

# ISSA Activity Brief

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## HOW CAN ISSA REACT TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?



The new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) became a pandemic in 2020, and has not only drastically reduced domestic and global economies but also has greatly affected communities and school education due to restrictions on the movement of and meetings between people. At present, there is no effective infection control and no prospect of the disease's termination. How should social studies education deal with these circumstances, and what can ISSA do?

First of all, social studies scholars and teacher educators must not lose sight of the mission and vision of the subject in any situation. Its mission is to form

scientific, social awareness and foster democratic citizens. Its vision might be respect for social diversity, critical thinking, exploratory learning, and promotion of social participation and so on. In particular, I think that respect for diversity and critical thinking are necessary countermeasures to COVID-19.

As for respect for diversity, empathy and care for minorities and the weak are indispensable. Still, in reality, there are incidents of harassment and exclusion of migrants and patients with COVID-19. Also, countries are competing in the development of vaccines and devoting themselves to the prevention of epidemics on their own territory. Social studies educators must remember the history of minorities and vulnerable people being sacrificed to eliminate social unrest and dissatisfaction in the event of disasters and epidemics and take care to protect vulnerable groups through cross-border solidarity. At the same time, we must control the pandemic through international cooperation, such as through WHO.

The importance of critical thinking has been pointed out since the establishment of social studies. Still, as online classes using digital resources are inevitable as a measure against COVID-19, expectations for critical thinking are higher than ever before. First, we have to find and eliminate the fake from among the information on COVID-19 flooding the web and obtain accurate information. This is because effective measures cannot be taken without precise details. Next, digital literacy is indispensable in promoting digital education. Still, it is not the operation of the device, but the critical thinking of the young people referred to as digital natives. As Professor Sam Wineberg (2016) of Stanford University points out in his article "Why historical thinking is not about history," many studies have shown that even digital natives are not good at sorting and interpreting information. Indeed, "it is one thing to be a digital native and quite another to be digitally intelligent."

ISSA is a network organization

managed by academic societies of social studies education in Asian countries. It does not have any force. However, we can exchange accurate information on COVID-19 responses in each country or region and block fake news. And we can empathize with the infected and the needy and encourage each other to overcome difficult situations. There is a saying that “a friend in need is a friend indeed.” I hope ISSA member societies will be friends in need.

**Tomohito Harada**  
President of the ISSA

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## **JSSEA VOL. 9 AVAILABLE SOON!**

We are pleased to announce that JSSEA Vol. 9 will be available in October. Also, we sincerely apologize for the delay in the publication and appreciate your understanding. The contents of this volume are as follows:

- How Can Social Studies Relate to Youth Civic Engagement? Preparation for Informed Civic

Participation Through an Inquiry Approach: The Singapore Social Studies Curriculum----Min Fui Chee

- Social Studies Education Utilising Children’s Motivations: Methodology to Connect Children and Society Through the Dismantling of ‘Performed Consensus’-----Noboru Tanaka
- Promoting Teachers’ Citizenship by Participation in PLC -----Aekyung Park
- Basic Education Curriculum Reforms in Myanmar and the Role of Social Studies -----Wint Zaw Htet

For reading the above articles and reviews, please access to <http://jerass.com/jssea/>.

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## **JERASS WILL HOST AN ISSA AFFILIATED WEBINAR**

The Japanese Educational Research Association for Social Studies (JERASS) will host an ISSA-affiliated webinar next January. Here are the details.

**Theme:** How can social studies contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals? Focus on SDG3—Teaching and Learning of “Health and Disease.”

**Date:** January 24, 2021 (Sun)

**Time:** 15:00–16:30 (Japan)  
14:00–15:30 (Singapore)

**Presenters and titles:**

(1) Dr. Chew Hung Chang (National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore): What does future-ready social studies education look like? Insights from teaching and learning geography.

(2) Dr. Yoshiyasu Ida (University of Tsukuba, Japan): TBA

**Language:** English.

Registration for the webinar will open in December. Please check the homepages of ISSA (<http://jerass.com/jssea/>) and JERASS (<https://jerass.jp/>) after November 30, 2020.

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## **LAST CHANCE! CALL FOR THE SPECIAL ISSUE OF JSSEA VOL.10**

Do not forget to submit your papers for JSSEA Vol. 10! In this volume, we are preparing a special issue discussing “**How should social studies deal with and contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals?**”

Any article of Social Studies Education, and related fields, including History and Geography Education, Political Education, Global and International Education, and Citizenship Education, are also welcome!

The submission deadline is **November 30, 2020**. We look forward to reading your work!

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## **CALL FOR AFFILIATED EVENT**

ISSA is ready to support you to make your association’s event global. If you have any academic event that you hope scholars from other countries will attend, especially English-based sessions, please let us know. We will send/share the information with our members for your successful event.

Additionally, we also want you to plan these kinds of events. This will be our way of getting better connected and make ISSA bigger and better. The following is an example of an affiliated event.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENT FROM OUR MEMBERS**

### **1. THE SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (ESSDRA)**

On February 22–23, 2020, the 31st annual conference of ESSDRA was held at Okayama University of Science, with the theme of “Prospects of Social Studies Education towards Era of Artificial Intelligence.” However, there were no ISSA-affiliated events at the conference.

The 32nd annual conference will take place on February 13–14, 2021. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be held online in two parts, “symposium” and “session by ESSDRA members.” The date might be changed depending on the COVID-19 news or university

entrance examination schedule in Japan. If you would like to check for more information about the conference, please our official homepage: <http://www.essdra.fan-site.net>.

Our academic Journal, *Journal of Research on Education in Social Studies Department*, Vol. 31, was published in December 2019. It contains six peer-reviewed papers, six book reviews, and a report on the 30th conference.

### **2. THE JAPANESE ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (JASS)**

Due to COVID-19, the Japanese Association for Social Studies has significantly changed its original schedule this year. All of the various committees, such as the Standing Committee and the Editorial Committee, held online meetings. The two-day national conference will also be held online, on November 28–29, 2020, hosted by the University of Tsukuba. On the first day, a general meeting and a board of councilors will be held. On

the second day, research presentations and a symposium will be held.

The themes of the research presentations are as follows:

1) How should disaster prevention education be continued?

2) How is gender bias hidden in social studies education?

3) How should the unit design be that fosters competencies in social studies education?

4) Considering the ideal way of the new school subject, “Comprehensive Geography” and “Comprehensive History” and “Public” within social studies education.

5) Considering the ideal way of subject specialization in teacher training of social studies education.

A theme of the symposium is “How will social studies lessons change by using the viewpoint of social participation?” Free research presentations will be made on the web.

On the other hand, academic journals have been published smoothly. As usual, three journals were published this year. Although

schools have been greatly confused by the effects of COVID-19, our members’ researches have remained steady and active.

### **3. THE JAPANESE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (JERASS)**

We are pleased to announce that the 60th JERASS & 37th the Naruto Association of Social Studies Education (NASSE) annual conference will be held online from October 24 (Sat) to November 3 (Tue), 2020. The theme is “Responsibility for social studies education: How to meet the broader demand for education.”

This conference will consist of a symposium (October 24 Zoom discussion and October 24–25 video distribution) and paper sessions. Although the online conference was a reluctant choice for us in the face of COVID-19, there have been unexpected benefits. By going online, its duration can be extended.

We look forward to welcoming you to our innovative, dynamic

online conference. Please check the official website.

### **4. THE KOREAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION (KASSE)**

KASSE will hold its 2020 winter conference in January 2021. Because of COVID-19, KASSE could not have an annual meeting. Therefore, the winter conference will compensate for the canceled 2020 summer conference. The National Research Foundation of South Korea will support the conference.

\*We are looking forward to hearing from the **Indonesian Social Studies Association (APRIPSI)** and the **Korean Social Studies Association (KASE)** next time!

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## **OUR MEMBERS’ NEW PUBLICATION WRITTEN IN ENGLISH**

### **1. DONG-MIN LEE (DECEMBER 2019)**

Dong-Min Lee, Assistant Professor of Catholic Kwangdong University, published the following article:

Lee, D-M. (2019). Cultivating preservice geography teachers' awareness of geography using Story Maps. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 44(3), 387-405.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the potential of Story Maps to improve the awareness of geography among preservice geography teachers (PGTs). To conduct the research, this study planned a Story Maps-based full-semester lesson plan for 30 beginning PGTs. The data were collected via participants' reflective journals and were analyzed using the seven steps of phenomenographic analysis. Participating PGTs deepened their awareness of geography as they created their Story Maps, which led to improved awareness of geography education. Many PGTs (Type A) developed a highly

procedural and scientific understanding of geography concepts, theories, and teaching and learning, while some other PGTs (Type B) showed comparatively less prominent improvements in their awareness of geography. In addition, one PGT (Type C) showed little improvement in awareness of geography. These results suggest potential implications for PGT education based on geospatial technologies and spatial narratives.

## **2. JINICHIRO SAITO (MARCH 2020)**

Jinichiro Saito, Assistant Professor of Tokai University, published the following article:

Saito, J. (2020). Maintaining national standards while engaging culturally relevant education: A comparative analysis of citizenship education in the United States and Japan, *Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook*, 14, 39-51.

This article explores the relationship between the freedom granted to teachers for shaping curricula and the function of national standards. In recent years, many countries have begun to introduce standards-based reforms in education. As cultural diversity within schools increases, the tension resulting from catering to such diversity while maintaining standards is also rising. This article offers a comparative analysis of the contexts in the U.S. and Japan.

The first half of the paper focuses mainly on the U.S. example. In the U.S., debates and conflicts between supporters of standards-based reforms and those of multicultural education have surfaced. In this process, creative strategies suggest providing teachers with the freedom to shape curricula for children of diverse foreign heritages.

The second half of the paper focuses on the contexts in Japan, such as history and characteristics of courses of study, regulation by the national government, and suggestive citizenship education

lessons for immigrant children in Japan. The implication is that although the U.S. has a higher degree of cultural diversity than Japan, similar controversial issues will also surface for the Japanese educational system soon. Therefore, this article advocates the need for a balance between regulation by the national government and teachers' own initiatives in creating a citizenship education curriculum.

### **3. JONGSUNG KIM & KAZUHIRO KUSAHARA (MAY 2020)**

Jongsung Kim, Assistant Professor of Hiroshima University, and Kazuhiro Kusahara, Professor of Hiroshima University, published the following article:

Kim, J., & Kusaraha, K. (2020). What is the lasting impact of the use of nuclear weapons during WWII in Japan? In B. Maguth & G. Wu (Eds.), *Inquiry-based global learning in the K-12 social studies classroom* (pp. 139-154). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hiroshima is a place where different memories collide. In Japan, the city is recognized as a place of disseminating the message "No More Hiroshima." In the U.S., dropping the atomic bomb in Hiroshima is controversial; one argues the bombing was necessary, but the other disputes that there were alternatives. Other countries, such as Korea and China, view Hiroshima based on the history of colonization by Japan. Likewise, the understanding of the use of the nuclear weapon during WWII in Japan varies based on the individual country's context.

In this chapter, we suggest a learning opportunity for viewing what happened in Hiroshima from multiple perspectives and deliberating how to remember the history. With the learning materials that cover from the historical background of the use of the nuclear weapon and the catastrophe in Hiroshima caused by the atomic bomb to the recent Hiroshima visit of former President Obama and people's reactions in a different context, students will answer the

compelling question "What is the lasting impact of the atomic bomb during WWII in Japan?" This unit culminates an authentic performance task to re-design the last 10 feet of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum with historical facts and their historical understanding.

### **4. KAWAGUCHI HIROMI & JONGSUNG KIM (JULY 2020)**

Hiromi Kawaguhi, Associate Professor of Hiroshima University, and Jongsung Kim, Assistant Professor of Hiroshima University, published the following article:

Kawaguchi, H., & Kim, J. (2020). Beyond the pendulum?: Social studies curriculum in Japan. In K. J. Kennedy (Ed.), *Social studies education in East Asian contexts* (pp. 19-35). New York, NY: Routledge.

After the sheer madness of the Second World War, social studies has been introduced as a principal

subject for promoting democratic citizenship as a new social norm in Japan. Although the goal of the school subject has been the same, its forms, curriculum, and pedagogy have constantly changed because it has reflected diverse competing visions of the future like a mirror. This chapter uses the following three tensions as a framework to successfully extract the characteristics of the Japanese social studies curriculum: Flexibility and Standardization, Rigorousness and Relevance, Transmitting and Transforming. Comparing to the past national curriculum, the current reform of Japanese social studies seems to ease the aforementioned tensions and acts as a regulator, or goes beyond the pendulum because the new national curriculum tries to integrate concepts that are regarded as opposing or conflicting. Social studies teachers in Japan have a new responsibility to coordinating diverse conflicting concepts in their own curriculum, and, thus, teacher education for both pre- and in-service teachers

should change its role to encourage teachers to conduct curriculum development.

**5. JONGSUNG KIM,  
KAWAGUCHI HIROMI,  
& SHO MURATA  
(JULY 2020)**

Jongsung Kim, Assistant Professor of Hiroshima University, Hiromi Kawaguchi, Associate Professor of Hiroshima University, and Sho Murata, a graduate student at Hiroshima University, published the following article:

Kim, J., Kawaguchi, H., & Murata, S. (2020). "This is a matter of survival": The collaboration between education for disaster prevention and social studies education in Japan. In K. J. Kennedy (Ed.), *Social studies education in East Asian contexts* (pp. 115-124). New York, NY: Routledge.

This chapter clarifies the characteristics of Education for Disaster Prevention in Japan, which

aimed at preparing students to survive natural disasters and to make a reasonable decision on the issues related to the disasters, and how social studies education collaborates with the whole-school priori. In a disaster-prone country such as Japan, Education for Disaster Prevention is "a matter of survival." Not only do school subjects matter, but also extracurricular activities and even those outside of school contribute to students' safety.

Social studies education has played an essential role in Education for Disaster Prevention because it deals with natural disasters and how people cope with them. In this article, with an exemplary lesson, "Let's Find the Secrets of Sendai Castle Town!" we describe how social studies educators connect the subject to Education for Disaster Prevention. Based on the case study, we also illustrate how social studies education can create win-win situations through collaborating with cross-curricular and whole-school priori.

## **INTRODUCING OUR ISSA AND JSSEA ADMINISTRATORS**



My name is Yu Osaka. I am an assistant professor at Tokuyama University in Japan. I have been working as the chief of public relations for JSSEA since JSSEA Vol. 7.

My main work is to maintain and update the JSSEA/ISSA website and to promote JSSEA to JERASS and other social studies education organizations in Japan. Occasionally, I also assist in the proofreading process. I will continue to promote activities to make JSSEA more

widely known.

I am looking forward to hearing your ideas on how to carry out public relations.

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