

Japanese Education System: A Model for Asian Countries

Abstract

Education is the best tool to rule the world peacefully. Role of education in shaping the modern world is remarkable, this reflects in every field of human development. Japanese education system could be a role model for the countries those trying to move ahead in the era of global competitiveness. Japan has delivered the scientific and social skills, and gained a high position of developed nations. Japanese shows their will power to frame the 'best' through their capacity, and education helped Japan to generate such capacity.

Keywords: Tokugawa, Bakufu, Han, Meiji, Dewey, MEXT, Industrial Economy, Samurai, Teacher, Education Program, School

Introduction

The Tokugawa which is also called Edo period, conveyed almost two and half century years of stability in Japan. The political system evolved into *bakuhhan*, a combination of the *bakufu* and *han* (domains) to describe the government and society of the period. In the *bakuhhan*, the *shōgun* had national authority and the *daimyō* had regional authority. This represented a new unity in the feudal structure, which featured an increasingly large bureaucracy to administer the mixture of centralized and decentralized authorities. Untouched from the outside world, Japan flourished and enjoyed a rich culture. In the Meiji era, many Japanese were literate and started getting formal education (Sims: 2001).

Meiji adopted the administrative scheme for its new education system from the France, which was centralized and very orderly, from Germany they adopted the idea of an educational system to establish national universities. England provided Japan with a model of schools founded on strong national moralities. And, the United States provided a powerful pedagogical model in the teachings of John Dewey- the American philosopher and educational reformer, with the Japanese notion that a school should be responsible for developing the whole child (Dewey, 1902).

The Meiji government, commanded universal and compulsory education, and eliminated the rigid class differences in the education system. Meiji reformers needed every Japanese citizen to be as well educated as possible. This turned out to be an appreciable decision, putting the basis for what would become possibly one of the world's most meritocratic societies. There was a reaction against the Meiji government's willpower to implement ideas from elsewhere in the world. It aroused deep fears that the essence of Japanese would be lost (Henshall: 2012). The Imperial Rescript of Education, released in 1890, was a clear declaration of the primacy of Japanese values in guiding the evolution of the new compulsory education system.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to deal with the educational pattern in Japan. Japanese education has provided the opportunities to its citizens to get benefit from it and pay back to the society and country.

Japanese Education System

During American occupation immediately after the World War II, compulsory nine years of education was declared in Japan, providing financial assistance to those who required it, and made it possible for every high school graduate to take the college entrance examinations. Earlier, a limited number of special high school graduates had been permitted to take these examinations. These policies secured the drive towards the highly meritocratic system that had already begun (Sims: 2001).

In Japan, the reputation of a school depends on the academic performance of the schoolchildren and their behavior. Society holds the



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school accountable for any violation of law from students, which is absent in Western nations. For instance, in Japan if a student breaks the law, the law execution authorities request the teacher who advise the student, the mother and all faculty members of related student to express regret for such behavior. In turn this marks Japanese students to develop a resilient sense of obligation to the faculty and endeavor to perform well academically and to stay within the limits of the law when not in school.

Indeed, the same idea applies with the relationship to the other students at school. To fail is to let the group down. Therefore, most members of this society will work very hard to do as well as possible, and are always working towards higher goals, because that is the way to earn recognition and gain status (Clark: 2005). The same values pervade the workplace. It is often said that people work very hard in Japan largely to earn the respect and admiration of their colleagues. They do not work hard for personal distinction, but rather for the good of the group.

Therefore, development in Japan is a purpose of quality determined by examination. The exams put emphasis on memorizing and collecting facts and mastering procedures, rather than analytical thinking or the capability for advance or innovation. However, it does work because Japanese employers are mainly interested in three things: applied intelligence, capacity to learn, and the capacity to work hard, and stick at difficulty.

Japan follows the national curriculum standards that outline the content to be taught by grade and subject, and every ten year Japanese educationist revise this course. Throughout the country, teachers teach based on the national curriculum standards. Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT-formed in January 2001) set the curriculum with advice from the Central Council for Education. In actuality, the key figures involved in setting the curriculum are university professors and ministry staff. While the curriculum defined by MEXT is only for direction. The direction for the curriculum is long and detailed, MEXT publishes explanatory booklets as well and the curriculum is revised following a regular schedule (MEXT: 2002).

Teacher is the important part of Japanese education system. After the Meiji restoration, most of the teachers were Samurai from Samurai schools, members of Japan's upper classes. Teacher are respected in Japan and this tradition could be found in Confusions days as well. In the early twentieth century, the modern era started and classless schools were formed for the first time in Japan, those schools were manned in significant numbers by the members from upper classes, and from that time forward, teaching has been an appropriate occupation in Japan (Rohlen: 1983).

Be a teacher of a school, candidate must attend a ministry-certified teacher education program at a university or junior college. Japanese national teacher training universities with model schools support the teacher training for new teachers.

Teaching training is a common part of all teacher education programs (Hood: 2001). Prefectures, like other employers in Japan, are prepared to make major investments in their new teachers to make sure they have the basic skills to thrive. Japanese teachers and principals are often reallocated to different schools by the prefectures. This is done to make sure that the dispersal of the most capable teachers among schools should be impartial.

Japanese Education--A Model for Asia:

The commitment for school children in Japan is must from the stakeholders, it is an existing and continuing priority. It is the central reason that Japan has access to a first degree of teaching force, Japanese students are excellently supported at home, and the schools are well resourced. This obligation is the foundation of the Japanese system. Which is not present in other Asian countries. Japan is dedicated to nonstop international benchmarking of education system (Hood: 2001). From the Meiji government to the present days, Japan has succeeded a lot due to its determination and to adapt the finest in the Japanese setting, interlacing them together into an intelligible and influential manner. Japan, like other East Asians, believe that academic attainment is more a matter of determination than the hereditary ability. Contrasting teachers in the rest of the world, Japanese teachers believe that the student presentation is better with bigger classes, at least in certain subjects. Because more students are likely to attend the class with a wider range of problem-solving approaches from which other students could learn.

Conclusion

Japan is among the most advanced industrial economy internationally. It is among the international leaders for the development and use of most innovative technological systems. The education pattern in Japan since the Meiji restoration has helped Japan to achieve highly comprehensive and merit based education system. Other Asian countries could learn from Japanese commitment for education. Education is backbone of society, the moral principles learned from education produce better tomorrow. Japan has succeeded in that pursuit.

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