

Material

## The Rules on Campus for Japanese University Students

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(Accepted Dec. 1, 2008)

Key words: behavior, rules, attitude in class, university students, Japanese

### Introduction

We have pointed out the importance of trying to understand university students' views of their school life in order to offer them a more suitable curriculum in university. Some research has already been conducted for this purpose, including relationships among students [1-10]. The basic object of this research is to add new data to understand today's university students. This time, we focused on students' behaviors and understandings relating to the rules/manners in school.

Unlike high or junior high school students, university students seem to have enough ability to understand the rules and manners in their school life. For a long time university teachers had no need to pay attention to their school climate (i.e. teacher support, peer support, student autonomy in the classroom, and clarity and consistency in school rules and regulations)[11]. But recently, the low birthrate in Japan, allows any senior high school student to enter a university or college if he/she simply wishes to [12]. Some universities and/or colleges have no choice to select 'better' students than others by the entrance examination to avoid falling below the quota [13]. Many universities/colleges have already begun to offer a new basic curriculum to students who need to brush-up some subjects to understand the traditional lectures in university. In this context, the university teachers are required not only to teach them academic/technical/vocational subjects, but also to care for the whole school life of students[14]. Some rules and/or manners may be no longer an informal agreement in universities and the teachers need to face and control this new situation.

There are some reports [15,16,17] about the relationship between students' normative consciousness during class and other aspects of the students' situation, for example the degree of adjustment to college life, their parents' nurturance, and etc. In Japanese universities, especially, the high frequency of 'private communication' during class has been pointed out since the 1990s and the cause of this 'improper' behavior has been discussed [15]. Some researchers [16] found that more than 84 % of university students 'whispered' during class in spite of 59 % of them being aware that they should not chat during class (in this report, we use the word 'chat' instead of 'whisper' because some students seem to 'whisper' but 'chat' in class). It shows clearly that to know and understand the rules is different from following rules for students.

In this report, the latest university students' behaviors including their manners in school and their attitude during class, and their understanding on rules and/or manners were assessed by the questionnaires given to students. The results from the analysis of data were discussed from the point of view of their normative consciousness to give clues as to how to provide university students with a better school life.

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## Methods

### 1. Subjects

The subjects available for analysis were 398 university students (males 130 , females 268 ) belonging to X University. Most of the students hope to be a co-medical staff after graduation.

### 2. Materials

To make clear the student behavior/attitude and thoughts relating to some rules/morals when they are on campus, a survey was done. Before making the questionnaire sheet, we interviewed eight housekeepers about the students' manners in the school building to learn which behavior/attitude sometimes can cause a problem for the staff. Referencing from their opinion, each question was decided. In the questionnaire sheet, the students were required to assess their own attitude about 21 items (ex. 'I sleep during class') by point 1(I never do so) to 5 (I always do so), and to check how they thought about 26 items (ex. I try to assist anyone who needs help at school) also by point 1(I did not think so) to 5 (I definitely think so). The statistical analysis was made by using SPSS 15.0J.]

### 3. Procedures

Upon receiving informed consent, the questionnaire was handed out to each student during lectures in December 2008. The following informed consent agreements were written on the head of the sheet and also read aloud

1. the object of this study is only to obtain mass data to know how students behave at school.
2. the unsigned data is calculated statistically and each individual's data will only be used to write a paper.
3. there is no obligation to answer all of the questions. Four hundred and ninety two sheets were collected. The percentage of the number of student responses available for analysis was 398 (81.0%).

## Results

[The assessment of students' behavior and attitude at school]

Twenty-one items which described student behavior and attitude at school were shown and assessed by themselves by point 1 to 5. The result is shown in Table 1. In this table, in addition to the mean of the points of each item, the number of students of three different types of answer in each item was also calculated. To make clear the result of the students' assessment, students who chose 'point 1' and 'point 2' were summed up as students who behaved "rarely" in such manner, the students who chose 'point 3' were recognized as students who "sometimes" behaved in such manner, and students who chose 'point 4' and 'point 5' were summed up as students who "often" behaved in such manner. The well-mannered behaviors showing more than 70 percent of the total number of students who answered 'I always do so', were as follows: '1. I separate trash before throwing away (flammable, non-flammable)' (74%), '4. I wrap gum in a piece of paper to throw away' (84%), '5. I always throw away my trash in a dustbin' (91%), '6. I wear indoor shoes.' (88%), '8. After using chairs and desks I put them back as before' (77%), '9. I do not sit on the umbrella stand.' (84%), '10. I always keep valuables with me' (82%), and '11. I lock my locker.' (94%). The good attitudes during class showing 70 percent of the total number of students who answered 'I always do so', were as follows: '16. I turn off my cell phone or use 'manner mode' ' (95%), '18. I do not walk out from the room without reasons' (85%), '19. I do not eat or drink in class' (72%), and '20. I do not write an attendance card for others.' (84%). On the contrary, 41 % of the students did not clean the

Table 1 Assessment of students' behaviours at school

	assessment <sup>1)</sup>						mean <sup>4)</sup>
	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		
	n <sup>2)</sup>	% <sup>3)</sup>	n	%	n	%	
<b>{Manners in school}</b>							
1 I separate trash before throwing it away (flammable, non-flammable).	293	74	65	16	40	10	4.0
2 I clean the desk after using an eraser on it.	129	32	109	27	160	41	2.8
3 I pick up and throw away trash if I find any on the floor.	77	20	101	25	220	55	2.5
4 I wrap gum in a piece of paper to throw away.	335	84	38	10	25	6	4.4
5 I always throw away my trash in a dustbin.	364	91	31	8	3	1	4.6
6 I wear indoor shoes.	350	88	29	7	19	5	4.6
7 I put on my name plate.	12	3	27	7	359	90	1.5
8 After using chairs and desks I put them back as before.	305	77	61	15	32	8	4.1
9 I do not sit on the umbrella stand.	338	84	30	8	30	8	4.5
10 I always keep valuables with me.	328	82	50	13	20	5	4.3
11 I lock my locker.	373	94	9	2	16	4	4.7
12 I greet the house keepers.	151	38	115	29	132	33	3.0
13 I greet the teachers.	189	47	127	32	82	21	3.4
<b>[Attitude during class]</b>							
14 I do not chat during class.	138	35	140	35	120	30	3.1
15 I do not sleep in class.	66	16	134	34	198	50	2.6
16 I turn off my cell phone or use 'manner mode'.	379	95	11	3	8	2	4.8
17 I do not use the cell phone in class.	173	43	115	29	110	28	3.2
18 I do not walk out from the room without reasons.	340	85	36	9	22	6	4.5
19 I do not eat or drink in class.	286	72	79	20	33	8	4.1
20 I do not write an attendance card for others.	333	84	37	9	28	7	4.4
21 I do not engage in any work during class that is not related to the class.	227	57	100	25	71	18	3.6

- 1) Each behaviour was estimated by point 1 (I rarely do it) to point 5 (I always do it). Points 4 and 5 were described as 'always', point 3 was described as 'sometimes', and 'points 1 and 2 were described as 'rarely'.
- 2) The number of students who chose the answer with the point
- 3) The percentage of the number of the students who chose the answer with the point to the total number of students (N=398).
- 4) The mean of the score of all students (N=398)

desk after using an eraser on it, 55 % did not pick up and throw away trash if she/he found any on the floor, 90% did not put on their name plate, and 50 % slept in class, according to their self assessment.

The data was also analyzed using the factor analysis and three factors were extracted (Table 2)

In Factor 1, '20. I do not write an attendance card for others.' '19. I do not eat or drink in class', '18. I do not walk out of the room without reasons', and '21.I do not engage in any work during class that is not related to the class' showed the middle factor loading ('Factor loading' means the coefficients to tell how much weight is assigned to each factor for each variable [20,21,22]. In these behaviors, but for 21, more than 70 % of students answered 'I always do so'. It seems it was easy for the students to mind these 'manners'. In Factor 2, '5. I always throw away my trash in a dustbin', '4. I wrap gum in a piece of paper to throw away', and 'I wear indoor shoes' showed the middle factor loading. These behaviors were

Table 2 The result from Factor Loadings of behaviours of students at school

No. behaviours	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
	Manners at class	Keeping clean	Politeness
17 I do not use the cell phone in class.	0.717		
14 I do not chat during class.	0.676		
21 I do not engage in any work during class that is not related to the class.	0.638		
19 I do not eat or drink in class.	0.594		
15 I do not sleep in class.	0.513		
20 I do not write an attendance card for others.	0.512		
5 I always throw away my trash in a dustbin.		0.721	
4 I wrap gum in a piece of paper to throw away.		0.520	
6 I wear indoor shoes.		0.507	
13 I greet the teachers.			0.715
12 I greet the house keepers.			0.700
eigenvalue	5.52	1.977	1.541
proportion of variance explained	23.543	6.463	4.673

Twenty-one behaviours were estimated with point 1 (I seldom do it) to point 5 (I always do it). Using this score, factor analysis was done and three factors were extracted by referring to the scree plot.

‘manners’ to help keep the school building clean. In Factor 3, ‘13. I greet the teachers’, and ‘12.I greet the house keeper’ showed the middle factor loading. These behaviors seemed to show the politeness toward staff in school.

[The students’ understandings toward ‘rules’]

Twenty-six items which described thoughts toward manners/rules at school were shown and students were asked how much they agreed with each thought. They assessed each item by point 1 (I do not think so) to 5 (I think so sure).

The result is shown in Table 3. In this table, in addition to the mean of the point in each item, the number of students of three different types of answer was also calculated. To make clear the result of the students’ assessment, the students who chose ‘point 1’ and ‘point 2’ were summed up as students who “did not think so”, the students who chose ‘point 3’ were recognized as students who thought ‘it depends’, and students who chose ‘point 4’ and ‘point 5’ were summed up as students who “thought so”.

The thoughts showing more than 50 percent of the number of the students who answered ‘I think so’ were as follows: ‘1. I feel my parents were severe on any rule violation’ (Yes,74%), ‘2.I think the school rules of my junior and/or senior high school were very severe.’ (Yes, 52%), ‘3. I think I always try to keep my private space clean.’ (Yes, 57%), ‘6.I think I always try to keep the public space clean.’ (Yes,70%), ‘10.

Table 3 Students’ understandings toward ‘rules’

No. thoughts	Yes		No		Depends		mean <sup>3)</sup>
	n <sup>1)</sup>	% <sup>2)</sup>	n	%	n	%	
1 I feel my parents were severe on any rule violation.	298	74	18	5	82	21	4.1
2 The school rules of my junior and/or senior high were very severe.	208	52	79	20	111	28	3.6
3 I always try to keep my private space clean.	228	57	44	11	126	32	3.7
4 I always try to assist anyone who needs help at school.	157	39	74	19	167	42	3.3
5 I like to be paid attention to by others.	91	23	172	43	135	34	2.7
6 I always try to keep the public space clean.	279	70	19	5	100	25	3.9
7 I do not mind other students’ rule violation as long as I follow the rules.	53	13	201	51	144	36	2.5
8 It is annoying when someone points out my rule violation.	97	25	129	32	172	43	2.9
9 I feel angry at other students who break rules.	190	48	60	15	148	37	3.5
10 I never point out other students’ rule violation because I do not want to get involved.	269	67	23	6	106	27	3.9
11 I feel annoyed when other students break rules.	203	51	45	11	150	38	3.6
12 To point out my friends’ rule violation affects our good relationship.	117	30	141	35	140	35	2.9
13 My rule violation is not paid attention to when there are many students around me.	97	25	140	35	161	40	2.8
14 It’s important for me to keep rules because I want to be liked by others.	68	17	131	33	199	50	2.8
15 It’s important for me to keep rules because of my dignity as a person.	131	33	89	22	178	45	3.1
16 It is acceptable if you break rules only sometimes.	95	24	114	29	189	47	2.9
17 It’s important for me to keep rules because I hate to cause any troubles.	214	54	32	8	152	38	3.6
18 I feel ashamed when I break rules.	169	43	52	13	177	44	3.4
19 I always keep rules even though I do not know the reasons.	160	41	61	15	177	44	3.3
20 I sometimes break rules when nobody is watching me.	125	32	97	24	176	44	3.1
21 I follow rules even though I find them troublesome.	183	46	33	8	182	46	3.5
22 I sometimes do not follow rules if there is no punishment.	110	28	109	27	179	45	3.0
23 I never do anything I believe to be wrong even though others do.	173	44	32	8	193	48	3.5
24 I point out the rule violation of my friends.	71	18	122	31	205	51	2.8
25 I act as my friends do, even if it means breaking rules.	71	18	127	32	200	50	2.8
26 I point out the rule violation of strangers.	30	7	246	62	122	31	2.1

Each understanding was estimated by point 1(No, I do not think so) to point 5 (Yes, I think so). Points 4 and 5 were described as ‘Yes’, point 3 was described as ‘Depends’ (It’s depends), and points 1 and 2 were described as ‘No’.

1) The number of students who chose the point and 2) the percentage of those to the total number of the students who answered the question is shown.

3) The mean of the score of all students (N=398)

I think I never point out other students' rule violation because I do not want to get involved.' (Yes,67%), '11. I think I feel annoyed when other students break rules.' (Yes,51%), and '17. I think it is important for me to keep rules because I hate to cause any troubles.' (Yes,54%). On the contrary, the thoughts showing more than 50 % of students who did not agree were as follows '7. I think I do not mind other students' rule violation as long as I follow the rules.' (No, 51%) and '26. I think I point out the rule violation of strangers.' (No, 62%).

The thoughts showing more than 50 % of students who could not decide whether the answer was yes/no,' were as follows: '14. I think it is important for me to keep rules because I want to be liked by others.' (It depends, 50%), '24. I think I point out the rule violation of my friends', (It depends, 51%) and '25. I think I act as my friends do, even if it means breaking rules.' (It depends, 50 %).

The data was also analyzed using the factor analysis and four factors were extracted (Table 4).

In Factor 1, '17. I think it is important for me to keep rules because I hate to cause any troubles.', '21. I think I follow rules even though I find them troublesome', '6. I think I always try to keep the public space clean', '18. I think I feel ashamed when I break rules', '4. I think I always try to assist anyone who needs help at school', and '23. I think I never do anything I believe to be wrong even though others do.' showed the middle factor loading. These seemed to show their respect toward rules at school. In Factor 2, '22. I think I sometimes do not follow rules if there is no punishment', '20. I think I sometimes break rules when nobody is watching me', '14. I think it is important for me to keep rules because I want to be liked by others', '16. I think it is acceptable if I break rules only sometimes', and '13. I think my rule violation is not paid attention to when there are many students around me' showed middle factor loading. These seemed to show their disregard toward rules. In Factor 3, '9. I think I feel angry at other students who break rules' showed a high factor loading and '11. I think I feel annoyed when other students break rules' showed middle factor loading. This factor was interpreted as their anger against other students breaking rules. In Factor 4, '26. I think I point out the rule violation of strangers' and '24. I think I point out the

Table 4 The result from Factor Loadings of understandings toward rules of students

understandings No.	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
	Respect to rules	Disregard to rules	Dislike of breaking rules	Caring for breaking rules
17 It's important for me to keep rules because I hate to cause any troubles.	0.638			
21 I follow rules even though I find them troublesome.	0.631			
6 I always try to keep the public space clean.	0.628			
18 I feel ashamed when I break rules.	0.602			
4 I always try to assist anyone who needs help at school.	0.520			
23 I never do anything I believe to be wrong even though others do	0.515			
22 I sometimes do not follow rules if there is no punishment.		0.657		
20 I sometimes break rules when nobody is watching me.		0.648		
14 It's important for me to keep rules because I want to be liked by others.		0.520		
16 It is acceptable if you break rules only sometimes.		0.516		
13 My rule violation is not paid attention to when there are many students around me.		0.502		
9 I feel angry at other students who break rules.			0.841	
11 I feel annoyed when other students break rules.			0.497	
26 I point out the rule violation of strangers.				0.596
24 I point out the rule violation of my friends.				0.541
eigenvalue	4.494	3.325	1.758	1.367
proportion of variance explained	14.913	10.225	4.168	3.307

Twenty six understandings were estimated by point 1 (No, I do not think so) to point 5 (Yes, I think so). Using the score, factor analysis was done. Four factors were extracted by referring to the scree plot.

rule violation of my friends' showed middle factor loadings. This seemed to show the students' concerns for the persons who break the rules.

[The relationship between students' manner in class and their other behaviors at school or their understandings toward rules.]

What is the difference between the students who behave well and those who behave awfully in class? Are their understandings toward rules also different? To answer these questions, the students who behaved best and the students who behaved worst in class were extracted. Concretely, the scores of each student for the 6 items extracted in Factor 1 of 'Behaviors at school', interpreted as 'Manners in class', were summed up (the mean score of the total number of students was 21.2, the standard deviation was 4.847, and the median was 22.0). Using this score, the best-mannered-student group who showed the highest score (total 47, female 35, male 12, 11.8% of the total number of students), and the worst-mannered student group who showed the lowest score (total 38, female 23, male 15, 9.5 %of the total number of students) were extracted as a result of the histogram of the frequency distribution (Table 5). In each factor, the mean of the sum of the score of items was calculated to compare the two groups by t-test. The result is shown in Table 6.

In the result from the t-test, there was a significant difference of the mean score between the 'best-mannered-student group' and the 'worst-mannered-student group' in Factor 2 and Factor 3 in 'Behaviors at school' and in Factor 1,2,3 in 'Understandings toward rules'. The best-mannered students in class show efforts to 'keep clean' and be 'polite to staff' at a significantly higher level than the worst-mannered students in class. In 'Understandings toward rules', the best-mannered students respect the rules, hate persons who break rules, and show care for persons who break rules at a significantly higher level than the

Table 5 The frequency of distribution

attitude at class	score	the number of students	percentage
worst	6-10	13	3.3
	11-14	25	6.3
	15-18	70	17.6
	19-22	106	26.6
	23-26	137	34.4
best	27-30	47	11.8
	total	398	100.0

Table 6 The relationship between their behaviors/understandings toward rules and the manners in class

	Manners in class (Factor 1 in [Behavior at school])		
	Best (n=47)	Worst (n=38)	t score
[Behaviors at school]			
Factor 2 Keeping clean	14.6	12.1	4.649, p<.001
Factor 3 Politeness	7.0	5.7	2.625, p<.01
[Understandings toward rules]			
Factor 1 Respect for rules (6 items)	23.3	18.8	5.027, p<.001
Factor 2 Disregard for rules (5 items)	14.6	16.2	2.048, p<.05
Factor 3 Dislike of breaking rules (2 items)	7.4	6.6	2.132, p<.05
Factor 4 Caring about breaking rules (2 items)	5.0	4.6	

Each student's score of 6 items extracted as Factor 1 in [Behaviors at school] (Manners in class) was summed up. The mean score of the total number of students was 21.2, the standard deviation was 4.847, and the median was 22.0. The best-mannered-student group who showed the highest score (total 47, female 35, male 12, 11.8% of the total number of students), and the worst-mannered student group who showed the lowest score (total 38, female 23, male 15, 9.5 %of the total number of students) were extracted result from the histogram of the frequency distribution. In each factor, the mean of the sum of the score of items was calculated and compared between two groups by t-test. Only when there were significant differences between the two groups, the t-score was described with the significance level.

worst-mannered students. On the other hand, the worst-mannered students in class disregard the rules at a significantly higher level than the best-mannered students in class.

## Discussion

Results from students' self assessment demonstrated that about more than 70 % of students followed well the basic 'rules' and/or 'manners' in school; they separated trash before throwing it away (flammable, non-flammable), they wrapped gum in a piece of paper to throw away, they always threw away their trash in a dustbin, and took precautions by keeping their valuables with them. But about half of these students were not interested in cleaning the desk after using an eraser on it or picking up and throwing away trash if they found any on the floor. During class, 95 % of students turned off their cell phone or used 'manner mode', but more than 60 % had an experience using the cell phone, chatting, and sleeping. These facts suggest that the students' attitude toward 'rules' and/or 'manners' can change easily depending on the situation.

Why do they think they need to follow 'rules' and/or 'manners' ? The reasons could be suggested by the analysis of their understandings on rules. Some students thought that they kept rules because they hated to cause any troubles, and felt ashamed when they broke rules. The others thought that they could break rules when there was no punishment, and when they felt that nobody was watching them because the main reason for them to keep rules is to be liked by others. They seemed to have some 'reasonable' grounds whether they followed rules or not. But this was not applied to the next case. In spite of eighty five percent of students feeling angry sometimes when other students broke rules, only 18 % of them pointed out the rule violation of their friends, and much less, only 7 % of students pointed out the rule violation of strangers. These facts suggest that the decision whether to follow rules/manners or not could sometimes be affected by how they want to be accepted by others, not on their principle toward how to behave. When they want to avoid being punished by teachers, they may follow the rules, but when they want to choose their 'friendships' before rules, they may break rules easily. Deguchi et al. [15] pointed out that there were positive relationships between 'whispering' and feelings of interpersonal adjustment, and some students' 'whispering' was caused by their hope to keep their good relationships with others. Our data suggested that this psychological tendency was shown in their behaviors relating to other rules/manners in school.

Such a behavioral tendency relating to rules can be explained by the point of view of the development of moral reasoning. According to the most well-known moral developmental models, Kohlberg's theory [21], most adolescents achieve a 'conventional level' of moral reasoning by 13-years-old and the persons who reason in this way judge the morality of actions by comparing these actions to societal views and expectations. Taking this view, the stages of the moral development of these students seemed to be average for their age, though we should not jump to conclusions.

From the view of education in university, it seems to be important to pay special attention to the smaller number of students: 8 % thought that they would break rules if they found them troublesome, and/or could break rules when others did so, 22 % never thought that it was important to follow rules because of their dignity as a person. These students have to learn more about the reasons for the existence of the rules. Also we should not ignore the fact that 18 % of students answered that they would act as their friends do even if it meant breaking rules. These students need to learn how to behave when they hope to choose different ways from their friends but keep their good friendship. If they can understand that to follow others does not mean to get along well with others, they will be able to act according to their own moral adequacy, not just follow others by whom they want to be liked. They seem to need not a 'moral education' but assertion training [22].

On the other hand, it could not be made clear what caused the differences of understandings toward rules between the good mannered students and bad mannered ones. To make clearer about the factors which affect the relationships, their behaviors and thoughts about rules/morals, more data should be added. For example, this time, the sex differences were not analyzed because the number of female students was almost twice that of males and that many research have generally found no significant patterns of differences in moral development between sexes [23]. But we feel there may be the sex difference in the behaviors relating to rules/manners through our experience and the differences should be researched further in the future.

## Conclusion

We found that some students followed rules well and others did not, and these differences related to their understandings on rules. The most important fact was that some students thought that they sometimes need to break rules to get along with others. Assertion training is suggested to help these students.

Most of these students want to be a professional worker to support others in the future. This data suggested that it could be one of the future important roles of university education to develop a higher moral perception among students.

## Acknowledgements

The data for this report was collected by Miho Kawada and Minako Tanaka for their graduate thesis in 2007. We wish to express our deep gratitude to them.

We also would like to thank Ms. Akiko Watanabe and Ms. Jane T. R. Dewar for their guidance and advice on English in this paper.

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