日本社会の公正，多様性，及び公民教育の必要性に関する一考察
Social Justice, Diversity, and the Needs of Civic Education in Japan

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ABSTRACT

　1990年代における日本経済のバブル崩壊後，日本人の「中流」意識は薄れ，日本は格差社会に移行した。さらに社会的に差別を受けている少数派の急増により，日本は多文化社会になりつつある。この傾向は公衆道徳を維持するための日本社会の公正及び多様性に関する難関となっている。本研究ではまず，戦後日本の中央集権政府と教育システムに統制された単一文化的アイデンティティーに関する問題の重要性を検証する。次に，公民権を定義，正当化し，社会の公正と多様性に関する公民権をいかに獲得するかについて検証する。最後に，社会の公正及び多様性に対応した公民教育の必要性を確証する。公民教育への社会文化的アプローチにより，国民の視野を広げ，人々を包含することを強調した公民教育を構築しようとする目的において，本研究は有意義であろう。

　The notion of egalitarian 'Middle Class' has faded away after Japan's burst bubble economy in the 1990s. As a result, Japan became a 'society of disparity'. Furthermore, a drastic rise in the number of social groups in Japan reveals that Japan is faced with a multicultural society. This trend invokes a critical issue concerning social justice and diversity in Japanese society which reinforces maintenance of social order with moral and culture. This paper first examines the significance of the problem concerning mono-culture identity controlled by the highly centralized government and its education system in postwar Japan. Secondly, it examines the definition of citizenship, its rationales, and ways to access citizenship concerning social justice and diversity. Thirdly, it determines the needs of civic education which is responsive to social

justice and diversity. This socio-cultural approach to civic education would help create a civil society stressing openness and inclusion of everyone.

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1. Problem Statement

Increasing economic globalization, materialism, and technological advancement in the 1980s created a huge gap between the rich and the poor. During the period of Japan's high economic growth between the 1960s and 1980s, the majority of Japanese people identified themselves as 'Middle Class'. However, the notion of egalitarian 'Middle Class' has faded away after Japan's burst bubble economy in the 1990s. As a result of distinct class and economic stratification, Japan became a 'society of disparity', so called, *kakusa shakai* (Sugimoto, 2014, p.38). Japanese youth, especially those who do not have economic independence and educational upward mobility such as FEETERs (Temporary worker without benefits) and NEETOs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training Opportunities) tend to be socially alienated and marginalized. They tend to keep their own private space and be cocooned within it. This psychological trait is marked as '*hikikomori*' described as anti-social behavior or social withdrawal. Gifford (2014) describes Japanese youth as 'citizens of becoming', identifying "the problems of young people's citizenship which attempt to address concerns marginalization and disengagement" (p.84). They tend to be unable to obtain full membership in Japanese society due to their economic status, loss of themselves, and loss of future directions. There is no self-actualization.

Society of disparity has also been affecting other social minorities in Japan such as *Burakumin* (outcasts), *Ainu*, *Zainichi* Koreans, and Chinese who have been historically suffered from prejudice and discrimination. In addition, the number of foreign and immigrant workers seeking economic opportunities has been increasing in recent years. However, their access to citizenship and socio-political status is limited due to language and culture barriers. As a result, they tend to belong to their own ethnic community and are not considered as full members of society. They share their own cultures within their own ethnic communities. However, their public space does not always overlap with that of the mainstream society; it only benefits their own group. Furthermore, the gender and sexuality issues in relation to GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender) are emerging in contemporary Japan. They are also facing the problem of access to the public space and full membership of the society.

A drastic rise in the number of social groups by age, ethnicity, race, class, gender, sexuality and disability in Japan reveals that Japan is no longer a homogeneous nation; it is faced with a multicultural society. This trend invokes a critical issue concerning social justice and diversity in Japanese society which reinforces authority, maintenance of social order, and traditional cultural values. With structural inequality and social hierarchy, there can be no civil society where the underrepresented, disadvantaged people are left out.

Today is there any possibility for Japan to create a civil society responsive to social justice and diversity in order to benefit these social minorities in Japan? What is the role of education to attain the goal of civil society: Guaranteeing fundamental human rights and affirming civic and political engagement and participation in pluralistic communities? Particularly, we must pay attention to Japanese youth who are expected to become responsible citizens and to act as future leaders in the global age.

2. The Purpose of the Paper

This paper has three purposes: First, it will examine the significance of the problem concerning mono-culture identity as collective identity controlled by the highly centralized, homogeneous government and its education system in postwar Japan. Secondly, it will conceptualize citizenship by examining the definition of citizenship, its rationales, and ways to access citizenship in relation to social justice and diversity. Thirdly, it will determine the needs of civic education which is responsive to social justice and diversity and will benefit every citizen including the social minorities in Japan including Japanese youth. This cultural and sociological approach to civic education would help decrease socio-political problems that the underrepresented, disadvantaged are facing. It also would help create a civil society that stresses openness and inclusion of everyone.

3. The Significance of the Problem

3.1 Nationalism and the Centralized Uniformed Education System

In the post-World War II, Japan was forced to shift from a militaristic state to a democratic nation stressing the people as sovereign, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, and renouncing war. The main purpose of the new Japanese education system which was adopted from the United States was to develop the whole person who can be equipped with knowledge and skills needed to act a democratic, responsible citizen. The post-war Japanese education system has been a huge success in helping to create an economic recovery and also served as a tool for the mobilization of the nation and its people which lasted for almost four decades. Although the centralized uniformed curriculum is opposed to the original aim of American education system stressing individualism and democracy, the

priority of Japanese national interests was reflected in the curriculum. This was geared toward Japan's economic success.

However, in the late 1980s, 'the Japanese school curriculum was renationalized, stressing the ideas of fundamental knowledge acquisition as necessary to become a Japanese citizen, including respect for national culture and traditions and the development of national identity' (Parmenter, 1999, p.455). This education policy of national identity formation created students with mono-culture who were not equipped with knowledge of diversity and skills to cope with globalization and its social change in pluralistic communities. Gifford (2014) regards this "ethnic conception of national identity as an overt aim of Japanese education policy with a broader focus upon morality and culture" (p.90).

Today, the Japanese government is right-wing leaning attempting to leave behind the post-war regime, while attempting to restore a powerful centralized state similar to the political model of the Meiji period. A good example of the emergence of Japan's new nationalism consists of a series of government actions such as an attempt to revise Article 9 and reinterpret the Self Defense Force rights, and to justify official worship at the Yasukuni shrine etc. The emergence of neonationalism under the Japanese government control in contemporary Japan is problematic; a large number of people in the urban areas in Japan are against this right-wing movement led by Prime Minister Abe.

Furthermore, the education reforms such as the Rainbow Plan for the 21st century have shifted its focus from Japanese national identity formation to the responsibilities of Japanese youth concerning civic responsibilities and actions in attempting to build a traditional model of community that stresses social cohesion and empathy. Again, forming a mono-culture identity may hinder self-actualization and the development of civil society for democracy

because of the exclusion of social minorities.

3.2 Neoliberalism and Capitalism

A rise of neonationalism by the government elites is tied up with neoliberalism and capitalism led by Japanese business and technology elites. Japan's economic success has brought more influence for Japanese corporations on governmental education policy. In addition, "corporate culture is characterized by ability-based hierarchical competitiveness and assimilation or exclusion of heterogeneity. Students are included in this corporate culture in which they are expected to conform to group norms and standards, while the needs of the individual is suppressed." (Asano, 2000). However, under the corporate cultural regime in Japan, the integration of Western-style rationalism and affirmation of elite's cultural values has caused a clash of authority and collectivism after the bubble burst in the 1990s. This has resulted in the collapse of seniority system and lifetime employment that used to be part of the successful Japanese management system for decades. As a result, the Japanese workforce has lost its power and has become more doubtful of an unpredictable, unknown future for Japan.

Thus, neonationalism and capitalism under neoliberalism would fail if Japan would seek only the nation's economic benefits without understanding social justice and diversity in the global age. Collectivism that suppresses individual rights by reinforcing the elite's cultural values would not work well for democracy. In this exclusion of heterogeneity and legitimation of specific elite culture applied to the top elites, only government, business, and technology elites would benefit from Japan's economic success, while the rest of the Japanese people including social minorities would receive no benefits. Gifford (2014) points out that young people in Japan who have social disadvantage and inequality are experiencing fundamental problems of citizenship. Especially, "the loss of stable employment transitions for young people is a double blow as it involves not just the loss of an opportunity for an occupational identity but also the withdrawal of a system of welfare" (p.89). Here one can recognize a cause of a society of disparity in which there is no social justice or honoring of diversity for democracy.

3.3 Declining Morals in Society

Japan is traditionally a moral-based nation. "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 (social) and inner (personal) judgments and actions. It is culturally specific and it includes historical backgrounds" (Buckley, 2015, p.7). Japanese children are required to develop morals at home and under tight education while forming their identity through their socialization process. Thus, moral formation is to develop a norm of both social and personal judgments and actions.

The nature of the Japanese education system with emphasis on individuality, freedom of inquiry, and development of the 'whole person' that consists of mind, body, and spirit, is cast within the American style framework. In Japan students are highly individualized in the classroom and do hard work to attain their goals through competition. Student cognitive learning is especially geared toward their academic excellence. Yet, the concept of the whole child is still carried out because of moral education and school extra-curricular activities and social interaction. This cognitive learning assisted by affective learning as a moral support system has aided Japan's rapid economic growth since the post-war period until the 1990s.

However, today declining morals in society caused by materialism is apparent in Japan. Traiger (1996) views the problematic actions in school and community as violations of the most fundamental of educational values, because "the Japanese look to the school as a place to develop morals and cultural

sensitivity in their citizens'' (p.442). Declining morals implies rejection of freedom from external force, because a series of moral thoughts, moral reasoning, judgment, and actions are interconnected, and those depend upon individual rights and responsibilities. Thus, morals should not be inculcated, but be creative and constructive based on social justice.

Then, how should mono-cultural, collective identity be transformed to cope with the pluralistic communities in the global age without losing social justice and moral responsibilities? How do diverse cultural values intertwine and influence Japanese collective identity with traditional cultural and moral values in an evolving multicultural society of disparity in Japan?

4. Conceptualizing Citizenship

4.1 The Definition of Citizenship

In order to answer the question, it is significant to conceptualize citizenship. "In a Japanese society, the term, 'citizenship' is substituted for 'nationality'" (Nakamura, 2012, p.138). Today, Japanese people still tend to regard citizenship as nationality in the name of '*kokumin*' (people of the country). Thus, in Japan citizenship is a matter of membership in the nation which requires the Japanese people to share the specific, common language, culture, and history. The membership guarantees fundamental human rights and requires moral and civic responsibilities to the nation in return. Education has been used as a tool for the integration of the national policy to which the Japanese people are to adapt themselves.

Historically the concept of citizenship concerning rights has been shifting its focus in England and other European countries over time. Marshall sociologically argues discourse for citizenship in three different rights: civic, political, and social rights. Civic rights movements started out in the 18th century, and then shifted to political rights movement in the 19th century, finally it moved onto social rights in the global age. This historical transformation implies the changes of people's self-consciousness of the economic, political, and social changes. Today, the definition of citizenship is not limited to the national level, but is extended to the global level. This distinctive difference of the term, citizenship between its use in Japan and Western nations is based on the point of view of whether the nation or the individual comes first.

Since the late 1980s, globalization has radically changed the world system. Yamada (2010) defines global citizenship as 'to be civic and to be civil'. Civic is defined as being concerned with public matters such as world hunger and the global environment, while civil means to be not rejected the dialogues with others from other countries. Thus, the integration of 'to be civic' and 'to be civil' is essential to civic and political engagement and full participation at the community level. Furthermore, linking the self with the community and beyond is becoming critical.

4.2 The Rationale of Access to Citizenship

Gifford (2014) identifies two types of citizenship: 'citizenship of becoming' and 'citizenship of being'. Japanese youth are regarded as 'citizens of becoming' with economic dependence. Gifford argues that "Civic stratification is particularly compounded by a model of 'citizenship of being' that denies young people's autonomy and political agency" (p.83). Although Japanese who are above 20 years old of age are legally identified as 'citizens of being', a large number of social minorities who are marked as 'citizens of being' do not have full access to civic and political participation. This is due to their language and other cultural barriers as well as social stratification and class inequality. Some of the recent immigrants to Japan have great difficulty becoming citizens or never have a legal citizenship status. Thus, discourse for the locus of

citizenship of being and becoming is centered on the obstacles of civic stratification for social integration.

However, all social minorities who are invaluable agents that influence Japanese culture in contemporary Japan. Japanese collective identity may be transformed because of such demographic change. Furthermore, the community and society may also evolve while the individuals are transforming their self-identities. A key point to address is the issue of civic stratification and how to educate Japanese youth who are 'citizens of becoming' about social justice and diversity and to eliminate alienation and marginalization against the social minorities in Japan.

5. The Needs of Civic Education Responsive to Social Justice and Diversity

We have recognized that Japan is moving toward a multicultural but also society of disparity. However, we also have to recognize that Japan has been shifting from an industrial society to a knowledge-based society. An industrial society represents goods, people, and money as assets, while a knowledge-based society values cultural capital such as knowledge, information, care, and social welfare. In addition, Japan is facing the problem of societal aging, and social welfare for everyone. This is especially true for the aged. The underrepresented, disadvantaged people should not be left out in a civil society.

In order to build such a society, it is essential for each Japanese citizen to have a powerful self-identity, self-consciousness, pride of one's cultural values, and self-esteeem of human dignity. This should be based on morals that are not inculcated with nationalism or the maintenance of social order, but that is creative and constructive based on social justice and honoring of diversity for democracy. Forming multiple identities at various levels is critical to empower self-consciousness of our local community and beyond for social justice and honoring of diversity.

Furthermore, it is important for the citizens to have civic and political engagement, and full participation. Such participation would cultivate the whole person and integrate inner social formation and outer community experience that include moral and civic responsibility.

Thus, the agenda for civic education in the global age is to educate citizens of being and becoming, especially Japanese youth who are expected to become future leaders of Japan.

Civic education should focus on moral and civic learning from a cultural and sociological perspective. This would empower the relationship between the individual and community and beyond. Each citizen should become self-conscious of the community, the nation, and global world, and take moral and civic responsibility.

6. Implications for a Future Study

In this paper, the needs of civic education were described in the relationship between the individual and the emerging multicultural society of disparity in contemporary Japan, especially in relation to social justice and diversity.

There are two major obstacles for personal and social integration: cultural homogeneity as a collective identity and civic stratification. Formation of mono-culture identity as the collective identity was formulated as national policy for the nation's economic interests in the 1960s through the 1990s. Related to this was an overt aim of Japanese education to create Japanese youth who have mono-culture identity and social cohesiveness based on Japanese morals and culture. Under this approach national interest comes first and individual rights are suppressed. Consequently, this political force led to anti-social behavior such as '*hikikomori*' and civic disengagement of Japanese youth. As a result,

there is no social justice or honoring of diversity.

Furthermore, Japanese youth, identified as 'citizens of becoming', are included with social minorities who share the common problems of civic stratification. This results in underrepresented, disadvantaged social groups who do not have access to full participation in society in spite of their high energy, passion, and creativity. In such a society, there is no personal and social integration.

In a future study, there might be possibilities for making a specific examination of Japanese youth, especially those who are economically dependent and are generationally alienated from society. Finally, Japanese education should be made responsible for finding ways for these Japanese youth to develop powerful multiple identities and to be committed to civic and political engagement with full participation in taking political action.

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