

国際シンポジウム

The Studies on Japanese Education in North America - A Sociological Inquiry

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Back in 1973, a book was published by George Bereday and S. Masai, which had a descriptive title of American Education Through Japanese Eyes. This book, based on the interview data collected from the Japanese teachers who visited America to observe the American education system in action. In this book, made were many interesting, penetrating comments and opinions by the Japanese educationists. In fact, they grieved over the disparity between lofty educational theory and its often spotty implementation in American practise. The basic aim of this paper is ^{then} essentially to reverse the analytical focus from Japan to North America and look at the Japanese education through American eyes.

There is another, perhaps more important, objective in this study. We ought to know something about the theoretical assumptions made by the American scholars studying the Japanese educational system and its functions. As well, we ought to know something about the methodological approaches attempted in these studies. In so doing, our intention is to explore the possibility that these studies do share some common perspectives and fundamental analytical vantage points which reflect the American educational values and norms as associated with education. The task on hand is by no means easy to substantiate but it is a challenging attempt, to say the least.

In this study, the information I have collected so far comes from the following three ^osources: 1) monographs touching upon some aspects of Japanese education, 2) academic journal articles which became available through a computer search, and 3) journalistic accounts on the subject matter which appeared in major popular periodicals. Two obstacles that I discovered were 1) a few bibliographies available in English deal exclusively with the books published in the Japanese language, and 2) there are not too many monographs which examine the Japanese education as their primary focus. Therefore, they do not necessarily appear in the subject catalogue of a library.

Using these books and articles acquired, I have attempted to show the areas of academic interest of Americans and Canadians by constructing a chart which includes all the substantive problems normally considered important in the sociological literature, and which consists of the following five major dimensions:

1. Social Functions of Education:

- 1) Education as a Vehicle of Cultural Transmittance
- 2) Education for Building National Identity and Consciousness
- 3) Education Facilitating Occupational and Social Mobility
- 4) Education for Job Training and Certification
- 5) Education for Social Integration

2. Educational Structure:

- 1) The Japanese Compulsory Educational System and Its Functions
- 2) The Hierarchy in the Japanese Educational Structure
- 3) The System of Entrance Examinations
- 4) The System of Education and Employment (Labor Market)
- 5) The System of Japanese Education: the Private Public Education
- 6) The System of Japanese Education in Relations to Other Public Agencies
- 7) The Japanese Education in the so-called "Inter-Organization Set"

3. The Japanese Education and the Problem of Control:

- 1) The Japanese Education and the Role of Mother
- 2) School Discipline and Class-Room Behavior
- 3) The Effects of Examination upon Students' Behavior
- 4) Delinquency and Crime among the Japanese Students
- 5) Changing Social Values and Consciousness among the Students

4. Education and Labour Market:

- 1) The Institutional Linkage between Educational and Occupational Hierarchies in Japan
- 2) Wage Differences among the Employes with Different Educational Achievements
- 3) Female Education and Its Occupational Consequences
- 4) Education - Prestige - Wealth - Power in the Job Hierarchy
- 5) Computer Science and Female Labor Market

5. Education and Social Change:

- 1) Student Politics and Mass Political Movements

5. (Education and Social Change, cont'd)

- 2) The Effects of Technology upon Mass Education
- 3) The Use of Computer in Education
- 4) The Projection of Japanese Education in the Future

Some revision may have to be made in assessing the distribution of the studies in these categories on the five dimensions. Nevertheless, an attempt will be made to see which areas have been more adequately studied by North American scholars on the basis of what theoretical and methodological assumptions and approaches.