

Taiwan Educational Policy during Late Japanese Colonial Era: A Case Study of Compulsory Education System

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ABSTRACT

With reference to “*Gaimusho Myogadani Kenkyusho Kyuzo Kiroku*” and newspapers, this study traces the policy-making process of introducing compulsory education in Japanese colonial Taiwan, and explores how the major financial problem was solved. Moreover, this paper also describes the expansion of compulsory education and the reactions of the local society.

Despite having been proposed since Japan colonized Taiwan, the compulsory education issue was only taken seriously in the 1930s. Its implementation was fostered by the first local elections to be held in 1935, making not only the local elite but also the colonial government sense the urgency of introducing compulsory education. Added to this reason was the great need for human resources to meet wartime mobilization. Hence, the Bureau of Culture and Education set up a new investigation department to survey on the related issues. According to their reports and suggestions, the colonial government established an Interim Education Commission to draft the concerned policies. Approved by the Advisory Council of the Governor-General of Taiwan, the “Compulsory Education Guidelines” were promulgated and then put to practice in 1943.

The years between 1939 and 1943 witnessed tremendous growth of education facilities in each locality. The number of classes increased by 4,000 and the enrolment rate of school-age children rose from 50% to 70%. The funding for such large-scale expansion came mainly from the government but the general public who yearned for more education opportunities also made considerable financial contribution.

Keywords: Compulsory Education, *Gaimusho Myogadani Kenkyusho Kyuzo Kiroku*, Education Finance, Education Expansion, Kokumin Gakko