

Characteristics of Japan's Policies and Practices of In-service Teacher Education and Training (INSET) : Focusing on INSET for Primary Teachers before World War II

Norihiro KURODA

(Hiroshima University, Japan)

1. Introduction

Since the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, Japan's ODA in education has been shifting from the so called "hardware" type of assistance to the "software" one (Kuroda, 2000). In other words, more emphasis has gradually been placed on areas related to educational contents and administration such as mathematics and science education, teacher education/training and educational management than such areas as construction of school buildings, provision of school facilities and equipment, etc. According to a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) report (JICA, 2007), out of thirty-three basic education projects supported by JICA in 2005 two-thirds were on science and mathematics education, and actually most of them were for teacher education/training. Yet another study (Kuroda, 2006) shows that out of seven major projects in education assisted by JICA for about ten years from mid 1990, all were for teachers; four of them were for providing in-service teacher education/training (INSET) opportunities, two for pre-service teacher education/training and one for preparing teacher guides.

The focus on science and mathematics education and teacher education/training (particularly INSET) seems to reflect Japan's experiences of educational development at least as perceived by the Japanese in general and those Japanese involved in international development corporation in education in particular. In fact, many government's policy documents¹ cite the importance of conducting international development cooperation in education keeping in mind lessons drawn from Japan's educational development and JICA actually attempted in 2004 to analyze and compile Japan's educational development experiences with a view toward utilizing such experiences for international educational cooperation (JICA, 2004). Perhaps a sense of successful experience may be shared among these people about science and mathematics education and teacher education (particularly INSET) in Japan.

Against the backdrop mentioned above, while keeping in mind issues and challenges that INSET is faced with in developing countries in general and JICA projects in particular, this paper tries to revisit educational development in Japan in terms of teacher education/training particularly INSET and from there draw lessons (successes and failures) which may be useful today.

It should be noted from the outset that this is not a new study on Japan's INSET policies

and practices using first- and second-hand data and materials, nor a longitudinal historical review of the policies and practices on the basis of existing studies, but a mere attempt to pick up exemplary cases from Japan's INSET history which may give interesting hints to the following practical questions.

- (1) What are the nature and purposes of INSET?
- (2) Who provides and organizes such opportunities?
- (3) What kinds of teachers participate in them?
- (4) Who trains them?
- (5) On what are they trained?
- (6) What motivates them to take INSET?
- (7) What effect does INSET have?
- (8) What rewards are given to the teachers who take part in INSET?

Please note that the focus of this paper is on primary teachers because at the initial stage of Japan's teacher training system there were different tracks for primary and secondary teachers. Therefore these two should be looked at separately and this paper deals with the former alone. It should also be mentioned that this paper covers only the period between the 1860s when a western education system was introduced in Japan for the first time and around the 1930s which was the time when education started to be geared toward World War II. It does not deal with the time closely linked to the last war nor the post war time when there was clear discontinuity with the period this paper is looking at.

2. Description and Discussion of Notable Policies and Practices Related to INSET

The following is an attempt to depict some notable features of Japan's historical experiences with INSET mainly based on Prof. Sato's work (Sato, 1999).

(1) Initial INSET as providing training for unqualified teachers

Japan's INSET was started, at the very beginning of the introduction of a modern, western education system, to provide opportunities to train unqualified teachers, because in introducing the new education system in 1872 no teachers had been trained, though in the same year a national teacher training college (normal school) was established in Tokyo.

Although the introduction of the new system had not been well prepared before hand, it was not introduced into a complete vacuum as there had been educational legacies inherited from the previous feudal time. One of the important ones was that there had existed private non-formal learning places for commoners called *terakoya*² where sons and daughters of common people were taught practical knowledge necessary for daily life (namely reading, writing and arithmetic) by Shinto and Buddhist priests, lower class samurai and local leaders. In introducing the new system these *terakoya* schools were converted into primary schools with the same people teaching. At the very initial stage these former *terakoya* schools constituted the majority

of primary schools. There was therefore an emerging need to train these unqualified teachers³ particularly about modern subjects (science, mathematics, social study, etc.) which were not at all familiar to them.

This is the very beginning of INSET in Japan. It may be said that this training is practically pre-service education rather than INSET because these teachers had had no training before. In any case the initial role Japan's INSET played was to give a kind of certificate after training rather than focusing on quality improvement of teachers. Today's INSET in Japan does not necessarily involve qualification acquisition or upgrading⁴.

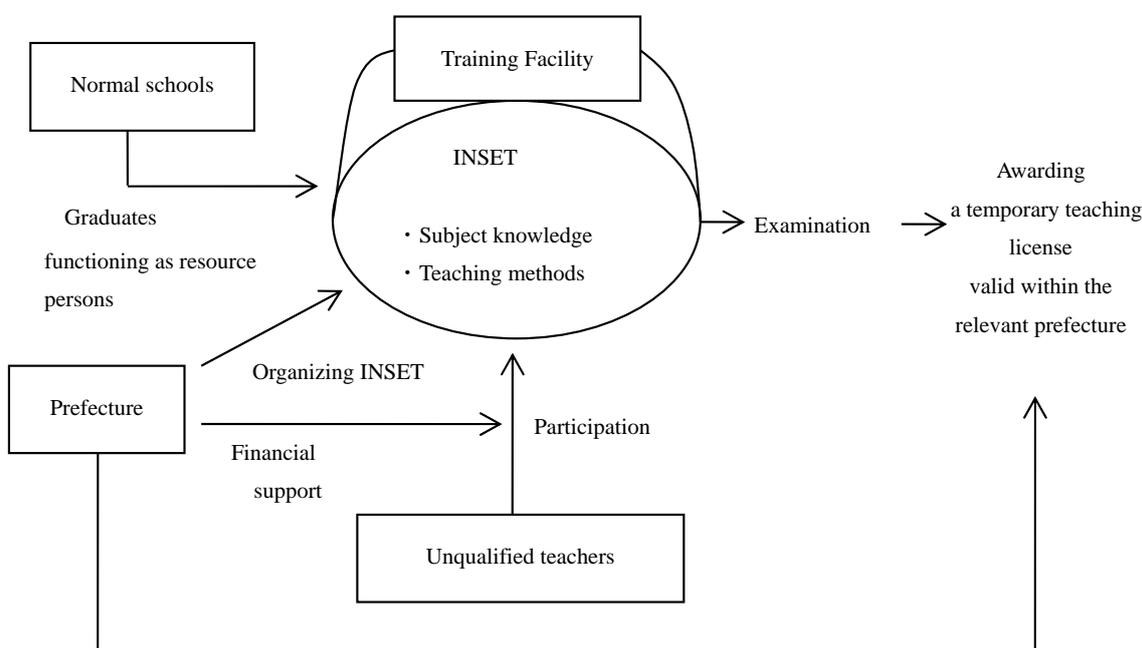
(2) Prefectural (provincial) initiatives for INSET

At this stage of the development of INSET in Japan, it was local education authorities (at the prefectural level) that took the initiative to provide training opportunities for such unqualified teachers, while the central government was concentrating on establishing national teacher training colleges (normal schools). The main reason for the local initiative was that at that time the local authorities were responsible for the major financial share of educational expenditure, while support from the central government was minor. Education taxes (those collected from the residents in the district according to the amount of their income regardless of whether they had school going children or not) were the major revenue (43%) for primary education, while the central government supported only 12 % (Kuroda, 2000).

Particularly after 1874 when national normal schools started producing graduates, many prefectural educational authorities embarked upon establishing training facilities and organizing INSET courses. Some examples of such courses are as follows (refer to Chart 1 below as well) (Sato 1999, pp. 22-27):

- a. Trainer: Graduates from Tokyo and other normal schools
- b. Duration: 2-3 days to a few weeks
- c. Content: Knowledge about subjects (reading, writing and arithmetic) and teaching methods
- d. Financing: Daily subsistence allowances, travel and organizing costs borne by the prefectural authorities
- e. Certificate: After training and in most cases by taking an examination, a temporary teaching license was awarded which was valid in the relevant prefecture for a certain period of years

Chart 1 Prefectural (Provincial) Initiative at the Early Stage of INSET Development
(Around the mid 1870s)



Source: Drawn by the author based on Sato (1999, pp. 19-27)

(3) INSET facilities developed into prefectural normal schools

As mentioned above, strictly legally speaking only graduates of national normal schools (and secondary schools) were eligible to obtain a teaching license. Since the establishment of the first normal schools in 1872 in order to produce qualified teachers as quickly as possible to cope with a growing number of primary students, altogether eight national normal schools had been established by the mid 1870s. However in 1878 all of a sudden all of these normal schools were abolished except Tokyo Normal School and Tokyo Women's Normal School for financial reasons. It was again prefectural education authorities that took the initiative in producing teachers. The training facilities for INSET cited in (2) above eventually became consolidated and upgraded to normal schools (= pre-service training facilities). While in 1874 54% of prefectures (34 out of 60) had a normal school, in 1876 in all prefectures at least one normal school was established (Sato 1999, p. 27).

Since at that time there were no national regulations governing these prefectural normal schools, each prefecture enacted its own rules about the content of its training and licenses to be awarded. These rules varied from prefecture to prefecture, but this normal school generally had four roles; 1) producing full qualified teachers (ordinary training course), 2) producing assistant teachers⁵ (short course), 3) qualifying in-service teachers or upgrading their qualification (INSET), and 4) teachers' quality improvement (INSET not directly involved in qualification upgrading). Any teaching licenses obtained by going through this prefectural training scheme were naturally valid only within the relevant prefecture. As can be seen here, prefectural normal

schools shouldered very heavy responsibilities in teacher education/training; giving not only pre-service but also in-service provisions. Furthermore normal school tutors were very often asked by prefectural authorities to play the role of a kind of mobile advisor to go to schools and give teachers advice on pedagogy and subjects.

Although at first glance the development of the teacher training system (pre-service and in-service) in Japan seems to have been brought about in a much decentralized manner, actually it was not necessarily so. Firstly the establishment of prefectural normal schools and the enactment of regulations about them in each prefecture could not be done completely out of central government control, but in doing so prefectures were required to get approval from the central Ministry of Education. Non-existence of central regulations about prefectural normal schools simply reflected very initial confusion and unpreparedness of the central government. Secondly there was no policy intention at that time to pursue a decentralized structure in education. As will be seen later, the development of Japan's teacher education/training including INSET may be said to be a process of local initiative getting incorporated into a centralized system. But in any case it is also true that in the development of education in Japan heavy responsibility was placed on prefectures.

(4) First step toward incorporating local initiatives in teacher education/training into a centralized system

It may be the first step toward centralizing the local initiatives in teacher education/training that in 1879 the Ministry of Education recognized prefectural normal schools as a second route to obtain a teaching license, while maintaining the principle that primarily the institutions to train qualified teachers are national normal schools. For instance, while the teaching license obtained by graduating from a national normal school was valid nationwide and for life, that for a graduate from a prefectural normal school was valid only within the relevant prefecture and for a certain number of years.

Furthermore national regulations about prefectural normal schools and teaching licenses obtained through those schools were established in 1881 as follows (Maki 1971, pp. 74-81).

- a. Duration of training:
 - Teachers for lower division (grade 1-3) – 1 year
 - Teachers for middle division (grade 4-6) – 2.5 years
 - Teachers for upper division (grade 7-8) – 3 years
- b. Duration of validity: 5 years
- c. Area where the license is valid: Within the relevant prefecture
- d. Relevant governor awards
- e. Job classification of teachers:
 - Fully qualified teacher
 - Associate teacher (who is qualified to teach one or more specific subjects)
 - Assistant teacher (who assists the above teachers)
- f. Other than obtaining a teaching license by completing the training course, obtaining a

license by examination was officially recognized.

In the light of the fact that teacher training was still far behind to meet the growing needs for qualified teachers, it is very important that the means of license acquisition by examination which had already been practiced in prefectures as mentioned earlier was officially accepted by the national regulations. This in turn would lead to increased needs for INSET to prepare for the examination.

(5) Emergence of a new type of INSET for the quality improvement of teaching

Apart from INSET for qualification acquisition/upgrading described above, another type of INSET was emerging around the late 1870s, which was called a “teachers study/training meeting”. This kind of INSET focused more on quality improvement of individual teachers’ teaching. An example from a prefecture is shown below (Sato, 1999, pp. 43-45).

- a. Organizer: Prefectural normal school with the authorization and under the auspice of the relevant prefectural education authorities
- b. Participants: Two teachers from each school required to attend
- c. Frequency: First Saturday of each month for three hours
- d. Venue: Prefectural normal school
- e. Activities: 1) Mock teaching (teaching participants playing the role of students), observation of the teaching and discussion on the class, 2) lecture by the headmaster of the normal school or other staff and 3) discussion on an educational topic given
- f. Impacts: Since participants in this meeting were normally lead teachers of each school (mostly full qualified teachers), after attending the meeting they took the initiative to organize similar meetings at the district level. (In most cases these meetings were spontaneously organized by teachers.)
- g. Motivation: As a few qualified teachers in the community, they were highly motivated to improve quality of education.

It should be mentioned that in addition to the initiative taken by prefectural normal schools like the one above, there were a lot of INSETs spontaneously organized at the district and school levels. The contents of training were more or less the same as those conducted by normal schools, and principals and lead teachers in the community were core organizers of these activities. Actually as few leaders in the education sector in the locality graduated from normal schools (either national or prefectural), it is said that they felt obliged to contribute to the quality improvement of teachers. While their spontaneous initiative was a main driving force for this undertaking, education authorities (either prefectural or district) were also involved. At least these INSETs had to be approved by the authorities beforehand and sometimes got financial support from them. In the 1880s these initiatives were developed into the creation of educational associations to expand the scope of activities to cover not only organizing INSET courses but also discussing and recommending on emerging educational issues (a kind of spontaneous advisory organization which still exists today).

A number of observations can be made. Here one can see a bud form of today’s school-

based INSET including 1) class/teaching observation (in this case mock teaching), 2) conference (discussion on the class), and 3) resource person's comments.

In the above case a kind of cascade chain can also be found; those who have learned in the study meeting at the prefectural level transmit their knowledge and skills acquired to colleagues by organizing a similar meeting at the district level, and even further the knowledge and skills were transmitted to the school level as well. One can thus find an origin of a cascade model, though the idea of cascade itself may not have been deliberately conceived in the example above.

It should also be noted that the above case is not a completely spontaneous endeavor by teachers themselves, but these activities were conducted under the loose control of the prefectural/district education authorities as the entire plan of the activities had to be approved by the education authorities from the outset and they were often financially supported by them.

(6) National initiative for INSET for quality improvement

The central government also took the initiative toward this direction. From 1882 to 1883 the Ministry of Education organized a central INSET at Tokyo National Normal School for about ten months inviting head teachers from the prefectures. The purpose of this INSET was not qualification upgrading, but to improve quality of teaching. In this undertaking, the idea of cascade was intentionally embedded. Participants were expected to diffuse what they had learned in the central INSET upon their return to their prefecture. Each prefecture was also ordered to establish training facilities of this nature or place trainers to this effect. In fact this kind of INSET was organized nationwide by prefectural normal schools like the case introduced in (5) above. Here a cascade model is observed; central training, prefectural training and district training. Here again one can see the process by which local initiatives were made nationalized/centralized.

(7) Institutionalization of INSET for qualification acquisition/upgrading at prefectural normal schools

It may be misleading to say that the type of INSETs described in (5) were exclusively for quality improvement and not involved in qualification acquisition/upgrading at all. It should be noted that they were also used for preparing for the teaching certificate examination as an officially recognized means to get and upgrade a teaching license (see (4)-f above).

Since the introduction of the examination system for obtaining a teaching license in 1881 (see (4)-f above), preparatory courses for the examination were provided on an ad hoc basis and developed nationwide by prefectural normal schools and private groups under the auspice of relevant education authorities. In 1892 the Ministry of Education confirmed this situation by issuing a notice that prefectural normal schools can set up an INSET course as one of their ordinary courses for teacher education/training, not as an ad hoc activity. This course was called a primary teacher INSET course. Here again one can see a process by which the central government is incorporating prevailing local practices into a national system.

Detailed regulations about this course were enacted by respective prefectural education authorities. An example is shown below (Sato 1999, pp. 159-162.)

(Fukushima Prefecture, 1893)

- a. Purpose: To train primary teachers on relevant subjects so as to improve quality of primary education
- b. Trainee teachers:
 - Group A (See (4)-a above)
 - 1) Those teachers who have a teaching license for middle grades (grade 4-6) and have teaching experience of two years or more
 - 2) Associated teachers who are qualified to teach three or more subjects and have teaching experience of two years or more
 - Group B (See (4)-a above)
 - 1) Those teachers who have a teaching license for lower grades (grade 1-3) and have teaching experience of two years or more
 - 2) Assistant teachers and unqualified teachers who have teaching experience of three years or more
- c. Subjects on which teachers are to be trained: Moral education, Japanese language, arithmetic, history, geography, science and physical education
- d. Duration: Six months
- e. Participant quota for each district: One or two
- f. Financing: Costs of food, and travel for going home during summer holiday (upon participant's request) are provided, but books and stationeries are to be paid for by the participants.
- g. Salaries: During the training period, participants' salaries could be reduced down to one-third at maximum depending on governor's decision.
- h. Working duty: After the training participants are required to work in the relevant prefecture for two years.

Participants were of course expected to pass the qualification examination to get a higher certificate after the training.

As can be seen from the above, this system seems to be an arrangement which forces districts, as one of the authorities who endeavor to improve teacher quality, to select and send a certain number of teachers for in-service training (see (e) above), rather than to encourage the spontaneous participation of teachers. As this arrangement was effective in upgrading teaching certificates in a short period of time, the number of prefectural normal schools and their enrolment drastically increased in the 1890s as indicated in the following table:

Table 1. Development of INSET Courses at Prefectural Normal Schools

Year	No. of prefectural Normal schools (A)	Of which those having an INSET course (B)	Proportion of normal schools having an INSET course B/A (%)	Enrolment of the course	Graduates of the course (Note)	Graduates of the ordinary course
1893	47	28	59.6	1,088	1,057	1,176
1894	47	38	80.9	1,336	1,715	1,205
1895	47	41	87.2	1,221	2,604	1,262
1896	47	44	93.6	1,717	2,839	1,262
1897	47	45	95.7	1,907	3,405	1,285

(Note) Since the duration of the course is six months, there are two graduations a year.

Source: Sato (1999, p. 158)

As Table 2 below indicates, unqualified teachers still constituted a sizable proportion of teachers actually teaching at primary schools. In order to cope with this challenge, the INSET course at prefectural normal schools was soon transformed to accept not only in-service teachers, but also those who had no teaching experience. The purpose of this course was to produce associate teachers (see (4)-e above) as quickly as possible. Applicants for this course did not necessarily need teaching experience, but were required only to have an eight-year education (four years of ordinary school and four years of upper primary school). This means that normal schools got another role of teacher education which was to provide an intensive, short-term pre-service teacher education course on top of educating fully qualified teachers.

Table 2. Number of Unqualified Teachers

Year	Fully qualified teachers	Associate teachers	Assistant teachers (unqualified) (A)	Total no. of teachers (B)	A/B (%)
1882	19,396	1,722	63,648	84,765	85.1
1887	23,208	--	33,628	56,836	59.2
1892	34,202	25,594	--	59,796	--
1897	43,896	18,215	17,187	79,298	21.7
1902	62,980	24,202	21,934	109,118	20.1
1907	80,750	18,007	23,281	122,038	19.1
1912	109,902	20,544	28,155	158,601	17.8

Source: Prepared by the author based on Sato (1999, p. 147)

(8) Consolidation and establishment of various INSET activities

The late 1890s and 1900s saw various INSET activities and practices consolidated and established all over Japan. It is said that it was the time of an INSET boom in Japan before the war.

Below is summarized which stakeholders organized INSET activities.

a. Central government:

As the focus of the central INSET was on secondary teachers, there was almost no activity organized by the Ministry of Education for primary teachers. This is another example of the central government resorting to local governments' initiative in the

process of INSET development in Japan.

b. Prefecture:

Unlike the very initial stage of the development of INSET (see (2) above), normally the prefectural authorities did not directly organize INSET activities any more. Rather under their auspice, prefectural normal schools organized lecture classes and other INSET activities. The prefectural authorities also supervised and advised on INSET activities conducted by district authorities and private groups.

c. District authorities

The main actor for INSET organization was district authorities and they contributed financially as well.

d. Private groups

As mentioned in (5) above, educational associations played an important role in providing INSET opportunities. But they did not completely spontaneously and independently organize INSET activities, but very often were under the auspice of and financially supported by education authorities, particularly district authorities.

Other than these associations there were some cases where private groups/individuals and even profit-making organizations provided INSET opportunities.

In terms of the purposes of INSET, the INSET activities were classified into two; 1) one was focusing on quality improvement of teaching (Type A) and 2) the other one was for qualification acquisition/upgrading (Type B). For example, out of eighteen INSET activities conducted at the district level in a prefecture in 1897, eleven were the former type and the remaining seven were the latter (Sato, 1999, pp. 206-207).

As to the modalities and contents, some typical examples are shown below:

Type A

(Lecture class)

- a. Organizer: Educational association under the auspice of and financially supported by the district authorities
- b. Participants: Primary teachers in the district
- c. Subjects on which to be trained: Pedagogy, teaching methods, Japanese language, singing, physical education
- d. Duration: Not more than fifteen days during the summer holidays
- e. Financing: District authorities
- f. Training modality: Lectures by resource persons

(Teachers' study meeting)

- a. Organizer: District authorities
- b. Activities: 1) actual teaching by teachers of the host school (not mock teaching), 2) class observation by participants and 3) discussion and commenting on the class
- c. Participants: Teachers of neighboring primary schools, head teachers in the district, head of the district, head of the city/village, district education officers
- d. Duration: One day

- e. Venue: Host primary school which is rotated
- f. Frequency: Three times a year

<Note> It is said that while the primary purpose of this study meeting was to conduct a study on teaching among teachers with some guests and experts invited, yet another purpose was to standardize teaching methods across the district, and then the prefecture and finally nationwide.

(Study visit)

Visits to schools in and out of the district, normal schools and the schools attached to them, by head teachers, district education officers and teachers

Type B

(Case 1)

- a. Organizer: District authorities
- b. Purpose: Improving quality of teaching at the same time preparing for the qualification examination
- c. Participants: Associate teachers and assistant teachers (unqualified teachers)
- d. Subject: Mathematics
- e. Duration: two weeks during the summer holidays
- f. Venue: Primary school in the district
- g. Resource person: District inspectors
- h. Costs: Daily subsistence allowances to be paid by the relevant city/ village

(Case 2)

- a. Organizer: District authorities
- b. Purpose: To prepare for the examination to obtain an associate teacher certificate
- c. Participants: Those who wish to become an associate teacher (in-service teachers were not targeted)
- d. Duration: Every Saturday for a year
- e. Venue: Primary school in the district
- f. Resource person: District inspectors with tutors from the prefectural normal school
- g. Costs: Tuition fees are to be collected from the participants

<Note> Cases 1 and 2 are completely different in the nature of teacher education/training. The first one is apparently provision for in-service teachers and thus is one type of INSET. The latter one is a case where the district education authorities were providing pre-service education, though it was not a pre-service teacher education/training institution.

From the above cases, a number of observations may be drawn about characteristics of INSET at that time.

Firstly even after about thirty years had passed since the inception of the new education system in 1872, fully qualified teachers still constituted only 70% or less in 1907 (see Table 2 above) and therefore Japan's INSET was obliged to play dual roles as has been repeatedly mentioned. One is to let teachers acquire a teaching license (assistant teachers) or upgrade their certificate (associate teachers). Until around the 1930s when fully qualified teachers constituted about 80% of the entire teaching body, this had been an important role of INSET in Japan

in order to produce teachers to meet a growing number of primary students. Sometimes the distinction between this type of INSET and the other one which was more focused on quality improvement of teaching as such was blurred.

Secondly in the various cases of INSET activities presented above, one can see a number of initial forms of today's INSET practices in Japan. For example, lecture classes, teacher study meetings, and school-based INSET, which are very common INSET practices in Japan today, had already appeared in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Thirdly the fact that in organizing INSET activities direct initiatives were taken at the local level is very similar to the current division of responsibility between the central and local governments. Perhaps one difference between that time and today would be that while the district authorities were more directly and positively involved in INSET provisions in the late 1890s and 1900s, today the prefectural authorities play the major role in INSET.

Finally as already pointed out in the note above, seemingly spontaneous initiatives at the district level involving private associations should not be simply understood as an autonomous organization of INSET activities by teachers themselves, but could also be seen as a process of a standardization of the teaching method, in other words integration of local initiatives into a national system.

(9) Development of school-based INSET

In the 1910s and 1920s, INSET activities were further expanded and developed. For instance, 1) the INSET courses at prefectural normal schools (see (7) above) continued to play an important role in awarding and upgrading teaching certificates, 2) the Ministry of Education started central training courses inviting head primary teachers from prefectures, and 3) teachers themselves began taking more positive initiatives in retraining themselves by founding local teacher associations and subject associations which spontaneously organized teacher study meetings focusing on teaching.

Among others, however, it is of particular importance during this period of time that school-based INSET activities were developed. There were a number of backgrounds against which this development was brought about.

Firstly this development was taking place in the context of the "free education movement" that was prevailing among a lot of schools particularly private ones in Japan from the late 19th to the early 20th century. Various new and innovative activities on the basis of the principle of "from teacher centered to student centered education" were attempted at the school level.

Secondly schools attached to national higher normal schools⁶ also had significant influence over the development of school-based INSET. Since one of the purposes of these attached schools was to do study on and experiment new teaching methods, teaching materials, school management, etc., they conducted a variety of school-based action research.

Thirdly around this time a school management structure was being established and in many schools a section was set up to be in charge of dealing with action research and INSET. For instance, in some school this section had the following responsibilities (Sato, 1999, p.335);

1) checking of teacher lesson plans, 2) observation of classes and giving advice on teaching, 3) preparing a development plan of the school, 4) assisting in improvement of teaching, and 5) planning for lesson study and teacher study meetings.

Indicated below (Sato, 1999, p.351) is an example of school-based INSET in a public primary school, which may be a little progressive one:

- a. Conducting a lesson study: Teachers themselves choose a theme and do action research on it.
- b. Opening of a class: Teachers conduct a class based on the results of their study and open it to their colleagues.
- c. Conference: After the class observation, a meeting is held to advise and comment on the class.
- d. Discussion meeting: Meeting where teachers discuss any emerging issues, educational or otherwise
- e. Open school: Opening of classes to outsiders including principals/teachers of other schools, educational administrators followed by a conference (like (c) above)

It should be noted that these activities were conducted by schools on a volunteer and spontaneous basis, not by the order of prefectural or district education authorities, and therefore it is often pointed out that the initiative and leadership of the principal and head teachers is of primary importance in organizing school-based INSET.

While mock teaching and its observation and discussion had already been conducted in the late 1870s (see (5) above), it is said that the origin of lesson study in today's sense is this kind of practice started in around the 1920s (Toyoda, 2011). The former one was conducted in a mock classroom setting on an ad hoc basis, whereas in the latter case a class was conducted on the basis of the results of the teacher's action research and of course in a real classroom at a school.

3. Observations and Discussion

From the very quick review above of Japan's teacher education/training focusing on INSET before the war, a number of observations could be drawn as follows:

(1) Accumulation of INSET experiences in Japan

It seems to be true that as many Japanese people believe, particularly those involved in international educational cooperation, Japan has had a relatively rich experience in INSET for more than a century. Perhaps because of this, Japan has been assisting so many INSET projects believing that a lot of expertise on INSET must have been accumulated. Therefore Japan may have some advantage in this area.

However unlike fields such as agriculture, industry and so on, one has to be cautious about the notion of transferring one country's experience of education to another country, because education is deeply rooted in the historical, cultural and social backgrounds of the individual countries. Furthermore Japan's experiences are almost one hundred-forty years old and thus its historical conditions were quite different from those of developing countries today.

It is therefore up to developing countries to decide what they can or cannot learn from Japan's INSET experience in the light of their various conditions. This is exactly what Japan did in introducing a modern education system 1872, for which comparative studies on educational systems in then advanced countries had been conducted including France, the United States, Britain and Germany.

(2) Role of normal schools (teacher training colleges) in INSET

As has been seen in the review, particularly at the initial stage of the development of teacher education/training including INSET, prefectural normal schools had played an important role not only as a pre-service training institution but also as an INSET agency. They established, as one of the ordinary courses, a certificate upgrading course for teachers and provided expertise for quality improvement INSET activities as well. Actually they functioned as a resource and expertise center for INSET.

In Japan today this function has been separated from teacher training institutions (teachers are normally trained in universities) and fulfilled by a specialized institution called the "Education Center". There is at least one Education Center in each prefecture as an agency specialized in INSET. JICA often employs this so called "Center Approach" in conducting INSET projects such as the Science Teacher Training Center for the Science Mathematics Education for Manpower Development Project in the Philippines (Kuroda, 2006) and the Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology in Africa for the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education Project in Kenya (JICA, 2009). This center approach could be one of the models to promote INSET.

(3) Dual roles of INSET

Unlike today's INSET in Japan which is aimed to exclusively improve teachers' quality not directly leading to certificate upgrading or promotion, INSET before the war had two roles; one is for certificate awarding/upgrading, and the other for quality improvement. Often the distinction between these two roles was blurred. For instance, INSET sessions for quality improvement may have functioned as preparation for certificate examination as well. In order to meet rapidly increasing needs for qualified teachers, Japan's INSET could not but take this responsibility as well. Today in many cases INSET normally concentrates on the latter.

However in some cases having the dual roles may be a good strategy. It has been found in the experience of the author and other experts involved in INSET projects in developing countries that one of the difficult challenges in implementing INSET projects is how to motivate teachers to participate in INSET courses by means of other than providing a high rate of daily subsistence allowances. In order to motivate teachers, promotion and certificate upgrading after attending INSET sessions could be a good motive.

(4) Local initiatives

As repeatedly mentioned in the review, it should be again emphasized that a lot of

initiatives were taken at the prefectural and district levels particularly at the initial stage of the development of INSET. One of the reasons for this is simply that at this stage the central government was not very well prepared for the training of teachers including INSET. More importantly at the beginning of educational development in Japan, fully qualified teachers were leaders in the education sector at the local level because only a few people graduated from normal schools. Therefore they felt obliged to contribute to educational development particularly the improvement of teacher quality in the locality. Tutors of normal schools, principals and head teachers were all driving forces to move forward INSET activities at the local level.

However it is interesting enough that these initiatives by local people were gradually absorbed and incorporated into national systems. At that time, decentralization was not an educational strategy of the government, and as the government organization was consolidated and established, education including INSET was put under the strong control of the central government particularly from the 1930s onward until the end of the war (1945).

(5) School-based INSET/lesson study

One of the important initiatives taken on by principals and head teachers was school-based INSET focusing on lesson study. This lesson study which was born in Japan as described above first attracted the interest of American researchers as a possible alternative to existing INSET provisions in the US from around 2000 on, and from there it now seems to be internationally spreading (Ono, 2009) in such countries as Indonesia, Malaysia, Kenya and Israel. Certainly this is an alternative to the traditional INSET where teachers get together in a training facility and are given lectures. But one has to be very careful that introducing lesson study is not simply to borrow a set of established skills and knowledge about teaching, but it is a process by which teachers themselves develop their own teaching. Therefore it necessarily involves a changing of their attitudes and even values. For instance in Japan historically opening a class has been a very common practice of teachers because they know this is not for auditing but for improving their teaching, whereas perhaps in many countries teachers may have strong resistance or hesitance against this practice. Therefore superficial copying of Japanese practices of lesson study may not work well.

Ono (2009, p. 77) argues that “teaching is culture in the sense that it is based on a way of thinking and values unique to a particular culture. Thus unless teachers change their way of thinking, teaching that encompasses basic ideas about teachers, students, learning and interaction between teachers and students would not change.”

Endnotes

1. For instance, a number of policy papers such as those issued by the Cabinet in 2003, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2002 and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2000 mentioned this.
2. The origin of these educational facilities goes back to those at Buddhist temples (*terakoya*)

is the literal translation of this meaning) in the medieval time and had already prevailed in Japan at that time (Kuroda, 2000).

3. It was stipulated by the relevant law that qualified teachers shall be either normal or secondary school graduates who are twenty years old or more.
4. Since April 1, 2009, the teacher certificate in Japan has been valid for ten years (formerly for life) and thus teachers are now required to take certain INSET programs for the renewal of the certificate. However there still have been policy arguments about whether this system should be continued or not.
5. The name differed from one prefecture to the other.
6. In 1897 all former national normal schools were renamed higher normal schools and at the same time their major role became training tutors of prefectural normal schools, rather than directly producing primary or secondary teachers.

References

- JICA (2004), *The History of Japan's Educational Development*. Tokyo: JICA.
- JICA (2007), *Risuuuka Kyoiku Kyoryoku Ni Kakaru Jigyo Keiken Taikeika – Sono Rinen To Apurouchi (English Translation: Systematization of Experiences of Science and Mathematics Education Projects: Its Basic Ideas and Approaches)*. Tokyo: JICA.
- JICA (2009), *JICA Purofeshonaru No Chosen: Shiri-zu 7 Kenya“ Chutu Risuka Kyoiku Kyoka Keikaku” Kanren Purojekuto – ODA Ga Afurika Wo Kaeru – (English Translation: Challenges by JICA Experts (Series 7): Projects for the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education-ODA Changing Education in Africa)*. Tokyo: JICA.
- Kuroda, N. (2000), Japan's Experience in Educational Development: A Case of the Realization of Universal Primary Education, *FASID Human Resource Development: Lessons and Issues from Japan's Experiences in HRD Cooperation No. 2*, pp. 1-23.
- Kuroda, N. (2006), *Nihon No Kokusai Kyoiku Kyoryoku Shuhou Ni Kansuru Chosa Kenkyu – 7 Kyouku Kyoryoku Purojekuto No Hikaku Bunseki – (English Translation: Study on Modalities of Japan's International Corporation in Education: Comparative Analysis of Seven Major Educational Corporation Projects)*. Hiroshima: Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, Hiroshima University.
- Maki, M. (1971), *Nihon Kyoin Shikaku seido Shi Kenkyuu (English Translation: A Study on History of Teaching Certificate Systems in Japan)*. Tokyo: Kazamashobo.
- Ono, Y. (2009), *Kyoiku Puroguramu No Borrowing-Lending – Jugyo Kenkyu Wo Chushin Ni – (English Translation: International Borrowing and Lending of Educational Programs: The Case of “Lesson Study”*, *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, 12(2), Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education, pp. 69-80.
- Sato, M. (1999), *Kindai Nihon Kyoin Kenshu Shi Kenkyu (English Translation: A Study on History of In-service Teacher Education and Training in Modern Japan)* Tokyo: Kazamashobo.

Toyoda, H. (2011), Chapter 2 Origins of Lesson Study and Post-war Education. In National Association for the Study of Educational Methods (ed), *Lesson Study in Japan*. Tokyo: Keishusha.