



Japanese Ways of Molding Quality People -Japanese Perspective on Thai People: Appropriate behaviors for a Harmonious Coexistence in Society-

Warintorn Wuwongse *, Suneerat Neancharoensuk, Piyanch Wiriyaenawat
and Yukie Nanakorn

Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University, Thailand

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to introduce the Japanese way of molding quality people and how it can be applied to Thailand. This is for the development of Thailand's human resources as well as for its economic development. This study focuses on 3 topics: 1. Japanese perspectives on Thai people, focusing on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society, 2 Japanese based expectations concerning appropriate behavior for a harmonious existence in society through material taught in Moral Education and books on manners, and 3. Role of Japanese schools and families in molding quality people. The research methodology involves an opinion survey using questionnaire, interview and observation of classroom teaching.

The findings reveal that the most important word/phrase indicative of Japanese behavior and conduct is not disturbing others. The way to do so is through self-discipline. This is the essence in the development of Japanese quality people. Besides not disturbing others, Japanese people are taught not to disturb the environment and nature. This way of molding is practiced in the same way across the country and is not confined to certain specific areas. Families, schools and Japanese society all teach this practice, thus making such molding very effective. Teaching in schools is put into practice until it becomes a habit. This is not something learned by heart. Rather, this practice is firmly based on concrete objectives as well as rules and regulations. How to live a harmonious life with others in society is carefully and subtly instilled into people. This same way of conduct is seen across the nation and can be said to represent Japanese culture. The research team would like to end with recommendations on appropriate behaviors that may be useful to incorporate in the Thai education system.

Keywords Quality people, Not disturbing people, Strict self-discipline, Japan

Introduction

Significance and origin of the problem

After Japan was forced to open up to the West towards the end of the Edo period (circa 1854), Japan tried its utmost to develop itself to be on par with its Western counterparts. Despite losing the Second World War, it took less than 20 years post-war for Japan to emerge as an advanced developed nation. This was made possible thanks to an important conceptual framework adopted by the Japanese government, i.e. the production of quality people. The quality of the people is an important factor in the national drive toward development. Currently, Thailand is trying to develop human resources to have more quality, but Thailand still faces problems. In the Human Capital Report 2018, Japan was ranked No. 2, while Thailand was ranked No. 68. In the Global Competitiveness Index 2018: World Economic Forum (WEF), Japan was ranked No.5, while Thailand was ranked No. 38. So far Japan's world ranking has stayed at the top. Thailand needs to accelerate the development of basic factors, especially the potential of human resources to enhance the country's development.

The researchers chose Japan as a case study of a successful country that molds quality people. It is globally acknowledged that the Japanese are aware of their duty, responsible, and strictly observe rules and regulations. The question is how Japan has managed to produce quality people. This is an interesting topic to explore.

Literature review

Research on the development of the Japanese parenting style reveals some interesting findings. Hirota (1999) mentions that books on parenting or parenting advice first appeared in the 1910s. This was a new phenomenon in Japanese society. Nevertheless, it did not mean that every family paid much attention to the parenting issue. This is supported by the work of Katsuta and Nakauchi (1964) in their studies on the parenting of various Japanese social classes. They found that the nobility and merchants attached greater importance to child education than did other classes. Karasawa (1968) demonstrated that the Japanese way of thinking used to be based on the idea that children would grow up naturally and can differentiate between what to do and what not to do. Therefore, it is not necessary to teach and guide them concerning daily life and manners. If children did not wash their hands before eating, parents would not discipline them; however, if children did not clean the shovel after farming, they would be severely punished. It is clear that the definition of "discipline" in the past was completely different from the present.

Uzawa (1998) found that toward the end of 1960s a surprising thing happened. In every social class mothers paid great attention to their children's education. They looked to the school when it came to character building and learning. During the 1970s most parents

came to a realization that eventually they and no one else had to be responsible for their children. They could not leave it to the school to do the work alone and they took it upon themselves to teach their children about life. Schneider et al. (as cited in Tsuneyoshi, 1992 p.78) found that Japanese values and ways of thinking in Japanese-born Americans remain for four generations. Azuma (1994) also compared the Japanese and the American way of molding children. Warintorn and Weerawan (2001) found that there is a difference in the character of Japanese and Thais, which can be a reflection of the difference in molding children in each country.

In Warintorn Wuwongse's (2003) paper "Education and Japanese Ways of Molding People," the researcher concludes that Japanese character molding focuses on pragmatism and strict self-discipline to such a degree that everything a child does becomes a habit. The objective is to teach children how to live in society without causing trouble to others.

Warintorn Wuwongse (2007) concludes that Japan is able to develop people and prepare them for routine rules and regulations in their daily life (e.g. washing hands before meals) and appropriate social manners (e.g. greeting visitors who they have never met), using education as a tool.

The above research findings indicate that schools play an important role in child education. However, a study by Uzawa (1998) reveals that since the 1970s, parents have begun to realize that it is their duty to teach and train their children. Thus, this research intends to study the Japanese ways of molding quality people and focuses on parenting in schools and families with regard to appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society.

Objectives of the research project

1. To study Japanese perspectives on Thai people, focusing on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society.
2. To study Japanese-based expectations concerning appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society, based on the contents of moral education taught in schools and books on manners.
3. To study how Japanese schools and families play their parts in molding quality people.

Conceptual framework

This study will emphasize appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society.

- a. To define "Japanese quality people" in terms of appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. Set the research conceptual framework with reference to the result of the opinion survey of 59 Japanese people living in Thailand to study how after living in an environment and culture different from theirs they will use the Japanese character

as a term of reference in their thinking or decisions on various things, while the questionnaire used will mainly attach importance to appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society.

b. Use the result of the survey in a. to classify the behaviors into groups on the basis of which to set the research framework.

c. Use the framework as a guideline for interviewing those concerned with parenting, e.g. school teachers in Japan. The interviews will be conducted with teachers at four schools. The schools will be at the pre-primary, primary and secondary (high-school) level and concern how they teach their students.

d. Observe classroom activities.

e. Interview seven members of Japanese families in Japan on what they teach their children on how to behave appropriately in Japanese society.

f. Seven Japanese people living in Thailand were randomly selected from the 59 people under section 1. 4. a. They were asked to complete a survey. The survey was conducted by interview.

g. Conduct an opinion survey of Thai people living in Japan for a long time to study whether and in what ways Thai people view the Japanese as quality people, using the questionnaire focusing on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. The purpose is to verify information in c. to f.

h. Study the content of Japanese moral education courses, and Japanese books on manners.

i. Analyze all the findings to assess how Japanese people are molded to have appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society.

Research methodology

The research team conducted an opinion survey of Japanese people living in Thailand, the result of which was used to set the research conceptual framework. The tool used was a questionnaire with about 10 open-ended questions allowing the study participants to give their views on behavior patterns observed and perceived as different between Thai and Japanese people. The subject of inquiry was that in a given situation how Thai and Japanese people would react. The respondents were also asked to mention what they were trained to do in such a situation. If they had any other view or experience, they could mention it in the "Additional Opinion" heading, as long as it was about appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. This research conducted an opinion survey of 12 Thai individuals living in Japan for more than 10 years, again on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. Their responses would be used to verify the information on issues that the Japanese attach importance to and have always acted upon.

Japanese perspectives on Thai people

Respondents of the questionnaire numbered 59, 85% of whom had lived in Thailand for 5-30+ years, while the total number of opinions on appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society was 526. The research team screened these down to 449 opinions which were then synthesized and classified into groups based on keywords expressed in their opinions.

Table 1 Gender and marital status of Japanese respondents

Gender			Marital Status		
Gender	Number	Percentage	Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Male	14	23.7	Married	50	84.7
Female	45	76.3	Single	8	13.6
Not specified	0	0.0	Not specified	1	1.7
Total	59	100.0	Total	59	100.0

Table 2 Age and occupation of Japanese respondents

Age			Occupation		
Age (years)	Number	Percentage	Occupation	Number	Percentage
20-29	3	5.1	Company employee	11	18.6
30-39	7	11.9	Business owner	7	11.9
40-49	26	44.1	Housewife	24	40.7
50-59	18	30.5	Teacher	13	22
60-69	5	8.5	Others	1	1.7
Not specified	0	0.0	Not specified	3	5.1
Total	59	100.0	Total	59	100.0

The first objective of the research was to study **Japanese perspectives on Thai people** regarding appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. The findings yielded 8 issues to which the Japanese attach great importance and paid attention to, shown in Table 3 in order of the number of opinions, from most to least. This demonstrated what Japanese consider appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society that Thais should follow.

Table3 Japanese perspectives on Thai people

	Issues	No. of opinions
1	Social manners	99
2	Awareness of work duty	89
3	Different ways of thinking	74
4	Respect for rules and regulations	58
5	Environmental conservation	47
6	Cleanliness and orderliness	39
7	Punctuality	31
8	Importance given to food	12
	Total	449

The essence of each issue can be summarized with some examples as follows:

1. Social manners

- One should apologize for being late or making others wait for a long time and should not give an excuse.
- One must take care when taking a photo. One must consider the possibility of someone else being included in it. Permission should be sought before the photo is made public.
- One should not bring an uninvited guest to a party.

2. Awareness of work duty

- One must have a service mind. A service provider should not look or sound angry or annoyed with a customer.
- One is responsible for assigned work.
- One makes a careful plan before starting work.
- One makes a clear separation between work and personal matter.

3. Different ways of thinking

- When seeing off a guest, one will remain until he/she has gone out of sight.
- The reason for an adult not offering a seat to a child on the train is to keep the child strong and let them learn how to stand.
- When buying a gift or souvenir for another person, one would consider who the recipient is. If he/she is a visitor from somewhere else, a gift should not be too bulky or heavy. The time to present a gift is usually toward the end of the meeting so that it will not be a burden to the receiver.

- In almost every family, rich or poor, parents will read books to their children.
 - When passing a pair of scissors or knife, one should ensure that the sharp end is not handed to others.
 - In a school sports event, everyone must participate whether or not he/she is good at sports.
 - At the cinema, after the movie ends, the audience remains in their seats to watch the names of the cast and will not stand or leave until the light is turned on as a show of respect for the movie production team and actors.
 - An appointment must be made before a visit is made to another person's house.
 - Japanese people do not give an empty promise but will do their utmost to keep their word even if they have to make personal sacrifices.
4. Respect for rules and regulations
- One must strictly follow the traffic rules.
 - One must not drink and drive.
 - One must not throw away cigarette ends or trash in public areas.
5. Environmental conservation
- One must separate garbage before disposal which will be made in a prescribed place and not in a haphazard manner.
 - One should not dispose of used cooking oil in the sink or wash basin. It must be made into combustible waste before disposal.
 - One should not waste water or electricity.
6. Cleanliness and orderliness
- One must not pollute the public area.
 - One must wash their hands after using the toilet, especially those whose job concerns the health of others, for example, cooks and waiters/waitresses.
 - One should not sweep trash out of their room or house.
7. Punctuality
- Being on time is very important.
 - If one cannot be on time, he/ she must always notify the person they made an appointment with and apologize for being late.
8. Dining
- One must eat up everything on their plate.
 - One must teach children to sit properly when eating, and not to offend people around them. They must not chew loudly. While dining, they will turn off the television.

Japanese people from a Thai perspective

The findings yield 11 issues shown here in Table 4 ranked in order of the number of opinions, from most to least:

Table4 Japanese people from a Thai perspective

	Issues	No. of opinions
1	Awareness of work duty	20
2	Environmental conservation	16
3	Respect for rules and regulations	15
4	Social manners	13
5	Cleanliness and orderliness	7
6	Self-help training	6
7	Punctuality	6
8	Honesty	6
9	Love of learning	4
10	Saving and spending	4
11	Dining	2
	Total	99

The researchers only selected examples of Thai opinions that were not addressed by the surveyed Japanese. Common opinions shared between Thai and Japanese study participants were not included. Results are summarized below:

- By the time a Japanese worker becomes a high-level executive, he must have gone through all the work from the very first step. As a result, he will know the work through and through. In contrast, a Thai person with high qualifications can become an executive straight away without having to work at the lower level; therefore, he/ she will lack understanding of the work at the lower levels.

- In Japan when a worker makes a mistake, his immediate supervisor will act in his defense and even take the blame himself. In a Thai situation, when a worker makes a mistake, he is held responsible. In some cases, when the supervisor makes a mistake, his worker is made to take responsibility instead.

- When a Japanese makes a commitment that the work will be finished within ten days, he means that it will be completed before the promised date. When a Thai person says the same, he means that it will take at least ten days to deliver, and in most cases, it will take longer.

- At work, a Japanese worker will not discuss personal matters on the phone, listen to music, play on the mobile phone, eat snacks, or sell things to his fellow workers.

- In work-oriented planning, a Japanese worker will plan ahead in a fairly organized manner, while the Thai counterpart tends to do so more loosely or sometimes does not do any planning but will take life as it comes.

- In Japan, one hardly sees any littering on the streets and side streets. Canals in Japan do not stagnate or smell, because Japanese help clean up public areas, including drainage in front of their houses.

- When it comes to instilling discipline in children, teaching will start at a very young age on how to carry out instructions, for example, taking out the garbage and putting toys away after playing with them.

- At pre-primary level, children will not be taught how to read and write; rather, emphasis is put on how to live with others happily in society and how to observe discipline, law and order, e.g. queuing up.

- Japanese people tend to have rules and regulations put in writing and follow them strictly.

- When visiting a client, the Japanese will not drink water or coffee brought to them until they are invited to do so.

- After using a wash basin, the Japanese will carefully wipe away the spilled-out water before leaving the washroom.

- At a food court there is a towel placed on the table. When done eating, the Japanese will use it to clean up the table before leaving.

- When taking off their shoes, a Japanese person will carefully arrange them facing outward, thus making it easier to put them back on when leaving.

- Parents will let their children walk or get on a bus to school on their own. Grade 1-6 students who live in the same neighborhood will walk in groups to and from school. Older students will look after younger ones. On a given day if parents need to drive their children to school, they will park their car away from the school. The children would feel embarrassed if seen by their friends or teachers to be driven to school by their parents. On the other hand, it is a common practice in Thai society for parents to drive their children to school or college no matter how old they are.

- Japanese people will try to help themselves more than their Thai counterparts. They will not ask for help from others until they have tried everything possible.

- Corruption is unacceptable in Japanese society. If found involved in fraud or corruption, e.g. cheating on a test, accepting bribes, or embezzlement, the wrong-doer will inevitably be punished.

- When a Japanese person finds a lost item, he will take it to the responsible officer, railway station master or a police booth and will not take it as their own. The Japanese are very honest people.

- When giving back change, Japanese people do not think of rounding off the sum. Every yen must be returned. One does not often see a Japanese person borrow money from a friend.

- Japanese people attach great importance to primary education, because it is basic education. Teachers need to have academic knowledge as well as athletic and musical skills. Focus is on teaching children to express their views. On the other hand, Thai people attach importance neither to primary education nor to the production of quality teachers for primary schools.

- Japan provides considerable support for education and research. Japanese people love reading, are observant, and like to do further study. That is why one often sees production and development of new things on a regular basis. Thai people do not like research as much as their Japanese counterparts. They tend to be on the receiving end of development rather than the leading end.

- In Japan there are many public libraries. The National Diet Library is the national library housing every book and journal ever published in Japan. At the provincial level, there are city and town public libraries. In big cities, e.g. Tokyo, there are regional libraries. Upcountry, there are prefectural libraries. Thus, Japanese people have a lot of learning sources. Although today they may read more comics and use their mobile phones more than ever before, the existence of numerous public libraries provides an additional channel for personal development, leading to a higher quality of life.

- When dining in buffet restaurants, Japanese people will pick just enough food to eat. Many Thais, however, use a large plate and pick more food than they can eat.

- Japanese people often figure out how much food is needed and order the amount needed, nothing more, nothing less. Thai people tend to order more than needed, thinking that too much is better than too little.

The findings about Thai people from a Japanese perspective, i. e. behavior that Japanese attach importance to for a harmonious coexistence in society and the opinions of Thai people living in Japan for a long time, show that the two groups of respondents agree on almost every point. This confirms that what the Japanese do in their everyday life is something that Thai people living in Japan agree about and see as such. In the findings, the most important keyword for describing Japanese behavior is “**not disturbing others,**”

while the way to do so is **“to exercise a strict self-discipline.”** This is **the essence of the Japanese way of molding quality people.**

Besides not disturbing others, one is taught **“not to disturb the natural environment.”** For instance, when going on a mountain trip to view natural scenery, Japanese people will bring a garbage bag with them to ensure that they will not spoil the scenery. At primary school, children are taught that what flows into the river will eventually go down to the sea. Fish will come to eat it, and humans will eat fish in turn. Also, what evaporates into water vapor goes to form clouds, which in turn causes rain to fall on us or contaminate agricultural produce.

Training and Molding of Japanese Young People

Behavior expected by society

Objective No.2 of the research project was to study Japanese-based expectations concerning appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society, based on the contents of moral education taught in schools and books on manners. A study of the textbooks on moral education, Ministry of Education, Kyouiku Kaihatsu Kenkyuusho (2016) and Nihon Kyozai System (2017) reveals that the focus is on feelings, emotions, and consideration for others. All this is concerned with more delicate mental aspects of life. The major contents are 1) self, 2) relationship with others, 3) nature, living things, and other things of higher value, and 4) the group and society that one belongs to. Concrete examples are given in every subject matter, all of which are something that children can relate to in everyday contexts, thus making it possible for the learners to apply to real life. The research team finds that the contents correspond directly with the research conceptual framework and the eight issues proposed. This shows that Japanese people will use this concept as a basis for assessment of the quality of the people.

The school subject of moral education serves as a theoretical base, representing the State policy for schools to implement. Its contents clearly reflect the concept of training and molding of Japanese youth. Of course, a school subject alone cannot implement this idea as fully as desired. In reality, the concept is integrated into every school subject, including all other school activities in which all children are expected to participate daily. The latter can be considered a field practice.

The result of the survey of books about teaching children desirable manners shows that every book presents and teaches the contents in the same manner and direction. The research team randomly selected four books which have concrete contents with clear detailed explanations and which best serve the purpose of this research project. The first (Tatsumi, 2005) and second book (Tatsumi, 2009), were first printed before 2010 and reprinted with more than ten editions. This reflects their popularity among Japanese readers.

The third (Kato et al., 2015) and fourth book (Tsuji, 2017), first printed in 2015, were also reprinted in several editions. The essence of these four books indicates that training and molding of Japanese children focuses on daily activities in every detail. This is a concrete teaching experience. The research team found that the method adopted by the Japanese in teaching their children is through “strict self-discipline”, including showing appropriate manners to others. This shows that when it comes to the policy of molding Japanese people, this is the way Japan wants its children to be.

Role of the family in training and molding

Objective No. 3 of the research project was to study how Japanese schools and families play their part in molding quality people. Interviews with Japanese people in Japan show that everyone is aware of the expectation of appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society and tries to teach their children accordingly. Each family may have different ways of teaching, but as a whole, it does not go outside the conceptual framework of the above eight issues. Teaching is centered around the keywords of “**not disturbing others,**” a practice considered an appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society through a method of “**strict self-discipline.**” It can be said that a Japanese family will teach their children strictly in the manner expected by society. Therefore, it does not matter where the Japanese live, in big cities or upcountry, they are all aware of social expectations and will teach their children to adopt appropriate behavior accordingly. Japan is a nation with its own identity. The Japanese will not accept people with inappropriate social behavior into their group.

Role of school in training and molding

Objective No. 3 of the research project was to study how Japanese schools and families play their part in molding quality people. Based on the visits made to four schools in Japan – pre-primary, primary, lower secondary/junior high school, and upper secondary/high school – and on the interviews of teachers, it is found that within the conceptual research framework of eight issues teaching in school is done in a very concrete and systematic manner. The Japanese school system places a great emphasis on pragmatism and strict self-discipline in the molding of Japanese character. Children will **practice until it becomes second nature.** The practice will continue for at least 12 years in the school system, covering social manners, work responsibility, work procedure, maintenance of rules and regulations, care for the environment, hygiene, cleanliness, orderliness, importance of eating, punctuality, and others. In the primary school, great emphasis is placed on activities involving cooperation. Training of character is given equal importance to academic learning, if not more so. Duties are clearly divided. Children will perform their duties as assigned. Activities

are conducted according to the rules and regulations of the group. Every child must act in the same manner.

In another dimension, Japanese teachers will teach and pay attention to details in such matters as proper hand washing, walking, sitting posture, carrying objects, holding chopsticks, holding a broomstick, cleaning the classroom, sweeping and mopping the floor, and inspection. The proper way of practice that the Japanese focus on is derived from the age-old artistic tradition that attaches great importance to form.

At junior high school and high school, children must learn more academic contents. Nevertheless, nothing concerning everyday activities is ever left out, such as washing hands before meals, putting one's belongings in order, disposing of garbage, or appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society, including being punctual, not disturbing others, or greeting visitors who are strangers. They must do all this until it becomes a habit. It can be said that **the conduct of Japanese schoolchildren is governed by rules and regulations set by the school and that each day time is allotted for children to follow rules and regulations. This way of molding children is done in every school in Japan and follows the same direction.** The ultimate objective of such molding is to teach how to live a harmonious life without disturbing others.

It can be seen that the Japanese concept of molding children follows the same direction throughout the country. It is not carried out only in selected social sub-sectors, families and schools teach the same thing. In addition, tangible social phenomena and experiences point in the same direction, thus making the process more effective. The fact that people everywhere in the country act the same way goes to show that such behavior amounts to a representation of the culture of Japan.

Discussion

The first objective of this research was to study the **Japanese perspectives on Thai people** on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. The findings yield 8 issues to which the Japanese attach great importance and pay attention, in order of the number of opinions, from most to least. Social manners, Awareness of work duty, Different ways of thinking, Respect for rules and regulations, Environmental conservation, Cleanliness and orderliness, Punctuality, Importance given to food.

It can be seen that the Japanese value and pay attention to those issues because families and schools teach the same thing. This is being taught continuously and is passed on from generation to generation (Schneider et al. as cited in Tsuneyoshi, 1992 p. 78). From the second survey, based on random interviews with seven Japanese people in Thailand who were e-mail respondents in the first survey, reveals the following reasons for such Japanese behavior:

1. Japanese social system: The Japanese system is such that everyone is obliged to act that way in order to ensure that everyone lives happily together in society. In Japan, a person, whether a child or an adult, who does not follow the prescribed rules will not be trusted by others. It is a big issue if a person forgets or breaks his promise. It can even cost friendship. Therefore, everyone adheres strictly to social rules.

2. Japan is a nation with virtually no natural resources and is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters because of its climate and topography. Therefore, to follow various teachings enable them to conquer the worst situations. These factors account for the formation of its history and culture, including the spirit of patience. They regard luxury as harmful; they live a simple and frugal life. The spirit of cooperation and unity is seen nationwide.

3. Shinto has influenced the lives of the Japanese since ancient time. Japanese people believe that there are 8 million gods manifest in everything, whether mountains, trees, things, or appliances. Therefore, the Japanese respect nature, conserve the environment, treat things carefully, keep cleanliness and orderliness, thus leading to good manners.

4. Peace-loving culture: Japanese are peace-loving. They want to be friends with others. Thus, when they are in public areas, they will adhere to social rules, refrain from demanding for themselves, act in accordance with others as group members. They will attach importance to advance preparations to avoid problems that may arise. They will offer their cooperation between group members to maintain peace and order.

The most important keyword in Japanese behavior is “**not disturbing others**”, while the way to do so is “**to exercise a strict self-discipline**”. This is **the essence of the Japanese way of molding quality people**.

The contents of moral education taught in schools and books on manners focus on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society.

Although many years have passed, the strengths of the content of the moral education taught in schools still emphasize on emotions and empathy as Warintorn Wuwongse (2003) mentioned. The contents written in books on manners are also the same. Books on manners or books on parenting advice first appeared in the 1910s. This was a new phenomenon in Japanese society (Hirota,1999). Even today, books about teaching children desirable manners are available in bookshops. The essence of these books indicates that training and molding of Japanese children focuses on daily activities in every detail. This is a concrete teaching experience. The method adopted by the Japanese in teaching their children is through “strict self-discipline”, including showing appropriate manners to others.

The contents of moral education taught in schools and books on manners focus on appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society are consistent with the issues

to which the Japanese value and pay attention to. This shows that **when it comes to the policy of molding Japanese people, this is the way Japan wants its children to be.**

Japanese schools and families play their part in molding quality people and teach in the same way.

In the past, parents leave their children's education to the school, but from the 1970s most parents came to a realization that eventually they and no one else had to be responsible for their children. They could not leave it to the school to do the work alone and they took the same way as schools to teach their children (Uzawa, 1998). They teach their children the appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society. According to the study of Azuma (1994), from Japanese perspective, "good children" are easily governable, coexistence in society, performing daily activities by themselves, greeting, adhering rules, **not disturbing others**, patient and attempting.

Regarding "**not disturbing others**", at schools, duties are clearly divided. Children will perform their duties as assigned. Activities are conducted according to the rules and regulations of the group. Every child must act in the same manner. In order to achieve this, Warintorn Wuwongse (2003) found that the important keyword to mold Japanese people is "**to exercise a strict self-discipline**".

Apart from the above reasons, there is another factor. Japan is a fully-fledged capitalist economy, manufacturing goods for the world market. It has a clear stance in the development of advanced technologies for global competition, i.e. it is imperative to develop human resources with two important attributes:

1. Strict self-discipline (desirable human quality)
2. Possession of advanced knowledge (knowledge-based quality);

Besides, Japan invariably holds that each education reform means production reform. In other words, education reform is equivalent to reform in human resource development. For Japanese society, the goal is to become a complete human being.

Conclusion and recommendations for learning and teaching in Thai schools

The objectives of this research are to study the Japanese way of molding quality people and apply the findings to Thai society. However, the backgrounds of the two countries are so different, and it is not always easy to apply the Japanese way of molding people to Thai society. However, while some behaviors are culture-specific, others are more generic and, therefore, not impossible to apply. The latter are, in fact, universal behaviors commonly practiced in developed countries and not confined only to Japan. Several appropriate behaviors for a harmonious coexistence in society are connected to national economic development. It is, therefore, imperative that the molding of character should be done systematically and cover the entire country, as it can be seen in the findings regarding how

school and family play an important role in the molding of young children into quality people in Japan.

The research team has a set of recommendations that Thai society should urgently and seriously consider for a harmonious coexistence in society and national economic development. They are as follows:

Punctuality

Punctuality is the issue to which the research team attaches the most importance. An unpunctual person will lack credibility and will have an adverse effect on the group. Punctuality and accuracy are indispensable to technological development in this digital age.

Recommendations:

1. Have a clock set with accurate time in every class.
2. In between class periods there should be a 10-minute break for the students to prepare for the next lesson which can then start punctually.
3. Teachers must be role models regarding punctuality, starting and finishing each lesson on time, thus demonstrating the advantages of punctuality and disadvantages of unpunctuality.

Disposal of garbage

Disposal of garbage is taught to very young children in the Japanese school system. This is something that the Japanese and global societies find very important.

Recommendations:

1. Separate garbage into combustible and non-combustible, including cans and bottles, before disposal.
2. Take students on a field trip to see how garbage is disposed.
3. Take students on a field trip to see how garbage stuck in drainage can cause clogging.
4. Teach proper ways of garbage disposal from start to finish at school.
5. Each month, set a day for garbage disposal in and around school.

Each class may take turns collecting the garbage they find.

Cleanliness

Maintaining cleanliness is the duty of every Japanese school child. Witnessing children working together to clean up their schools is always a wonderful sight for foreigner visitors to Japanese schools.

Recommendations:

1. Organize every student to clean up the school for 10-15 minutes every day. Students can be divided in groups to clean specific areas in school. This will instill a self-awareness about duty and responsibility without having janitors do the work.

2. Train the students to wash their hands every time after doing the cleaning or after using the toilet, for example, through posters promoting hand-washing posted in every toilet stall, and encourage peer warning about health and hygiene.

3. Train the students to put things away in an orderly fashion after use or before going home.

Respect for rules and regulations

Japanese schools teach students how to respect and observe rules and regulations in an effective and tangible manner.

Recommendations:

1. Invite traffic police officers to advise how to strictly follow traffic rules.

2. Instill the practice of queuing up. Lining up can be shown with signs on the floor to help students form a line more easily.

3. In the classroom, post a schedule for a given day and ensure that the students follow it. This will teach them how to follow the schedule and keep time through practice at school.

Equal treatment

A different way of thinking that the research team finds very interesting is that at Japanese school, everyone has to participate in sports day. It does not matter if a person does not play well. This is an example of how to create a feeling of equality among students, as those who participate are not selected from among good players.

Recommendations: In all school activities students should be given equal opportunity to show their ability and participate. Make sure that there is no feeling that only certain groups are given special privilege.

The research team thinks that these five recommendations are the minimum requirements that young people in Thailand must follow to ensure a harmonious coexistence in society and for the sake of national development. In addition, on social manners, the Japanese respondents have given the most comments. A closer look at the contents reveals that social manners are all related to the concept of “**not disturbing others,**” meaning that Japanese people think that their Thai counterparts are not concerned with such awareness.

Apart from the recommendations made by the research team, based on interviews of Japanese people living in Thailand for a long time (some even having their children study

in Thai schools), the following are the recommendations that they think may be useful to Thai schools:

Letting children learn whatever is good when they are young.

Continuous learning is important. Japanese children will have a variety of activities even at an early age. No matter what lesson is given, children must always be taught manners, rules and regulations. Even pre-primary schoolchildren are taught about keeping promises. In the learning process and in doing activities, not only do they learn about rules and regulations, but they are also taught how to cooperate and take responsibility. If the learning process or activities are changed too often or too soon, the effect on the children will not be long lasting. So, teaching something like rules and regulations, cooperation, or responsibility takes time and needs to be done continuously.

Encouraging children to read books with interesting contents.

When children are young, teachers should recommend to them good, age-appropriate, books to read during vacations. They should be encouraged to write about their feelings and hand in their written work to their teachers. Books assigned for reading may be quite long and complicated but by reading good books children will learn about rules and regulations, social manners, responsibility, justice and other things.

In addition, children will feel very proud if they can finish a book and will want to read more. Because of such training, Japanese adults continue to love reading. At primary school there should be periods for reading when children go to the library to read books.

Assigning some tasks and responsibilities to the children.

At Japanese primary school, each child will be assigned tasks. A child may take on several duties, such as cleaning up, looking after school lunch, and organizing morning-evening meetings. Some duties may sound exciting, such as, acting as the chairperson of the class committee; others could be boring. If there is no division of labor, life at school may not go so smoothly. Teachers need to supervise, and children must do their duties diligently. Training at an early age is a good idea, because children are still innocent. They will not think that they should do only honorable work. Another example of division of labor at school is that children are trained to feed pet rabbits or water plants, and this can make them kind and caring.

Adding periods for moral education in which children learn to solve problems together.

Teachers will bring up cases for children to solve through class discussion without giving too much lead. Children will write up their opinions on the whiteboard and come up

with a final decision. This will train them to take responsibility for themselves. Japanese schools do not just teach knowledge but also provide moral training so that children have a strong and determined character. For instance, they will get things done and will not give up easily.

Educating children on how to deal with natural disasters

For example, what to do when there is flooding to avoid facing further disasters and accidents. There is much to teach before a disaster strikes. There is so much that children can learn and do, e.g. health precautions.

Working as a team

The Japanese way is to divide the class into groups to do activities. The training is designed to create an awareness of how small power and collective responsibility can affect a decision. There are advantages and disadvantages to working as a team. One disadvantage of teamwork is bullying in children and adults. However, Thai society does not regard the development of a group conscience and may not accept the value of such activities. Most Thai teachers have received and are used to Thai-style education. Therefore, the recommendation is to change the common basic core value of the teachers. They should teach the importance of keeping rules and regulations, responsibility, orderliness and punctuality. All these elements, from a global perspective, are considered part of being a developed nation or a nation with a high moral and social conscience.

Adding life experience and social studies periods

Thai schools should teach these subjects including such matters as how to put things away in an orderly fashion, how to take care of collective property, how to take care of the environment and making life plans. A life plan may be about planning how to spend time during the day at school or during the semester. All this can be put into practice straight away, and teachers should do so as a role model or do it together with their students.

Japan is considered successful when it comes to instilling in its people a sense of discipline and responsibility. Teaching in school requires real practice, something that has turned into habit. It is not a matter of rote learning. Learning objectives are set with rules and regulations and concrete practice, all leading to appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in society in a delicate and subtle manner, while parents pay close attention to their children's education. A very distinctive feature about this is that the family, school and the society all teach the same thing. In the case of Thailand, parents tend to pass the burden of education and training to schools, while the three parties, i.e. family, school, and society, teach differently and do not act in a sufficiently concerted manner.

Thailand does not exist in isolation. Globalization has led to extensive migration, foreign investment in Thailand, and Thai investment overseas. The development of human resources on appropriate behavior for a harmonious coexistence in a globalized society is, therefore, necessary and very urgent. Thailand has been trying to become Economy 4.0. What is needed at the same time is to develop Human Resources 4.0. The Japanese education system has attached great importance to the production of quality people, thus forming one of the greatest foundations for the existence and survival of Japanese society. When the country needs to build upon the human resources to a higher level in the business and public sectors, it is able to do so without much difficulty, as it has already properly laid the human foundation. On the other hand, in Thailand such a foundation is not yet secure, and it is imperative to take action in this regard seriously.

So far Thailand has been successful in instilling the concepts of Nation, Religion and Monarchy, as a driving force of the country. This shows that if it wants to uplift the quality of the Thai people further by taking action systematically nationwide as suggested by this research, it is possible to do so.

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