

# Turning Points and Careers in the Life Stories of High School Dropouts

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The high school dropout rate in Japan is maintained at a low level among so-called advanced countries. A large number of research papers have proven the fact that high school dropouts become low-income workers and the working poor. This study examines how people arrive at dropping out of high school, how they grew as people, how they built their careers, and how they viewed their turning points in life.

In this study, the life stories of four high school dropouts in early adulthood were explored. The results show that their life courses and the meanings of their turning points are very diverse. It is considered that the characteristics of early adulthood with major changes such as employment and marriage are reflected strongly.

The examinees have made various choices while recursively looking back on past experience so as to ensure that no contradiction is present in their lives. The author concludes that the examinees are trying to ensure consistency in their life history.