

**Mohammad Reza Sarkar Arani**

**School of Education**

**Nagoya University, Japan**

## **The Alternative Approach to Improve the Teaching-Learning Process and Teachers' Professional Development in Japan**

### **Introduction**

One of the most important features of a modern educational system is its capacity for self-renewal and continuous change. This change must encompass what is taught, how it is taught, the relationship of our schools and classrooms with society beyond the school, and the ways we regard teachers and they regard themselves and strive to develop their abilities.<sup>1</sup> For this purpose the successful teaching-learning process of the future must be one that helps students collaboratively perceive, analyze, interpret<sup>2</sup> and discover the new relations in various situations. For all of them teachers must prepare to make new teaching-learning strategies and need to know how to get self-actualizing knowledge and developed self-experience. This teachers' change need to increase experience and examining classroom practices, and move from the old model of teacher competence to broader and suitable forms of professional development in which teachers take responsibility for such

new areas as action research and self-directed development.

Based on the above ideas and the fact that in the last decade, teacher development has become a critical part of discourse on educational change.<sup>3</sup> This paper tries to clarify characteristics and experiences of Japanese In-Service Teacher Training (INSET) programs which attempt to help teachers to improve quality of the teaching activities and their competence. The case of Japan is an excellent example<sup>4</sup> of how, from a historical perspective, the problem-solving approach and trend of educational achievements can be applied in comparative education.

In the present paper, I am going to characterize Japanese model of INSET (*Genshoku Kyoiku*) and attempt to explain the School Based INSET (*Kounai Kenshyu*) as an alternative scheme for change and enrich classroom practices, teachers professional development and improve school activities and environment.

## **Historical Background**

### *The Prewar Situation*

In prewar Japan, teachers were expected to function in their dealings with children and their parents as the Emperor's servants (*Tenno no kanri*). At the same time teachers were expected to be servile and submissive towards superior authorities and towards the possessors of local administrative power. The servility of teachers was the outcome of a well articulated policy that can be clearly traced back to the Regulations for Primary School Instructors (*Shogakko Kyoin Kokoroe*) issued in 1882. Under the system for the Mass Mobilization of the National Spirit (*Kokumin Seishin Sodojin Taisei*) formulated during the 1930s, even the teachers' every day liberties, not to mention their

freedom to conduct research, were tightly controlled and regulated.<sup>5</sup>

The paradigm for the relationship between government officials and schoolteachers can be observed in the Regulations given to all graduates of the First Normal School in Aichi Prefecture (*Nagoya Daiichi Shihan Gakko*) in 1883. Regarding research activities, the Aichi document declared:<sup>6</sup>

Participate in proper societies for the study of the arts and sciences, but never join groups whose meetings breed doubts. If you come into contact with seditious or dangerous writings, report this immediately to and discuss them with your school's principal.

The Regulation also prescribed appropriate behavior for teachers with regard to dress, housing, and the disposition of salaries:<sup>7</sup>

...You must not lodge in a house having a daughter of marriageable age and you must avoid a place where there is a jealous young husband.

You must not lend money...Think of yourself every day as working for your Emperor and family.

Avoid passing by private dwellings in which female teachers reside.

Keep your attire simple and maintain an orderly appearance.

Keep your hair closely cropped and do not put your hands in your pockets.

Even this brief selection from the official policies in *Aichi* suggests the detailed scope of the regulations imposed upon schoolteachers. The basic principle running throughout the Imperial education system was the complete separation of scholarship (*Gakumon*)-"teacher as learner and researcher who has individual independence and spiritual freedom"-

and education (*Kyoiku*)-"teacher as teacher, and person who is underwrite the steady advance of National independence-.<sup>8</sup>

Before and during World War II, Japanese education was as a conscious vehicle for carrying out the intent of the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education. This rescript, promulgated by the Emperor *Meiji* on October 30, 1890, remained the official statement of the principles underlying Japanese education until it was scrapped. The rescript gave both legal form and, perhaps more significantly, moral force to an educational system that supported the rise of militarism and ultranationalism during the late 1920s 1930s.<sup>9</sup>

### **The PostWar Development**

The establishment of Japan's postwar educational system, rooted in the values of the Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Law. No longer would education be thought of as an Imperial prerogative; henceforth it had to be recognized as a constitutionally guaranteed right of the people. Because the teacher's work was reconceived as a part of the function of a democratic society. It was recognized that both academic freedom and the liberty to create new educational practices had to be vigorously supported in order to guarantee the conditions necessary for the new role of teachers.<sup>10</sup>

In the completed text of the law provisions were made regarding "respect for academic freedom" (Article 2), "guarantees of the teacher's status" (Article 6), and "the independence of educational authority in conjunction with limits on the responsibilities of educational administration" (Article 10).<sup>11</sup>

The preface to the Summary of the Draft for a Fundamental Law of

Education, submitted to the Thirteenth General Session of the Educational Reform Council on November 29, 1946, states:<sup>12</sup>

Education in our country have in the past been deficient in self-awareness and critical reflection. Education has shown little if any respect for the modern scientific spirit or traditional religious sentiments...Eventually all arenas of learning and teaching fell under the sway of militarism and ultranationalism. To correct this most troubling situation, education must be reformed right down to its roots.

Concerning the problem of educational administration, the draft summary forthrightly declared:

Educational administrators have to respect academic freedom and educational independence. Their efforts must be limited to securing and regulating those conditions necessary for the fullest possible realization of educationally conceived objectives.

Even in the Ministry of Education's Draft of the Fundamental Law of Education, presented to the Diet on January 15, 1947, the same spirit of respect for educational autonomy is amply apparent:<sup>13</sup>

Education shall not be subjected to improper political or bureaucratic control. It shall bear an independent responsibility towards the Japanese people.

One of the major influences on this educational reform aimed at guaranteeing "educational freedom" came from the report of the First American education Mission, a group of twenty-seven American educators who arrived in Japan in March of 1946, and whose report provided the framework for reordering educational discourse in postwar Japan.<sup>14</sup> The American architects of Japanese educational reform

sought to give concrete expression to the ideals of a democratized educational administration. These measures acknowledged the educational liberty of teachers and attempted to provide guarantees which would facilitate the development and expansion of autonomous research activities and eventually substantiate the vision and ideals of a new educational order.<sup>15</sup>

Based on the American education Mission Committee's idea, democratic attitudes cannot be learned from precept alone; they must be learned through the experience of democratic action. Informal pupil-teacher relationships contribute to it, together with a self-discipline based on willing conformity derived from a knowledge of the consequences of behavior for the common good. Training for participation in community life in a democracy calls for experience in the process of group deliberation, in the choosing of leaders and the exercise of leadership, in the toleration of different points of view and in accepting responsibility for the actions of the group. In the chart below, a number of these points are summarized to indicate the direction of desired change in teaching practices in democratic education.<sup>16</sup>

*Less Desirable Practices*

Pupil penalized for not doing that of which he is intellectually incapable.  
Highly standardized and uniform methods.  
Teacher a lecturer only.  
Teacher asks questions,

*More Desirable Practices*

Pupil encouraged to work at tasks at which he can succeed.  
Flexible methods adopted to local and individual needs.  
Teacher also a discussion leader and guide.

pupil answers.

Textbook sole source of authoritative information.

Subject matter organized according to conventional patterns; little interrelationship between courses.

Examinations favor material memorized.

Pupil-teacher relations formal; little sense of mutuality.

Discipline imposed by authority or precept.

Group activities initiated and controlled by teacher.

Pupil asks questions, answers sought cooperatively.

Textbook supplemented by other sources.

Subject matter organized meaningfully around a problem to be solved or a project to be completed.

Achievement judged according to initiative and independent thinking.

Pupil-teacher relationships informal; genuine sense of partnership in a mutual task.

Self-discipline imposed through acceptance of demands of the social situation.

Group activities and controlled in part by pupils under the leadership of the teacher.

In addition, Mission Committee issued several suggestions for the INSET as the following:<sup>17</sup>

1. Teachers shall be given many opportunities to meet with their fellows for the interchange of professional counsel and inspiration.

...Professional meetings of all types of schools in a village, a city a prefecture, or a large region should be encouraged. Meeting of groups of teachers with special professional interests should also be held.

2. Teacher-training institutions, such as normal schools, higher normal schools, colleges and universities, have a clear duty to provide teachers in-service with those special means of professional education variously called in English by such terms as conferences, workshops, institutes and vacation courses.

3. Professional publications may be used more widely for discussion of teachers' problems and for reporting successful practices.

4. One of the most effective phases of in-service education is the observation of another teacher in action followed by a discussion with that teacher of the educational aims and methods involved.

5. The professional quality of the present inspectoral staff of its functions changed to conform more nearly with the modern conception of the work of a supervisor as a professional leader and helper of teachers, if in-service education is to be carried on effectively.

6. Travel to visit and study in other countries and exchanges between Japanese teachers and those of all the United Nations may be arranged to the lasting benefit of education throughout the world.

7. In connection with all planning for in-service education, we point to the obvious necessity of reducing the present excessive teaching load, providing adequate leaves for study and travel, and establishing an adequate salary scale for teachers. Without these changes, teachers will have too little time and resources for effective INSET.

Based on the above suggestions, Law for Special Regulations Concerning Educational Public Service Personnel was enacted in 1949,



in which educational personnel and staff are requested to engage in constant research and training to implement their responsibilities.<sup>18</sup>

### **Recent Reform**

In August 1984, the Government established the National Council on Educational Reform (NCER) as an advisory body to the Prime Minister. The Council was created under the "Law for Establishment of a National Council on Educational Reform". On September 5, 1984, the Prime Minister (*Yasuhiro Nakasone*) asked the NCER to advise him basic strategies for necessary reforms with regard to governmental policies and measures in various aspects,<sup>19</sup> so as to secure such education as will be compatible with the social changes and cultural developments. In referring this subject to the Council, the Prime Minister pointed out:<sup>20</sup>

Since the end of World War II education in Japan has spread and developed to a great extent.

In recent years, however, the change in the social environment and the notable quantitative expansion of education have had a great impact upon educational programs in this country.

Consequently a variety of problems and difficulties have arisen. There has also been a growing demand for securing such education as will be compatible with the increasing changes in society and cultural developments in the country, for example, the change in the industrial structure, progress of the information society, increasing desire of the public for Lifelong Learning, and the trends of internationalization in various sectors.

For three years, the NCER has submitted to the Prime Minister four successive reports including the final report in August, 1987. In its

reports, the subject of improving the quality of teachers has been taken up as a part of improving the elementary and secondary education. This means that the success or failure of school education depends upon the teachers' capability after all, and that how teachers should work is one of the areas in which people in this country have their keenest interest. Also improvement of teaching methods has been one of the major theme. It is demanded that teaching methods be diversified and evaluation practice also improved so as to make pupils receive instruction appropriate to their individual characteristics.<sup>21</sup>

In the second report on Educational Reform (April 23, 1986) NCER recommended to created INSET for beginning teachers (Shoninsha Kenshyu):

It is important to provide new teachers with in-service training at beginning of their teaching careers and thus to help them make a successful start in their educational service.

All beginning teachers should be required to undergo one year of training immediatly after their employment, under the guidance of supervising teachers. The training should concern bothe actual teaching and other duties of teachers.

In administering training for begining teachers, each school should establish a systematic mechanism whereby the supervising teachers and all other teachers at the school will cooperate in the training of beginning teachers under the leadership of the principal.

Every prefectural government should develop an appropraite structure for administering in-service training programs, including the appointment of supervisors in charge of these programs.<sup>22</sup>

In the reports on Educational Reform NCER, such INSET programs

as can be undertaken at regular intervals throughout the professional career of teachers should be planned. These periodical programs will allow teachers to reflect on their own teaching experiences, acquire new professional knowledge, revitalize themselves and further improve their own capacity for classroom and other activities. Teachers are requested to enrich their competencies in the following areas:<sup>23</sup>

1. Betterment of pupil-teacher relationship and classroom management;
2. Preparation for effective teaching process;
3. Improvement of evaluation especially in the aspect of affective area of pupils;
4. Development and utilization of teaching materials;
5. Re-examination of equipments and facilities;
6. Diversification of teaching-learning styles;
7. Improvement of moral education and "Special Activities";
8. Improvement of internal organization in schools effective teaching;
9. Enrichment of in-service education of teachers within and out of schools;
10. Collaboration between school and home, community;
11. Upgrading teachers' moral towards professional growth.

### **Teachers' Professional Development Opportunities**

The competence and quality appropriate to the professional responsibility of teachers are to be formed gradually throughout various stages of their career. Since the Law for Special Regulations Concerning Education Public Service Personnel requires teachers to pursue consistent INSET, various systematic programs are conducted at

national, prefectural, municipal and school levels.<sup>24</sup>

Japanese teachers' professional development programs according to their aims, significances and organisers, can be categorized into the following: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Monbusho*), Prefectural Education Center (*Kyoiku Sentaa*), Municipal Education Center (*Shichoson Kyoiku Sentaa*), Beginning Teachers Training (*Shoninsha Kenshyu*), Universities and Research Institutions (*Daigaku ya Kenkyusho*), Self-learning or Training (*Jiko Kyoiku ya Kenshyu*), Informal Training Activities (*Minkan Kyoiku Dantai to Kenkyukai*), and School Based INSET (*Kounai Kenshyu*).

### **Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (Monbusho)**

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture holds "central workshops" (National Education Center) for the INSET of principals, vice-principals, coordinating and advising teachers (*Shunin*) on subject matters who play the leading role at the prefectural level. The content of the programs cover many specialized areas from management and administration of school affairs, to curriculum and academic instruction, as well as general education in subjects such as politics, economics, society and culture.<sup>25</sup>

For the improvement of the guidance abilities of teachers in positions of leadership in local areas, especially to meet the new Course of Study in which school-based curriculum developments are encouraged within the framework of the national standards, curriculum Management Improvement Courses are opened each year for every elementary, lower and upper secondary schools and various areas of specialized education. Here, discussions are conducted based on actual practices of interest in

local schools, school supervisors and subject specialists who are in charge of guidance and advice from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.<sup>26</sup>

The Ministry sends about 5,000 (1994) teachers abroad every year in order to broaden their international perspective and to gain an increased consciousness of their chosen profession, for a period of 16 days, one month or more.<sup>27</sup>

Destinations are selected from among Europe, North and South America, South-East Asia, and Africa. They separate into each group of about 30 and study management of schools, content of teaching, teaching methods, and educational facilities and also observe the educational, social and cultural conditions of each country. Since 1976, special intensive training programs for 160 leading faculty members who teach English in lower and upper secondary schools, have operated. In this training program participants are not allowed to speak even a single Japanese and its emphasis is placed on listening and speaking of English. From 1979, about 100 potential English teachers have been selected every year from those completed the 8 weeks program in summer for overseas training. After participating in a 6 weeks course at universities in England or the United States, 2 weeks are spent for observation, and they must brush up on their English hearing and speaking abilities.<sup>28</sup>

The ministry provides special training programs for the cultivation of each local leaders courses such as the Student Guidance, Counselling Techniques Guidance, and Moral Education for educating the leaders are among those of importance. In order to promote communication among teachers from different types of schools and from various geographical regions, the Ministry conducts an 11 days induction

training ocean cruise in cooperation with the prefectural boards of education.<sup>29</sup> In addition, the Ministry gives grants such as financial assistance for INSET programs administered by prefectural boards of education, teacher training organization and others.

### **Prefectural Education Center (Kyoiku Sentaa)**

Prefectural boards of education are required by law to be responsible for planning and encouraging daily INSET in local public schools. Prefectural education centers, which have lodging facilities, educational equipment and apparatus and professional staff, play an important role in INSET, Prefectural boards of education also dispatch teachers to universities, research institutes, private firms and other institution for long-term training in order to improve their professional competence and their social character. In addition, Prefectural boards of education conduct periodic INSET at different stages of a teacher's career, for example, after 5 years, 10 years and 20 years of service.<sup>30</sup>

Other programs of INSET are directed towards meeting the learning needs of teachers in various positions such as principals, vice-principals and coordinating and advising teachers. The subjects of this program are: democratization of human relations and rationalization in school management, how to manage the school in a way which answers to trends in the local society, Interpretation of legal regulations concerning education and their administration, Improvement of management to solve school problems.<sup>31</sup>

In *Aichi* Education Center (Aichi Kyoiku Sentaa) which the author had opportunities to visit, is as a progressive research institute and INSET center that provides various INSET programs for all of teachers

during the different stages of their career, new materials of teaching, computer, new educational technology, new designs for teaching and learning, intensive English training seminar and etc.. Also, Aichi Education Center has organized a lot of educational research projects related to improving teaching-learning process, problems of schools in Aichi prefecture, and teacher's professional development, for example, educational administration, school and classroom management, educational contents, English teaching, educational evaluation methods, educational environment, and special problems in Japanese education system.<sup>32</sup>

### **Municipal Education Center (*Shichoson Kyoiku Sentaa*)**

Various lectures and workshops are held by municipalities. In addition, municipal Education Center do research, set up seminars related to city educational problems and organized a various courses in cooperation with prefectural INSET programs such as understanding learners, teaching methods, educational psychology, pupils' guidance, special activities and etc.

Furthermore, each city board of education (*Shichoson Kyoiku Inkai*) issues a notification (*Tsuutatsu*) which applies to all of schools on educational activities and INSET programs. For example, during 1995-96 academic year, *Nagoya* City Board of Education (*Nagoyashi Kyoiku Inkai*) issued a notification which considered to foster children who have healthy minds and bodies, to help children who cooperate with others, to help children to develop self-direction learning, to foster children to have the ability to think profoundly and to have generous and tender hearts, and to help teachers to understand learners.<sup>33</sup> All of schools in

Nagoya should attend to this notification during planning and performance of school based INSET and school practices.

### **Beginning Teachers Training (*Shoninsha Kenshyu*)**

A system of induction training for beginning teachers was created in the school year 1989 by the Law for Special Regulations Concerning Education Public Service Personnel.<sup>34</sup> It is conducted for all beginning teachers in national and public elementary schools, lower and upper secondary schools, schools for the blind, the deaf and the otherwise handicapped, for one year after their appointment.

This induction training program is spread over the school year for a total of at least 90 days, 60 days or more of which are school based INSET during which beginning teachers receive instructions from their advising teachers, and no less than 30 days of which are spent in attending lectures, seminars, and various practical training sessions that include five day workshops held in education centers or other institutions outside of school. Prefectural boards of education and the boards of education in 12 designated cities plan concrete programs of induction training for beginning public school teachers and provides substitute teachers during the training sessions.<sup>35</sup>

### **Universities and Research Institutions (*Daigaku ya Kenkyusho*)**

INSET for regular teacher certificates<sup>36</sup> is provided at universities and other institutions of higher education. Large numbers of in-service teachers are sent to universities, research institutes, companies, and other organizations on long-term training assignments designed to improve their expertise and broaden their social experience. In addition,



recognized courses under the Educational Personnel Certification Law are being introduced with the cooperation of prefectural boards of education and universities to enable teachers holding second-class teaching certificates to acquire first-class or advanced-class teaching certificates.<sup>37</sup>

Almost all of universities and colleges have master course programs which teachers can participate and take M.A or M.S in a period of two years. Furthermore, teachers have opportunities to improve professional abilities during a one year research (*Kenkyusei*) in universities or some research institutes.

### **Self-learning or Training (*Jiko Kyoiku ya Kenshyu*)**

Reading professional periodicals and writing journals, diaries, and logs as a productive way to promote reflective thinking for teachers. Writing about teaching is certainly a powerful method for reflection and keeping a journal strengthens the teacher professionalism. For teachers, journals are places where they can reflect and think deeply.<sup>38</sup> Journal writing is a method of INSET based on teacher's self-directed learning, which is popular in Japan. Furthermore, teachers attend some private study circles (*Kyoikusha Kenkyukai*) which are spontaneous and provide opportunities for teachers to study based on their needs, interests, justifying ongoing decisions, self-improvement projects, and independent development experiences.

### **Informal Training Activities (*Minkan Kyoiku Dantai to Kenkyukai*)**

Every academic year, in each school, all of the teachers plan for informal training activities such as to visit companies, museums and

institutes, art activities, sports, trips, meetings and parents participation. In some cases, the conditions for participating INSET are voluntary. It provides them opportunities to meet other teachers and exchange classroom practices, experiences and discussion about new materials, methods, and problems. This learning process of teachers can be defined as the process of sharing experiences with senior colleagues through interaction with each other based on the teacher's individual needs. Through these opportunities, not only teachers who has experience can improve his or her quality of teaching but also beginning teachers can be able to learn a typical pattern of teaching and to develop a sensitivity toward teaching.<sup>39</sup>

One of the circles which the author already has participated in (since 1995) is spontaneous study circle for enriching classroom practices (*Wakate Kyoikusha Kenkyukai*), set up from 1983 in Nagoya by some professors of *Aichi Kyoiku* University and *Nagoya* University and teachers of *Aichi* prefecture. The predominant aim of this circle is to help and provide opportunities for participants to improve classroom practices and self-professional development on the basis of research in their own classroom and students. This circle has 15 participants, gathering together on last Saturday of every month and carrying out a free and friendly discussion about general pedagogical knowledge, the strategies of improving teaching-learning process, teacher's experience, teachers' classroom practices, teacher-student interaction, new materials of teachings, teachers' problems, internationalization of education, new design of teaching, and etc..<sup>40</sup>

### **School Based INSET (*Kounai Kenshyu*)**

Each school sets up an INSET Committee and this committee coordinates the activities of the INSET programs according to the notification issued by City Board of Education and suggestions and problems of the school which are discussed through the all faculty members meeting at the beginning of each academic year. Also in carrying out the training program, the section meeting such as the subject area, grade area and general faculty meeting, are organically connected and amplified.

School based INSET programs in Japanese schools are various but one of the fundamental programs is *Jugiyō Kenkyū* as collaborative classroom research, which is based on the three steps; Plan-Do-See (PDS).

The school based INEST in Komeno Elementary School (KES)<sup>41</sup> (which the author has conducted research there from 1995) at 1995-96 academic year is planned around the following topics:

1. Improvement of educational activities and teaching-learning process,
2. Development of teachers' professional competency,
3. Improvement of relationships of teachers and understanding each other,
4. Improvement of educational environment.

On the basis of the above four topics, the PDS process in KES is as following:<sup>42</sup>

Plan: Firstly, all of the teachers discuss about the teaching theme. This theme is closely related to the school's problems. Secondly, they divided in two small groups, one group has teachers of 1~3 grades and

the other has teachers of 4~6 grades. Each group of teachers discusses the teaching materials, contents and methods, and determines 1~3 lesson plan cooperatively. Thirdly, all of the teachers discuss to improve lesson plans for performance.

**Do:** One of the teachers presents a lesson at her or his classroom on the basis of the lesson plan and other teachers are active observers in this class and make notes on what happens in the classroom during the presentation. Each teacher has a special role at that time. For example, one of them would record visual document and another would look at the teacher-students relationships, based on their specific tasks which have been decided in the each small group during the discussion on the lesson plan.

**See:** all of the teachers meet for debriefing analysis, criticism and evaluation. During this session they examine appropriateness of teaching theme, materials, methods, problems involved in teacher's performance and the characteristics of each pupil's learning activities. They also discuss the next lesson plans, how to make new teaching-learning strategies and obtain self-directed professional development. In addition, Each small (grade) group also discusses and evaluates the plans based on the result of the dicussion of all teachers and prepares to decide the next lesson plan.

Other school based INSET programs in KES are as follows:

1. Teachers visit some school, observe some classes, talk with the teachers of that school about new designs for teaching and learning and write a report for their own school.

2. Consultants are invited to the school from *Nagoya* City Board of Education, conduct a lecture for teachers, attend the classes and help

teachers in self-initiated professional development.

3. Supervisors (*Shunin*)<sup>43</sup> of academic affairs, research activities, each subject and grade attend the classes and advise teachers on how to develop better teaching methods.

4. Each year, all of the teachers plan for informal training activities such as to visit companies, museums and institutes, art activities, sports, trips, meetings and parents participation.

5. Teachers of each grade invite parents to observe their classes, make notes and suggest ways to improve the teaching- learning process in the after class discussion.

6. Class training courses such as computer programs, educational technology and new subjects.

7. Seminars on specific themes such as special problems in school or in Japanese education system.

### **The School Based INSET as an Alternative Approach**

Scholarly research<sup>44</sup> suggests that one of the most important things for teachers' professional development is to do research into their own classrooms and students. This makes it possible to research, change and enrich classroom practices. In addition, it will facilitate teachers' self-renewal and a continuous change in the quality of teaching. This also involves improving classroom life and making effective relationships among classroom, school and society.

Recent approaches to teacher development have centered more in schools and involved teachers more directly in decisions which shape these approaches.<sup>45</sup> School based INSET is an orientation which reconceptualizes how teachers can improve both their professional

effectiveness in the work development and their relationships with their students and classroom activities.

Teachers believe that the most important thing for professional development is learning by doing and practice on their own. They have to decide which area they would like to concentrate on and then they should work on it, and write out their own plan for every single lesson in one subject and keep at it at least for one year.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, ILO-UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of the Teacher proclaimed the teacher's job-related academic freedom. There must be assurances that teachers can freely organize their own in-service training, not on the basis of work orders but simply as a point of principle. If the teacher's freedom to conduct independent INSET is usurped, he or she loses the capacity to truly function as a teacher, and it becomes impossible to fulfill the duties of an educator, learner and researcher.<sup>47</sup>

The school based INSET which is also supported by scholarly research<sup>48</sup> has a more significant effect on developing teacher's competence and improving quality of the teaching-learning process than another type of INSET (for example, according to the study continuity of teacher education in Japan [1986, N=1120], 78.5% of teachers are increasingly interested in participation in school based INSET schemes. Compared to 37.6% for Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and local board of education INSET programs, this is very strong).<sup>49</sup> It appears to teachers interests, responds to teachers variability, helps teachers to learn to interact with students, to research their own classrooms and pupils, to justify ongoing decisions and actions and supports teachers learning on the job.

In *Jugiyō Kenkyū* which is a basic program of school based INSET, teachers have opportunities for professional collaboration in solving problems of school and appealing to teacher's individual needs in school practices and classroom activities, the adoption of innovative teaching methods, the use of new technology, the teaching of specific skills, and a host of other matters related to curriculum development and classroom management.<sup>50</sup> These provide opportunities for teachers to share their experiences, their successes and failures, and to seek solutions to common problems together with full understanding of the constraints and limitations under which they must work.

This approach of teacher development is centred more on the classroom, the exchange of expertise, the provision of an appropriate environment for teacher's learning from each other, the challenge of teacher-student relationships, the learning through participation and enhancing professional dialogue. In this type of INSET, teachers are learners in their own school and are capable of determining what and how they should develop and change. They learn from their own lesson plans and self-directed projects. Furthermore, they develop essential skills for organizing and managing the classroom as an effective learning environment, such as the ability to work as a team, to communicate and exchange ideas, to engage in self-assessment, to observe using a variety of methods, to use a variety of motivational strategies, and to address students' different learning needs. These are highly challenging opportunities for teachers that improve quality of teaching based on self-initiated professional development.

## **Conclusion**

Japanese people have been increasingly interested in the education of their children, and they are likely to require teachers to be able than ever before. Also, teachers are expected to make their own efforts to educate themselves, and the predominant aim of INSET is to provide to achieve teaching quality and teacher competence. Although participation in INSET programs is not normally rewarded with salary increases, teachers are most likely to attend professional workshops and INSET programs in comparison with other countries (USA, England, Germany, Singapore).<sup>51</sup>

As previous scholarly research mentioned, professional development has individuality, which includes personal interests and aptitude as well.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the author recognized that to provide good positive encouragement for teachers to study by themselves is of the first importance. That is to say, teachers must do it independently as far as possible, just as they usually ask their pupils to study by themselves.<sup>53</sup> The school based INSET depends on these aspects particularly to assist teachers' independent efforts in experience development and self-improvement projects.

Teaching profession is, a learned profession and teacher is a member of the scholarly community.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, teaching and teachers' own quality are essentially important. However, teaching quality relates to many serious problems in schools. In other words, school activities and environment are closely tied up with quality of teaching and teachers' professional development. In school based INSET, teachers can find opportunities to reflect on many school problems that challenge them and develop their own quality.



On the basis of the above research, the author found that contemporary situation of INSET in Japan has high quality and provide various opportunities for change and enrich classroom practices, teachers professional development and improve school activities and environment. But this does not mean that INSET programs in Japan has no problem. Japanese teachers are extremely busy in preparing their daily work and undertaking other duties in schools. According to the survey conducted by Consortium,<sup>55</sup> about 90% of teachers experience "stress in the job" and feel, to a great extent, that matters connected with the work occupy the mind outside working hours.<sup>56</sup> Although teachers are quite satisfied with their present jobs on the whole, they feel too busy, and sometimes too tired. According to a study of teachers' culture, 80.6% of the teachers claimed of "being busy".<sup>57</sup> It is suggested that INSET should be more precise, efficient, and flexible, and the policy should be developed of encouraging teachers to apply themselves to self-directed learning. Furthermore, INSET should move its emphasis from quantity to quality and from compulsory shape to offering teachers the freedom to decide independently.

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5. Teruhisa Horio (1988) *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan*, (University of Tokyo Press), p. 254.
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8. See: Ibid., pp. 37-64.
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10. Teruhisa Horio (1988), p. 255.
11. Ibid., p. 256.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., quoted from Suzuki Ei'ichi (1970) *Kyoiku Gyosei*, (University of Tokyo Press), pp. 291-294.
14. See: Joseph C. Trainor (1983) *Educational Reform in Occupied Japan*, (Meisei University Press), pp. 206-210.
15. Teruhisa Horio (1988), pp. 258-259.
16. Gary H. Tsuchimochi (1993) *Education Reform in Postwar Japan-The 1946 U.S. Education Mission-*, (University of Tokyo Press), pp. 241-242.
17. Ibid., pp. 246-248.
18. NIER (1992) *School Teachers in Japan*, (National Institute for Educational Research of Japan), p. 13.
19. In December 1983, *Yasuhiro Nakasone* issued his own "*Seven Point Proposal for Education Reform*". The seven points may be summarized as follows:
  - 1) Reform of the 6-3-3-4 school system.
  - 2) An improvement in the system of high school entrance examinations.
  - 3) Improvement of the university entrance examination system, including reform of the Kyotsuichiji entrance examination.
  - 4) Incorporation of work-experience activities and overnight camps into the education system.
  - 5) An increased emphasis on moral and physical education.
  - 6) Continued promotion of the internationalization of education.

7) An improvement in the quality of teachers.

(See: Leonard J. Schoppa (1991) *Education Reform in Japan-A Case of Immobilist Politics-*, (Routledge, London), pp. 214-215.)

See Also: Nakasone Yasuhiro (1983) *Seven Point Proposal for Education Reform, December 10, 1983*, (In Foreign Press Center, Japan (ed)., Documents), pp. 13-14.

20. National Council on Educational Reform Government of Japan (1985) *First Report on Educational Reform, June 26, 1985*, p. 3.

21. NIER (1992), pp. 1-2.

22. National Council on Educational Reform Government of Japan (1986) *Second Report on Educational Reform, April 23, 1986*, pp. 151-152.

23. NIER (1992), p. 3.

24. Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1994) *Education In Japan*, (Monbusho, Japan), pp. 92-93.

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25. Masami Maki (1987) *The Condition of Teaching*, (National Institute for Educational Research (NIER), Japan), p. 65.

26. Ibid., p. 66.

27. Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1994) *Education In Japan*, pp. 92-93.

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31. Masami Maki (1992) *Changing Pattern of Work Organization and The Quality of Teaching*. (National Institute for Educational Research (NIER), Japan), p. 12.

32. Aichi Ken Kyoiku Sentaa (1995) *Yoran Heisei 7 Nendou* [Bulletin], Aichi Ken Kyoiku Sentaa, pp. 6-11.

33. Nagoyashi Kyoiku Inkai Kyoikucho (1996) *Kyoiku Inkai no Shidou* [A Notification

Issued by Nagoya City Board of Education], Nagoyashi Kyogakushi, Dai 24 Go, Heisei 8 Nen, 2 Gats, Suitachi.

34. Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1994) *Education In Japan*, pp. 92-93.
  35. Ibid.
  36. There are three classes of regular teacher certificates, advanced, first class and second class. Teachers holding an advanced class certificate have earned a master's degree. Those holding a first class certificate have earned a bachelor's degree and those holding a second class certificate have earned a title of associate, obtained by the completion of junior college.
  37. Ministry of Education, Science and culture (1994) *Japanese Government Policies In Education, Science and Culture 1994*, (Monbusho, Japan), p. 105.
- See also: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (1992) *Japanese Government Policies In Education, Science and Culture 1992*, (Monbusho, Japna), p. 114.
38. See: Kojiro Imazu (1995) *Journal Writing as a Method of In-service Education of Teachers in Japan*, (A Paper Presented at the International Conference on "Teacher Education: Innovation Alternatives For The 21st Century", The Imperial Hotel Bangkok, July 11-14, 1995, Thailand).
  39. See: Nobuo K. Shimahara & Akira Sakai (1995) *Learning to Teach in Two Cultures-Japan and The United States-*, (Garland Publishing, Inc, New York), pp. 145-160.
  40. Interview with *Ishikawa Yoshitaka* who is a teacher of Komeno elementary school and the manager of this circle (*Wakate Kyoikusha Kenkyukai*), November 24, 1996.
  41. Komeno Elementary School is a municipal elementary school at *Nagoya* city, (*Aichi Prefecture*).
  42. Mohammad Reza Sarkar Arani (1996) *Gakko o Kisotoshita Genshokukyoiku to Jugiyo Jissen no Kaizen-Nagoya Shi Komeno Shogakko no Kounai Kenshyu no Jire Bunseki*, [The School based In-service Teacher Training for Improving Classroom

Practices-A Case Study on Komeno Elementary School-], *Nagoya Daigaku Kyoikugakubu Kyo, Kyoiku Gakka*, Dai 43 Kan, Dai 2 Go, [Bulletin of the School of Education, Nagoya University (Dept. of Education) Vol. 43, No. 2.]. (In press).

43. In Japanese schools, various "*Shunin*" are appointed by the principal according to the type of internal organization established for the achievement of the school's educational objectives. In the ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the following "*Shunins*" are prescribed:

- 1) "*Kyoumu Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of academic affairs.
- 2) "*Gakunen Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of each grade.
- 3) "*Hoken Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of pupils' health.
- 4) "*Seitoshido Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of pupils' guidance.
- 5) "*Shinroshido Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of pupils' career and future guidance.
- 6) "*Jimu Shunin*" "*Shunin*" in charge of clerical work.

44. See:

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45. See: Thiessen, D. (1992) Classroom-Based Teacher Development, *Understanding Teacher Development*, edited by Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M.G, (Teachers College Press, New York), pp. 85-109.
46. See: Nobuo K. Shimahara & Akira Sakai (1995), pp. 145-160.
47. Teruhisa Horio (1988), p. 277.
48. See:
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  - .Maki Masami (1982) *Kyoinkenshyu no Sougouteki Kenkyu* [The Comprehensive Study on In-service Teacher Training], Gyosei, Tokyo.
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50. See: Russell, N. Campbell (1993) Some Thoughts on On-going Teacher Development, *Gakushu Hiyoka Kenkyu* [Journal of Learning and Evaluation], No.13, (The Center for the Study of Learning, Japan), pp. 94-99.
51. See: Akira Ninomiya & Toshitaka Okato (1990) A Critical Analysis of Job-satisfied Teachers in Japan, (*Comparative Education*, Volume 26, Nos 2/3), pp. 249-257.
- See Also: Allen Menlo & Pam Poppleton (1990) A Five-country Study of the Work Perceptions of Secondary School Teachers in England, the United States, Japan, Singapore and West Germany (1986-88), (*Comparative Education*, Volume 26, Nos 2/3), pp. 173-210.
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