecture. However, there were comments that the national budget should be used to remove unfairness, the fund system based on the state of the disaster for each prefecture should be reconsidered, and a transition should be made toward enacting measures for each separate fiscal year. The assessment was summarized as follows: “Regarding the continuation of these programs, a review of the fund system and its details including lowering the support rate based on changes of circumstance since the disaster, is necessary.” The assessment concerning the details and methods of the subsidy programs reflects Japan’s current economic difficulties, and can be said to prioritize restoring public finance over the propriety of support methods for disaster victims.

Until now, because prefectures and municipalities had used existing systems, there were considerable differences in the average payments per person under subsidy programs (1) through (6) listed above in the three disaster-struck prefectures and in other

Figure 2 Comparison of Support Levels per Person of Special Temporary Subsidy Programs for Child Disaster Victims



Note: Indexed from the highest sum paid per person being 100.

Source: Created by the author with reference to MEXT documents.

prefectures. In subsidy programs (1), (2), and (4), the payment amounts per person were all highest in Miyagi Prefecture. Looking at the index, with 100 representing the highest sum paid per person, the level of non-disaster prefectures at 48 for (2) School Expense Subsidies Programs for Child Disaster Victims, the level of non-disaster prefectures at 56 for (4) Cost-Reduction Programs for Private School Tuition Fees, and the level of Fukushima Prefecture at 40 for (6) Cost-Reduction Programs for Vocational School Tuition Fees, are all remarkably low (Figure 2). The standards and details of the School Expense Subsidy Programs have been previously identified as having large discrepancies between municipalities (Gan 2013, pp. 52-71; Yuda 2009, pp. 141-149).

Subsidy program (6) Cost-Reduction Programs for Vocational School Tuition Fees is the only one for which two-thirds is covered by national subsidies, but all of the other subsidy programs have a high rate of national subsidy, at 10 out of 10. However, the substantial differences in payment amount between the municipalities and prefectures that implement each program, and the fact that the national government has not grasped the particular details of the programs, is not adequate. The fact that the

municipalities made use of existing programs as emergency measures was unavoidable. However, having the full sum for financial support of children of municipalities struck by a large-scale disaster charged to a national expenditure can be nothing but a guarantee of the national minimum level¹². It is not enough to leave the levels of support at the discretion of municipalities; rather, the national government, in addition to investing public funds, must take responsibility for the nation and demonstrate the support levels that should be guaranteed.

MEXT officials have also gained some insight into the evacuee situation three years after the disaster, and so even though the movement of evacuees is somewhat unsettled, they can anticipate it to a certain extent. By way of becoming able to grasp the scale of programs for each prefecture, they mention that they are reviewing the inclusion of methods other than the fund system, such as annual budgetary provisions¹³.

3.2 Support for Secondary Education (University Students, etc.)

At MEXT, appeals were sent regarding the deferment or reduction of matriculation and tuition fees at all universities and colleges¹⁴, and tuition reduction, scholarships, and lodging assistance were implemented at many universities across the country. The following lessons about these kinds of support were recognized: “the need to plan for continuous support for disaster victim students who are expected to have difficult economic circumstances going forward” and that “regarding tuition cost reduction at private universities, generally, subsidies for tuition-fee reduction are issued in March. However, considering the management of disaster-struck universities, part of the necessary expenses were accelerated and issued in July for tuition reductions for student disaster victims as well as regular tuition reductions. The reason was to lower the burden on student disaster victims, and this was effective.”¹⁵

However, looking at the tuition fee reduction situation for national and public university students from earthquake victim households, the implementation result figures are decreasing. In particular, the implementation amount for private universities was ¥8.1 billion issued to 25,000 people in fiscal year 2011, but fell to ¥4.3 billion issued to 14,000 people in fiscal year 2012 and ¥2.3 billion issued to 7,000 people in 2013, a drastic reduction when compared to national and public universities (see Table 2 and Figure 3).

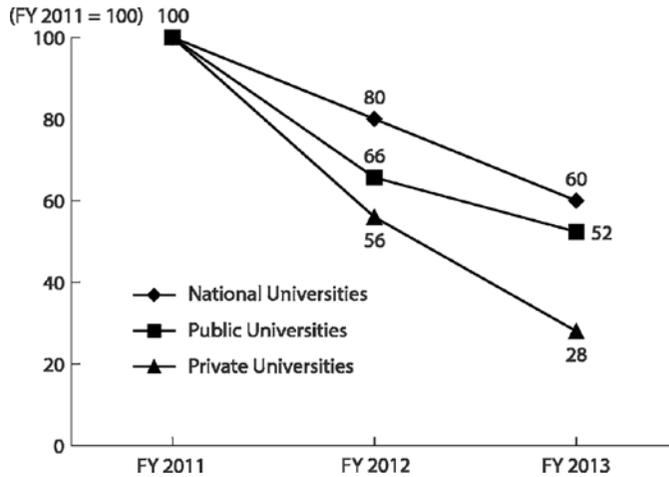
Table 2 Tuition Fee Reductions for Students from Great East Japan Earthquake Victim Households

FY 2011	Initial Anticipated Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Actual Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Amount Per Person Per Month
National Universities	2,861	2,861	¥1.766 billion	¥1.766 billion	-
Public Universities	-	1,165	-	¥411 million	¥29,399
Private Universities	12,000	25,000	¥4.7 billion	¥8.1 billion	-
FY 2012	Initial Anticipated Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Actual Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Amount Per Person Per Month
National Universities	2,289	2,289	¥1.413 billion	¥1.413 billion	-
Public Universities	-	765	-	¥269 million	¥29,343
Private Universities	19,000	14,000	¥6.1 billion	¥4.3 billion	-
FY 2013	Initial Anticipated Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Actual Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Amount Per Person Per Month
National Universities	1,716	1,716	¥1.061 billion	¥1.061 billion	-
Public Universities	-	610	-	¥223 million	¥30,475
Private Universities	16,000	7,000	¥5 billion	¥2.3 billion	-
FY 2014	Initial Anticipated Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Actual Number of Tuition Fee Reduction Recipients	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Amount Per Person Per Month
National Universities	1,145	-	¥705 million	-	-
Public Universities	424	-	-	-	-
Private Universities	11,000	-	¥3.5 billion	-	-

Note: Anticipated numbers for public universities for fiscal year 2014 are from a MEXT independent survey. Tuition fee reductions at public universities are not provided for in the MEXT budget because they are supported through local government finance measures. Fields marked “-” indicate missing data.

Source: MEXT documents.

Figure 3 Changes in Tuition Fee Reductions for Students from Great East Japan Earthquake Victim Households



Source: Created by the author with reference to MEXT documents.

The investment methods and percentages of public finance funds for tuition fee reduction at each national and public university differ depending on their institutional structures. At national universities that implemented tuition fee reductions, the additional step of subsidies for the operating expenses of the universities' corporations is added. Tuition fee reductions at public universities are supported through local government finance measures. For tuition fee reductions at private universities, two-thirds of the necessary expenses are supplemented by public funding. It is thought that the responsibility for the final one-third of expenses accounts for the decline in implementation results at private universities.

The Japan Student Services Organization also issued interest-free loans so that students from households affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake would not have to abandon their studies for financial reasons. From fiscal year 2011 to 2014 (as of August), they accepted all disaster victim applicants who satisfied the loan criteria. There have also been changes to the restrictions on all interest-free loans, and the number of disaster victim students receiving interest-free loans has increased over fivefold in the space of three years (Table 3). It can be said that the emphasis of support for students from households affected by the disaster is shifting from tuition fee reduction to interest-free student loans from the Japan Student Services Organization. The creation of a system for normal times that can also respond in times of crisis is now needed.

Table 3 Changes and Percentages of Recipients (Actual Results) of Interest-Free Loans from the Japan Student Services Organization

	Loan Recipients (A) (Number of People)	Of (A), Students from Disaster Victim Households (B) (Number of People)	Percentage of Recipients from Disaster Victim Households (B/A) (%)
FY 2011	379,195	1,649	0.43
FY 2012	402,092	5,922	1.47
FY 2013	427,423	8,429	1.97

Source: MEXT documents.

3.2.1 Survey of Financial Aid for Student Disaster Victims at Universities and Junior Colleges

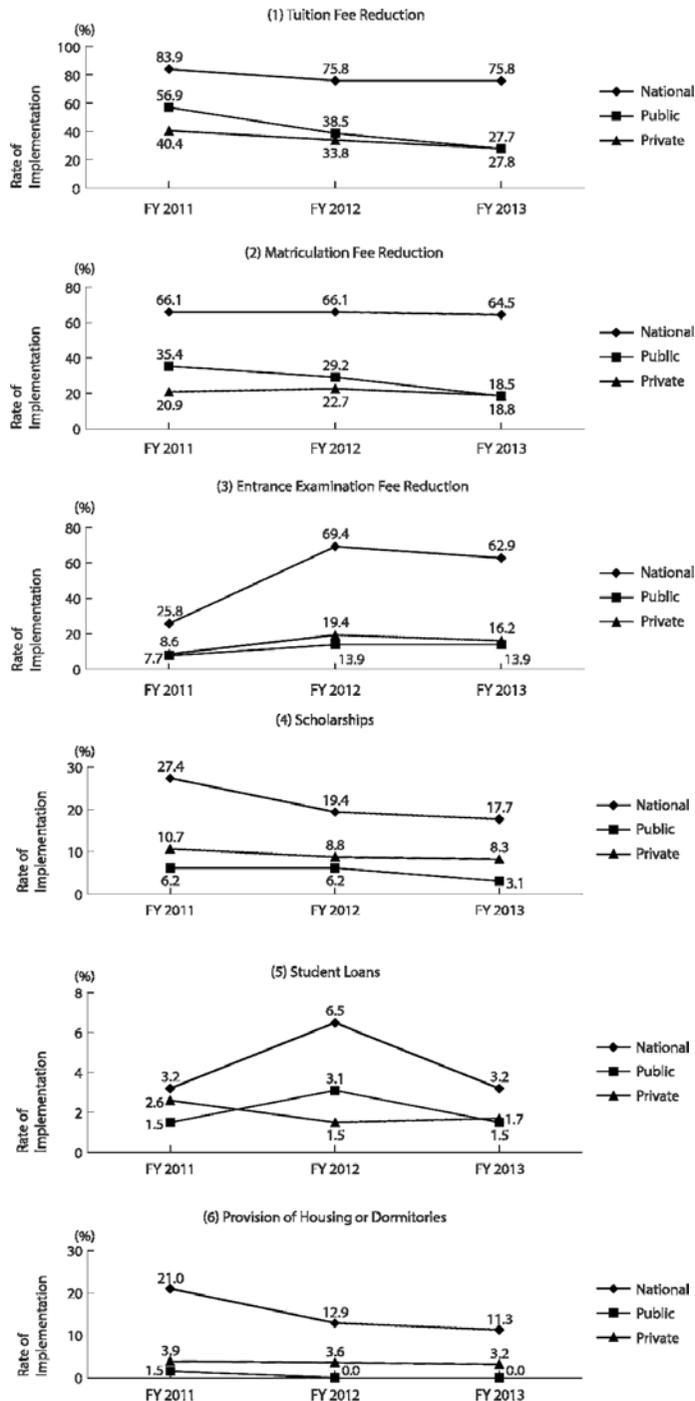
Below are the results of the “Survey of Financial Aid for Student Disaster Victims at Universities and Junior Colleges” (Graduate School of Education, Faculty of Education, Tohoku University; led by Eiichi Aoki and Shuji Tobishima), carried out in February 2014 on financial aid for disaster victim students by national and public universities¹⁶. This survey asked about whether or not the following six types of aid were given from fiscal year 2011 to 2013: (1) tuition fee reduction, (2) matriculation fee reduction, (3) school entrance examination fee reduction, (4) scholarships, (5) student loans, and (6) provision of housing or dormitories (Figure 4).

(1) Tuition fee reduction and (2) matriculation fee reduction are, in order of total implementation rate over three years (the proportion of colleges that implemented aid that account for valid responses), more prevalent at national followed by public and then private universities, and are trending downward, same as with the results mentioned above concerning the MEXT survey results about tuition fee reduction. For (3) school entrance examination fee reduction, (4) scholarships, and (6) provision of housing or dormitories, the rates were lower at public universities than private ones, with the order being national, private, then public universities. No categories leveled off and all are trending downward, but (3) school entrance examination fee reduction was higher in 2012 than in 2011¹⁷. (5) Student loans have a low level of implementation.

As can be seen in Figure 4, although a student may be from a disaster victim household, there will be large disparities in their opportunities to receive support in the form of tuition, matriculation, and entrance exam fee reduction; scholarships and loans; and provision of housing or dormitories, depending on whether his or her educational institution is national, public, or private. From the perspective of fairness amongst students from households affected by the disaster, we should review methods for efficiently and

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Figure 4 Financial Aid for Student Disaster Victims at Universities and Junior Colleges



Source: Created by the author based on the “Survey of Financial Aid for Student Disaster Victims at Universities and Junior Colleges” (Graduate School of Education/Faculty of Education, Tohoku University; led by Eiichi Aoki and Shuji Tobishima).

promptly issuing cash assistance to individual students, in place of indirect measures by universities. Perhaps the arrangement in the school expense subsidy system for senior high schools, in which school officials receive support money in place of the students themselves and counterbalance some or all of the tuition fees, can be used as a reference¹⁸.

As we get further from the disaster, the topic of discontinuing support has been coming up. In the long term, the continuous guarantee of funding terms for interest-free student loans by the Japan Student Services Organization will be an essential measure for soft landing.

3.3 Networking Support via the “Great East Japan Earthquake Children’s Learning Support Portal Site”

MEXT opened the “Great East Japan Earthquake Children’s Learning Support Portal Site” from April 2011 to May 2012, to make it easier for children and students affected by the disaster and in need of support to receive it more easily by allowing for the exchange of information about support needs in disaster-struck areas and potential support offered by various groups. This site created a network for financial support, covering such matters as funds for school supplies and scholarship information. MEXT determined that in the roughly one year that the site was open, there were 926 offers of support, 416 requests for support, and a total of 2,289 matches made¹⁹.

4: Support by Nongovernmental Organizations

On the “Great East Japan Earthquake Children’s Learning Support Portal Site” mentioned above, information about scholarships²⁰ was also provided, including some about scholarship programs for children who had difficulty attending school for financial reasons after the disaster; the funds came from private businesses, NPOs, charitable corporations, universities, and local governments. The scholarships mainly consisted of donations from private capital, but financial aid such as scholarships from nongovernmental organizations often targeted orphans only.

Furthermore, according to the Japan Business Federation, the results of a survey of member businesses and organizations showed that aid to earthquake victims and

stricken areas by businesses and organizations as of September 2011 was about ¥101.1 billion²¹. Of the aid given by these groups, cash donations constituted about ¥71.5 billion, and the rest consisted of donations of goods and matched donations. About 5% of the cash donations, or about ¥2.9 billion, were given by 34 companies (or groups) to “scholarships or subsidies managed in-house.”

In the Japan Business Federation follow-up survey, businesses’ support programs were classified into seven categories: (1) community support, (2) industrial recovery and job creation support, (3) next-generation training and education support, (4) mental health care, (5) support for disadvantaged people, (6) support for intermediary support groups, and (7) support for evacuees outside the prefecture²². In the “next-generation training and education support” category, 11 cases were published of financial support to individuals in the form of scholarships and so on.

4.1 Survey on the Implementation Status of Financial Support for Child Disaster Victims

In the “Survey on Incorporated NPO Support for Child Victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake”, I classified incorporated NPO support for children into the categories “study support,” “financial support,” “mental health care,” and “livelihood support”; I then conducted an aggregate survey of the staff that operated these programs and analyzed the results.

In September 2014, I carried out the “Survey on the Implementation Status of Financial Support for Child Disaster Victims,” focusing on groups providing financial support for children²³.

The main survey items covered the status of support implementation, such as recipients, details, amounts, adoption numbers, the application process, and other forms of the financial support given by each group (scholarships, payments, one-time payments, and loans). Financial support by incorporated NPOs often took the form of donations or support money for the activities of NPOs and other groups, even if the support given was a monetary payment by a relevant corporation.

Furthermore, among the types of financial support, there were support for individuals and support targeted not directly at individuals but at organizations. Below I will focus on 9 instances of support by 8 incorporated NPOs and 23 other instances of support by 21 organizations for a total of 32 instances of support for individuals. The classification

of the 21 organizations is as follows: 8 private businesses, 6 local governments (independent programs), 5 public utility foundations, and 1 labor union or independent administrative corporation.

There were a total of 17 (53.1%) instances of support targeted only at disaster orphans, and adoption numbers reached 3,750 (63.6%), but, with the exception of 1 case, the source of funding for support expenses was donations (including fundraising and trust properties) from individuals, organizations, and businesses. These kinds of support backed by private funds included many examples that only targeted disaster orphans. Detailed survey results are as follows.

4.1.1 Recipients of Support

As for the recipients of support, of the 32 cases, 20 (62.5%) targeted disaster orphans, 14 (43.8%) targeted a different category of disaster orphans (children who lost one parent in the Great East Japan Earthquake, aged under 18 at the time of the disaster, including children who were not yet born at the time of the disaster), and 10 (31.3%) targeted child disaster victims regardless of orphan status (multiple answers were allowed). In addition, there were three instances from two groups of support for children living with foster parents or in child care institutions.

There were eight cases (25%) of support targeting children who were so-called independent evacuees from the nuclear disaster, but of these five were scholarships targeting university, graduate, and technical college students, and in the survey no support cases targeted independent evacuees who were preschool-aged or high school students. Furthermore, there were no instances of support for children attending schools for foreign citizens, such as so-called Korean schools.

4.1.2 Details of Support

For the 21 cases in which support amounts were paid monthly, the range was from ¥10,000 to ¥100,000. Furthermore, there were 12 cases in which lump sums were paid at the time of school enrollment or graduation, the largest of which was ¥2 million, and the smallest of which was ¥30,000. As for the education levels supported, 3 cases (9.4%) gave support through high school graduation, 12 (37.5%) through university graduation, and 4 (12.5%) through junior high school graduation. The aforementioned support typically began in 2011, with 21 cases (65.6%). The number of people accepting support as

of fiscal year 2013 was, for the 32 cases, 5,894 in total (including some anticipated recipients).

4.1.3 Support Methods

The methods for notifying and publicizing the support included 15 cases (46.9%) that “sent materials to schools in affected areas,” 8 (25.0%) that “sent materials to affected local governments,” and 14 (43.8%) that “publicized on the organization’s website” (multiple answers were allowed). In addition, there were two cases that placed notices in newspapers. Application processes included 19 cases (59.4%) with “application via schools,” 13 (40.6%) with “direct application to the organization,” 2 (6.3%) with “application through local governments,” and 3 (9.4%) with other methods.

Sources for support costs were in 24 cases (75.0%) donations (including fundraising and trust properties) from individuals, organizations, and businesses, and in 3 cases (9.4%) came from public funds such as subsidiary aid or prefectural government programs.

4.1.4 Other

There were 15 (51.7%) organizations that had websites about their support for child disaster victims, and 11 (37.9%) that did not. Non-financial support for child disaster victims by the relevant organizations included 13 cases (44.8%) of “mental health care,” 4 cases (13.8%) of “study support,” 9 cases (31.0%) of “other kinds of support,” and 9 cases (31.0%) that “did not offer other kinds of support” (multiple answers were allowed). “Other kinds of support” included such things as holding social gatherings and providing material goods. For the guardians of child disaster victims, 15 organizations (51.7%) engaged in some kind of support, and 11 (37.9%) did not. Nine organizations (31.0%) had engaged in support activities for child disaster victims from before the Great East Japan Earthquake, and 17 (58.6%) had not.

Support carried out by organizations in relation to the Great East Japan Earthquake included “support for children” (20 cases, 69.0%), “mental healthcare” (8 cases, 27.6%), “support for evacuees outside the prefecture” (6 cases, 20.7%), “industrial recovery and job creation support” (5 cases, 17.2%), “community support” (4 cases, 13.8%), “support for disadvantaged people” (1 case, 3.4%), and “support for intermediary support organizations” (1 case, 3.4%) (multiple answers were allowed).

5: Conclusion: Issues with Financial Support for the Education of Child Disaster Victims

Support by means of private funds is largely targeted solely at orphaned disaster victims. Among support by nongovernmental organizations and others, there was also support for targeted children who were independent evacuees from the nuclear disaster. With private funds, as with support through the “Great East Japan Earthquake Children’s Learning Support Portal Site,” there is the advantage of being able to quickly and flexibly respond. However, in the “Survey on the Implementation Status of Financial Support for Child Disaster Victims” this time, there was no support for child disaster victims attending schools for foreigners, such as Korean schools.

Financial support to reduce the burden of education for children from households affected by the disaster is important from the perspective of guaranteeing children equal access to education, even in times of disaster. As with the examples of school expense subsidies I mentioned in Chapter 1, if there were no special measures for full payment by the national treasury, it would have been difficult for local governments affected by the disaster to grant school expense subsidies to child disaster victims at current levels. However, the following issues remain and need to be resolved.

The “Special School Expense Temporary Subsidies for Child Disaster Victims,” which is the central system for financial support by national and local governments to children in households affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake up to high school age, was part of an existing system originally implemented by the prefectures and municipalities. For that reason, there were large disparities in the average payment sums per person for these subsidy programs. That is, there arose large disparities in the financial support one could receive depending on the municipality from which one evacuated. Disparities in the details of support arose because support methods used existing programs with inherent discrepancies between municipalities that emphasized the efficiency and speed of subsidy distribution.

Furthermore, full payment by the national treasury for financial support of children in municipalities during times of large-scale disasters is nothing but a guarantee of a certain national minimum. Therefore, it is not appropriate for the national government to not have a grasp of the details of these programs and to leave everything, such as the

payment amounts per person, up to the discretion of the municipalities and prefectures that implement each program. First of all, even in normal times, we should plan for the increase and restoration²⁴ of the percentage of the population subsidized by the national government in order to reduce disparities between municipalities in existing programs that implement financial support for children's education. Resolving the institutional issue in existing programs of large disparities between municipalities during normal times will lead to smooth responses in times of large-scale disaster.

Moreover, regarding university students from households affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, large disparities arose in the details of the support, such as tuition, matriculation, and entrance examination fee reductions; scholarships and loans; and provision of housing or dormitories, depending on the differences between national, public, and private universities. Regarding fairness amongst university students from affected households, subsidies should not be given indirectly by the universities, but rather ways to efficiently and quickly give cash support to university students individually should be considered from now on. For example, there could be a system where schools accept subsidies in place of individuals, similar to the one carried out under the Senior High School Expense Subsidies System. The continual guarantee of loan quotas for interest-free loans by the Japan Student Services Organization is also very important.

In order to swiftly and fairly take immediate action during times of disaster, when the number of children in need of financial support due to a disaster affecting their guardians increases, I believe that it is important to create national minimums for measures against child poverty and financial support for children's education even in normal times. I also believe it is important to build a system with as little disparity as possible between both the municipalities in which children live and the methods of support.

Acknowledgment

This work was supported by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

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Note

- 1 The “Outline for Measures Against Child Poverty” made by a cabinet decision in August 2014 and based on the “Law for the Promotion of Measures Against Child Poverty” enacted in 2013, places the planning for the use and improvement of School Expense Subsidies as a strategic policy.
- 2 The number of children in need of protection or in semi-need of protection (receiving payments for School Expense Subsidies only) is the percentage accounted for in total number of students in public elementary and junior high schools.
- 3 MEXT “On the Number of Children in Need or in Semi-Need of Protection in Fiscal Year 2012,” 2014.
- 4 Japan Business Federation Societal Contribution Promotion Committee 1% Club (2012a), pp. I-3, II-3, II-4, II-8.
- 5 MEXT “On Securing School Attendance Opportunities for Children in Areas Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 (Report),” line 22 first item, No.1714, March 14th, 2011.
- 6 MEXT “On Kindergarten Attendance Promotion Programs for Children Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake,” MEXT Elementary and Secondary Education Department Early Childhood Education Division Promotion Desk Report, March 31st 2011; MEXT “On Sending Q&A Compilations Regarding the Flexible Acceptance of Children Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake into Public Schools,” MEXT Elementary and Secondary Education Department Planning Division Education System Reform Desk Report, April 7th, 2011.
- 7 National Recovery Administration “Fiscal Year 2014 Administrative Program Review (Open Process) Proceedings,” 2014, p.5.
- 8 General Affairs Agency Administration Inspection Department Compilation “Toward Improving Provisions for Earthquake Disasters: Lessons from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake,” 1998, p.123.
- 9 MEXT “Compilation of Intermediary Inspection Results on Restoration and Reconstruction Efforts After the Great East Japan Earthquake (First Report),” December 22nd, 2011, pp.64, 98.

- 10 The number of people covered by kindergarten attendance support programs for child disaster victims in Miyagi Prefecture was 4,380 in fiscal year 2011, and nearly double that at 8,135 in fiscal year 2012. The reason was that MEXT is a body that depends on the layout of Miyagi Prefecture program systems, and Miyagi Prefecture provided payment to guardians all at once, including “infant disaster victims” in the event of “tuition fee reduction” as well, in order to centralize payments to guardians. In fiscal year 2011, the requirements to apply for “tuition fee reduction” were lax, and the applications that were filed under “tuition fee reduction” rather than “infant disaster victim” in that year were filed under the opposite category in fiscal year 2012, when the application requirements for “tuition fee reduction” became somewhat stricter. Accordingly, the increase in recipients is explained as being dependent on the system rather than on the circumstances of the disaster victims.
- 11 National Recovery Administration “Fiscal Year 2014 Administrative Program Review (Open Process) Proceedings,” 2014, p.14; National Recovery Administration “Fiscal Year 2014 Administrative Program Review Open Process Collected Comments,” 2014, p.1.
- 12 The lower limit of living standards guaranteed to citizens by the national government.
- 13 National Recovery Administration “Fiscal Year 2014 Administrative Program Review (Open Process) Proceedings,” 2014, p.5.
- 14 MEXT “Considerations for Students Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake (Report),” Line 22 Item No.1254, March 14th, 2011; MEXT “On Support for Students After the Great East Japan Earthquake (Report),” Line 23 Item No.43, April 8th, 2011.
- 15 MEXT “Compilation of Intermediary Inspection Results on Restoration and Reconstruction Efforts After the Great East Japan Earthquake (First Report),” December 22nd, 2011, p.70.
- 16 This survey was sent to 1,119 universities and junior colleges (not including graduate schools) that were included in the fiscal year 2013 edition of “Nationwide List of Universities” (Education Association). There were 595 valid responses, for a collection rate of 53.3% (response numbers and rates by institution type are as follows: national: 62 universities, 75.6%; public: 65 universities, 63.1%; private: 468 universities, 50.1%).
- 17 However, there is the possibility that responses that kept the reduction of fiscal year 2011 entering students’ entrance examination fees in mind, and responses that considered entrance examination fees for exams held in 2011 (targeting students entering in fiscal year 2012), were mixed together.
- 18 For more on the new system of making senior high school tuition-free, see MEXT “Outline of Financial Attendance Support System (New System) for Senior High Schools,” (http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/mushouka/1342605.htm, viewed on October 19th, 2014).
- 19 The number of actual matches made may exceed this because it was possible for both par-

ties to make direct contact via the website. On p.98 of MEXT's "Compilation of Intermediary Inspection Results on Restoration and Reconstruction Efforts After the Great East Japan Earthquake (First Report)," on the topic of "Great East Japan Earthquake Children's Learning Support Portal Site," it was unclear until when operations would continue, and under what circumstances operations would cease. There was even the comment "Before I knew it the program continued until June, and it was increasing the sense of burden on the staff in each department responsible for the above website."

20 As of October 30th, 2015, it was moved to the MEXT site "The Great East Japan Earthquake Recovery: Through Places of Education" (<http://fukkokoiku.mext.go.jp/links.html>); there is information about "Scholarships for Child Disaster Victims: Kindergarten through Senior High School" (as of June 4th 2012) (http://fukkokoiku.mext.go.jp/links/pdf/120606_hisai-syougakukin-ichiran.pdf), and a link to the Japan Student Services Organization's "Scholarships for Student Victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake" (http://www.jasso.go.jp/about_jasso/shinsai_shougakukin_etc.html).

21 Japan Business Federation Societal Contribution Promotion Committee 1% Club (2012a), pp. I-2-3, II-3, 4, 8. However, support amounts for children are unclear.

22 Japan Business Federation Societal Contribution Promotion Committee 1% Club (2012b), Ibid. (2013).

23 In the "Survey for Incorporated NPO Support Activities for Child Victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake," the target was 469 incorporated NPOs that responded as engaging in "financial support" in the recorded examples from the Japan Business Federation report, and 58 other organizations that had been recorded on the above-mentioned MEXT website or had their support information obtained otherwise, for a total of 527 organizations. There were responses from 153 incorporated NPOs (32.6% response rate), and 21 other groups (23 cases of support, response rate of 36.2%).

24 For example, the School Expense Subsidies system was converted into a general funding source due to the trinity of reforms of existing government subsidies (Gan 2013, pp.51-71).