

## Research Note

# The Development of Educational Studies in Japan after World War II: An Analysis of Journals in Its Subfields

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*This study is the first attempt to analyze the articles in several journals, in order to disclose the development of academic educational studies in Japan. In this paper, my examination was not limited to one journal, but covered six education journals listed below and all their issues until 2005. I chose, from a methodological viewpoint, four journals that have been most important for the philosophical, historical, sociological and comparative research on education and, from thematic viewpoints, two celebrated Japanese journals for the study of educational method and that of educational administration.*

*The development of educational studies shown in the articles of the journals reviewed was diverse and complex. On the one hand, the home institutions of the authors were not only traditional research universities, but also other types of universities. On the other hand, the former institutions are still the center of training for (graduate) students who make up the largest number of authors of the articles today. The analyzed six journals had such heterogeneous character as to have oriented themselves to different areas (theory, school, society [public]) to a varied extent. The articles targeted several historical periods and countries/areas and their distribution of these factors was relatively balanced. Although the studies were based, methodologically, primarily on the analysis of certain kinds of text, in other words on the philosophical method, the object of the studies was mostly not the ideas of certain persons. The articles referred, topically, to a certain philosopher or education researcher/theorist less often than to secondary/higher education. Furthermore, the research methods, objects and topics of the articles in one journal were far from homogeneous.*

## 1. Introduction and method

The academic educational research is sustained by the academic researchers responsible for

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certain field(s) and their articles in the journals of the research associations. However, to date the development of Japanese educational research as a whole represented in these journals has never been examined or described. This study is the first attempt to analyze the articles in several journals, in order to disclose the development of academic educational studies in Japan.

In this paper, my examination was not limited to one journal, but covered six education journals listed below and all their issues until 2005. These journals were regarded as official organs of famous Japanese associations for educational research. In the list of scientific associations for educational studies in *Gakkai Meikan 2007–2009* of the Japan Science Support Foundation, the names of 96 associations were given. Most of them are, however, far from well-known and unimportant for academic educational studies in Japan. I chose, based on a methodological viewpoint, four associations that have been most important for the philosophical, historical, sociological and comparative research on education and, from thematic viewpoints, two celebrated Japanese associations for the study of educational method and the study of educational administration<sup>i</sup>. In accordance with the regulations for teacher's license, many universities have staffs who are members of these associations, which have been quite influential for the academic educational studies in Japan.

Table 1 Japanese journals for educational studies and their parent organizations

Name of journal	Establishment	Name of association	Establishment	General members in 2007	Student members in 2007
The Journal of Educational Sociology (JES) (=Kyouiku Shakaigaku Kenkyuu)	1951	The Japanese Society of Educational Sociology (=Nihon Kyouiku Shakai Gakkai)	1948*	1428 <sup>ii</sup>	-
Studies in the History of Education (SHE) (=Nihon No Kyouiku Shigaku)	1958	The Society for the Historical Research of Education (=Kyouikuhi Gakkai)	May 3, 1956	920	/
Studies in the Philosophy of Education (SPE) (=Kyouiku Tetsugaku Kenkyuu)	1959	The Japanese Society for the Philosophy of Education (=Kyouiku Tetsugakukai)	May 3, 1957	700	/
Research Journal of Educational Methods (RJEM) (=Kyouiku Houhougaku Kenkyuu)	1975	National Association for the Study of Educational Methods (=Nihon Kyouiku Houhou Gakkai)	Aug. 20, 1964	812	133
Comparative Education (CE) (=Hikaku Kyouikugaku Kenkyuu)	1975	Japan Comparative Education Society (=Nihon Hikaku Kyouiku Gakkai)	Mar. 31, 1965	649	162
Bulletin of JEAS (BJEAS) (=Nihon Kyouiku Gyousei Gakkai Nenpou)	1975	The Japan Educational Administration Society (=Nihon Kyouiku Gyousei Gakkai)	Sep. 4, 1966	547	/

Source: Nihon Gakujyutsu Kyouryoku Zaidan 2007.

\* The data of the Japanese Society of Educational Sociology were not shown in *Nihon Gakujyutsu Kyouryoku Zaidan 2007* and filled with the help of the publications of the society (e.g. Kyouiku Shakai Gakkai 2009).

My investigation was limited to the papers categorized into “special issues” (=Tokushuu Ronbun) and “(general) research theses” (=Ippan Kenkyuu Ronbun), excluding essays (=Essay), memorial essays (=Tsuitou Ronbun), book reviews and reports on special topics with a small volume (=Kenkyuu Note and other kinds of short papers). I will call the first two types of papers “articles” in this study. This investigation will focus on (1) total number of research articles published, (2) position and home institution of author (3) character of the articles, (4) targeted historical period, (5) target country, (6) research method, (7) research object, (8) topics of/in the articles<sup>iii</sup>.

## 2. Results and discussions

### 2.1. Total number of articles

In this study, 2,516 articles were analyzed in total. The number of published articles in each five-year period is shown below. The number of articles has fluctuated in every journal since its establishment.

Table 2 Total number of articles per 5-year period

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
JES	85	73	51	57	54	52	71	78	92	80	95
SHE		19	22	29	28	25	30	51	69	69	58
SPE		16	40	36	36	28	27	27	35	30	34
RJEM					10	50	54	66	85	68	59
CE					2	29	33	54	72	63	65
BJEAS					7	41	50	44	57	53	57
Total	85	108	113	122	137	225	265	320	410	363	368

In the first two decades, the total number of the articles in the first three journals was increasing. Although the number had decreased for 10 years after the foundation of the next three journals, the total number of all the articles in the six journals increased. This situation lasted until the period of 1991-95.

### 2.2. Author

#### 2.2.1. Position of the authors

The articles were written by 2,838 authors in total. Although most of the authors were academic members (1,796 by researchers, 837 by students, 70 by school teachers and 135 by others), the ratio of the former two groups varied across a wide range. The following figure shows the ratio of (graduate) students to researchers as authors in each period.

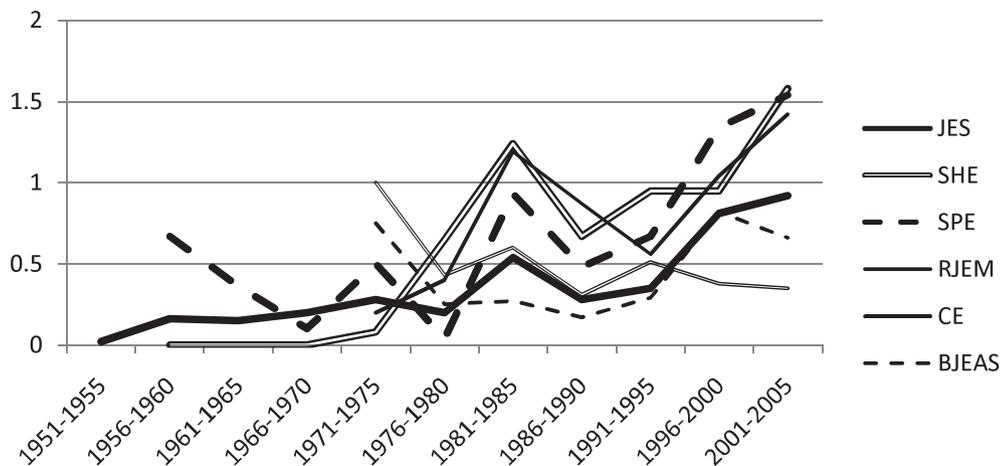


Figure 1 The ratio of (graduate) students to researchers as authors in journals

Of all journals, except *Comparative Education* and the *Bulletin of JEAS*, the ratio of (graduate) students to researchers as authors has been increasing as a tendency, while that of researchers has been decreasing in the last decades.

### 2.2.2. Home institution of authors

The home institution of the authors was also examined. Here the number of the authors was tabulated according to home institutions.

Table 9 Home institution of authors

	JES	SHE	SPE	RJEM	CE	BJEAS
Tokyo University	145	36	8	19	11	19
Kyoto University	37	9	13	14	18	22
Hokkaido/Tohoku/Nagoya/Osaka/Kyusyu University	119	42	24	30	48	36
Tsukuba University	35	28	25	28	33	30
Hiroshima University	55	30	29	62	60	18
Other national universities	197	70	56	129	53	87
Municipal universities	10	8	7	22	10	13
Private universities	166	95	124	59	82	85
Foreign universities	6	3	7	2	13	0
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science	17	7	6	5	8	5
Research institutes/ministries	98	14	4	8	43	32
Schools	21	6	6	27	2	8
Others/Unknown	13	60	9	25	9	12

The percentages of authors affiliated to the old research universities founded before World War II (i.e., Tokyo, Kyoto, Hokkaido, Tohoku, Nagoya, Osaka, Kyusyu, Tsukuba and Hiroshima University) were high in most journals, although the percentage of authors from other institutions was also far from low. However, the meaning of the old research universities for each subfield of educational studies in Japan can be identified, when we focus on the home institution of the (graduate) student authors. As shown below, the former eminent universities have been the center for training the rising generations in Japanese educational studies after World War II.

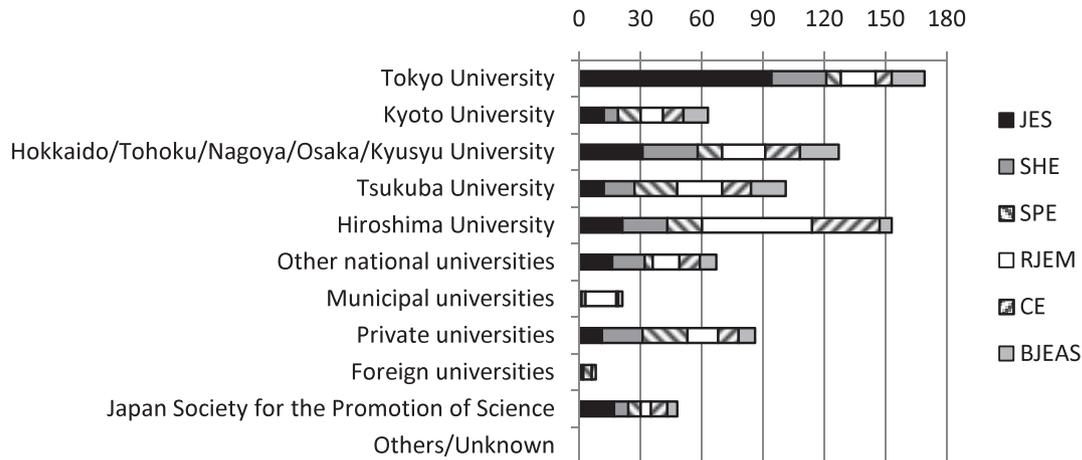


Figure 2 Number of articles by student authors in universities

### 2.3. Character of the articles

The character of the articles in each journal was assessed with three grades (0–2). The result is shown below.

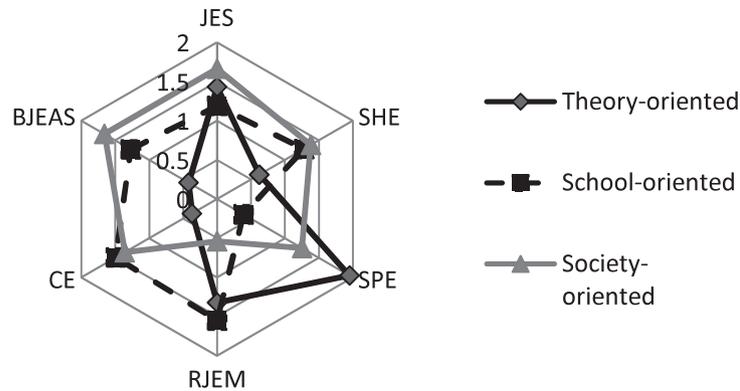


Figure 3 Orientation grades of the journals on average

Most journals oriented themselves toward two of the three areas (i.e., theory, school, society [public]). The only exception was the *Journal of Educational Sociology* that covered all of the areas to the same extent on average. Judging from these scores, *Studies in the History of Education*, *Comparative Education* and *Bulletin of JEAS* showed similar character. Accordingly, the academic educational studies in Japan has been engaged not only in philosophy or theory, but also oriented toward school or society [public].

#### 2.4. Targeted historical period

With examination of the targeted historical period, the numbers of the articles of each period in each journal can be shown in the following figure.

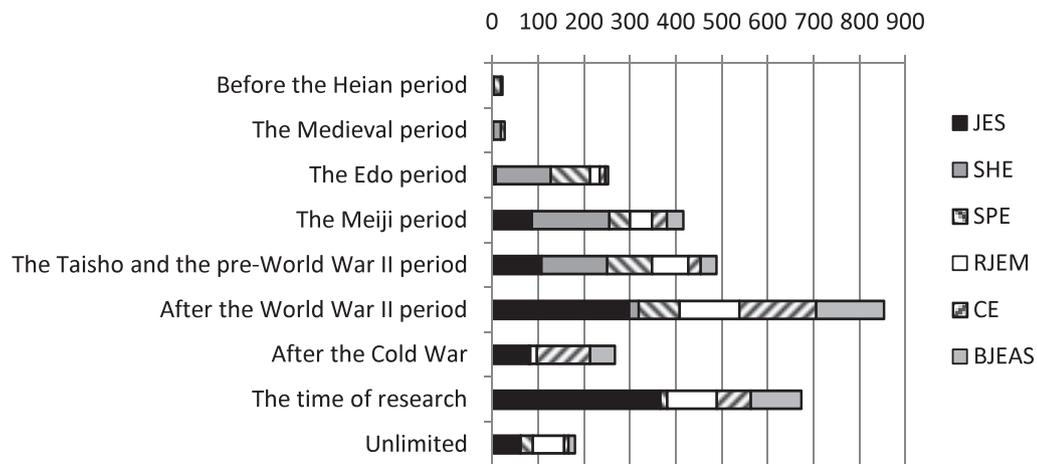


Figure 4 The number of articles targeting historical periods

#### 2.5. Target country

On the basis of analysis of the target country of the articles, the following tables show the number of articles targeting four country groups (the UK/the USA, continental Europe, Asian countries and Japan) in each period.

Table 10 The Journal of Educational Sociology

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA	6	5	4	4	7	11	16	2	10	2	13
Continental Europe	4	5	2	1	4	3	5	4	2	3	1
Asian countries	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	4	4	6
Japan	71	60	46	42	46	48	44	49	75	66	80

Table 11 Studies in the History of Education

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA		3	3	4	4	10	3	10	15	19	11
Continental Europe		4	5	6	8	3	7	9	9	6	4
Asian countries		6	4	6	5	3	5	8	8	10	16
Japan		6	9	11	12	11	15	28	44	41	36

Table 12 Studies in the Philosophy of Education

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA		3	13	13	9	3	3	6	7	9	3
Continental Europe		12	15	21	25	14	18	19	24	18	28
Asian countries		0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
Japan		1	6	2	2	9	5	2	3	2	4

Table 13 Research Journal of Educational Methods

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA					0	13	17	11	14	16	15
Continental Europe					0	0	13	15	18	14	9
Asian countries					0	1	0	0	1	1	0
Japan					8	17	20	28	40	37	29

Table 14 Comparative Education

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA					1	14	9	19	20	12	19
Continental Europe					0	1	8	8	8	12	9
Asian countries					0	8	9	16	20	18	21
Japan					1	8	14	6	24	12	5

Table 15 Bulletin of JEAS

	1951-55	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05
The UK/The USA					0	8	12	13	9	13	15
Continental Europe					3	4	3	4	4	1	2
Asian countries					0	1	0	3	5	1	2
Japan					3	27	28	23	38	38	40

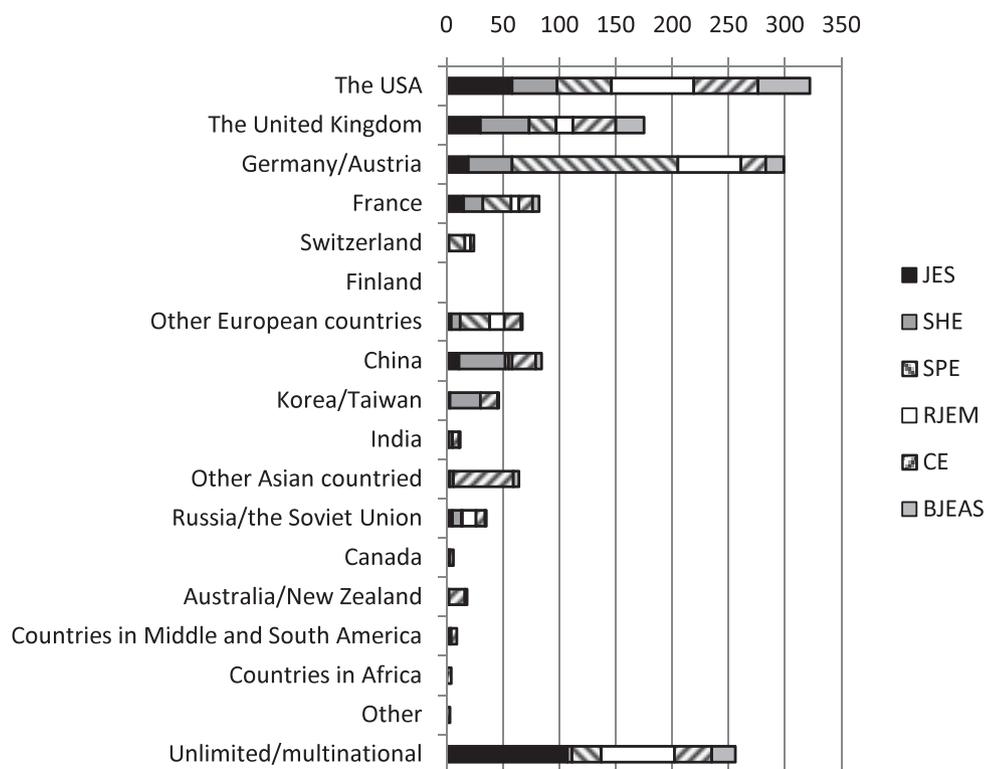


Figure 5 The number of articles targeting foreign countries

Despite their different proportions across the journals examined, the USA, the UK and Germany/Austria were the most popular foreign countries as the object of analysis. The variety of the target countries was especially large in *Studies in the History of Education* and *Comparative Education*. While the others concentrated on European countries in particular, the last two journals covered also Asian countries. Furthermore, the number of studies on Japan was extraordinarily large in comparison with that on foreign countries. The number of articles on Japan amounts to 1,322 (627 in JES/ 213 in SHE/ 36 in SPE/ 179 in RJEM/ 70 in CE/ 197 in BJEAS). Therefore, the academic educational studies in Japan has been focused mainly on Japan (approximately 50 percent of 2,516 articles in total), secondly on Western countries and subsequently on Asian countries excluding Japan.

## 2.6. Research method

Regarding research methods, the number of the methods adopted in an article was counted in each method type. We can figure out the fact from Figure 6 that the most popular methods of Japanese educational studies were ‘analysis/quotation of/from the text of certain person’ and ‘analysis of documents or reports’. ‘Analysis of cases’ was adopted only in *the Journal of Educational Sociology* to a large extent. Remarkably, the ratio of the first three methods to others was quite high and the percentage of the method of ‘international comparison’ was quite low even in *Comparative Education*.

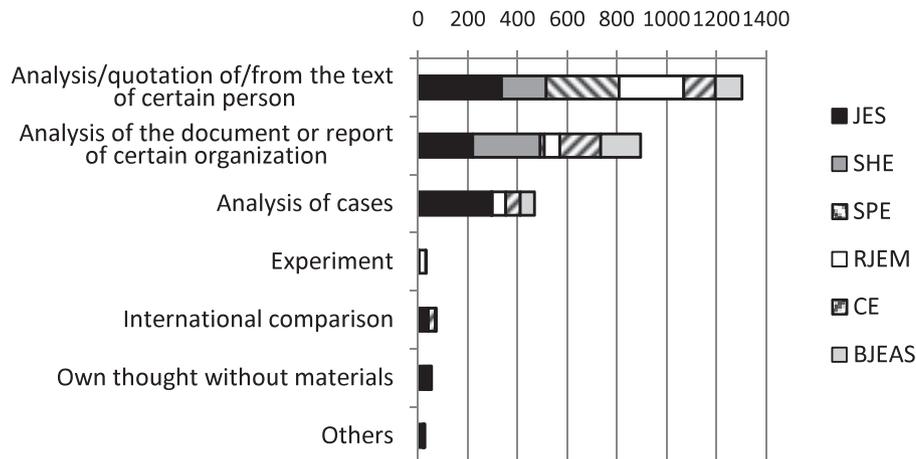


Figure 6 The number of the articles regarding research method

The method ‘analysis of cases’ was separable into four further groups. As shown below, these empirical methods were adopted not only in *the Journal of Educational Sociology*, but also in the *Research Journal of Educational Methods*, *Comparative Education* and the *Bulletin of JEAS*.

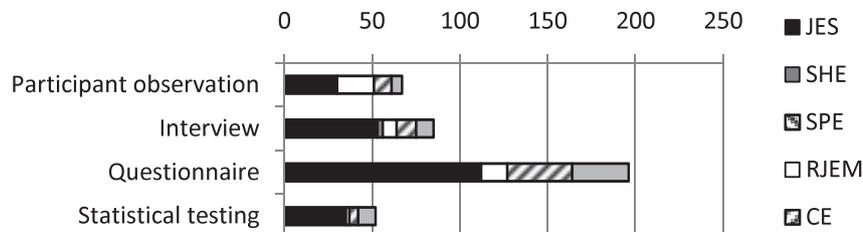


Figure 7 The number of the articles regarding research method within ‘analysis of cases’

## 2.7. Research object

As shown below, the academic educational studies in Japan after World War II concentrated primarily on the analysis of a ‘certain person’, ‘school and administration related field’, ‘thought, feature and relationship of (between/within) education actors’, ‘educational matters’ and ‘social matters’. The numbers of articles in each category depended on the definition. However, even under my limited definition, the numbers were relatively large. Approximately, one fifth of all the articles (2,516 in total) referred to a certain person, half were focused on school and education administration, one third concentrated on educational matters and one fifth were devoted to social matters.

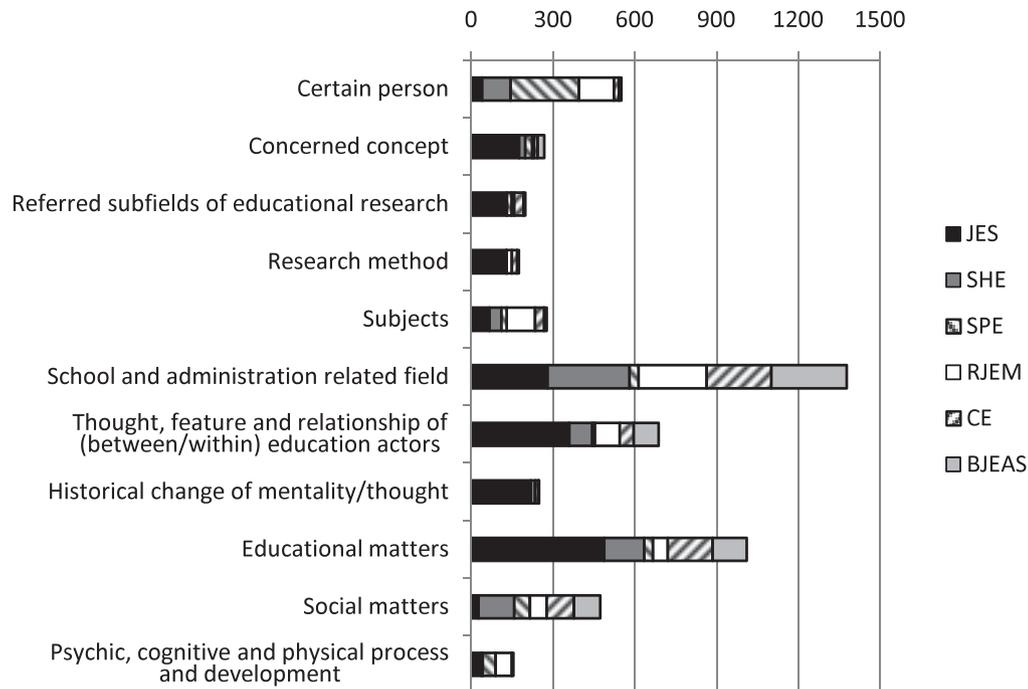


Figure 8 The number of articles classified by their research object

## 2.8. Topics

### 2.8.1. Referred person

Concerning the referred person, I did not count the number of referred persons, but that of the articles where the person belonging to each group was mentioned.

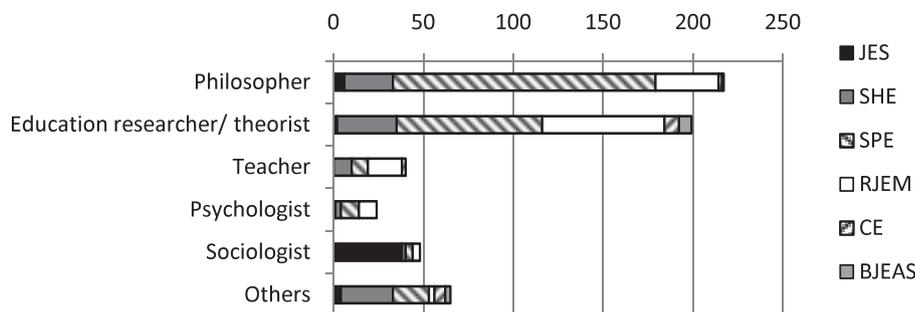


Figure 9 The number of articles referring to a certain person

As is shown above, the ideas of certain persons were mostly discussed in *Studies in the Philosophy of Education* and the *Research Journal of Educational Methods*. As the result of that, ‘philosophers’ and ‘education researchers/theorists’ were referenced most frequently in comparison with other types of persons.

### 2.8.2. Curricular Subjects

As shown above, a curricular subject was not always the prominent theme in the articles. Judging from the graph below, the *Research Journal of Educational Methods* was the only journal for subject-related study in Japanese education research. The most popular curricular subjects were ‘social studies/civics’ and ‘moral education’ that were also referred to in other journals.

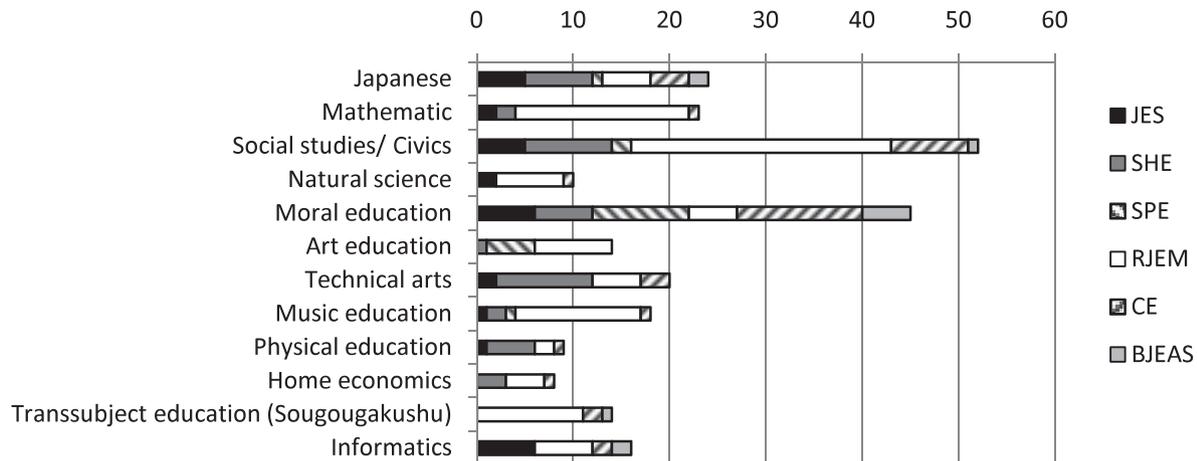


Figure 10 The number of articles regarding curricular subjects

### 2.8.3. School and administration related field

The numbers of articles referring to school and education administration were also counted. As shown in the following graph, ‘educational method’, ‘curriculum’, ‘elementary education’, ‘secondary education’, ‘higher education’, ‘other types of administration on education’, ‘school administration/management’ and ‘laws’ were the favorite topics in the journals that were mentioned in over 100 articles (cf. Fig. 11).

Interestingly enough, the articles devoted to the school and administration related field came not only from the *Bulletin of JEAS* as the journal for the study of educational administration, but also from *Studies in the History of Education* and *Comparative Education*. That is to say, the differences in research methods, objects and topics did not always correspond to the journals founded by societies with a particular research approach.

## 3. Conclusion

The development of educational studies shown in the articles of the journals reviewed was diverse and complex. On the one hand, the home institutions of the authors were not only traditional research universities, but also other types of universities. On the other hand, the former institutions are still the center of training for (graduate) students who make up the largest number of authors of the articles today.

The six journals analyzed had such heterogeneous character as to have oriented themselves to different areas (theory/ school/ society [public]) to a varied extent. The articles targeted several historical periods and countries/areas and their ratios were relatively balanced. The studies based, methodologically, primarily on the analysis of certain kinds of text (i.e. the philosophical method). The object of the studies was, however, mostly not the ideas of certain persons. The articles referred, topically, to certain philosophers or education researchers/theorists less often than to secondary/higher education. Furthermore, even the research methods, objects and topics of the articles in certain journals were far from homogeneous.

The academic educational studies in Japan began with the analysis of the thought of Western philosophers around 120 years ago. Our general understanding has historically adhered to the depiction of this beginning. The development of Japanese academic educational studies was, how-

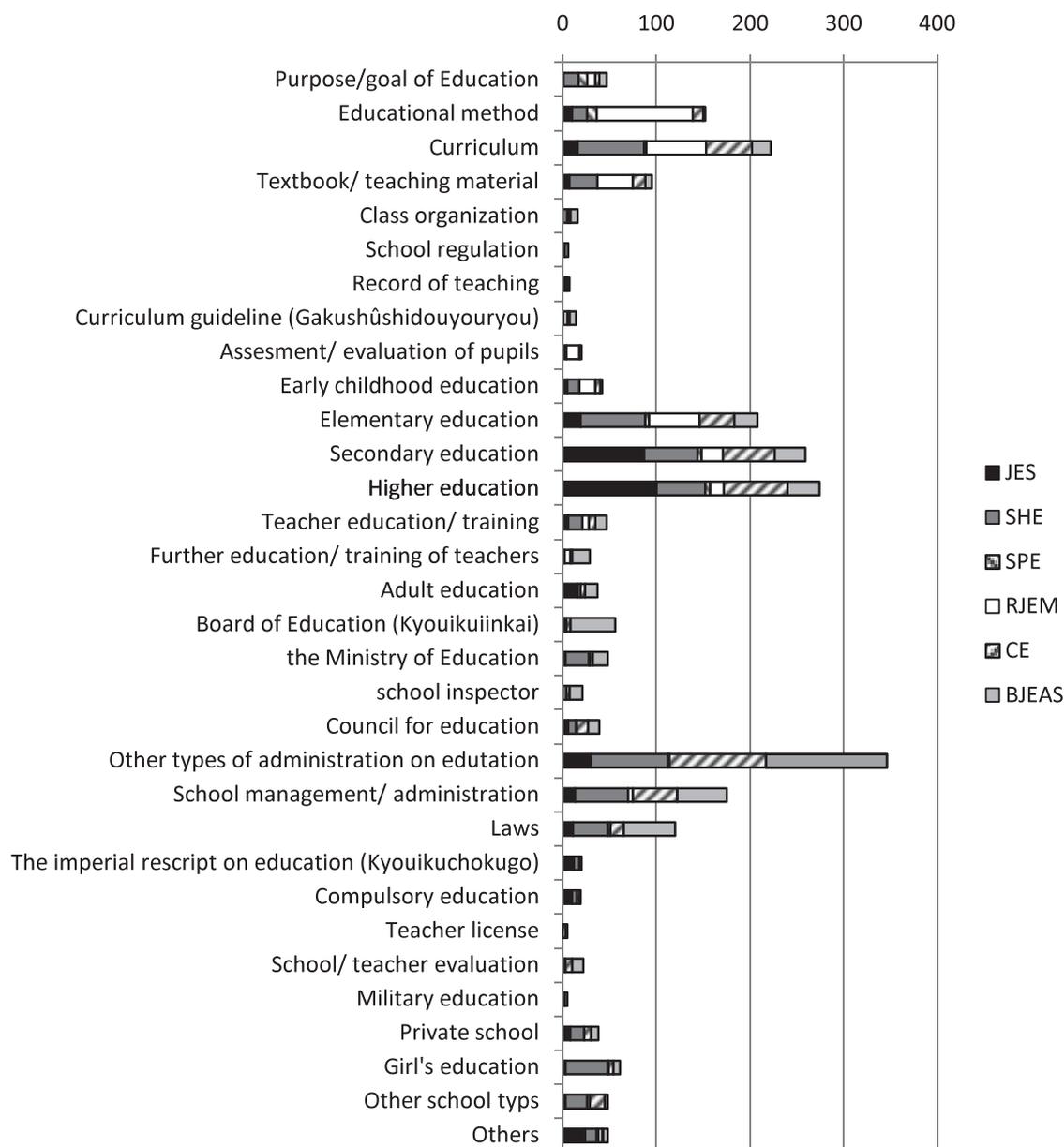


Figure 11 The number of articles on the school and administration related field

ever, much more diverse. This analysis might be the first small step to a further differentiated study.

**Notes**

- i The “educational methods” in Japanese meaning differs from that of the Western countries referring sometimes to research methods. This Japanese concept is similar to what is called “teaching methods” or “pedagogy” in these countries. The “educational administration” should be also understood carefully, because there are three educational sub-fields related to this concept. The first is educational administration as governmental administration, the second is as school administration and the third is as classroom administration. In this study, the first will be the focus.
- ii The data of the Japanese Society of Educational Sociology were not shown in *Gakkai Meikan 2007–2009* and filled with the help of the publications of the society (e.g. *Kyouiku Shakai Gakkai 2009*)
- iii Concerning (3) *characters of the articles*, they were classified on the following scale: (a) much/little/not theory-oriented, (b) much/little/not school-oriented and (c) much/little/not society-oriented (public-oriented) and evaluated with one of three grades (much=2/little=1/not=0). Other characteristics were classified by their extent of the corre-

spondence in each category into two grades (either correspondent or not). In this research, the degree was not judged strictly by the quantity of their correspondence, in order to characterize the articles.

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