

Ideological Genealogy Underlying “Individualized Education Support Plans”

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Abstract: The government of Japan has implemented various programs to replace “special education” with “special needs education.” In this context, the development of “Individualized education support plans” is one key element. This paper identifies new aspects of “individualized education support plans” from the perspective of their necessity for educational and non-educational objectives, in particular welfare objectives and analyzes their historical and ideological meaning.

Key Words: Special needs education, individualized education support plans, welfare, ideological genealogy

I. Introduction

The government of Japan has implemented various programs to reform special education in particular by replacing “special education,” with “special needs education”¹⁾. In this context, “special education,” means the provision of education at special locations, depending on the child’s degree of disability, while “special needs education,” refers to the provision of educational support suitable to the educational needs of each child/student with disability.

According to the basic principles of “*The Future Directions of Special Needs Education (Final Report)*” released in 2003, this systemic reform has the following purposes: (a) to address/ to cater to the needs of/ to meet the needs of children who have Learning Disabilities (LD), Attention Deficit – Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or high-functioning autism (HFA) enrolled in regular classrooms; (b) to pay due attention to changing perspectives on disability in the international community; (c) to provide flexible education tailored to the educational needs of each child; (d) to adopt the viewpoint of children/students; and (e) to take into consideration the decentralization of power from central to local governments.

In response to the report, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) established the Special Needs Education Ad-Hoc Committee under the auspices of the Central Council for Education. The Ad-Hoc Committee has met 22 times since March 2004, and on 8 December 2005, the Central Council for Education submitted a report entitled “*Appropriate Framework to Promote Special Needs Education.*” This called for a review

of the special education school system, a re-examination of programs at the elementary and lower secondary school levels, and a review of the teacher credential program. To comprehensively institute special needs education, the report highlights the necessity of preparing individualized education support plans, appointing special needs education coordinators, and establishing regional special support cooperative councils²⁾.

Preparing individualized education support plans is meaningful because these plans aim to provide comprehensive support for the entire life of a child with a disability/(the entire lives of children with disabilities) and more effective education services by involving relevant organizations, and because they are also future-oriented to form local networks to support children with disabilities by accumulating individualized education support plans for each child.

Some researches explain the origin of individualized education support plans from an historical perspective³⁾, but only a few studies date back further to explain the historical viewpoint of nations that have come to guarantee the welfare of their citizens. It is only possible to understand the true meaning of the concept of individualized plans as a human right only following an overview of such historical developments.

In addition, a welfare state absolutely requires fiscal economic capability. The authors note the socioeconomic paradigm shift behind current reforms in Japan. Children with disability go-out into the real world after schooling so “individualized education support plans,” will surely depend on what these children are expected to do in that society. In this context, this paper briefly discusses the paradigm shift in special education in terms of capitalism and democracy,

that are the fundamental principles of modern industrialized societies and also examines how disability-related legislation has turned into/has been manifest as the “Services and Supports for Persons with Disabilities Act.”

As mentioned above, this paper identifies new aspects of "individualized education support plans" from the perspective of their necessity for educational and non-educational objectives, in particular welfare objectives, and analyzes their historical and ideological meaning.

II. Education from the Perspective of the Welfare State

This section briefly discusses the history of the welfare state as the background for education by the state. This is because education for children with disability only works well in collaboration with welfare services for children and for persons with disability. The concept of individualized support plans first appeared in the, “Five-Year Plan for Implementation of Priority Measures” in Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities (December 2002). To understand the objectives of this basic programme, it is necessary to clarify what a welfare state is. Hereinafter, this paper examines how the ideology of the welfare state has been actualized from an historical point-of-view in Japan and in the rest of the world.

1. Steps Toward the Formation of the Welfare State

This section looks back on how the welfare state has been actualized in the world history, in particular from the perspective of Marshall (1950) ⁴⁾. It will then explore how “basic human rights,” “freedom and rights,” “the right to live,” and “the right to education,” are established in statutory form, for what purposes and in what order.

In the eighteenth century, from the viewpoint of guaranteeing rights, citizens (the capitalist class) demanded of the government (the privileged class) to guarantee civil rights, in particular property rights and freedom of contracts as the foundation of the capitalist economy. The “right to education,” may be viewed as forming one part of these civil rights. However, since they intended education for the capitalist class at that time, in particular tutoring at home or education for children of the capitalist class, the right to education did not necessarily mean public education as we see today ⁵⁾.

In the 19th Century, governments have come to guarantee political rights by easing restrictions on political suffrage based on gender or tax payment while at the same time increasing the number of citizens with voting rights to assure state legitimacy. As the working class grew as a social force, workers also expected their children to be educated in schools financed by public expenditure. In the late 19th Century, free-competition capitalism structurally shifted to monopolistic capitalism. In this paradigm shift,

governments required mass nationalism to unite their peoples (that is, all citizens including the working class) to exercise control over the labor movement. This is how the welfare state was formed through government intervention. National education systems were established to operate as *the cultivating apparatus of nationalism*. In the Meiji era, the Japanese government viewed Prussia as a model of the world’s first welfare state. The right to education emerged as a civil right for the education of the capitalist class and was a right in which the government was unable to intervene, but since that time, it has grown into a public education right to which the government can intervene.

In the 20th Century, social rights were added because the inherent inequity of capitalism developed into a social problem. As poverty, disease, lack of access to education, unsanitary living environments, and unemployment hampered national reconstruction after WWII, analysts called for the government to comprehensively guarantee national minimum standards. The typical example of this trend is the, “*Beveridge Report*”⁶⁾ in the UK, which proposes a basic model for welfare states in developed Western nations. Despite some differences in welfare service levels among nations, since the mid-twentieth century, industrialized capitalist nations generally followed the path towards the type of modern welfare state that guaranteed basic welfare services for their citizens. On the other hand, in socialist nations during the Cold War era, the welfare state had exactly been their national goal.

2. Criticism of the Ideology of the Welfare State

The Cold-War structure in the post-WWII period has led to conflict over political ideologies in developed nations. The degree of development of a welfare state is related to the political ideology of the nation. During this time, social democrats were influential and calling for a planned socialistic economy by correcting excessive capitalism. However, the capitalist class also accepted welfare services because better employer-employee relationships were expected to contribute to corporate growth backed by economic growth. Economic growth has improved social welfare programmes, that is directly associated with an aging population in developed countries, and bloated administrative organizations ⁷⁾.

The pressure for change in the idea of the welfare state was the global slowdown in economic growth because the resources required for social security were supplied by economic growth. The aging of the population and the social security system of the welfare states in developed countries had crossed the threshold even before the economic slowdown had begun.

In the 1980s, in this context, Margaret Thatcher in UK and Ronald Reagan in the US came to power and criticized the concept of the welfare state from a neo-

liberal perspective. They criticized (a) its non-economic aspects (i.e., lower incentives for investment and labor), (b) its unproductiveness (i.e., the shift of capital and human resources from the private sector leading to a bloated bureaucracy), (c) its inefficiency (i.e., unsolved poverty, and negative spiral of dependence on government), (d) its authoritarian regime (i.e., stronger social control through bureaucratic dominance), and (e) its denial of freedom (i.e., no choice in welfare services and heavy taxation). Neo-Liberalism advocates absolute distrust in human rationality and assumes that even rational judgment inevitably results in human errors. For this reason, they attached higher values to trial-and-error in the free private sector than monopolistic intervention by the State⁸⁾. In addition, as the Cold War ended in 1989 following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the transition to social democracy, as argued by traditional political leftists, had become an unrealistic option.

Why did economic growth slow? According to Keynesian economics, government intervention should lead to sustainable economic growth and full employment. As an explanation for this phenomenon, in organized capitalism with highly-organized workers and capital, mass production and mass consumption has been progressing, and government intervention is able to create effective demand through public works and monetary policy. However, if the economy shifts to high-mix low-volume production, workers are divided into full-time skilful workers and unstable peripheral workers, sending down the trade union membership ratio. This prevents consensus building and benefits sharing through labor-management cooperation that results in the failure of centralized, comprehensive government intervention. In addition, economic globalization has also diminished the effectiveness of government economic interventions in a single nation.

Slightly deviating from the main subject of this paper, new social movements spread out on a global scale at the same time as criticism was voiced against welfare nations. First, women, minorities, persons with disability and others whose rights were not fully guaranteed began to criticize policymakers. In Keynesian-style welfare nations, continuously employed regular workers enjoyed the highest old-age pension benefits. In other words, they were societies most favorable to adult males, the ethnic majority, and able-bodied persons. As a result, discrimination based on gender, race, and disability emerged. In addition, since economic growth also led to environmental pollution and destruction that would eventually erode human welfare, environmental problems became an issue of social concern.

For these two decades, industrialized capitalist nations have come to face common problems that cannot be solved by ideology, such as economic globalization, the pursuit of environmentally friendly and sustainable economic growth, an aging society, unemployment, in particular for

young people, and increasing homelessness. Policymakers are expected to actively address these cross-class problems through education, welfare reform, economic policy, environmental protection, and crime prevention. Modern society is very unstable because capitalism is unable to coexist with the modern welfare state but, at the same time, cannot exist without it⁹⁾.

3. New Development of the Welfare State

This is so-called “welfare pluralism,” or “the welfare-mixed economy,” that recognizes problems and contradictions in welfare states and suggests possible solutions. These concepts encourage plurality of welfare service suppliers, rather than exclusively depending on the welfare services of the state. One of the important purposes of social policies is the redistribution of resources to correct inequality resulting from capitalism. In this resource redistribution process, in most cases, the government forcibly collects taxes and insurance premiums and provides welfare services, pension benefits, and allowances. There are several channels for this redistribution process. For example, child allowances and a reduction of income tax for dependents also yields similar effects, although the former represents increased revenues for households, while the latter leads to decreased expenditure. In addition, family allowances provided by corporations also bring about similar effects. This concept is sometimes called the “Social role-sharing of welfare services”¹⁰⁾.

Recently, the informal sector, such as households or neighbors, as well as the private non-profit sector is also considered to play an important role in the provision of welfare services. In particular, many nations attach importance to the redistribution process through the private non-profit sector. Recognizing the importance of this private non-profit sector, the report of the Wolfenden Committee (1978)¹¹⁾ describes four categories of the most popular welfare service suppliers in the United Kingdom (i.e., the voluntary system, the informal system, the commercial system, and the statutory system), and aims to analyze the social services provided by private non-profit organizations. Before making such analysis, the Wolfenden report also discusses the overall system for providing social services. Highlighting that the four types of service providers to satisfy social needs that cannot be met by individual citizens, the report calls for a pluralistic supply framework in which each of these service providers plays their own role, rather than exclusively depending on only one service provider.

In reality, the shift to a welfare mixed economy did not occur in the late 1970s. Ever since the state became involved with welfare, these four sectors blended to form current welfare services provision¹¹⁾. Since the 1980’s onward, due to the arguments about the welfare mixed economy,

there has been progress in the analytical method of welfare due to developments in international comparative research between welfare states and the promotion of community care within each state. As a result, rather than addressing public-private role-sharing primarily intended to scale-down the role of governments, analysts and policymakers began examining where to collect necessary financial resources (i.e., tax, insurance, or self-pay burden), who should control service quality, what kind of role government should play, what kind of role NPOs and private enterprise should assume, and what kind of relationship (balance) should be maintained. We also add that within modern welfare states, education is also managed using the concept of a mixed economy²⁾.

III. Characteristics of Social Welfare in Japan: Focus on State Responsibility and Social Solidarity

1. From Post-war Reconstruction to the Welfare State

Following WWII, Japan started national reconstruction as a new democratic nation under a new constitution. With almost all citizens starving (malnourished?), there were about 8 million people, including returnees from overseas, in need of social help. The GHQ document, “*Public Assistance*” stressed the principles of (a) nondiscriminatory equality, (b) state responsibility (i.e., the separation of public and private), and (c) the necessity to provide social assistance as much as possible within the limits imposed by the overall budget). Consistent with these principles, the Japanese government established a basic framework of social security in the post-war recovery period. Rather than being based on the pre-war concept in which the public was at the emperor’s mercy, the government emphasized state responsibility for citizens (i.e., private individuals).

The “*Recommendations on the Social Security System*,” in 1950 (“*The 1950 Recommendation*”) defined the direction of the post-war social security system in Japan and called for state responsibility to coherently and comprehensively implement with public assistance, public health, and social welfare programs centering on social insurance programs. As for social solidarity, the 1950 Recommendation concluded that, “As long as the state assumes such responsibilities, citizens must also respond to the state’s efforts and must, with a spirit of social solidarity, assume their social obligations necessary for maintaining/operating this framework.” Japan then implemented with social security and social welfare legislation during the period of high economic growth since the mid 1950s. The “right to live,” is also guaranteed as a social right under state responsibilities. While gradually evolving towards a modern welfare state, since the 1960s Japan has improved its social security programs in a context of high economic growth.

The 1962 “*Report on Basic Policies for Comprehensively Coordinating Social Security Programs and Recommendations on Implementing with Social Security Programs*,” (“*The 1962 Recommendation*”) reexamined the issue of an appropriate social security system for solving the income gap problem emerging in the high economic growth period and called for the improvement of public assistance and social welfare. As for social solidarity, the 1962 Recommendation mentions, “To develop this framework in a sound manner, it is necessary to organically combine it with the government’s other policy actions, win sufficient understanding of this framework among citizens, and permeate (a) vivid atmosphere of social solidarity among citizens,” placing top priority on the public responsibilities of the state. At best, the recommendation merely calls for citizens to recognize their daily social solidarity as a moral standard.

During the high economic growth period, social welfare programs have improved. Japan has seen the implementation of universal health insurance coverage and universal pension coverage during this period and in the early 1970s, introduced free-of-charge medical care services for the elderly and a price-indexed pension program. These are all in preparation for Japan’s aging society of the future, and the year 1972 could be described as the first year of the modern welfare era. By describing this as a “Guarantee reasonable living standards through social solidarity,” social security law experts recognize that the concepts of social solidarity have yielded successful outcomes, such as social insurance programs. In this process, the intergenerational insurance/pension funding system (i.e., present elderly persons are supported with insurance premiums collected from younger generations) was established. In this period, rather than simply providing social security programs through social solidarity as a moral standard, the government has provided substantive social security programs backed by legislation. The trend of sector-based social security expenditures (Figure 1) illustrates social security-related issues on a time-series basis.

2. Re-examination of Welfare Programs and the Change in Quality of Social Solidarity

Following the oil shock of the late 1970s, Japan began to reexamine social security programs in a context of lower economic growth. The central government’s documents began emphasizing social solidarity as a moral standard, specifically family nursing care, mutual assistance between neighbors, and corporate welfare programs. The expression, “Japanese-style welfare society,” emerged at this time. For example, cabinet approved the “*New Socioeconomic Seven-Year Plan (1979)*,” that stated,

As Japan has almost caught up with developed nations in North

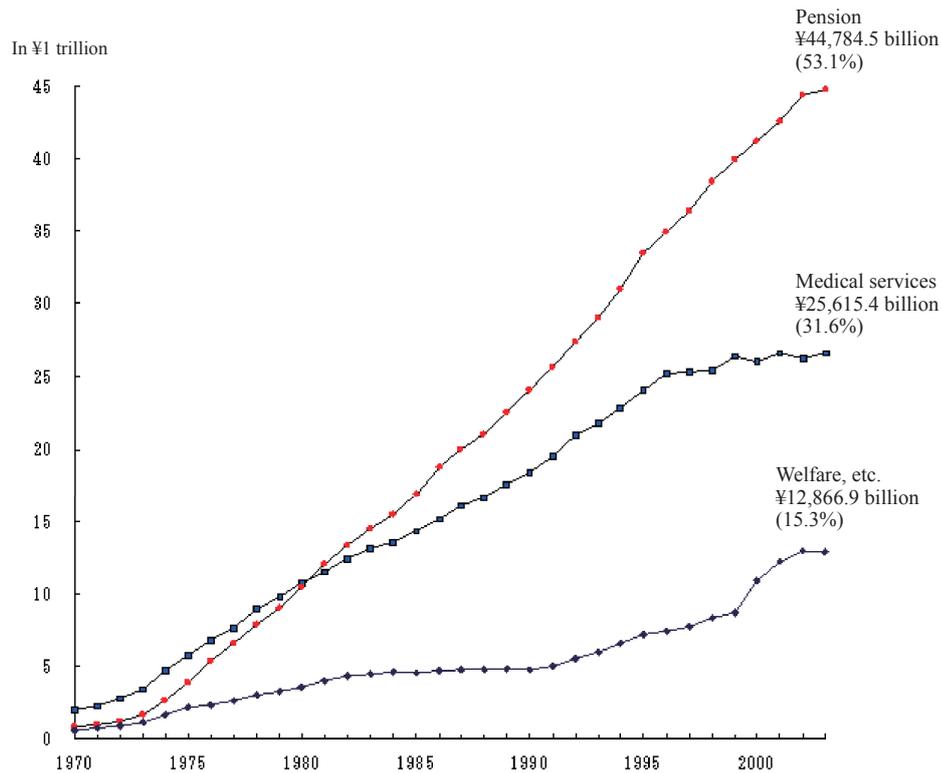


Figure 1 Sector-based social security benefits expenditures
 (<http://www.ipss.go.jp>; Data come from the FY2003 social security benefits expenditures.)

America and Europe, Japanese citizens should start to seek for qualitative improvement, shifting away from quantitative expansion.....Basically, Japan should create a new-style welfare society by taking advantage of its socioeconomic characteristics, such as a strong work ethic among its people and a high-level of social mobility. To this end, in addition to improving the living standards of Japanese citizens by taking advantage of a free economy’s creative vitalities, highly-efficient government should emphasize the guaranteeing of public welfare services, while solidarity circles should be formed in local communities based on the independent mindedness of citizens and stable households so that each Japanese citizen is able to achieve a fulfilling social life.

In this type of Japanese-style welfare society, citizens should first make self-help endeavors, then, if it is impossible, they should be supported by the solidarity of the local community. Public assistance is a last resort measure. Obviously, social solidarity is a moral standard of citizen cooperation and should not serve as basic principle for achieving public social welfare. The democratic principle calls for “private individuals” to assume public responsibility as a member of Japanese society.

In 1982, the 2nd Ad-hoc Commission on Administrative Reform released its report “*The Third Report on Administrative Reform: Basic Report - Constructing*

Energetic Welfare Society.” This is also based on self-help, mutual assistance, and private-sector vitality, while recognizing social solidarity as a tool to reduce public expenditure. Advocates of a “Japanese-style welfare society,” or “the construction of an energetic welfare society,” emphasize social solidarity as a moral standard for Japanese citizens and intend to reduce public expenditure by attaching greater importance to mutual assistance (daily cooperation between citizens). This is a similar trend to neo-liberalism in the US and UK. In other words, by reexamining social solidarity based on government programs at that time, the government began attaching greater importance to the concept of social solidarity in terms of private mutual assistance between citizens.

3. Social Welfare Basic Structural Reform and Exploration of the New Social Solidarity

In the 1990s, the third comprehensive recommendation was released to set forth the direction of social security in the future. This recommendation puts additional emphasis on social solidarity. In 1995, the Social Security Council released the report entitled, “Reconstruction of Social Security Programs” (*The 1995 Recommendation*) that explains the basic philosophy of social security, as follows:

Social security programs have expanded to cover all people in

Japanese society. In addition, Japanese citizens are supposed to pay social insurance premiums, taxes, and support/build social security programs. To this end, Japanese citizens should fully understand social security programs, have a sense of ownership of these programs, and actively participate in them. It is also cooperation in societal context of mutual help to address difficulties that might be faced by any individual. In this sense, social security should be the proof of 21st Century's social solidarity that is beneficial for all people, created by all people, and supported by all people. This is the basic philosophy of social security for the 21st Century.

The 1995 Recommendation also states,

The most important thing is that all citizens should have the social security mindset; in other words, a strong sense of self-help and social solidarity. In addition to intra-generational mutual help, such as healthy people supporting sick people and working people supporting unemployed persons, there is intergenerational support, including public pension programs mostly dependent on payments from younger generations. In a society where most people live longer, those who have supported the elderly when they were young will be, in turn, pension beneficiaries in the next era. In other words, long-term social solidarity is the basis of social security programs. In addition, social solidarity is not a mutually dependent relationship, but giving "a helping hand," and living together with other people in a similar fashion to fulfilling responsibilities for their own, or for their family members. In this context, if the elderly make an effort to take care of themselves by maintaining good health and staying self-reliant, younger generations will be more willing to understand and support the elderly.

In the reform plan section, the 1995 Recommendation also addresses education, stating,

To foster the mindset of "caring about other people," or a "welfare spirit," and the concepts of cohesion and solidarity among citizens, efforts based on long-term perspectives are necessary. While respecting the self-motivation of each citizen, the government should implement with fostering "a social solidarity mindset" and provide welfare education in schools, corporations, local communities, and other locations centering on home education.

In particular, the phrase, "social solidarity" is frequently seen in the 1995 Recommendation. The recommendation recognizes social solidarity as basic relationship, mutual assistance, and cooperative relationships in the human society and calls for citizens to fully understand these relationships. In this context, "social solidarity" refers to public responsibilities, and stays as a moral standard.

When the 1995 Recommendation was released, various

criticisms emerged. Above all, was the criticism that the government intended to avoid public responsibility by using the phrase, "social solidarity," demanding spontaneous solidarity, or mutual help between citizens. When comparing the arguments of the 1995 Recommendation and those of the October 2005 MEXT report, "*Redesigning Compulsory Education for a New Era*," an interesting phenomenon is demonstrated. As for the objectives and principles of compulsory education, the MEXT report states,

Compulsory education has two purposes: Developing the character of individual citizens; and nurturing people to make up the nation and society. These two purposes remain unchanged in any period. Compulsory education plays an important role so that children are able to develop their character, be independent, cultivate their individuality, unleash their potential to its maximum, and build up the foundation to lead a happy life regardless of their career. It is necessary to foster citizens so that they will be able to strongly and affluently survive in a rapidly changing society by thinking and taking action on their own. At the same time, compulsory education should foster individual qualities necessary for building a democratic and peaceful nation and society.

It also emphasizes public responsibility by adding,

As compulsory education has these purposes, schools should provide high-quality education by striking a balance between knowledge, virtue, and a healthy body at any location in Japan and it must be a reliable location to which parents are able to send their children without anxiety. The central government needs to guarantee equal opportunity, quality assurance, and charge-free *free-of-charge education services as set forth in the Constitution so that citizens will have equal access to high-quality education. In particular, improvement in compulsory education is absolutely necessary as a safety net that guarantees a certain level of education to all citizens without regional gaps and prevents deteriorated inequalities and the creation of hierarchization.

On the other hand, the government's stance of nurturing citizens through compulsory education suggests that social solidarity based on individual freedom, that is, democracy, has not yet taken root in Japan. This Japanese-style solidarity is the same as the solidarity as a moral standard emphasized in Japan in the early 20th Century. When contemplating the meaning of "self-reliance" in developing individualized support plans for persons with disability, such Japanese-style solidarity is problematic.

In the mid 1990s, the government commenced social welfare structural reforms consistent with the aforementioned recommendation. In 1998, the Social

Welfare Basic Structural Reform Taskforce of the Central Social Welfare Council released an interim report entitled, “*Social Welfare Basic Structural Reforms*,” that outlined the reform principles. It stated:

“In a matured society, citizens should basically support their life by themselves under their own responsibility. However, due to problems in their daily life, citizens are sometimes unable “to stand on their own feet, with their own effort. Rather than protecting only a limited number of citizens as in the past, social security in the future should aim to provide social solidarity-based support for all citizens experiencing such difficulty and support their self-reliance so that each citizen will be able to lead his/her life in their own household or local community with the dignity as human beings, regardless of disability or gender.

The 2000 Social Welfare Act, which passed the Diet as a part of the Social Welfare Basic Structural Reform initiatives, gives higher priority to self determination of the consumer and choice of contract-based service suppliers, shifting away from traditional welfare services. In this context, the government is expected to provide support for this purpose. Related to this, Article 25 (The Right to Life, and state obligation of the state to guarantee that right), and Article 13 (i.e., respect for individuals, respect for life, freedom, and right to seek for happiness), expressed in the Japanese constitution are important. As mentioned in the preceding section, Article 13 originated from a civil right free from government intervention. However, by employing a different logic to Japanese-style welfare society theories (i.e., a shift from welfare services determined by local agencies to contract-based support chosen by the consumer), the Social Welfare Structural Reform emphasizes self-determination, self-responsibility, and social solidarity, while at the same time recognizing self-reliance.

Is the self-reliance of people with disabilities covered in Article 25? Or, is it covered in Article 13 of the Japanese constitution? This is an important difference. If it comes from social rights requiring government intervention, the public responsibility will inevitably expand relative to the past. In nature, it should be covered in both. A Japanese-style social welfare state must be based on the philosophy of the self-reliance of persons with disability who is respected even in social solidarity (as guaranteed by Article 13).

4. Potential for Social Solidarity in Japan

The 2000 “*Report of Taskforce on Appropriate Social Welfare for People requiring Social Supports*,” states the creation of new “public” concept,

It is necessary to restructure the ‘current relationships’ and seek for social welfare to include all people as society members (i.e., social inclusion) in a way to protect them from solitude,

isolation, exclusion, or conflict and bring about a healthy and cultural life. To this end, flexible operation of public programs as well as the restructuring of voluntary support schemes in local communities is necessary. In particular, local governments are expected to achieve a ‘mutual support society’ through broad participation of local residents to develop and operate regional welfare plans in accordance with the Social Welfare Act, which will come into force in April 2003. In addition, it is desirable to create a new ‘public’ concept by forming cooperative relationships and linkages among various programs, organizations, and groups in local communities, such as social welfare councils, local governments, NPOs, Co-ops, agricultural cooperatives, and volunteers.

As mentioned above, public-private affairs are both an old and new problem. Government intervention expenditure was introduced with the recognition of the government that “private” is under the control of the “public” due to private facilities’ long-term financial difficulties since the pre-war era and the public sector’s dependence on the private sector. In the 1970s, Japan managed “the dollar shock” and “oil shock” and enjoyed a period of economic prosperity. “Japan as Number One,” was phrase used by some analysts. After the subsequent “economic bubble,” Japan has suffered the same problems as experienced by other advanced nations. In Japan, as it took a longer time than anticipated to overcome the post-bubble economic recession, it was at the time of Hashimoto Administration that the government proposed six major reforms; these were economic structure reform, financial system reform, social security structural reform, fiscal structural reform, administrative reform, and education reform. A succession of prime ministers following the Hashimoto Administration implemented with these reform plans.

Education reform was the last initiative. On 26 October, 2005, the Central Council for Education released the report, “*Redesigning Compulsory Education for A New Era*,” which is a summary report setting forth future directions for education reform. This resulted in an amendment to the Basic Act of Education for the first time in the post-war era.

As education services for children with disability, special needs education is in accordance with the concept of Japanese-style social solidarity. But even now, “special education” is used from the context of Article 26 (the right to education). Individualized support plans care about persons with disabilities for their lifetime. In this sense, it is necessary to reaffirm that these plans serve as a bridge between education and social security, including welfare services. In addition, it is also necessary to understand the meaning of “self-reliance” or “support,” in the historical context of the welfare state.

IV. Background of Individualized Education Support Plans

1. History of Policy for Persons with Disabilities in Japan

(1) Background leading-up to the 2002 Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities

In December 2002, cabinet approved the, “*Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities*,” which inherit the concepts of “rehabilitation” and “normalization” writing in the “*New Long-Term Plan of Measures for Persons with Disabilities*” (1993-2002). This defines basic policy principles for persons with disabilities for the 10-year period from 2003 to 2012 to further implement (expand the opportunities for) with the social participation of persons with disabilities. This “*Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities*” describes priorities of problems to be solved by government, basic principles for each policy, and basic directions of possible policy actions. In this context, the principles of “normalization” means (a) creation of a cohesive society in which all persons, with and without disabilities, will support each other and respect their personality and individual character and (b) that persons with disabilities should enjoy human rights as an equal member of society, participate in society’s activities under self-selection and self-determination, and assume their responsibilities as social members. In addition, as cross-cutting viewpoints for addressing these issues and future directions, the plan also calls for the (a) implementing a barrier-free society, (b) the provision of consumer-centered support, (c) policy action appropriate to characteristics of specific disabilities, and (d) the promotion of comprehensive and effective policy action.

From the first basic program for persons with disabilities —“*Long-Term Plan of Measures for Persons with Disabilities*” (1982-1992)—to the aforementioned, “*Basic Plan for Persons with Disabilities*,” Japan’s basic plans on the policy actions for persons with disabilities are linked with the action plans/programs for persons with disabilities of the United Nations, and have been conducted in a seamless manner.

For example, “*Long-Term Plan of Measures for Persons with Disabilities (1982-1992)*” is linked with the “United Nations Decade of Persons with disabilities,” while “*New Long-Term Plan of Measures for Persons with Disabilities*,” is linked with, “The Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with disabilities.” The “Biwako Millennium Framework (2002),” a high-level intergovernmental meeting held in the final year of “The Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with disabilities” declared an extension of “The Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with disabilities (1993-2002)” for an additional period of 10 years (2003-2012), on the initiative of the Government of Japan. In addition, the Framework

participants also recommended regional policy actions of governments and stakeholders in the region to attain an inclusive, barrier-free society that respects the human rights of persons with disabilities.

In other words, “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities,” is in accordance with the action plan of the “Biwako Millennium Framework (2002).” In addition, the basic principle of the action plans/programs for people with disabilities of the UN, which underlie a series of these programs, is the spirit of “full participation and equality for persons with disabilities.”

In this context “individualized education support plans” have originated from the “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities” and the action plans/programs for persons with disabilities of the United Nations.

2. The origin of policy action for persons with disabilities in Japan

To understand the essence of UN action plans/programs for persons with disabilities, this section briefly explains the origin of the “normalization” concept, which serves as the basic principle of Japan’s policy actions for persons with disabilities.

“Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities,” only describes “normalization” as “a philosophy aimed at a society where persons, with or without disabilities, are able to equally participate in social activities and lead self-reliant lives,” but it does not explain in detail the necessary environment, code of conduct, or other principles of “normalization.” Hereinafter, this section outlines the normalization concept, which serves as basic principle of Japan’s policy actions for persons with disabilities.

(1) Overview

“Normalization” was first proposed by Bank-Mikkelsen in Denmark. At that time (1951-1952), Mikkelsen worked with a parent association of people with intellectual disability in Denmark, and he was asked to draft a paper demanding improvements to the Danish government policies on people with intellectual disability, namely “separation, detention and sterilization.” In this 1953 paper sent to the Minister of Social Affairs in Denmark, he used the term “normalization” for the first time. Mikkelsen severely criticized the ideological similarity of the policies of “separation, detention, and annihilation” and compared them with the policies imposed on the Jewish people in Nazi Germany¹²⁾.

Mikkelsen said “let’s provide citizenship to people with disabilities, let them live in ordinary houses in local communities, and let them have access to education.” Later, Nirje systematized Mikkelsen’s model and put it into a statutory form. Nirje defined normalization as “making living environment and local community life of people

with disabilities the same as, or almost the same as those of ordinary people, or making living environment or daily life conditions in a suitable manner for all of intellectually people with disabilities and other persons with disability.”

In other words, in addition to the living conditions of “house, job, and leisure,” as suggested by Bank Mikkelsen, normal life is defined from the viewpoint of normal life rhythms and normal developmental experiences in the lifecycle. In addition, as economic/environmental conditions, dignity as human beings and the world of men and women are also added, Nirje’s normalization concept has turned into a universal principle.

This way of thinking serves as the foundation of the 1971 UN “Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” and also underlies the, “full participation and equality” concept promoted in 1981 as the theme of the “International Year of Persons with Disabilities”⁸⁾.

The normalization principle was also introduced to North America by Wolfensberger. Adopting a sociological perspective, Wolfensberger redefined the principle of normalization and constructed a new theory he called Social Role Valorization (i.e., people with disabilities should play their own roles in any society). This means that people with disabilities play a twofold societal role; Individual changes to fulfill potentials of people with disabilities at maximum and enhance their abilities to adapt to the society; and social changes to create positive images on people with disabilities in society¹³⁾.

Taking this into consideration, Kouno states that education and welfare should “enhance [the] independence of people with disabilities” under the principle of “normalization”¹⁴⁾. According to Kouno, persons with disabilities have been passive in terms of education or welfare. As education and welfare is provided by those people in a stronger social position, it is generally thought that persons with disabilities should simply receive them (i.e., paternalism). In contrast, the normalization concept cares about and respects individual choices and intentions of persons with disabilities as much as possible. Education and welfare services for persons with disabilities should be provided by recognizing persons with disabilities (or their parents) as core stakeholders. In education and welfare, support should be provided to enhance the independence and free choice of persons with disabilities.

The aforementioned “Social Role Valorization” concept is similar to the concept of “empowerment,” because Social Role Valorization calls for the reexamination of all social resources and the provision of an appropriate environment so that persons with disabilities are able to make their own decisions and play a leading role in their life when they are empowered.

(2) Concept of empowerment

Empowerment is a concept derived from social work theory. Barbara B. Solomon defines empowerment as “the process whereby the social worker or other assisting professionals engages in a set of activities with the client that aim to reduce the powerlessness that has been created by negative valuations based on membership in a stigmatized group”¹³⁾. In this way, “empowerment” is not originally an exclusive topic for persons with disabilities.

The term “empowerment” was commonly used in the disabilities-related field when Justin Dart created a “Congressional Task Force on the Rights and Empowerment of Americans with Disabilities,” to seek for feasibility (to establish a rationale for the legislation, “Americans with Disability Act (1990).”

Under the empowerment concept, “since persons with disabilities also have high capabilities, the problem is how we should utilize these capabilities oppressed by society”¹⁵⁾. Furthermore, users and consumers of social welfare services (i.e., persons with disabilities) should be additionally empowered and should be able to take control over their accessible affairs and problems that impact on their lives. Empowerment also includes not only taking control of accessible matters, but also actively reaching-out to service providers to solve their problems, eliminating oppressive social frameworks, and protecting human rights, such as their civil rights.

3. History of the perception of disability by the Japanese people

The “Annual Report on Government Measures for Persons with Disabilities (1995 edition),” states that, “persons with disabilities are facing physical obstacles, institutional obstacles, cultural/information obstacles, and awareness obstacles in implementing policies based on normalization. By eliminating these obstacles, the government aims to create an equal society in which people with disabilities are able to freely engage in their own social activities.” This is also the basic concept of “Long-Term Plan of Measures for Persons with Disabilities.” When persons with disabilities are motivated to engage in social participation, the biggest problem is the mental barriers imposed by society. The annual report describes the history of how Japanese people have viewed persons with disabilities, as follows.

- 1) People with disabilities are useless and troublesome. They are looked at with curiosity, or sometimes with abhorrence. These prejudices are still not eliminated, even today.
- 2) Ordinary people feel sympathy or compassion for persons with disabilities and try to do something for unhappy people with disabilities from their superior

position, which gives an unpleasant feeling to people with disabilities and their families.

- 3) Nowadays, people have a “coexistence” perspective, recognizing that persons with disabilities have the same ambition and human rights as ordinary people and are friends living together with ordinary people.

The annual report clearly states that concepts (1) and (2) are similar because they recognize persons with disabilities to be different to ordinary persons and that they precisely represent “awareness barriers.”

In addition, from an educational perspective, other social practices, and ideologies, Hori (1997) categorizes and explains the perception of persons with disabilities, taking into consideration the concepts and actual practices for overcoming problems concerning persons with disabilities in the past¹⁶⁾.

- 1) The problems of people with disabilities are a threat to society. The purpose of education for children with disability is vocational training and adaptation to society, thereby denying people with disabilities’s pursuit of their human rights and happiness.
- 2) The problems of people with disabilities should be addressed by mitigating/overcoming their disabilities. This way of thinking derives from the idea that people with disabilities should also enjoy human rights and the theory that medical services, training, and education will mitigate and overcome their disabilities and encourage their rehabilitation into society.
- 3) People with disabilities should also enjoy an ordinary life. Their problems are recognized from the viewpoint of persons with disabilities themselves. Normal life should be guaranteed for people with disabilities, whilst recognizing them as the holders of human rights.
- 4) The self-reliance of persons with disabilities should be achieved. The problems of people with disabilities should be recognized from the perspective of the person with disability. This way of thinking is closely related with normalization movements and focuses on the self-reliance of persons with disabilities as possessors of human rights.

Of these perspectives proposed by Hori, Concept (4) is based on the empowerment philosophy and also has some common features with Concept (3). The annual report (Concepts 1-3) and Hori’s categories (Concepts 1-4) are incomplete in their expression, but current international and domestic normalization-based perspectives of persons with disabilities have significantly shifted from the previous disrespectful stance of ordinary people, and the recognition of persons with disabilities as special (Concepts 1 and 2), to

a more rational and “coherent” stance from the viewpoint of the person with disability (Concept 3).

In other words, there has been a shift from the perspective of the provider to that of the service user. In addition, people generally used to have a “physically unimpaired” person’s superiority-based viewpoint that persons with disabilities should improve/overcome their disabilities to participate in society, but such thinking has been replaced with the new concept emphasizing (cohesive) equality.

This ideological transition has also served as the background for new basic concepts in the “Appropriate Special Education for 21st Century (Final Report),” the “Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities,” the “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities,” and the “Appropriate Special Needs Education for the Future (Final Report).” In addition, Concepts 1-3 in the government annual report as well as Hori’s categories (1-4) fundamentally appear to be an historical (time-series) transition, but in fact they are also connected with our current perspectives on children with disability (children with disability’s education) and human rights.

4. Relationships with the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)

The December 2002 “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities,” states “To utilize ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) adopted in WHO (World Health Organization), in light of better understanding of disabilities and promoting appropriate measures, should be considered.” ICIDH has been replaced with ICF because the rehabilitation concept, which emphasizes directly working on functional disabilities to mitigate impaired abilities or social disadvantages, has been replaced with the normalization concept, which works on the remaining “mental/physical functions,” daily life “activities,” and social “participation,” to improve life function and living environment and, thereby, mitigate restraints on their activities and social participation and support life of service users. If we focus on a certain person with disabilities, the concept of ICF plus the “subjective dimensions” will yield specific image of “coherent” society as mentioned in the preceding section¹⁷⁾.

V. Conclusion

From a variety of directions, this paper has explored welfare, education, disability perspectives, human rights awareness, as well as other concepts and policy implementation underlying “individualized education support plans.” To conclude, this section discusses the notion of “community building,” one of the goals of individualized education support plans.

At present, “community building” is a keyword in the

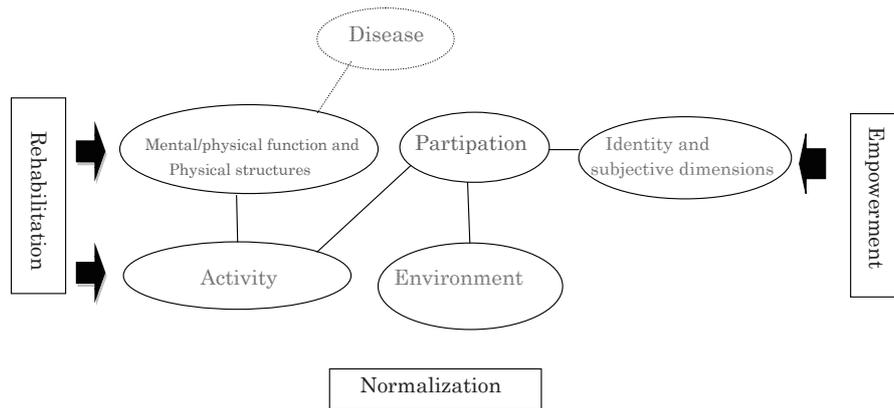


Figure 2 Structure and approaches for life functions and disabilities

health, welfare, and education fields. When looking at ideological genealogy behind individualized education support plan, future local communities should be imagined in which persons with or without disabilities will enjoy dignity as human beings and lead independent lives in their local communities. For this reason, the individualized education support plan is a tool for achieving the normalization concept in local communities (i.e., municipalities or smaller districts). Individualized education support plans are prepared for each and every child with disability. In this process, it is important that related organizations and local residents are motivated and actively engaged in dynamic activities.

The theoretical rationale to do so is based on the concept of “social capital” proposed by the American political economist, Putnam, in a survey of the decentralization of 20 local governments conducted over two decades in northern Italy in the early 1970s¹⁸⁾. Putnam demonstrated that while administrative service patterns were similar, their social, economic, and cultural contexts were significantly different, as were their performances as government entities. He used the term “social capital,” to explain this local government performance gap from the contexts in which the local governments were placed. He defined social capital as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.” He suggested, if they have rich social capital, people will voluntarily trust and cooperate with each other, and will implement with productive social relationships in the local community ranging from social to economic activities, in the local community, and leading to a well-functioning democracy¹⁹⁾.

We are now at a major turning point. Raising children with disability is never totally unrelated with problems in raising children without disability. As we engage in public education, we must have broad perspectives and address the quiet “needs” of children with disability immediately before us.

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