

Teacher Education in Contemporary Japan

A Norwegian Perspective

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Preface

I like to express my gratitude to all and everyone who supported this work, especially those who are mentioned in the report. Thanks also to partners and respondents, and all who helped me both financially and in practical matters. Thanks to The Scandinavia-Japan Sasakawa Foundation for financial support. My travel took place in November - December 2012.

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Abstract

This paper is a preliminary report, not a scientific article, on my research travel to Japan that lasted for about 5 weeks in the end of 2012. The frame of the research was Educational Leadership with main focus on the role of Teacher Education in contemporary Japan. I chose to do my research in Aichi and Kinki because most of my partners are there. By the help of them I could visit universities of teacher education, kindergartens, schools and other cultural institutions. I also had the chance to make interviews with students, teachers and professor - and I could observe practice in kindergartens, schools and universities. Some relevant documents on teacher education was collected, both from historical and recent records.

1. Introduction

Why this interest for education in Japan, and in this case teacher education in Japan? First: research does not need to be useful for a concrete purpose or in a short time perspective, but for the purpose of cultural understanding. On the other hand, scientific knowledge about people, societies and cultures are more needed than ever before as our society becomes more and more open and global. Third: education in most countries is more influenced by international trends than we tend to be aware of. In recent years this trend has been enhanced by international programs like PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS and others. Finally, the results from these programs and related research more and more often points at the role and quality of the teacher and teacher education, (Schulman 1987).



Figure 1. Exchange with Japan, 2011

I met Professor SASAKI, Eiichi of Otomon Gakuin University for the first on a seminar on vocational education in Obihiro, Hokkaido in 2008. We learned to respect each other professionally and through our research and common interests on Education in Germany. When we departed he promised to visit Norway for his research.

This visit took place in November 2011 together with four other professors from Japan: Professor ITO, Kazuo of Kansai Social Welfare University, Professor SATO, Futimo of Wakayama University, Associate professor ITO, Hiromi of Nagoya Keizai University and Associate professor KINOSHITA, Ryu of Chiba University. A program was prepared by my students of Educational Leadership, and we had a successful week of exchange and discussion on education. We also visited local schools and kindergartens, and the Major of Kongsberg. The picture to the left was taken on this occasion. On the picture, Professor Eiichi Sasaki can be seen to left in the front of the group, and me to the right.

In Japan I could also meet with KATO, Takayuki, a high school teacher and PhD-student at Nagoya University. He visited to Norway in October 2012 for his research about entrepreneurship Education. Secondly I met with ITO, Takao, a PhD-student at Nagoya University and Lecturer at Aichi University of Education, and finally HASEGAWA, Noriko. She is also a PhD-student at Nagoya University, and researches about Sami Education in Norway. Finally I also visited two kindergartens: Anahashi kindergarten in Nagoya, and Ichimura kindergarten attached to Nagoya Keizai University in Inuyama.

From former contacts I also met with some former students. First of all WATANABE, Hiroki who studied sports education in Telemark a few years ago, and MURAKAMI, Miho who arranged a student exchange with my students in 2005 in relation to the celebration of 100 years diplomatic

relation between Norway and Japan in 2005. The president of the Norwegian Parliament and the Ambassador of Japan took part in this event.

1.1 Research problem

On this stage this research was planned to be quite open within the frame of Teacher Education in contemporary Japan as the overall guide. However, seven more guiding topics were prepared in advance: 1) Teacher Education and Teacher content, 2) Career preparation and Transfer from school to work, 3) Teacher professionalism and Ethics, 4) Specialization in Teacher Education, 5) Practice in Teacher Education, 6) Master in Teacher Education 7) Other topics.

1.2 Methodology

This paper is a preliminary report based on qualitative methods in general terms, (Aakre 2011). Information and data were collected through observations, interviews and meeting with professors, teacher, students and staffs. Some books and documents were collected and analyzed, (Horio 1994) and (Okano and Tsuchiya 1999). Photos were also taken when possible, but after asking for permission from the respondents. For all meetings an interview guide was used, but in a rather flexible way. Ethical consideration has been done by preventing any exposure of identity of children, and not to expose anyone in any harmful position.

Some analyzes of data has been done prior to this report, but not very systematic as it is a preliminary report. The presentation is therefore mostly descriptive and visual with photos. My plan is to do further analyses of the data, may be also more studies in Japan, and to publish the results in one or two scientific articles.

2. Otemon Gakuin University and Teacher Education

Professor Eiichi Sasaki gave me the opportunity to have my base and also a convenient office at Otemon Gakuin Univeristy in the suburb of Ibaraki, Osaka. Professor Sasaki has lived in Germany and expressed special interests in the system of education in Germany with main focus on vocational guidance and transfer from school to work. He often visits Europe for his research, last time to Milane in Italy.

The university is private like 75 % of all universities in Japan, and operated by the Otemon Gakuin Educational Foundation. Otemon is a comprehensive educational network that extends from kindergarten through graduate school. It has its origins in an elementary school attached to Osaka Kaikoshu (garrison), whose foundation was proposed in 1888. Today their common educational principles are to foster in close collaboration independent individuals with the ability to contribute to the society on a broad scale of professions, and not only teachers.

In the teacher education program at Otemon, Vocational Guidance has high priority, and also offered as a special course by Professor Sasaki. I found this program quite interesting because similar programs are not offered in regular teacher education programs in Norway. In Norway such programs are available for teachers who are already graduated. In most cases some teachers take



Figure 2. Professor Sasaki, Eiichi (left)

such courses after quite some years of practice, or after they got a position related to vocational guidance in a school. The consequence may be that future career and employment is less emphasized in the Norwegian schools. It might also be one reason many Norwegian teenagers fail to make a realistic choice when they enter secondary school. Better follow up and more emphasis on career guidance could be worth while investment to make in Norway, (Hernes 2010).



Figur 3. Otemon Gakuin University

Otemon Gakuin University has a unique architecture and interior design, though the big glass fronts may generate quite some heat during the summer season. The most impressive part might be the building with thousands of small cherry (sakura) leaves made in copper. This building can be seen on the picture. My impression is that private universities in Japan invest more in modern architecture and design than public schools do. Public schools tend to be more standardized all over Japan according to an early Bauhaus style, often made in concrete. They are functional, but not always very aesthetic.

At Otemon I had the privilege to talk with other professors of education, like philosophy of education, sociology of education and didactics. One of the professors expressed deep interests and knowledge about Comenius, and tried to do research in all the places Comenius lived by visiting there. Didactics is of course lectured about in the teacher education programs, though it seems that didactics in Japan is practiced quite instrumental, and less related to overall reflection or curriculum theory, (Klafki 2011). About the structure of their program I concluded that it is quite similar to “Praktisk- pedagogisk utdanning” (PPU) in Norway, (UFD 2003). When it comes to basic theories and literature there are also many similarities. I noticed names like John Dewey, Johan Amos Comenius, Jerome Bruner, John Goodlad, Lorence Stenhouse, Johan Friedrich Pestalozzi, Wolfgang Klafki and others, (Dewey 1938) and (Myhre 1993).

We also discussed problems like bullying in the schools, school refusal and suicide by young students in Japan, which seems to be a problem, (Okano and Tsuchiya 1999). I was explained that bullying today more and more often take place through modern media like mobile phones and internet. This new form of bullying is not so easy for the schools or the teachers to be aware of. However, physical or mental bullying also takes place in the schools, and quite often done by teachers. Even humiliation and physical punishment may occur. Different possible explanations were given: Japanese classes are crowded with many students, and the workload of teachers is high. Therefore they may not always be able to help students individually. Sometimes they also get frustration and tend to scold or pick on students who do not behave properly. In some cases bullying is ignored to avoid involvement with parents. Some also mention factors like lack of space, urbanization, or stress related to a tough entrance examination system. Others mention the fact that fact that young people in Japan have little space or room to express individuality, or they may not trust teachers or parents as partners on their side, but for conformity and the society only.

I also discussed vocational education and vocational teacher education in Japan with professor Sasaki. In contrast to what we tend to believe, quite few high school students chose to enter a vocational program. The majority, about 75 % enter general course, (MESSC 1999). Most of them, about 60 % continue their education in a university or college. Some of the colleges in Japan are 2-year junior colleges or a 2-year Senmon gakkou providing more specialized skilled training than regular universities do. They are similar to what is called “Fagskole” in Norway.

Vocational programs in Japanese high schools do not provide a national certificate of apprenticeship similar to “svennebrev” or “fagbrev” in Norway. Skilled training certificates in Japan are obtained through training in a company. I have seen two such schools, one at Toyota and the other one at Denso Corporation in Aichi. These certificates are usually not transferable to another company. On the other hand, Japan used to have a strong tradition of life-long employment in the same company. However, this is not to the same extent true anymore. Today only a few of the staff in the company can be sure to have a permanent employment. More and more workers today only have a part time job on short contracts, and less chances of on the job training.

To become a vocational teacher the system is similar to that of regular high school teacher and based on a 4-year university program. Typically, in most cases vocational teachers in the industrial programs are engineers from a university. In social and health program the normal is 4-year program in nursing or similar. Norway has a dual system, either a 3-year integrated program for vocational teachers, or a system similar to Japan based on 1 year practical- pedagogic education, (UFD 2003).

Skilled workers may also work in schools on vocational programs, but normally as assistant teachers teaching only workshop skills, not theoretical subjects.

3. Koyasan, Koyasan University and Teacher Education

My visit to Koyasan and Koyasan University was probably my most unique experience during my stay as I did not know much about this historical place from before. Professor ITO, Kazuo - who is still honorary professor of Koyasan University - guided me all the way from Ibaraki, via Wakayama and on the ropeway to Koyasan, and gave me this unique opportunity.



Figure 4. Professor Ito, Kazuo (right) and two of his colleagues

On the way back from Koyasan I could also meet two of Ito’s colleagues for a delicious okonomiyaki dinner at a restaurant in the center of Osaka. One of them explained his interested in educational philosophy related to Buddhism. The other expressed interests on educational sociology and we discussed the writings of Jüergen Habermas. He was surprised to learn about the influence from Habermas to Wolfgang Klafki, and Klafkis influence on the philosophy of education in contemporary Norway, (Klafki 2011). We also discussed problems like “monster parents”, bullying and suicide among students, and how teacher deal with these and similar ethical dilemmas. They gave similar explanations I had heard from professors and others before. It was also explained that teachers are not properly trained to handle the complexity of the society today. Most teachers tend to stick to traditional ethical codes, and that students need to respect authority without any discussion or complaints.

I could also meet with some of Itos's students at Koyasan, and to discuss contemporary problems on philosophy, religion and education with them. Koyasan was established as centre for the study and practice of Shingon Buddhism about 800 AC by the priest posthumously known as Kobo Daishi. Since 2004 it has been on the UNESCO list as a world heritage. One reason seems to be the origin of Kanji, the unique Japanese logographic characters developed from Chinese characters Hanzi. They were developed at Koyasan and I could even see some of the originals made in wood prints.



Figure 5. Zen garden at Koyasan

Shingon Buddhism is one of several branches of Buddhism in Japan. I will not go into details, but it should be differentiated from the Tendai school that is younger, and the even younger Zen-Buddhism that most people in Norway may have heard of. On the other hand, Koyasan has a very nice garden that some people may identify as a Zen garden. The connection between the Shingon Buddhism and the original Esoteric Buddhism became more obvious when I could see that Dalai Lama had visited Koyasan a few months earlier in May 2012.

At Koyasan I could also have a guided tour through the cemetery. I could see the tombs and stones of the Tokugawa family as well as more recent monuments like that of Nissan and Pachinko. They were nicely placed almost side by side. I could even see a "Buddhist" rocket with five sections, Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and finally Space. This really puzzled my mind quite a lot.

The coexistence of Buddhism and Shinto since the 6th century also reminded me of its strong influence on the Japanese way of thinking and their basic values. Still these values seem quite influential in modern Japan and thought in many Buddhist schools. However, the number of students at Koyasan seems declining, and most of the student at Koyasan seems not very different from average young Japanese. He does not spend most of his time at Koyasan for studies and meditation, but wears ordinary clothes, drives a car and enjoys baseball and other sports. Some also have a girlfriend, may be selling Prada from a luxury store in the centre of Osaka. I still wonder what values will be influential in the future, and guiding the new generations of Japan?



Figure 6. Monks and students at Koyasan University

Koyasan University is a 4 year university with religion and Japanese language as their main program. The students may choose to take a teacher certificate as an elective program and to become a teacher of religion and language in an elementary or secondary school. Most of the graduates continue their teacher career at a Buddhist school somewhere in Japan. Since 1947 Japan had a secular school with moral education instead of religion, so religion cannot be though in national

schools. In public schools the subject is called Moral education, though it seems to provide quite some knowledge of Buddhism and Shinto traditions. Norway used to have Christianity as a compulsory subject, but the system has been changed several times over the last 30 years. Today the subject is called Religion and Ethics (RLE) where knowledge about all main religions are thought, also Buddhism, but not about Shinto, (KD 2006).

4. Wakayama University and Teacher Education

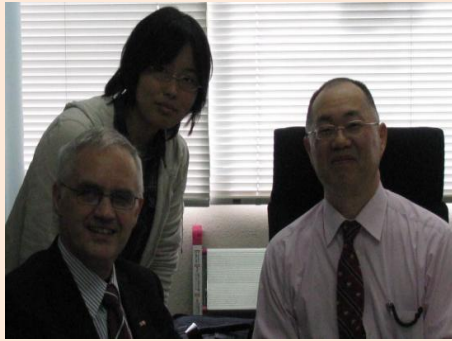


Figure 7. Professor Sato, Futimo and Ms. Inoue, Maki (middle)

Professor SATO, Futimo was my host at Wakayama University when I went to visit there with Professor Eiichi Sasak of Otemon University. We were picked up at the train station by Professor Sato and one of his graduate students on Technology Education, Ms. INOUE, Maki. The main focus of our discussion was teacher education in general, and especially technology education which proved to be the main interest of Professor Sato. We also discussed about space education as Wakayama University has a national center for promoting space education among young people, especially high school students. Professor Sato keeps blog where my visit is reported: http://www.edu.wakayama-u.ac.jp/campus_blog/technical/2012/12/post-7.php

The Teacher Training Course at Wakayama University is made up of the three fields: Educational Science, Subject Matter Teaching, and Primary Education. Students in the Educational Science Course work toward becoming teachers in elementary schools, junior high schools, and special needs schools by specializing in one area out of education, psychology, special needs education, and applied education, and students in the Subject Matter Teaching Course work on one area out of the various disciplines. Meanwhile the Primary Education Course specializes in elementary school education and fosters elementary school teachers with a comprehensive perspective that combines Education Science and Subject Matter Teaching.

In addition there is a Comprehensive Education Course that views education in the broad sense as a product of living in nature and human culture. The program is different from traditional teacher education in the sense that the students may not decide to become teachers in schools, but prepare for position in social and cultural institutions on a broad scale. The overall objective of the program is to foster human resources equipped with the practical ability to take action, which is indispensable to modern people, by studying what kind of consideration for the environment and reflection on culture are needed in our society and everyday life through the Cultural Studies and Environmental Education Programs.

Wakayama University is the only national university in Wakayama prefecture and holds four faculties, including the Faculty of Education. In addition they have a space educational center similar to the center at Andoeya in Norway. They also collaborate on space education with this center in Norway.

Wakayama University also offers graduate programs within the area of teacher education. The students may choose to take a master program in three courses: 1) An



Figure 8. Assistant professor KiJima, Masachika on space education

integrated course aiming at general school education, 2) A specialized course on school subjects like language, mathematics, technology or other, and 3) A course on special education with focus on developmental disorders.



Figure 9. Textile work

Technology education is one of the school subjects teacher students at Wakayama University can take for their teacher certificate, and also master. As this subject is a little different in Japan than in Norway, I use this as an example. Elementary schools students in Japan have a compulsory school subject called Arts and Crafts. This is the same in Norway. However, in Japan Arts and Crafts are split into Fine Arts and Technology in Junior High School. In Norway Arts and Crafts is continued into Junior High School. However, since 2006 this subject is mixed with science and mathematics into a cross discipline activity called Technology and Design, (KD 2006). In addition there is also Entrepreneurship Education, and from 2010 nine elective practical subject to prepare for vocational training.

Wakayama University has special workshops on most of the subjects related to Arts, Crafts, and Technology education. There are workshops for textile, woodwork, metalwork, electric and electronics, home economics as well a fine art. There is also an outside area for growing food like rice and vegetables. I was told that woodwork was the most popular activity among the students.

The two examples I included are from textile work and electronics. The textile work in figure 9 is a model of a bento box (Japanese lunch box) with its content neatly made in textile. Figure 10 shows a robot with an electronic motor controller.

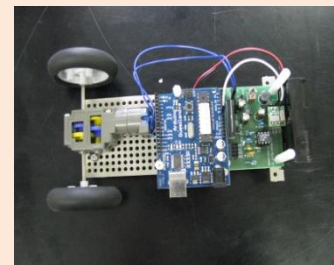


Figure 10. Robot with electronic motor controller

5. Nagoya Keizai University and Ichimura Kindergarten

My host at Nagoya Keizai University was associate professor ITO, Hiromi who is in charge of a 4-year program for Kindergarten teacher education. I also met with some from the staff, professor FUNAI, Hironori and the teacher of English language MAEDA, Andrea. Andrea told me she was originally from Massachusetts, but came to Japan and became married to a graphics designer, and now living in Konan city.



Figure 11. Associate professor Ito, Hiromi (left) and Head of Ichimura Kindergarten

A 4-year program for kindergarten teacher education has been introduced in a few universities in Japan over the last 8-10 years, and not so common in Japan. In most cases Kindergarten teacher education in Japan are 2-years, which is also offered at Nagoya Keizai University. I was told that 2-

year programs may not be of lower quality than 4-year programs because many good students tend to prefer a 2-year program. The reason for this choice is shorter time and lower cost for the student. In some cases the chance to get a job is easier because private kindergartens prefer to pay lower wages. High turnover may also be a reason because young mothers tend to leave their jobs.

The structure of kindergarten teacher education in Norway was changed from 2012. Comparing Japan and Norway is therefore not so easy, but there are many similarities between the structure and content of Kindergaten Teacher education in Japan and that of the content and structure in Norway before 2012. The content of educational philosophy, psychology, sociology and didactics seems quite much the same. In Norway a Bachelor theses of 15 credits is now compulsory. Keizai require the students to do a similar work of 6 credits. The biggest difference is the amount of compulsory practice out in kindergarten. In Japan it is 4 weeks compulsory, in Norway 21 weeks. The amount of practice in teacher education in Japan seems not to be a big issue like it has been in Norway, though there seems to be some reports on the issue, (Okano and Tsuchiya 1999).

The content of pedagogy, that is educational philosophy, history, psychology, sociology and didactics, seems to have many similarities with such subjects in Norway. I noticed names like Comenius, Dewey, Steiner, Montessori, Froebel, Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, Ausubel, Brunfenrenner, Mead, Owen, Stenhouse, Goodlad and some others. These names are quite familiar to most educators in Norway also.

However, there seems not to be much discussion related to topics like power in the relation between the teacher and the kids. On the other hand Hiromi expressed her special interest in educational philosophy and the problem of equality between girls and boys. Therefore she bought a children's book about this topic on her visit to Norway. Now she is using this book in her lectures.

5.1 Ichimura kindergarten

Ichimura kindergarten is attached to the university and surrounded by more space and also woods than most urban kindergartens in Japan. The children are from 3-5 years old, and dressed in black and red uniforms with a nice cute hat. Ichimura is a private kindergarten and the children are brought to the kindergarten every day by small special buses in light blue and white color. Some of the homes are located quite far from the kindergarten, in some cases about one and a half hour bus tour away.

Ichimura kindergarten does not have a nursery as nurseries are not so common in Japan. I was told that only mothers who have to work bring their child to a nursery. This is quite different from Norway where more and more kids go to kindergarten from about 1 year old.



Figure 12. Class at Ichimura Kindergarten

The kindergarten is organized into classes of about 30 children managed by one teacher. In Norway the limit is 18. Japanese kindergartens look a bit more like schools than in Norway, though the head of the kindergarten said they give priority to play and free activity. They also use school-like

timetables, but classes were held both inside and outside in a wide and nice playground. Outside I could see working with plants, collecting nuts and seeds, and other things from the wood like Froebel advised for his kindergartens. Materials from nature were also used for making arts. This kindergarten seems to put more emphasis on art and esthetic education than other kindergartens I have seen in Japan. In addition to Japanese language they learn English with MAEDA, Andrea. This was a quite unique observation because first time I came to Japan most children did not learn a foreign language until seventh grade, or Junior High School. Professor FUNAI supported by Andrea keeps a blog on the Internet about activities in the kindergarten. In December 2012 she reported about a project on Christmas with her seminar students, also introducing English to the group. On the picture Andrea can be seen in a brown dress.

“Every year at Ichimura Kindergarten my seminar students and I do a special Christmas English lesson. First, I read a Christmas story book and introduce English vocabulary that are used for Christmas, for example, snowman, Santa Claus, Christmas tree, stocking, etc. Then we play a Christmas Bingo game and afterwards we all sing, ‘We wish you a Merry Christmas.’ The blog is available on: <http://blog.nagoya-ku.ac.jp/childcare/>

The blog gives a good insight into the everyday life of a Japanese kindergarten, and also about kindergarten teacher education in Japan. Chairman, Professor FUNAI, Hironori expressed his special interests in physical education and sports. He frequently visits Germany for his research.

6. Aichi University of Education and Anahashi kindergarten

University Lecturer ITO, Takao was my host at Aichi University of Education. He also introduced me to Anahashi kindergarten, a private kindergarten run by his mother Ito, Masako and his brother Ito, Jyunja.



Figure 13. University Lector Ito, Takao and students at Aichi University of Education

Japan has 47 districts called prefectures. They are all obliged to have at least one national institution of integrated teacher education. Aichi is located in the centre of Japan between Tokyo and Kyoto, and its national institution of teacher education is located in Kariya. Kariya is outside Nagoya city which most easily might be identified by Norwegians by Toyota. Aichi University of Education is one of the oldest such institutions in Japan, established around 1873.

Today the university offers four types of teacher training programs: 1) those for Primary education, 2) Secondary education, 3) Special support education and 4) school nursing and health education. In

addition there is now a program for Contemporary Liberal Arts and Sciences, which integrates the principle of liberal arts education and places emphasis on specialized general education. This program consists of six courses: Cross-Cultural and Social Studies, Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language, Social Welfare and Clinical Psychology, Arts and Crafts, Informatics and Communication Technology and Natural Science.

I met with two of Ito's classes: one from the general liberal arts program and one from teacher the teacher training programs. A little over 40 students in each class, about 75 % of them were girls. This day ITO had a lesson on textbooks in education, and he had prepared handouts and worksheets for this. He also introduced variation by a creative competition on making a helicopter to let the students experience the combination of using text books and practical activities as a means of motivation. I noticed among others:

- 1) How fast and easily the big group in a small room reorganized from class to small groups, and then back to big group. This ability for group orientation seems typical in Japan and seems to start very early in kindergarten and emphasized later in school on all levels.
- 2) How the students made reflections through notes and comments after the main lesson. Each student also had to submit a note with comments about the lesson to the teacher after class.

In Japan teacher education for grade 1-6, which is elementary school, and 7-12 grades are separated into two different programs. In 2009 Norway started to implement a differentiated system called Grunnskolelaererutdanning (GLU) for grades 1-10. In this program students have to chose specialization on either grades 1-7 or 5-10, (KD 2012).

The content of the subject pedagogy seems to be similar, except that there seems to be a combination of compulsory and elective topics in the Japanese program. At Aichi they also teach methodology in each of the subject instead of only didactic reflection. They even have a special lab for training. On the other hand, in the Japanese system there is only 4 weeks of compulsory practice out in the schools. In Norway it is 21 in the integrated program. In Japan it is also the student who has to contact a school for practice, make an individual contract and report to the university who is visiting the school for observation and guidance.



Figure 14. Teacher students at Aichi University of Education

I had a long and interesting discussion with a group of students who stayed behind after the class was over. Most of the questions I got from the students were related to special education, and we had a long and interesting discussion about this topic. Among others they were curious about the Norwegian term «normalization», and the idea of not using the expressions «handicap», which is quite normal in Japan. In Norway we tend to focus more on the abilities and the capacity of all children, independent on their status or ability. We also discussed the role of teachers and special need teacher in our society today, and how they can help children in a best possible way.

We also touched the idea of power and how to respect the individual versus collective values of children. On this issue there seems to be some differences in the way of thinking among educators in Japan and Norway.

These students already decided to study special education. In Norway you cannot take only special education integrated with teacher education, but as one of the elective courses from third or fourth year in combination with compulsory teacher training program. The alternative is to take a free bachelor on special education, but then you do not get a teacher «certificate».

Teacher education in Japan has one program quite different from Norway called «school nursing and health education». They seem not to be teachers in the full sense of the word, but work in schools to take care of tasks like health and nutrition.

6.1 Anahashi kindergarten

Anahashi kindergarten is a small private kindergarten located in the eastern suburb of Nagoya city, run by ITO, Masae and her son Jyunja. ITO Takao is also involved in the planning and operation. The kindergarten was approved by the government to provide support and training to children with special needs, especially on problems with social relation in other settings like kindergarten and future attendance in school.

The children do not come to Anahashi kindergarten to stay for the whole day, but come for special training. In some cases they stay in an ordinary kindergarten most of the day. They have to be prescribed this service by the local social and welfare system based on examination.

It was a great experience for me to stay at Anahashi, to observe their training and to communicate with the children. Their social behavior did not appear any difficult to me, but they might have problems in other settings like attending school and to communicate with other children. In Norway I think most of them would have been in an ordinary kindergarten and trained there. However, Japanese schools have less space and many students in one class. Therefore behavior, self control and the ability to function in a group seems more emphasized in the education of children in Japan than in Norway.



Figure 15. Mrs. Ito, Masae (left) and her staff at Anahashi Kindergarten

I could also observe their relation to the parents and how they collaborated with the parents in the training of the children. That means they did not only have the focus on the individual problem of the child, but to see the child as part of social network. In some cases the problem may not be the child, but in the environment of the child. One means of collaborating with the parents was cases of books the children and the parents could pick up and to take home for reading together. In some families there might not be many books, and by introducing books to the family they can help the whole family to appreciate reading and prepare the child for future life and work.

I also had interesting talks with the staff discussing some of the points mentioned above. Like before at the university we talked about the Norwegian idea of «normalization» and also reflection on the power staff in schools and kindergartens possess.

7. Other

7.1 Science and Technology Education



Figure 16. Nagoya Science Center. Planetarium to the left.

For some years I have been involved with the problem and challenge of science and technology education on primary and secondary level, and even kindergarten, (Aakre 2011). Some of this activity has been related to a technology center in Kongsberg where it is now decided to establish a science center. One motive is to promote science and technology because Kongsberg is so

fundamentally based on such skills and enterprise on an advanced and international level. For this reason I

made some preliminary studies on this issue in Japan, and hope to make more in depth studies later.

The institutions I visited were the Toyota Technocenter for children, The Nagoya Science Center and the Science Center in Kobe. I also visited Mazak tools at Shin Sakae in Nagoya because their advanced tools are used by companies in Kongsberg. These topics are already followed up by a special research program in Kongsberg that will last for may be four more years.



Figure 17. Young student at Toyota Technocenter

7.2 Expo Park Osaka

Professor Sasaki took me my by car to the Expo Park in Osaka, located not far from Ibaraki. The most impressive and interesting part was the Cultural Heritage Museum, which is a national museum in Japan. We could learn not only about the history and culture of Japan, but great exhibition of culture and language from all over the world. I realized that Norway and Nordic countries are only a very small part of the world. I could observe some about the Norwegian languages, but no artifact or other historical fact. From the Nordic countries I could see only some few artifacts, and some information about immigration and the challenge of multiculturalism in Finland from the late 1970's.

7.3 Kawabata, Yashunari

Most of the time I stayed in Ibaraki, and one of the most famous persons from Ibaraki is Yashunari Kawabata, the first Japanese writer I learned to know from his novel Izu no Odoriko, (Dancing girl of Izu). Later I could enjoy to read many other pieces like Sembazuru (Thousand Cranes) and Yama no Oto, (The Sound of the Mountain), and also see the movie of Yuki Guni (Snow Country).

Kawabata was the first Japanese author to receive the Nobel Price in litterature in 1968. He relocated from Ibaraki to Tokyo where he studied, and later to Kamakura. But there is a nice museum in Ibaraki I could visit and talk with the staff. One of the staff worked as a print maker expressing many of quotes made by Kawabata. He walked all the way with me to a book store in the center of Ibaraki to get a copy of Izu no Odoriko in Japanese.



Figure 18. "Rome was not made in one day", Kawabata.

7.5 Sony and Handa

In my doctor theses of 2005 I used the Sony LPT-1 as a typical design of the 1980's. Also as a symbol of change into a more personal and individualized society on many areas, even in economics and politics. I always appreciated the simplicity and minimalism of early Sony design. Therefore it was a great surprise to me to discover that my hotel outside Nagoya was located close to the small village Kosugaya where the founder of Sony Company, Akio Morita was born. Morita was a very creative person who made great impact on modern industrial design. Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, expressed close relation to the philosophy of Morita. This philosophy of design that can be experienced in personal artifacts like the Ipod and Ipad today.

Together with Kato, Takayuki I could visit the birthplace of Morita in Kosugaya, which is still famous as a factory of vinegar and sake as it used to be. This is also the main product of another historical place nearby, the village of Handa with an equal interesting history.

Finally, this tour gave me the chance to learn about modern Japanese literature of children's books by MASUYA, Masahiro from the same area. I could recommend many of his books, but like to mention the Shoe Maker's Dream which is an educative story about a simple shoemaker who encounters all sorts of people throughout his day, helping each in a different way. May be that is what we need to cope with the multitude of cultures and different beliefs in a global society.

7.6 Teacher Education and Entrepreneurship

My good friend KATO, Takayuki has studied about education for many years already, and also translated some of my research papers into Japanese. He came to Norway twice for his research, last time in 2011 for his final work on his doctor theses on Entrepreneurship education at Nagoya University.



Figur 19. Entrepreneurship Educaton in Norway. Kato, Takayuki (right), Inger Groegard (left) and the Major of Hjartdal municipality in Telemark.

With his background as a teacher in both elementary and secondary education his experience is quite unique. He helped me a lot to understand the process of teacher education in Japan. He also gave me the chance to analyze his personal notes from his transfer from Master of Law at Waseda University, to become a teacher, first in elementary school and now in high school. I hope he will soon be able to finish his doctor degree on Entrepreneurship Education in Norway as well. In the mean time I will learn more Japanese and continue to analyze his notes to get a deeper understanding of teacher education in Japan, and the challenges they face today.



Figure 20. HASEGAWA, Noriko with a Sami costume on her research in Helgeland in 2009

Finally I share my gratitude with Mrs. HASEGAWA, Noriko. On my previous stays in Japan I visited her private English evening school several times. Many Japanese kids go to evening schools called Juku, especially to prepare for their many entrance examinations to high school or university. I could learn a lot from the many conversations and interviews with her students, most of them grade 4 - 12. Noriko expressed her personal belief in Christianity which is not very common in Japan, may be only 1 %. However, from her I learned the Japanese respect for nature from wonderful hiking in the Japanese Alps of Nagano. In the Japanese Shinto religion Gods tend to be identified in nature like old trees and high mountains. Noriko is

also a PhD-student at Nagoya University, doing her research on a very unique topic: Sami Education with focus on the Southern Sami area in Norway. Now she told me that she is planning an exhibition on Sami culture at Nagoya University next year. The picture on figure 20 is from her research trip to Norway in 2009.

7.6 Former students and their families

On my last visit I had a nice opportunity to meet with former students and their families, MURAKAMI, Miho and WATANABE, Hiroki. The picture is from our dinner outside Toyohachi at the coast of Irago bay. Hiroki studied sports education in Norway, and now works with quality control at a shipyard in Toyohachi. Miho organized a successful student exchange with my students in 2005 on the 100 year anniversary of diplomatic relation between Norway and Japan. Japan was one of the first nations to accept Norway as an independent state in 1905. She helped organize the program with Japan ambassador FUMITO, Saiga and president of the Norwegian Parliament, Joergen Kosmo.



Figure 21. Hiroki Watanabe (no. 1 from left in front) and his family, and Miho Murakami (no. 2 from the left in the back)

8. Conclusion

The frame of this research has been Educational Leadership with main focus on the role of Teacher Education in contemporary Japan. This is a preliminary report from this research, and the plan is to do further analysis and follow-up studies in order to make 2-3 more scientific articles: 1) Kindergarten teacher education, 2) General teacher education and finally 3) Vocational teacher education. The research was guided by seven topics:

8.1 Teacher Education

To earn a teacher certificate in Japan is quite complicated. First you need to take a certificate at a college or university. This gives you the chance to become a part time teacher, but normally not a permanent job or position. To earn a permanent certificate two more tests are needed. These tests are normally operated outside the university by the prefecture, and it is very difficult to pass both these tests. In one case I was told that there were about 500 candidates in the first round, about 30 in the second round and about 10 who passed the final test to earn a permanent position.

Teacher Education in contemporary Japan can be explained in four categories. Since the early 1950's Kindergarten teacher education has been given in 2-year Junior Colleges, and separated from other forms of teacher education. In recent years some 4-year programs has been implemented, but not compulsory. Kindergarten teacher education in Japan seems a little more «technical» than in Norway.

All other forms of teacher education is basically 4-years, and since the 1970's provided by a university. To become an elementary school teacher, grade 1-6 in Japan, the student need to take a broad range of subjects that covers most of the national curriculum. To become a teacher in junior high school, grade 7-9 in Japan, or high school, grade 10-12 in Japan, special studies in only one subject is needed. However, for the prefecture examination two or more subjects might be preferred. This is quite similar to practical-pedagogic education (ppu) in Norway. There are also the same requirements for being vocational teachers. However, a skilled worker may become an assistant teacher to take care of practical training in workshops.

8.2. Career preparation, from school and work

Career preparation, and transfer from school to work in Japan, is supported through a special program on vocational guidance. This program is not compulsory, but teacher students can chose take this program as part of their teacher qualification, and it seems quite many do so. All junior and senior high schools I have seen have a special program on career guidance, and at least one teacher has a special responsibility take care of this, even though he or she may not have special training for it.

Most high school students in Japan, about 75 %, take a general course. The vocational programs are also quite broad and general, and there is no system of national certificate. In most cases a certificates of skills are earned inside the company, and may not be transferred to another company. There are some exceptions though, like hairdressing and bookkeeping. At Nagoya Future Culture College at Shin Sakae, a 2-year junior college, I talked with some students of hairdressing. They got their skilled training in the college, mostly on models in the beginning of the program.



Figure 22. Students of hairdressing at Nagoya Future Culture College

8.3. Teacher professionalism and ethics

Teacher professionalism and ethics has been discussed quite a lot in Norway and the countries during the last years, (Shulman 1987). Elements from this discussion were implemented in the teacher education reform of 2009, (KD 2010). It deals with the problems of autonomy, how to deal with conflicting interests and the complexity in contemporary society. Japan seems not to have much of such a discussion, though I could find some comments on it in literature, (Okano and Tsuchiya 1999). Ethical dilemmas in the Japanese schools seem to be solved by reference to traditional ethical codes and respect for people with higher rank or authority, (Horio 1994). There are also indications of bullying from the teachers, and even spanking like in sports education and different forms of competition. However, this issues need to be investigated more.

8.4 Specialization in teacher education

Teacher education in Japan for grade 7-12, above elementary level, are already concentrated on few subjects. In most cases 2 subjects. It seems also quite common, even in elementary schools, that teachers are specialized on one grade, at least for some years at a time.

8.5 Practice in teacher education

Teacher students in Japan have only four – 4 - weeks of compulsory practice in the school to earn a teacher certificate. They also need to contact a school and organize their practice by them self, but need to be checked by a professor from the university. This is far less than in Norway, but I did not recognize much discussion or problems on this, except some minor comments in literature. The argument seems to be that practice start with the first job, and that the program in university is only a preparation. This may also be the reason why they need a test system after graduation to earn a permanent job. Similar ideas are no also discussed in Norway. On the other hand, Japan already introduced a one year internship program for new teachers before they can have a permanent job. This is also discussed in Norway, and even supported by the Teachers Union, Utdanningsforbundet.

8.5 Master of Education

Finland already introduced a Master of education to become a teacher, and the idea is discussed in many countries including Norway. More and more teachers in Norway take a master degree, and now there seems to be a majority of parties in the Norwegian Parliament who support the idea. May be in the next few years it will be implemented, but probably slowly.

There is a similar discussion in Japan, and promoted by the Japanese government. However, implementation seems to be far from any reality though there seems to be some efforts made to make master degree compulsory to become a principal. One argument against a master degree on a broad scale is the costs on taking a masters degree for teachers. In Japan it is very expensive to take a university degree because the tuition is very high, may be 100.000 Nkr. in a private university, and few scholarships available. Only teachers with a permanent job may afford to take a masters degree as a part time student, but at the same time it may take a long time to get a permanent job.

8.6 Other

Science and technology education have very high priority in Japan. We have to understand this priority on the fact that Japan have few natural resources and have to make their welfare from industrial production and the knowledge they can add to imported materials. Therefore well developed centers for science and technology can be seen in most in most big cities, and visited by

many students. Japanese students also perform well on these subjects in international tests. At the same time the interests for study science and technology is declining in Japan as it is in most in industrial countries. Young people in Japan also seem to possess less optimism about the future than young people in other countries. It could be related to many factors that I would not speculate on in this preliminary report. After my visit to Koyasan, and my discussions with the mucks and students at Koyasan university, I am still not sure what values and ideas that will be guiding the next generation of Japanese, (Horio 1994).

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