

Japanese Human Resource Training Policy Through The Education Reform From 1945 To 1952

Pham Thi Phuong Linh¹, Pham Duc Thuan²

^{*1}Department of History Education, School of Education, Cantho University, Vietnam

Email: ptplinh@ctu.edu.vn

²Department of History Education, School of Education, Cantho University, Vietnam

Email: pdthuan@ctu.edu.vn

Corresponding Author: Pham Thi Phuong Linh Email: ptplinh@ctu.edu.vn

Abstract

After World War II, Japan became a completely exhausted country and fell far behind other developed capitalist countries in the world. Developing human resources through education has become the key to Japan's success. This can certainly be a reference to Vietnam in planning future human resource development policies. We often feel surprised by the Japanese government's seriousness in solving educational problems. The Japanese government is not only interested in comprehensive reform of educational policies but also emphasizes human resource training for economic development. The purpose of this article is to examine the educational reforms that were implemented in Japan for human resource training from 1945 to 1952. To clarify this issue, we mainly use the historical method, the logical method, the comparative method, the analytical method, and the interdisciplinary method to analyze the context of reform implementation, giving human resource training policies through education reform. It is hoped that our results and discussion, practical meanings, and lessons learned may be useful and worthwhile for Asian countries.

Keywords: Japanese human resource training policy, educational reform, Japan educational reform, Japan from 1945 to 1952

Date of Submission: 10-03-2024

Date of acceptance: 23-03-2024

I. INTRODUCTION

Although there have been many studies and research works on single aspects of human resources, the issue of human resource training policy through educational reform in Japan from 1945 to 1952 has not been researched deeply and systematically as an independent work. This is a research gap that we need to continue to work on. Education is one of the important contents in the policy of training and developing human resources for industrialization in Japan.

In general, there are quite a few foreign projects researching issues related to human resources in Japan such as the relationship between education and training for human resource development and human resource training in a specific model. Overseas projects focus on human resource training within a specific company, human resource development, or human resource management. These works have not gone into depth analyzing the historical context of Japan after World War II and the need for human resources in Japan's economic development process or policies for training humane resources. After Japan was occupied by the Allies, Japan made changes in human resource training policies to adapt to the circumstances and achievements brought to the economy. Japan's economy at this stage has not received much attention. Within the scope of our knowledge, we have not seen any comprehensive and in-depth research on human resource training policies in Japan in the period 1945 - 1952.

Japanese human resources has been studied through many works and studies. Some works can be mentioned such as "Human Resources in Japanese Industrial Development" (Hisashi Kawada; Solomon B. Levine, 1980); "Quality Management Training in the Japanese Style of Good Mental Cycle" (2015) by Yumiko Kawanishi; "The Art of Training human resources in the Toyota style" (2013) by Ojt Solutions; "The Education and Training of Industrial Manpower in Japan" (1957) by Ken Inoue; "Kaizen - The Key to Japanese Management Success" (1992) by Masa Aki Imai; "Education and Training of High-quality Human Resources of Japanese People from an International Comparative Perspective: Training Professional Skills to Adapt to Globalization" (2012) by Tadaguchi Miyu, "Methods to Improve education and training of high-quality human resources" (2005) by Hisamura Kunitsugi; "Manage the development of high-quality human resources" (2012) by Fukuzawa Hidekiro, etc.

In general, there are quite a few foreign projects researching issues related to human resources in Japan such as the relationship between education and training to human resource development and human resource training in a specific model. However, these works have not gone into depth analyzing the historical context of Japan after World War II and the need for human resources in Japan's economic development process or policies for training human resources. Japan made changes in human resource training policies to adapt to the circumstances and achievements brought to the economy. Japan's economy at this stage has not received much attention. Within the scope of our knowledge, we have not seen any comprehensive and in-depth research on human resource training policies through educational reform in Japan in the period 1945 - 1952. Therefore, this is the driving force of research. This study aims to analyze Japanese human resource policy through educational reform from 1945 to 1952. To study this topic, authors mainly use a combination of historical method and logical methods. First, the historical method is used to reconstruct the process of educational reform in Japan taking place. Second, the logical method is to comment, analyze, and draw out the typical features of the educational reform program. Furthermore, to clarify the research, we also use comparative, analytical, and interdisciplinary methods to clarify the issues of education reform in Japan to develop human resources in this period.

II. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The context of education reform in Japan

After World War II, Japan became a completely exhausted country and fell far behind other developed capitalist countries. According to statistics, "*the total value of damages amounted to 61.3 billion yen, accounting for 1/3 of the value of Japan's remaining assets after the war of 188.9 billion yen. Notably, this remaining amount of assets is approximately equal to the total value of national assets in 1935, which was 186.7 billion yen. Thus, all the wealth accumulated in the 10 years from 1935 to 1945 was destroyed; 34% of machinery, 25% of construction work, and 81% of ships were destroyed. The industrial production index in 1946 dropped to 31%. Economic activity was almost paralyzed and the country was in financial distress*" (Luu Ngoc Trinh, 1996). Along with the material damage, the mental damage is also very large "*in terms of the number of dead and injured missing up to 2.53 million people, including those killed, injured and missing overseas. This number is up to nearly 3 million*" (Luu Ngoc Trinh, 1996). In addition, unemployment, lack of raw materials, and inflation also became serious.

A similar predicament also occurs in the education sector. According to (Clark, 1979) more than 3,500 schools of all types were destroyed during the war. Most high school and university students are mobilized to war or work at defense industry plants. When the war ended, students left the army and returned to the city, but they were all depressed. In the context of a country devastated by war, the Japanese were soon aware of the instability in the education system established after the Meiji Restoration. That is centralization in education, expressed in the education system from central to local levels. Extreme nationalist education and over-emphasis on the divine role of the Emperor have led to significant limitations in education. Besides, some comments say that Japan's failure also comes from delays in science, the root cause of which is outdated teaching methods and teaching content compared to the world.

After Japan announced its unconditional surrender to the Allies in August 1945, until April 1952, Japan was under the control of Allied forces, mainly American troops. The Allied forces in Japan were called the Allied Command General Force (SCAP) or General Headquarters (GHQ) led by General Douglas MacArthur of the US Army. Japan was indirectly occupied, meaning that the Japanese Government continued to exist and operate, sometimes even resisting American demands. During the time the Allied forces occupied Japan, although the Japanese government still had legal leadership, in reality, the basic policies were drafted, directed, and administered by SCAP. To permanently eliminate militarism and the desire to turn Japan into a liberal democratic ally and establish an anti-communist belt in Asia, the United States reformed the entire Japanese education system according to the American style. From 1946 to 1952, the American education system was forcibly imported to Japan. In 1945, the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers (SCAP) carried out a series of decrees and laws to abolish all pre-war education. According to (Dang Thi Thanh Huyen, 2001), the role of education in training and developing human resources is expressed through the following aspects: Education improves the labor productivity of each individual through accumulating knowledge, skills, and labor attitudes. Education improves the quality of labor expressed by accumulating human capital and increasing workers' income.

The human resource training policy in Japan during the period 1945 - 1952

Minister of Education Maeda Tamon in the Higashi Kuninomiya cabinet, on the one hand, carried out dismantling educational institutions during wartime such as abolishing labor conscription for pupils and students; a positive side expressing the post-war educational motto. On September 15, 1945, the Kuninomiya

cabinet issued the "Education Guideline to Build A New Japan" with the main idea of eliminating militarism and maintaining the Emperor as the center to build the country's education and escape from difficult situations. However, the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers (SCAP) issued a different policy on education, eliminating militarism and Emperor-centric ideology from textbooks, strengthening rehabilitation democratic trends, and respect for freedom of speech, religion, thought, and basic human rights.

Regarding educational management, from October 1945 to December 1945, four major directives on educational reform were issued, clearly expressing the principles of educational reform. The content of the directives is specific: "The first directive titled "Management policy for the Japanese education system" demonstrates the basic principles of educational management such as thoroughly eliminating militarism, and extreme nationalism out of education, and advocates that to do that, we will inspect the content of education and those involved in education, investigate textbooks and documents. teaching.....The second directive on the investigation, exclusion, and approval of teachers and education officials (October 30) sets out the principle of excluding from the work of educating those who do not have qualifications. Third, Directive Regarding the announcement of the suspension and supervision of the government's protection, support, and maintenance of the Shinto religion (December 15) There is a content prohibiting the sponsorship, maintenance, and conduct of rituals, and education related to Shinto religion. The fourth directive on the suspension of Self-Cultivation, Japanese History, and Geography (December 31) stipulates the termination of classes for three subjects: Self-Cultivation, Japanese History, and Geography in schools" (Mugen, 2014).

With the policy of eliminating the ideology of militaristic education and extreme nationalism and building a democratized and equitable education system for all citizens in society, in March 1946 an ambassador A delegation of 27 people with expertise in the field of American education led by J.D. Stoddard (Head of the New York State Administration) was sent to Japan to learn and understand the current educational situation in this country and presented a report titled Allied Commander-in-Chief in Japan—education report of the American educational mission. The reports of this mission laid the foundation for the later establishment of a democratic education system for Japan and also contributed to the creation of the first democratic Education law in Japan.

The report points out five specific problems: an extremely centralized education system, a complex school system, one-way cramming education, and a dictatorial bureaucratic education administration. , the national language - the national language is ineffective. Next, the report sets out the principle that education must be consistent with a democratic society, with respect for personal values becoming the starting point towards making everyone "self-consciously mature" and organizing education in such a way that suits individual abilities, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, skin color, everyone is accepted equally (Robert Ward, Sakamoto Yoshikazu, 1987).

Regarding the school system, compulsory education is established with six years of elementary school, three years of lower middle school, and three years of high school, free of tuition, no entrance exams, and boys and girls studying together. For higher education, expanding opportunities to enter universities emphasizes achieving equal opportunities for women. Before the World War, the troubled and deadlocked school system with few educational opportunities for women has now been resolved. It is considered one of the landmark contents of educational reform. Regarding educational administration, the power of the Ministry of Education was reduced, power was decentralized, and Education Committees were established in the provincial government to be responsible to the people. Regarding educational content, they are recognizing the differences between individual students, and focusing on developing the potential capabilities available in each individual to enable them to participate effectively in social organizations. appropriately, negative self-cultivation focuses on educating the ideology of absolute obedience and advocating moral education throughout the entire educational program (Hisashi Kawada; Solomon B. Levine, 1980). Regarding teachers, teacher training must be about educating people in a broad sense, not just training teachers with limited specialized knowledge and techniques, but should be expanded to all universities. Education in general and social education also need to be organized with positive activities to support citizens' learning. The basic ideas of educational reform after 1945 were established based on the contents of this report.

Article 23 of the 1946 Constitution states "Academic freedom is guaranteed", Article 26 also stipulates that "all nationalities, according to the provisions of law, have the right to receive education equally depending on their ability" (Mugen, 2014). Japanese education has been conducted in the spirit of the goals stated in Article 1 of the Basic Education Law established in 1947: "Education must aim at comprehensive personality development, training healthy people physically and mentally, love truth and justice, respect personal values, work hard with a high sense of responsibility and imbue the idea of independence and self-reliance to be able to build a social state assembly peace" (Hoang Thi Minh Hoa, 1999). The education system is considered by Japan to be the key to economic growth and social stability. Therefore, for centuries, the Japanese Government has done everything possible to create an education system that can train a highly effective workforce to move the

country toward modernization. The urgent need now is for Japan to catch up with the level of Western countries, because, in reality, Japan is moving slower than Western countries.

From 1947 to 1949, many laws related to education were promulgated. In March 1947, the School Education Law regulated all content related to schools from elementary to higher education. This has overcome the limitations related to school ordinances in previous periods. Next, the Law on Organization of the Ministry of Education (May 1949) and the Law on the Committee of Education (July 1949) were promulgated to eliminate the narrowing of powers of the Ministry of Education and gradually transition to a piece of directed administration advice. Regarding teachers, it is stipulated in the Law on local civil servants (December 1950) and the Special Law on educational civil servants (January 1947). According to the Law on Teacher Practicing License (May 1947), all students who graduate from university and wish to become teachers can become teachers. The regulations transformed the closed form of teacher training in pre-war teacher training schools to an open teacher training mode. In addition, the Law on Private Schools (December 1947) and the Law on Social Education (June 1949) created conditions for the revival of social education, promoting cultural and educational exchange activities education and excluding political and religious activities.

A series of laws related to education were established between 1947 and 1949, collectively known as the Postwar Education Codes. The Education Law stipulates specific educational goals and guidelines. From this stage onwards education has practical and specific purposes. Education aims to develop people, train people who love the country, love the people, and live for a democratic and peaceful society. Education also aims to train people who love justice, are honest, respect people, and understand the value of labor, becoming people who are physically strong and mentally strong. The educational motto is that to achieve the above goals, it must be through coordination with agencies and organizations in society. Respect for academic freedom is always updated and considered how the real situation affects education, through the process of nurturing spirit and knowledge to contribute to building and developing culture. The Education Law will be the guideline for educational activities in society and must be developed by the New Constitution of Japan. According to the Japanese Constitution, all citizens have the right to go to school and find a job in the future. Enthusiastic and working-age teenagers need advice and improve their knowledge and vocational skills before entering society. The basic purpose of introducing career guidance programs into schools, first of all, junior high school (secondary school), is to first help students choose a career according to their needs, abilities, and aspirations but must be consistent with the needs and development of society. Students must know the career field they pursue, they must know the difficulties and requirements when participating in that field (Perez, 1998). After being equipped with a basic amount of knowledge about the career field they are interested in, the next step is for them to self-reflect and re-evaluate themselves and their abilities to see if they are truly qualified. Are you ready to participate in that field or not? This is a process that requires time and maturity of personal awareness, so introducing a career guidance program right from middle school is considered to be the right time and help achieve the effectiveness of career guidance distribution of labor in society. With that policy, the government began implementing human resource training policies from the most basic steps, which is establishing a curriculum system at junior high schools with a mix of general educational programs, and career guidance programs. Although in the first years of application, the career guidance program was only symbolic, later on, the importance of the workforce graduating from secondary schools was realized, so the career guidance program was designed effectively. At the same time, the Ministry of Education also conducts advanced career guidance programs at high schools because of the development of the economy, science, and technology as well as the need to improve people's educational level. For the general public, the general knowledge as well as the vocational knowledge that students accumulate after graduating from junior high school are not appropriate.

Thus, it can be said that the career guidance program at middle and high schools is the foundation for a solid human resource training system in Japan during the process of national recovery and development of high economic development later. The career guidance program in secondary schools must also go through a long period of research, analyzed by many councils in the Ministry of Education such as the Central Council of Educational Assessment, the Council of Educational Assessment, Central Vocational Education Decision, etc. All activities aim to find the best and most reasonable path for the human resource training mechanism.

The policy of simply educating and training human resources through career guidance programs at junior high schools is specified by Regulation No. 261 issued on May 28, 1949, of the Japanese Ministry of Education:

"1. Compulsory subjects in the career guidance section are not necessary professional knowledge for learners, but basic knowledge about important occupations in society that learners need to know to be able to choose a career for themselves.

2. Although these career-oriented subjects are mandatory, they can be chosen by learners according to their abilities, aspirations, and needs. Besides, it not only contributes to helping learners choose a career that suits their future abilities and interests but also helps learners know social trends to harmoniously combine their

needs, society's needs interests and aspirations. Another important goal is that after graduating from junior high school, if necessary, learners can still meet job requirements and can go to work immediately.

3. Career-oriented subjects will be conducted in parallel between studying at school and practicing at necessary places.

4. These subjects will be conducted evenly over 3 years of study at junior high school (middle school), with a total number of lessons from 105 to 175 lessons (one lesson is 50 minutes) each year.

5. Students will choose subjects according to their wishes.

6. There is no difference in these subjects between men and women, which means creating equal opportunities for both genders to hone vocational skills to participate in society later.

After Regulation 261 above was passed, in secondary schools, people began to apply the program of selecting subjects in the vocational education program. These subjects include industry, agriculture, commerce, fisheries, and family. Of course, this application also causes problems such as choosing whether or not to study vocational subjects, what is the regime for vocational subjects, and whether it is necessary to design family subjects as an independent subject, or problems that arise during the vocational training process such as how to practice, who the teacher instructs vocational subjects, etc. These problems are overcome during the progress process. At the same time, the Ministry of Education is also very flexible in implementing this regulation. Therefore, localities can design the program according to their development needs and the labor situation in their localities most appropriate, avoid stereotypical application which is both ineffective and causes damage to the entire training process. With the above contents, the vocational education policy for middle school students is a solid foundation for human resources to serve the economic development process in the future. Another point to note here is the liberalization in the process of conducting career guidance programs at middle schools. Freedom here does not mean there is no central management or no unity between localities, but freedom here means depending on the needs and conditions of economic development of each person. In each locality, the schools in that locality conduct career guidance programs to suit the fastest and most complete development needs of that locality. Localities with the terrain and a long history of agricultural development cannot rigidly apply career guidance programs aimed at industrial or processing technical subjects but must guide students in their locality. They participate in courses related to agriculture, agricultural techniques, agricultural product processing, various types of services for agriculture, etc. Only then can we meet the real needs of local people, at the same time helping to develop a strong locality, keeping workers continuing to participate in local production, limiting the process of migration from one locality to another, and overcoming inadequacies in the labor market.

Localities neighboring large cities that are on the path to developing towards industrialization must be flexible in organizing career guidance programs to suit the development situation of their locality as well as the demand for support for neighboring large cities. It can be said that the above policy of Japan has a very important meaning in contributing to nurturing and training future human resources for Japan. The country after the war prepared a solid foundation for development.

III. CONCLUSION

Training human resources to meet the changing requirements of socio-economic development is a common characteristic of educational reform in every country. After World War II, questions arose for Japanese educational reform such as why to reform education, what to reform education for, and how to reform education to develop in the future. From 1945 to 1952, the American education system was forcibly imported to Japan. In 1945, SCAP carried out a series of decrees and laws to abolish all pre-war education and established an American-style educational system. Since then, Japanese education has contributed to training human resources to serve the country's recovery and development period. Reforms aimed at human resource training in Japan during the period 1945-1952 generally had the following characteristics. Firstly, educational reform aims to value male as well as female human resources, so all learning programs are designed to be balanced and meet the educational aspirations of both genders. Second, the policy of training human resources with a solid general knowledge base along with a vocational knowledge base right from the time they are in high school. Third, the educational program is designed to suit learners' abilities and is always innovated according to changes in science and technology and social needs.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Beasley, W. G. (1970). *The modern history of Japan*. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- [2]. Beasley, W. G. (1977). *Modern Japan Aspects of History, Literature & Society*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- [3]. Clark, R. (1979). *The Japanese Company*. New Haven, London: Yale University.
- [4]. Dang Thi Thanh Huyen. (2001). *General Education Develops the Quality of Human Resources Practical Lessons from Japan*. Ha Noi: Social Sciences.
- [5]. Eijiro Honjo. (1965). *The Social and Economic History of Japan*. New York: Russell & Russell Inc.

- [6]. Glasnovich, R. S. (2019). *Vanguards of Civilization: Police Education and Unequal Treaty Revision in Meiji Japan (1868–1912)*. *The International History Review*
- [7]. Henshall, K. G. (2004). Henshall, K.G. (2004). *Building a Modern Nation: The Meiji Period (1868–1912)*. In: *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [8]. Hisashi Kawada; Solomon B. Levine. (1980). *Human Resources in Japanese Industrial Development*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- [9]. Hoang Thi Minh Hoa. (1999). *Reform in Japan from 1945 to 1951*. Ha Noi: Social Sciences
- [10]. Luu Ngoc Trinh. (1996). *Human Strategy in Japan's Economic "Miracle"*. Ha Noi: National Political Publishing House.
- [11]. Mugen, O. (2014). *Japan educational reform*. Hanoi: Hanoi: Vietnam's Encyclopedia Press.
- [12]. Nitungkorn, S. (2000). *Education and Economic Development during the Modernization Period: A Comparison between Thailand and Japan*. *Southeast Asia Studies*.
- [13]. Perez, L. G. (1998). *The History of Japan*. The United States of America: Greenwood Press.
- [14]. Robert Ward, Sakamoto Yoshikazu. (1987). *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.