

Modernization, Equalization and Differentiation: Education and Employment of Students in Technical Schools of Taipei (1923-1945)

Li-ling Cheng

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the education and employment of students in technical schools of Taipei under the integrated education policy introduced by the Japanese colonial government since the 1920s. With the aims to extend the inland of Japan and to assimilate the colonial subjects, the integrated education policy was implemented in educational institutions from middle schools and above. In the literature, there has been much discussion on how Taiwanese were deprived of the opportunity to enter Taiwanese schools under the integrated education system. However, the changes experienced by educational institutions of different nature also varied. Prior to the integrated education system, Taiwanese students could still enjoy equal competition with their Japanese counterparts. Their rate of admission to domestic technical schools approximated that to similar educational institutions in Japan; implying a reasonable selection process for school entrance. Nevertheless, under the differentiated education system, Taiwanese faced unequal competition with the Japanese, and the admission rate of Taiwanese students to technical schools dropped substantially. On the other hand, under the equalized education system, Taiwanese graduates from technical schools could enjoy equal footing and fair competition with the Japanese. They also exhibited their ambitions in pursuit of equal treatment and professional development. During the Second World War, restrictions were imposed on both public and private institutions for employing graduates of technical schools and measures of apprentice mobilization were enforced, thus affecting the natural trend of practice and employment for technical school graduates. As a result of wartime mobilization, most students and graduates of technical schools became the journeymen and technical staff in military supply factories.

Keywords: Modernization, Equalization, Differentiation, Integrated education system, Technical Education, Technical Schools of Taipei