

[Concluding Discussions]

Riho Sakurai (Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

Thank you very much. We would like to now start our final session. This is our concluding session but as this forum is an opportunity for open exchange of opinions it is not our aim to come to a conclusion in this session. We have the keynote speakers as well as our panelists and we would like to give 3 minutes to each of the speakers to talk about the major points you thought were important that came out of today's forum.

Tomoko Udagawa (Teacher, Sashiogi Elementary School in Saitama City and Former Participant in JOCV Special Participation System for In-Service Teachers)

There is one thing while I was listening to your presentations. That is the status of teachers tends to be very low in all countries and I wonder why students don't choose to be a teacher. I choose to be a teacher and the reason was because while you are working you are impressed every day and learn something new every day. Not only that, the children are able to do something they were not able to do yesterday and when they come to that understanding the moment of discovery is so encouraging and so moving that they almost break into tears. In physical education class something that one student couldn't do before and suddenly they could do it one day and so everyone cheers. And that is something I love about teaching. What I also love about the profession is that I am learning instead of just teaching. Being a teacher, you continually learn while being a teacher. So I enjoy being a teacher and I am trying to convey that message to my students and I really hope that even one or two of my students feel that the profession of teaching seems to be enjoyable and fun. I am very honored and pleased that I was able to speak with you today.

Rina Rouanet de Núñez (Education Specialist, JICA GUATEMATICA Project Local Coordinator, Guatemala)

The theme is education and you may choose to become a teacher as a profession or you may become a teacher because you need a financial income. In this forum there was a lot of discussion and we talked a lot about what a good teacher is and what they can provide for the learning of the students. We are in a very critical situation and we need to enhance and generate outcomes toward a high quality teaching. In Latin American countries there is still an old-fashioned way of training teachers which is insufficient. Unless the quality of teachers improve the enrollment rate will not increase. A teacher has to have sufficient knowledge of the content matter and quality is quite abstract so you have to turn it into something more concrete. According to my experience in Guatemala they should be trained to become teachers in accredited universities because there they can receive an adequate level of training but this is not the case in my country and in certifying teachers. However we need more time to increase quality and we need more experienced teachers so they can convey that to the younger generation of teachers.

Ramon Bacani (Director, SEAMEO INNOTECH)

By way of sharing an insight I would like to make a proposition that teaching is both a science as well as an art. And we know there are a lot of initiatives directed at teaching as a science. Many of the things we discussed today really deal with how to improve teaching as a science: pedagogical skills, ICT teaching, learning process and so we know many of the policy interventions that are being used by governments. But when we talk about the art of teaching we do not know as much. The science of teaching is directed at the minds of teachers but for the art of teaching we should look at the heart of teachers and I think this is where less is known. What we need to do is to learn how to continuously motivate and inspire teachers to stay committed and dedicated to the profession. And if we are unable to do this, since teaching

is often a lifetime career for most teachers, they will probably suffer from burnout and emotional and mental stress and not be able to discover their passion for teaching. We need not just governments but communities to recognize this in our society. In the Philippines we have a national campaign called “My Teacher, My Hero” because we recognize that teachers can really make a difference in the life of students who are entrusted to them. And when we ask successful professionals who influenced them, they often remember teachers who have made a significant influence in their lives. So that is the slogan we have been using in the Philippines even in the mass media. During the National Teachers Month some private sector companies give a discount to teachers who present their ID when buying something or going to a movie house. Acknowledging the effort of teachers has to really look at ways to motivate and inspire our teachers, otherwise, they will not be able to meet our expectations. Teaching is a demanding profession.

Shinji Kubota (Professor, Division of Education, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba)

In the last question there was the issue of unions and how they oppose lesson study. I have no concrete evidence about this but let's think about what you are saying. It reminded me of another question about the student evaluation this morning. The Teachers Union in Japan is also opposed to the evaluation of schools. The reason they are opposed is very common and which may be the very same as lesson study. For the development of students or to enhance the quality of a school, if a teacher makes an effort for these schools they know they are making a difference. Teachers do not feel they are doing anything with school evaluation or lesson study. Schools have their own studies on voluntary conduct during working hours and if they are going to contribute to the development of students then they are willing to do whatever is necessary so you need to have them feel that it is rewarding. That is my opinion or impression. In order to enhance the quality of teachers you need financial resources and that has been emphasized over and over and I cannot comment on that anymore. And I did talk about the experience of Japan and the various issues which may be resolved step by step to enhance the quality of teachers which may improve the enrollment rate of teachers. And if these other countries increase their level of education then their countries will be facing the same problems that we are facing in Japan such as collaboration with local communities and the mental health of teachers. Those problems occur as a result of EFA. When everyone is receiving education then these new problems emerge. There is a saying in Japan that if the wheels you see in front of you are caught in a rut, then you should not follow the same path. So the challenge that the Japanese teacher faces in Japan is something that can be an indicator for you in the future.

Dzingai Mutumbuka (Chair, Association for the Development of Education in Africa)

In Africa we often talk about a safari as a journey. So if education is a journey we are taking, on a safari when we go to the game park to see some exotic plants, what you need is a good guide. So if education is a safari the teachers are our guides. And if this journey is going to succeed we need the best guides possible. And whatever I gave you to undertake, whether it is long or short, whether it is rugged terrain or smooth terrain, you need the best guides possible. So my first take is that whatever level of development a country is at it needs to format and implement the best possible policies on getting the maximum amount from its teachers. The second thing that I want to take from today's experience is that this forum is really excellent for an exchange and sharing of experiences between the North and the South, the East and the West. Well done to the organizers. Well done to the people who thought of this idea. Please keep it up. Keep it up. Keep it up.

Edem Adubra (Head of the Secretariat, International Task Force on Teachers for EFA, UNESCO)

Thank you very much. What Professor Sakurai has not told you is she has asked me not to give my own impression but has tasked me to give a wrap-up of what it is happened today. In French culture that is what remains when

everything else is forgotten. I have forgotten the wealth of contributions that you have made but I have five sub-themes from everything that has happened today:

1. Teacher preparation and continuing professional development matters whether it is in Japan or the regional areas presented here. It is fundamental. We talked about content knowledge and pedagogical skills and know-how. We also talked about the debate on academic qualifications. If the training teacher goes to a certain level of education is it good for his/her future profession? We are not unanimous about which academic level to set because the reality of Japan is not the same and we cannot expect all primary teachers in Lesotho can have an MA degree. Pre-service has to account for practical in school training where the teacher is not just learning theory but is teaching and has experienced what happens in schools to be prepared to start the journey. Who is to provide the in-service training? Who will provide self-learning opportunities for the teacher to upgrade his/her own knowledge?
2. The second major area is teacher motivation and working conditions. There is a low status of the profession and in addition there are other burdens and peer pressure and requirements of new subjects and new development in the same subject. There is also teacher performance assessment. Who shall assess the teacher and motivate them to do better? We all agree that the teacher himself or herself should be a part of that process. There is a special role for school leadership and management. I use both because management was used as in plain infrastructure management but also there is leadership of structural leaders such as school principals that should be provided. It should not be limited to teachers and principals alone, but one principal has to wear all those hats. Recognition of good teaching. How to reward good practice? Examples were given and also evidence produced. When good teaching practice is recognized it should thus be used or disseminated.
3. The third major point was values in education and it was said again and again that values are not limiting knowledge and skills. School environment also matters. Learning languages in education, gender inequality, and immigrant population coming to our educational system, we need to take care of these students. And we need to have respect to the teacher.
4. The fourth element consists of monitoring and evaluation reforms related to the teaching profession. In Japan we saw the aging population and we do need to monitor the age of our teaching population when we prepare all of us are going to retire. So there is a need for monitoring and documenting results. Professional development schemes are said to have an impact on the quality of teaching. Monitoring is important. What works and what does not work have to be identified in order for policy measures to be taken. Regarding accountability, because teaching and teacher training represent a high cost, a lot of people look at the profession. We need to account for that. Teachers need to be a part of that and need to be accountable for that they are expected to deliver.
5. The final point is the international population in education. This may not look like a point to identify but the composition of the panel was well done and even though while we are talking about two different cases, Japan today and African countries, the first thing the professor said is that there are similarities in the issues and what Japan has gone through years ago also resonated in the keynote speech. Avoidance of the same mistakes, learning good lessons to adopt, because although the situation is different, there are things that can be taken like those principles that could help. The second element is to help find a global framework like EFA which works. The international community agreed on benchmarks and the answer is not all countries are moving at the same pace but monitoring those frameworks allows countries to know where they are and how they can better plan to bridge the gaps.

I have forgotten everything else that has been said today and I thank you for the opportunity of being a part of this and look forward to the continuation of the dialogue and the next JEF.

Riho Sakurai (Professor, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University)

The theme of JEF X was collaboration toward self-reliant educational development and within that issues concerning teachers toward expanding good quality basic teacher education. Quality and teachers were highlighted and I believe this theme we have shared today is really relevant not only to Japan but also to other countries. Also very relevant to this theme is the work of Phillip Jackson who said the action of teaching has two meanings. One is the transmission of knowledge based on a mimic mode and the second is a transformative mode which generates changes in the attitude and lifestyle of the learners. Today the quality of education was highlighted and what it means is that it is time for us to make this transformation from mimicry to the transformative mode. Looking toward 2015 Japan's educational collaboration should continue further and to this end it is extremely important that we put emphasis on the enhancement of education. We should all collaborate together in resolving these issues. Last but not the least this forum is not meant to come up with a single conclusion but to provide a thought provoking venue on education and what should be done in the future. I hope we have been able to accomplish this goal and I would like to thank all of the participants.