

Learn From the Japanese Education System

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ABSTRACT

The reason is that Japan is one of the developed countries that has the best education system in the world and is a mecca or reference for other countries, including Indonesia. One indicator that can be used to see the quality of a country's education is the results of the assessment (PISA) carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). What is very interesting about Japan's progress, including its educational progress, is that this progress is still framed by the country's noble values. Japanese people are very proud and uphold their traditions and culture. Education is valued and well managed and is based on moral and character development as an integral part of education. The Japanese education system is generally built from a combination of Western ideas and Japanese methods. Even Japan can minimize the unemployment rate, which always increases in every country. The creativity of Japanese education graduates is recognized internationally as an example of success in the automotive sector, namely Honda, and Suzuki, which are always able to innovate their products in a short period. Apart from producing civil servant workers, it is also able to produce experts who can continue to develop the latest research.

Keywords: Education System, Japan, Developed Countries.



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INTRODUCTION

Japan is a developed country in many areas of life, including politics, economy, society, culture, and technology. Japan's advancements, of course, have had an impact on its facilities and infrastructure, as well as the quality of its education. History demonstrates that education in developed countries such as the United States, Greece, Germany, and other developed countries promotes national progress by prioritizing education in their countries where the state attempts to educate the nation's life and honors all scientific developments (Fägerlind & Saha, 2016). For Japan, education is a tool that plays a very important role in improving human resources. Where the quality of education must continue to be improved because it can determine the quality of human resources in a country itself. Education is expected to be able to develop the abilities and character of each amid national civilization. Japan is considered superior in advancing education in its country where Japan was selected as the country with the best quality education system in Asia and it has been recorded that since 1970 the country of the Rising Sun has been able to implement all of its educational goals in just 25 years (Ishikawa, 2011).

Education in Japan offers numerous advantages in sectors such as medicine, technology, literature, and the arts, among others. Takeuchi et al (2007) add, that the ability of the Japanese education system to meet numerous difficulties connected to the human resources

required in diverse domains of employment reflects its effectiveness. The educational system has effectively trained persons in the medical industry, technical advancement, literature, and the arts. These varied educational benefits are critical in propelling Japan's success across various industries and bolstering the country's standing as an innovative and culturally rich nation. Even the Japanese government can reduce the jobless rate, which is increasing in every country. Japanese educational graduates' innovation is recognized internationally as an instance of success in the automobile business, specifically Honda and Suzuki, which have always been able to improve their goods in a short amount of time. It is capable of creating experts capable of continuously developing the latest research in addition to a workforce of state workers.

Based on the information provided, the writing team is interested in conducting an in-depth examination of Japan's educational system. The writers' purpose is to obtain more information and insights to adopt and apply relevant components of the country's education system. The authors seek to obtain new views and beneficial insights in their efforts to improve their educational system by researching and analyzing Japan's educational techniques and policies. The authors hope to promote education in Indonesia and deliver greater advantages to students and society as a whole by analyzing Japan's successful experiences.

METHODS

The study of this research employs a literature review, in which the literature is taken by the subject matter and is thoroughly evaluated so that conclusions and findings in the research may be derived. Literature is derived from books, journal papers published both domestically and globally, and other sources (Aryantie et al., 2023).

RESULTS

3.1 History of education in Japan

Japan is a country located in East Asia which is heavily influenced by Confucian thought, such as China and South Korea. This teaching highly values education and the cultivation of strong character, and theory and practice cannot be separated. Apart from that, it is also said that the emperor's ancestors built their kingdom based on noble and eternal values (Mori, 1979). This philosophy has influenced Japanese educational philosophy from time to time. The history of Japanese education can generally be divided into two periods, namely before the Second World War and after the Second World War. Before the Second World War, Japan's state education policy was summarized in a copy of the Imperial Rescript on education (Kato et al., 2022).

The material or learning taught tends to teach loyalty and obedience from generation to generation while still paying attention to and applying aesthetic values (Halstead & Pike, 2006). Every individual must be able to establish harmonious relationships and show affection to the people around him. Loyalty and obedience to parents, husband, wife, and

friends, being moderate and simple and seeking knowledge as deeply as possible and balanced with an artistic spirit. Education places great emphasis on the development of knowledge, ethical values (character), and aesthetics (art) which are the essence of education, Henderson's opinion is that education is a process of growing and developing knowledge, values, and skills as well as the goals of education according to Hummel (1977) is a question of value. After the end of World War II on November 3, 1946, Japan's education policy began to be changed based on human rights, freedom of conscience, guarantees for every individual to develop freedom of thought, and academic freedom where every individual has the right to receive education by applicable regulations. ability (Anggraini & Hendrati, 2014). The difference between the periods before and after the Second war, as stated by Barnadib (2013), is about the relationship between citizens and the state and the educational goals of the Japanese state, which were initially imperial-oriented, and became more democratically oriented toward society. The following is the explanation 1) Every citizen is obliged to develop their intellectual and moral powers, uphold the law, and have the courage to defend the country to defend and maintain the welfare of the Emperor's palace. Enter Every citizen has the same opportunity to obtain education based on his or her abilities, regardless of race, gender, social status, economic position, family origin, financial assistance for those in need, academic freedom, and responsibility for building a country and society that is peace; and 2) The purpose of education is to strengthen the Emperor's loyalty and obedience to achieve social unification under one father, namely the Emperor. Transformation into, to support overall personality development.

3.2 Japanese education system and policy

The following principles underlie the Japanese education system (Kobayashi et al., 2021), namely: 1) Legalism: Education in Japan continues to emphasize the supremacy of the law and legalizes the right of every individual to receive education without discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race or membership. group; 2) Democratic Government: The state provides the possibility for anyone to receive education at a cost that can be borne by the people. Education costs in Japan strive to be affordable according to community resources, with scholarships available for those who are successful or less fortunate 3) Neutrality: Japanese language education is provided to every student at every level of school, with a focus on equality for all students, regardless of background material, family origin, gender, social position, economic position, ethnicity, religion, race or group. membership; 4) Adjustment and determination of educational conditions: During the teaching process, each level of difficulty is adjusted based on the level of education obtained; and 5) Decentralization: Uniform distribution of education policies from the central government to all schools in the country, so that the development and progress of the education system can be adequately tracked. These principles were translated into Japanese educational policy (Beauchamp, 1987); Cummingsc (2014), among others: Elementary education to junior high school is mandatory education that must be followed by every student in Japan where this education is the basis for forming personality, character, and behavior, namely 1) The Japanese government waives education fees for elementary to middle school levels; 2) Compulsory education is attended by students aged 6-15 years; and 3) Every April 1, elementary schools in Japan begin to open a new school year and open registration for prospective elementary school students.

3.3 The goals of Japanese education

The Japanese educational philosophy is reflected in its educational objectives, namely 1) Developing the personality of each individual as a whole; 2) Strive to develop quality Human Resources both mentally and physically; 3) Teach every student to always maintain justice and truth; 4) Every student is taught to always maintain harmony and respect their social environment; 5) Every student must be disciplined, respect time, and have a work ethic; 6) Developing a responsible attitude towards each lesson assignment and assignment given to students according to their respective educational levels; and 7) Increasing the spirit of independence for each student to build the country and maintain world peace.

3.4 Structure and types of education in Japan

The structure and types of education in Japan are divided into several levels (Aspinall, 2011; Cummings, W. K. (2014), namely:

- **Elementary School (ES):** ES in Japan consists of ES and Junior High School (JHS). This education is mandatory for children aged 6-15 years. In compulsory education, Japan has the same procedures as Indonesia where students have to go through the stages in stages, students are not allowed to take higher levels before completing the lesson, and students can leave the class if they do not meet the appropriate grades or are deemed incapable. master the knowledge he learns. given by the class teacher. ES in Japan places great emphasis on character education and integration into social life. The following is an explanation of ES: 1) ES (Shōgakkō): The ES system in Japan is almost the same as in Indonesia, namely led by a class teacher who masters all the subjects taught to his students. This education is mandatory for children aged around 6-12 years. The curriculum in elementary schools includes Japanese, introduction to the environment, music, drawing, sports, crafts, topic studies, science, arithmetic, housekeeping, and social studies. In social studies lessons, ES students are given moral education, participate in social activities, etc. It can be seen that the curriculum emphasis in ES education is directed at instilling character and aesthetic values,
- **Junior High School (JHS) (Chūgakkō):** The JHS system in Japan is also almost the same as the education system in Indonesia, where each subject in the class is led by a different teacher according to each subject. This education is mandatory for children aged around 12-15 years. The JHS curriculum includes Japanese, English, or other foreign languages, social studies, mathematics, science, music, health, physical education, arts, industry, family welfare, and homemaking. All these lessons are given on different days of the week without repeating the same subjects in a week. In learning social studies, JHS students are also given moral education, take part in social activities, and so on.
- **Senior High School (SHS) (Koutougakkou):** The SHS system in Japan is quite different from the system in Indonesia. To be able to enter or continue their education at the high school level, each prospective student must take an entrance exam at their respective high school. The exam is quite difficult so every prospective student who will take the entrance screening test is advised to take study guidance at a special institution such as Juku or Yobiko to improve students' abilities and readiness for the entrance screening test at the SHS level. Majors in high schools in Japan are categorized into several types, namely general majors (academic), agriculture, engineering, trade, fisheries, economics, and nursing. All majors are adjusted to the curriculum applicable

in that country. This education level is divided into 3 types of classes: 1) Full Time: Lasts for 3 full years, according to SHS in general and the average Japanese student chooses full-time education like this. Students are required to take 80 credits of courses, first-grade students are required to take compulsory courses, while second and third-grade students are allowed to choose 4 compulsory subjects plus 14 credits according to their needs in planning their future careers; 2) Part Time: This education is given at night according to the length of time the student works part-time and is considered equivalent to a Diploma and takes more than 3 years. This type of education only applies in universities to employee classes such as in Indonesia. Part-time education in Japan is divided into two classes, namely: Part-Time Daytime Lectures: Students are declared to have passed if they have taken 74 credits of courses. In pursuing this education, students can spend four to 6 years at school, the subjects offered are elective subjects with a learning system that resembles the learning pattern at a university where students determine for themselves the subjects they will take each semester. So this type of education can be said to be equivalent to a diploma; and Afternoon Part-Time Study: Students are declared to have passed if they have taken 74 credits of the same courses as the Daytime Part-Time Study with a study period of around three to 4 years. This type of education is intended for students who work during the day so that students can take classes in the afternoon or evening according to their working hours; and 3)

- **Correspondence:** This type of education is a combination of Full Time and Part Time by offering a unique way of learning, namely students do not need to attend lectures every day and only attend three times a month with 74 credits that must be collected. This course is also aimed at students who just want to learn and increase their knowledge without intending to get a diploma or graduation. The average student who takes this course is around 15-30 years old. Student assignments in this course are further enhanced by studying independently at home. Students are given assignments to complete at home based on manuals, while still taking exams every semester. The task of making a report determines the value of the student and the assignment is sent by post to the school and the teacher will immediately assess the work made by the students. After the examination, the teacher will send back the results of the assignment accompanied by an assessment. To enroll in this type of education each prospective student must take a test. From the description above, it can be seen that the high school education system in Japan is more flexible in terms of time and also the selection of subjects that are adapted to the future careers of students as well as the credit system adopted makes students more responsible. The education system is somewhat similar to the system in higher education. In contrast to the education system in Indonesia which is still packaged the learning time is not flexible and does not accommodate working students.
- **Higher Education (Daigaku):** The higher education system in Japan is different from the higher education model in Indonesia. There are three types of education in Japanese universities, namely: 1) Higher Education: In higher education, there is undergraduate education with a Bachelor's degree which is taken for 4 years (medical and dental students study for 6 years) and a Postgraduate Master's degree which is taken for 2 years and a Doctoral degree which is taken for 5 years; 2) Junior College: It takes about three to 4 years of education for a high school graduate. Junior College is enough to fulfill half of the credits that must be taken for a Bachelor's Degree. Prospective University

and Junior College students are selected based on exam results and student achievements during high school. For state universities, prospective students are selected based on two selection stages, namely a combined proficiency test and a college entrance examination as the final stage of selection; and 3) Engineering College: Which can be taken by prospective students who have graduated from junior high school. Engineering Colleges produce technician graduates. This type of higher education is similar to vocational schools in Indonesia. From the description of the types and levels of Japanese education, basic education is somewhat similar to the basic education implemented in Indonesia, including compulsory education. Character education in Japan is highly emphasized and integrated into students' lives and supported by parents and society. Secondary and higher education in Japan are somewhat similar and the separation is not as strict as upper secondary and higher education in Indonesia.

3.5 Japanese state education management

Authority: The authority for Japanese education is held by three management institutions, namely: Central Government, Regional Government, and Private. An educational administration system is built at four levels, namely: 1) Central administration system; 2) Prefectural (Provincial and Regency) administrative system; 3) City Administration System (Regency); and 4) School administration system. Each administrative system has its level, role, and authority to complement each other and collaborate in managing each administrative system in Japanese education. Good solidarity or cooperation between the government, school principals, teachers, students, and parents so that support for educational development and progress runs well.

- **Funding:** Compulsory education (7-15 years) is provided free of charge in Japan and is paid for by the government. The state is responsible for meeting the needs of its country, including facilitating quality facilities and infrastructure in the teaching and learning process.
- **Personnel:** Teachers and lecturers are professionals in their fields. The teaching profession is a profession that is highly respected and appreciated in Japan. This award can also be seen from the teacher salary ranking released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which places Japan as one of the 10 countries with the highest salaries in the world, namely USD 64,000. According to Muhtadi (2008), the higher the teacher's salary, the higher the quality of the educational results.
- **Curriculum and learning methodology:** The creation of the Japanese education curriculum is supervised by the Education Council which is at the prefect and city level. Because these two institutions are still closely related to MEXT, curriculum development is still very centralized (Shigesu Komatsu, 2002). However, recommendations issued by the Central Council for Education (*chuuou shingi kyouiku kai*) 1997 allowed schools to play a greater role in future curriculum development. Some guidelines for compiling a curriculum are: 1) Refers to national curriculum standards; 2) Prioritize the harmony of students' physical and spiritual growth; 3) Adapt to the surrounding environment; 4) Pay attention to student development; and 5) Pay attention to the characteristics of study programs/majors at the high school level. In general, the preparation of the school curriculum is carried out through the following

stages: Setting school goals, studying curriculum standards and their correlation with school goals, preparing mandatory and elective courses for middle and high school, and allocating school days and effective learning hours.

- **Exams**, class promotion and certification: In Japan there are no grade-level exams, all children move up a grade, and at the end of ES and JHS, there is no graduation exam. Students are free to enter JHS and SHS of their choice, but to enter SHS there is an exam that determines a student's further education which is known to be very strict and difficult.
- **Educational research**: Research is more emphasized on applied research, and the provision of funding is more competitive based on peer review, and on the ability to identify priorities.

CONCLUSIONS

Japanese educational philosophy is influenced by Confucian teachings and the characteristics of the Japanese Empire which are based on noble and eternal values while Indonesia is based on Pancasila values. The characteristics of Japanese education are more decentralized than Indonesia. There is a division of authority between the central, local, community, and parents. The educational goals of Japan in general are almost the same as Indonesia, namely developing the potential of students. Japanese objectives are more detailed and contain quite several characters that Japanese children must have. The education levels are the same, namely 9 years of basic education (ES and JHS), 3 years of senior secondary education (general and vocational), and higher education. The Japanese curriculum is more flexible than Indonesia's. The curriculum is prepared under the direction of the ministry and allows schools to adapt to school conditions. Funding for primary and secondary schools is borne by the State and other sources, while in Indonesia there are still student fees. Examinations including the national exam were abolished at the elementary to SHS levels, but there were exams known to be quite difficult to enter high school. Indonesian exams at every level of education and its level. The Japanese education system, namesake character, cannot be separated from education, integrated between theory and practice. The emphasis of the curriculum on instilling these characteristics is especially for ES. The great contribution of the community and parents in education and the very high regard for the teaching profession, including welfare issues, are taken into account.

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