

現代日本における道徳を基盤とした新たな公民教育を求めて

Searching for a New Moral-Based Civic Education in Contemporary Japan

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ABSTRACT

現代日本は戦争の責務, 高齢社会, 2011年の大震災の衝撃という主要問題を抱えている。さらに物質主義, 情報技術による経済格差のために道徳の危機にも瀕しており, 若者の人格, 社会性の形成が妨げられている。グローバル時代の日本において, 民主的で責任感のある公民をいかに育成することが可能であろうか。当論文では次の五点を目的とする。1) 日本の社会問題の重要性, 現在の教育論争を道徳性, アイデンティティ, 公民権に関連して検証する。2) 哲学的歴史的視野で道徳, 公民教育の論争の概念構造を確立する。3) 日本の道徳, 公民教育の政策に対する論点を分析する。4) 文化的価値に焦点を充て, 基礎となる仮定及び異なる見解から示唆を検証する。5) 道徳を基盤とした公民教育の方策を探究する。人間関係, 社会の絆を内在目的としたシステムを保つ日本における公民教育の新たな方策を探究することにおいて, 当論文は有意義であろう。

Today, Japan is facing three main issues: accountability of the Japanese for the horrors of the wars, societal aging, and the impacts of the 3.11 triple disasters. The issues of ‘comfort women’ (*ianfu*), official visits by politicians to the Yasukuni shrine, and territorial disputes with Russia are still unresolved. Furthermore, the emerging economic and military threats of China have brought new issues involving the Self Defense rights and territorial disputes with China and Korea. Domestically, societal aging and the impacts of the natural disasters are critical to Japan’s future. Historically, Japan has been a nation whose system derives from a societal ethnic encompassing human relations and social cohesions. However,

globalization that stresses rationalism and competition has accelerated the materialist impulse. Consequently, it may be asserted that a moral crisis is becoming a critical issue in contemporary Japan. The focus of this paper is to 1) examine the significance of the problems associated with morality, identity, and citizenship; 2) establish a theoretical framework for the examination of moral and civic issues from a philosophical and historical perspective; 3) analyze the controversy over current government policy on moral and civic issues; 4) examine the underlying assumptions and implications of these different positions, focusing on the meaning of culture; and 5) investigate a new approach to a moral-based civic education. This study will suggest an alternative approach to civic education suitable for construction of a moral-based society.

1. Problem Statement

Today, the increasing globalization of the world economy, demographic change, and global warming are continuously influencing our pluralistic communities at global, national, and local levels. In order to solve world-wide problems and to promote world peace and security, interdependence and collaboration at all levels is critical. Thus, the need for an increased global awareness, perspective, decisions, and actions is demanded by the world leaders as never before. However, a simultaneous rise of nationalism is also becoming widespread due to its own benefits because of an unstable, insecure, and unpredictable future. Consequently, these two opposite movements tend to create complex social problems in relation to history, geographical location, and projection of the future.

Furthermore, the cultural domination of leading Western nations tends to provide local communities by threatening local traditions. Consequently, declining local traditions and a sense of community are also becoming a critical issue. Local communities tend to be separated from the national and global communities.

Japan is currently facing three main issues: accountability of the Japanese for the horrors of the war, societal aging, and the impacts of the 3.11 triple disasters. The 15-year war (1931–1945) between Japan and China including Pacific War victimized not only Chinese and Koreans but also

people in Southeast Asian countries and Americans located in the South Pacific Islands. Today, the issues of ‘comfort women’ (*ianfu*), official visits by politicians to the Yasukuni shrine, and territorial disputes with Russia are still unresolved. Furthermore, the emerging economic and military threats of China have brought new issues involving Self Defense rights and territorial disputes with China and Korea.

Domestically, societal aging and the impacts of natural disasters are critical to Japan’s future. The percentage of the aging population over age 60 will soon be 42%, in comparison to 1.4% of annual economic growth in 2014 and a huge defense spending (\$49 billion) in 2013 (Time, 2014, p. 31). That has caused a decrease in the labor force, which resulted in a shrinking Japan’s economy and individual income, and furthermore threatening social security for the individuals after retirement as well. Since post-war, Japan has been economically and technologically successful due to its highly valued education and highest literacy rates in the world plus their strong work ethic until the bubble burst in 1989. After the two decades of economic recession, societal aging is continuously causing an economic challenge in the future of Japan.

Moreover, frequent natural disasters also threaten the Japanese people. Those who have suffered from the disasters in affected areas tend to lose their quality of life and ownership of their local community due to the collapse of infrastructure and

loss of their family, schools, jobs, and community at large. Especially the impacts of the 3.11 triple disasters: earthquake, tsunami, and radiation leak are critical to Japan's future. Former Prime Minister, Noda mentioned that there is no rebirth of Japan without the rebirth of Fukushima. Thus, this incident which had a strong impact on Japan has become a historical moment among the Japanese people.

Besides these external problems, Japan is also facing internal problems associated with morality and social justice. Today, globalization of the world economy assisted by information technology is continuously accelerating materialism. This has caused widening gaps between the rich and the poor and it resulted in creating an unequal society based on information literacy. Gifford (2014) quotes Murakami's argument, stating that "Because the seniority system began to break down since the 1990s, young people in Japan feel increasingly powerless, marginalized" (p. 86). The number of non-employed young people in Japan has also increased sharply since the early 1990s. This means that nearly one in ten (15-24 year olds) is now out of work (OECD, 2012). The emergence of social problems such as FREETER and NEET, especially among Japanese youth, is becoming a challenge for the future of Japan. These young people have insecure temporary jobs or no jobs, which challenges their self-identity in Japanese group culture and, consequently, they cannot fully participate in society as responsible citizens. Those who are socially alienated from the society are not individual failures, but are rather considered social defects. Japan is facing a moral crisis and alienation of young people from their own communities. "Many young people were critical of the increasing emphasis on individualism in the society and concerned at the loss of mutual respect and bonds of affection between people in their communities" (Hart, 2009, p. 651). Thus, a moral crisis and

alienation of Japanese young people in contemporary Japan is strongly influencing those three issues, accountability of the Japanese for the horror of the war, societal aging, and the 3.11 natural disasters, which will continuously aggravate Japan's future.

How can Japan educate students to become democratic, responsible citizens in contemporary Japan and pluralistic communities in the global age? We, educators, ought to solve these problems to find a way to the future of Japan as a democratic, civil society.

2. The Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of the paper is to 1) examine the significance of the problems associated with morality, identity, and citizenship in current education in Japan; 2) establish a theoretical framework for the the examination of moral and civic issues from a philosophical and historical perspective; 3) analyze the controversy over current government policy on moral and civic issues in Japan; 4) examine the underlying assumptions and implications of these different positions, focusing on the meaning of culture; and 5) investigate an alternative approach to civic education suitable for construction of a moral-based society.

3. The Significance of the problems and Its Controversy in Education

The external and internal problems in contemporary Japan stated above have caused a crisis in education, because the school is a miniature of society and is the place to help equip students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to become democratic, responsible citizens. Emotional and social problems caused by declining morality at schools are aggravating the future of the society in Japan. Such problems include bullying, domestic and school violence, school refusal,

misconduct, drug abuse, classroom breakdown, and suicide (Tokunaga, Miyajima, Sakakibara, Tsutsumi, & Hayashi, 2003, p. 5). Furthermore, “The ‘*hikikomori*’ (being capsulated from the outer world) phenomenon has become particularly associated with a perceived ‘breakdown’ of Japanese education system which has characterized as placing considerable pressure on pupils and demanding high levels of conformity” (Furlong, 2008, p. 315). Consequently, social alienation tends to block not only individual identity and maturity in group culture but also full membership of society.

The controversy over educational reform depends upon how to solve these moral and civic issues. Young people in Japan who are future citizens tend to be alienated and marginalized in the school and society requiring conformity in the Japanese group culture. “...The accumulated social disadvantages and challenges experienced by young people in the UK and Japan can be conceived as a crisis in the ‘citizenship of being’ ” (Gifford, Mycock, & Murakami, 2014, p. 90). Thus, it is important to address these emotional and social problems that Japanese youth are facing and to link these problems with moral issues, self-identity in the Japanese group culture and civic issues while searching for solutions.

4. A Theoretical Framework for the Controversy in Education

Establishing a theoretical framework for the controversy in education is critical in order to examine these interconnected moral and civic in order issues. We must educate students to become not only mature individuals but also democratic, respectful citizens. In this section, two components, philosophical and historical, will be discussed. For personal and civic development, building solid philosophical and historical foundations would help both teachers and students better understand the

linkage between morality and civics.

4. 1 Philosophical Perspective

Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) stress the importance of creating well-balanced whole persons who are equipped with skills needed to well function in a global age. The main purpose of the recent education reforms made by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) was significant in nurturing students’ character by creating a balance of body, mind, and morality as a whole child. The revision of the ‘Foundation Law of Education’, enacted in 2007 enhanced more global knowledge, perspective, and respect for human rights and dignity. In teaching and learning, nationalism was replaced by patriotism.

King (1963) determines that the goal of education is to enhance character beyond intelligence. Hutchings (2014) made comments on King’s idea that “Civics captures this - it offers thoughtful analysis of democracy’s timeless tensions, which often unearths students’ higher character as they learn to value integrity, compassion, and their unique conception of patriotism and the common good” (p. 5). Young people need strong moral foundations for their own judgment, reasoning, decision-making, and societal actions. Thus, moral (character) and civic development is important in education. Sheppard and Larson (2011) support the importance of character or disposition development, stating that “We do not intend to diminish the importance of knowledge and skills when citizens discuss controversial issues. However, we do suggest that particular dispositions also need to be developed if we want to foster through the recognition and appreciation of the intrinsic value they offer” (p. 5). Furthermore, Sheppard and Larson state that “the engagement with controversy as an activity which has intrinsic is an opportunity to learn more about

ourselves” (p. 5). In other words, students develop themselves individually and socially through engagement with controversy, on a broader and deeper level. The particular disposition or character development they stress overlaps with moral development, in the recognition of intrinsic values needed to become democratic, responsible citizens.

4.2 Historical Perspective

Japan turned from a feudalistic society to a modern state in the Meiji era; it finally became a democratic nation, after the total defeat in the Pacific War. In the post-war, revising the Meiji Constitution played a significant role in the reforms aimed at democratizing Japan. Nearly 70 years have passed, but war memories are still shared among the Japanese people as bitter experience and accountability for war is continuously debated in the social media.

In principle, accountability of the Pacific War should be based on the existing Japanese Constitution that comprises three main themes; sovereignty of the Japanese people, the guarantee of basic human rights, and the renunciation of war. However, today there is a widening gap between the principle of the Japanese Constitution and the role of the Self Defense Force. Prime Minister Abe and his cabinet are striving to fill the gap by changing the interpretation of the Constitution instead of revising it. In the meantime, the controversy surrounding the current LDP government political decisions and actions is widespread in the social media in Japan, which notes that the current Japanese government has lost credit in the international communities. The arguments centered around whether Mr. Abe’s political decision as Japan’s leader is based on nationalism or not; there is a fear among the international communities. There is a growing tension with China and a fear of Japan’s reemerging militarism, especially expressed by the people in neighboring Asian countries that

suffered from Japan’s invasion during the Pacific War. The controversy over the use of Japanese national flag and anthem at school occasions still continues. Furthermore, the controversy over the revision of history textbooks made by MEXT is continuously focused on whether or not the content of those textbooks are historically valid.

Signs of ideological and institutional continuity in Japan can be read in the following phrases: “They (The Japanese) were willing to reject the militarism of the late pre-war period, but they did not want to lose the traditional Japanese morality of the Imperial Rescript” (Schoppa, 1991, p. 31). Furthermore, “the elements of ‘Japanese morality’ (e.g. hierarchy, loyalty, obedience, and diligence) that comprised the deep ideological meanings of Japaneseness were not to be swept away by military defeat” (McVeigh, 2000, p. 83). Traditional Japanese morality is playing a central role in resolving the issues of societal aging and 3.11 triple disasters, because Japaneseness includes care for others, respect for elders, group cohesion, and cooperation, all needed to strengthen social ties in local communities.

However, it also contains the limitation of democracy, because traditional Japanese morality and character development in Japan is hierarchical as represented by the seniority system and social alienation of Japanese youth in their own identity in group culture. Japanese youth tend to be blocked individually and socially due to their lack of experiences. In other words, traditional Japanese morality still remains as the mechanism of maintenance of social order, which contradicts the principle of democracy stressing freedom and equality.

5. Discussion on the Government Policy on Moral and Civic Education in Japan

5.1 Moral Education

After several educational reforms in Japan, in 2000, the MEXT announced the establishment of the National Council for Educational Reform containing three missions of education toward the 21st century. Those were 1) a respect for Japanese tradition and culture, 2) self-awareness as a Japanese citizen, and 3) contribution to developing children along with self-identity. This innovation has changed moral education toward more humanistic and global perspective in distributing 'Kokoro no Noto' (Notebook of Heart) to the elementary and junior high school children throughout the nation, in 2002. Each text contained four common themes: 1) self-development, self-help efforts, and self-control, 2) courtesy, caring, and communication, 3) awe of life and sensitivity, and 4) social rules and social order.

In spite of the innovation in moral education, "three issues may still need to be addressed. Those are 1) emphasis on the maintenance of social order, 2) its psychological approach focused only on feelings, but not on critical thinking or problem-solving, and 3) no actual human relationships with peers" (Buckley, 2006, p. 212). Ozawa & Hasegawa (2003) points out that current moral education in Japan is still used as a tool for the maintenance of social order; consequently it does not work well in current Japanese schools.

Furthermore, a soft type of moral education such as a counseling approach represented in 'Kokoro no Noto' does not work well, either, because it only focuses on feeling; it does not cure a student's deeply pained mind. Thus, either a hard or soft type of moral education under the MEXT control does not function in schools. In the conditions of social alienation from others this may cause a delay in personal development; as a result, young people cannot completely actualize themselves.

5. 2 Civic Education

Gifford (2014) quotes Ikeno (2005), stating that

"Approaches to citizenship education in Japan in the post-Second world War period sought to reject nationalism associated with the imperial past and instead prioritize the inculcation of democratic literacy, values, and action (p. 90). Due to 'Education at Risk' in Japan in 1984, a policy of reforming moral education with an emphasis on respect for individuality, self-discipline, and self-responsibility was proposed by the Temporary School Commission to the MEXT. This proposal was significant in stressing essential knowledge-based learning necessary for being a Japanese citizen and respect for Japanese culture and tradition. In addition, this proposal was also critical to integrate moral and civic education.

The main change was made in the elementary school curriculum by replacing Social Studies by two new subjects called 'Life Science' which combined the original 'Social Studies' and 'Science'. The second change was made in the middle school curriculum by replacing 'Social Studies' by three independent subject matters; 'Civics', 'Geography', and 'History'. Furthermore, 'World History' became required instead of 'Japanese History' in high schools. These curriculum changes imply that there was a shift from Japan's nationalistic and capitalistic perspectives on education to a more democratic and humanistic approach to education. In this sense, the innovation was successful.

However, under the recent "Education Reforms Plan for the 21st Century (the 'Rainbow Plan') to establish community-based service learning, the social studies curriculum was redesigned to place a greater emphasis on national loyalty and to foster 'love of country'" (Higashi, 2008, p. 40). Thus, civic education in Japanese schools is utilized to create empathetic-oriented communities. However, Gifford (2014) criticizes this kind of political and social cohesion, stating that "The stress on a traditionalist model of community places restrictions

on individual freedoms or expressions of diversity (p. 91). Again, here is the limitation of democracy due to Japanese homogeneity which becomes an obstacle for the acceptance of people from other countries and different cultures.

6. Discussion on the Different Arguments and the Meaning of Culture

The efforts to improve moral and civic education made by the MEXT did not lead to success. A number of trials and errors for innovation in moral education failed because of the homogeneity and hierarchy of deep cultural Japanese traditions. Thus, it is significant to reflect on the different arguments associated with the meaning of Japanese culture, as compared to that of Western cultural traditions, linking to the concepts of self-identity, morality, citizenship, and democracy.

6.1 The Concepts of Self-Identity

In Japan, self-identity is recognized and developed in the Japanese group culture. Japanese language is deeply rooted in Japanese culture. The essence of the Japanese language is politeness; it is significant to be aware of who you speak to and who you speak about. Gender, rank, status, and age determines the use of politeness according to the degree of proximity or distance from the addressee or referent. Authority is utilized as a tool to control Japanese youth at home and in school in their personal developments. Academic and social training are simultaneously conducted in the primary and middle schools. The relationship between the teacher and students is based on discipline, but in an intimate and nourished manner. Because of that, mind, body, and morality are well-balanced in personal development of Japanese young children. However, Japanese teenagers at high school have a great deal of peer and social pressures in Japanese group culture and academic

and sports competition, they tend to sacrifice themselves due to the power of authority and conformity. As a result, they cannot actualize themselves and tend to be socially alienated if they cannot be part of the group. That condition may continue in their later lives as ‘*hikikomori*’ or capsulated phenomena. In this case, the mission of democracy education, to develop the whole person consisting of mind, body, and morality, cannot be attained.

Fukuzawa (1994) points out the differences between the Japanese and Americans in the development of self-identity, noting that for Americans “Education should create a critical, questioning, independent adult who is ‘inner directed’ in a moral and universalistic sense... (for Japanese) Personal development and self-discovery are closely linked to an acceptance of one’s social role and its requirements. The goal is the development of an ‘outer-directed’, compliant adult with a situationally-based sense of morality” (p. 84). In Japan, what is meant to be mature is to fully adapt to outside social realities and responsibilities that lead not to self-negation or conformity in the Japanese view, but to personal fulfillment.

6.2 The Concepts of Morality

In Japan, morality is defined as social order to shape human behavior and the way of life and also as an individual internal indicator of good or bad. Thus, it is considered as a norm of both outer (societal) and inner (personal) judgments and actions. It is culture specific and includes historical backgrounds.

Historically, Japan has been a nation whose system derives from a societal ethic encompassing human relations and social cohesions as the internal basis as opposed to the external goals of the Western philosophical tradition. In post-war Japan, moral education (*dotoku*) was replaced by self-discipline (*shushin*) which was derived from the

Imperial Rescript because of democratization of education. However, homogeneity and hierarchy still remain in moral education in contemporary Japan.

Research on teacher perceptions on the teaching of moral values in Japan conducted by Buckley (2009) led to ten important moral value themes. It is interesting to note that in the top three moral values themes identified by high school teachers in Japan there was an emphasis on student-centered outcomes. “Those are sympathy, enhancement of loving relationship with life and nature, and an emphasis on human relationships and communication. These interconnected moral values are derived from the traditional Japanese culture. However, this seems to be more culture-free or culture-neutral in practice and to be shared with Western Christian values and personal student development” (p. 274).

In addition, globalization that stresses rationalism and competition has accelerated the materialist impulse. Consequently, it may be asserted that a moral crisis is becoming a critical issue in contemporary Japan. Japanese youth tend to accept Western moral values based on rationalism and Christianity. This has caused a widening intergenerational gap, Japanese adults, parents, and teachers tend to lose their confidence in teaching traditional moral values to children, as a result, they tend to lose authority, and Japanese youth who tend not to be ordinary Japanese are not fully accepted in group culture. That is problematic in the tight hierarchical society, especially for both those who try to maintain the social order and those who are expected to become responsible citizens. The key question is how Japan should overcome homogeneity and hierarchy in its cultural traditions to attain the mission of democracy and to educate Japanese youth to become democratic, responsible citizens.

6.3 The Concepts of Citizenship and Democracy

In Japan, ‘citizenship’ is defined as ‘nationality’ (Nakamura, 2012, p. 138). Because of that, Japanese self-identity in group culture tends to be recognized as collective identity which requires conformity and hierarchical authority. This trend is dangerous because it may lead to nationalism which may hinder Japan in playing a role in a global society.

The concept of democracy in Japan also differs from that of Western countries. In Japan, a model of empathetic communities pursuing the common good for communities is permeates society, as opposed to that of just community stressing individual rights and responsibilities based on rationalism and individualism on the basis of Western philosophy. In this sense, the means such as moral judgment, decision, and reasoning to meet the mission of democracy differ, although the ends as societal actions can be shared. It can be said that morality in Japan tends to be more holistic and empathy-oriented, as opposed to more linear and judgmental. Thus, the meaning of culture and its moral construct is critical while examining the concept of citizenship and democracy.

Since the burst of Japan’s bubble economy in 1989, the Japanese government has been making efforts to adjust to global society by promoting more Western cultural values. A number of education reforms have proven that Japan is adopting a more liberal democratic and humanistic approach as a means to overcome its nationalism which may lead to militarism and undemocratic society.

However, Fujiwara (2005, p. 6, p. 135) raises the alarm that there is a need to restore dignity as a nation, by pointing out the declining of morality and sensibility in contemporary Japan. He claims

that Japan needs to stress sensibility, the national language, and the spirit of Bushido, as opposed to rationalism, English, and democracy. His argument is well-taken, because the defects of globalization and materialism have caused a great deal of social and psychological problems in Japan. Consequently, the Japanese people have tended to lose their confidence and direction. Fujiwara argues that those problems cannot be solved by rationalism, but instead by sensibility which has been crystalized throughout the Japanese cultural history. Furthermore, he stresses the importance of the restoration of dignity of Japan as a nation. In other words, Fujiwara claims that Japan should highly value its own cultural traditions in order to play a critical role in the global age, instead of replacing its own cultural values with Western cultural values.

Thus, integration of moral-based civic education would help Japanese youth to prepare to become future citizens in the global age.

7. A New Approach to Moral-Based Civic Education

Yamada (2010) defines global citizenship as both ‘claims of social order’ and ‘societal actions’. Further, he stresses the importance of civic education because of declining morality and loss of individual autonomy in contemporary Japan. In fact, today the significance of social justice regarding the issues of world economy and security is frequently addressed by the mass media. These issues cannot be resolved at the local or national level. Rather, efficient communication networks and partnerships at the local, national, and global levels are required. In this sense, the meaning of culture is significant, because traditionally self-identity is formed and developed in the Japanese group culture. However, it should be noted that self-autonomy from the Japanese cultural traditions

is also important to identify the controversial issues, and further analyze and discuss the controversy with others who have different perspectives to find alternative solutions. Moral constructs and commitment to the local community are essential to attaining the goals of the common good without sacrificing the self.

Thus, a starting point is to empower the individual by conceptualizing self-identity and commitment to the local communities, instead of relying on the authority of the local or national government. In order to do so, it is critical to develop civic literacy, attitudes, and skills. In other words, it is critical to gain knowledge of worldwide issues, to enhance self-awareness of various thoughts and ideas from various people who have different cultural backgrounds, and to develop skills needed to resolve those problems. Furthermore, there is a need to establish a social system, especially at the local level, so that people in the local area can empower themselves as a group and furthermore build relationships with the national and global authorities. Thus, the key is to learn how to utilize the self and authority to empower the relationships with people at different levels. In this sense, it is possible to integrate self-identity and local and global communities and to create social democracy which educate the Japanese youth to understand how to treat one another by an individual’s character and morality developed from the Japanese cultural tradition, but separated from the Japanese group culture in his/her thoughts and actions.

Colby et.al (2003) note that, “What are the essential elements of (moral and) civic character for Americans? What problems? Educated citizens must understand and accept their obligation to all humanity, to making this a nation worth defending in a world safe and promising for all its inhabitants” (p. 21). Although the authors target American students in these statements, Japanese

educators must think of the essential elements of moral and civic character in their minds.

Today, moral education is not a subject matter in Japanese schools although discipline training continues by building relationships between the teacher and students and among peers in classroom and extracurricular activities, counseling and so on. However, social and emotional problems and a moral crisis still remain. Thus, moral constructs should be included in social studies curriculum and instructional practices in schools. This moral-based civic education would help prepare Japanese youth to gain civic literacy, positive attitudes, and skills needed to become democratic, responsible citizens in the global age.

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