



Title	A Qualitative Investigation of Japanese Nutrition Teachers' In-Service Professional Development and Distinctive Practices for Tokkatsu Activities Related to Food Education and Food Sustainability in Japanese Schools.
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Abstract of Thesis

Name	(WAFAA MOHAMED ABDELMOTALEB GAD ABDO)
Title	<p>A Qualitative Investigation of Japanese Nutrition Teachers' In-Service Professional Development and Distinctive Practices for <i>Tokkatsu</i> Activities Related to Food Education and Food Sustainability in Japanese Schools.</p> <p>(日本の学校における食育および食品の持続可能性に関する特別活動のための日本の栄養教諭の校内研修と特徴的な実践に関する質的調査)</p>
<p>Abstract of Thesis</p> <p>The Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP) is one of the important initiatives within the broader and more comprehensive framework of Egyptian education reform. This partnership was launched in 2016 with the aim of using the best education practices from other countries to improve the Egyptian education system. As part of this initiative, Egypt sought Japan's expertise and assistance in adopting its holistic approach to child development and implementing the <i>Tokkatsu</i> principles in Egyptian schools, as well as supporting the professional development of teachers and staff in Egyptian educational institutions to ensure that these transformative practices are effectively implemented. Egypt's focus on holistic child development included not only the development of schoolchildren's scholastic and intellectual outcomes, but also extended to addressing the students' health and nutrition. As a result, the EJEP initiative prioritized the health development of Egyptian schoolchildren as well as the performance of Egyptian teachers, recognizing the interconnectivity of education, well-being, and effective school environments. Building on this focus, the current study aims to conduct a critical analysis of the professional and pedagogical practices for <i>Tokkatsu</i> activities related to Shokuiku and food sustainability with an emphasis on in-service training programs offered to nutrition teachers in Japan, with the goal of informing the implementation of teacher training programs in Egypt to facilitate effective <i>Tokkatsu</i> adoption.</p> <p>The study adopted the qualitative approach for data gathering. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were carried out with expert nutrition teachers in four different cities across Osaka Prefecture. Thematic analysis was used to gain a full understanding and thorough insights into nutrition teachers' in-service training programs, as well as their professional and pedagogical practices for <i>Tokkatsu</i> activities associated with food education and food sustainability in Japanese schools.</p> <p>The study found that nutrition teachers engage in regular training programs that are 1) formally regulated, 2) comprehensive, encompassing all aspects of their daily responsibilities related to ensuring and promoting students' health, and 3) flexible, allowing teachers to choose courses based on their individual needs and preferences. In addition, the study found that nutrition teachers had positive perspectives toward professional training courses because 1) the courses were effective and supportive in terms of training modalities, and 2) the content was significantly relevant and up-to-date, enabling them to perform their educational and nutritional roles in promoting school students' health. Furthermore, in terms of nutrition teachers' pedagogical practices, the study found that all of the distinctive features of in-service training programs play an essential role in empowering nutrition teachers to effectively implement <i>Tokkatsu</i> and food education in their school settings. The study also found that nutrition teachers use varied pedagogical practices that focus on fostering authentic, real-world experiences and linking theoretical frameworks such as sustainable development goals to practical activities. In conclusion, in-service training programs for nutrition teachers in Japan are structured, comprehensive, and flexible. They serve an important role in strengthening nutrition teachers' professional and pedagogical practices in order to successfully implement <i>Tokkatsu</i>, food education, and food sustainability in schools. Hence, empowering nutrition teachers to significantly contribute to promoting students' health and holistic development.</p> <p>Keywords: Nutrition Teachers, In-Service Professional Development, <i>Tokkatsu</i>, Food Education, Food</p>	

Sustainability, Japanese Schools

論文審査の結果の要旨及び担当者

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論文審査の結果の要旨

Title of the dissertation: A Qualitative Investigation of Japanese Nutrition Teachers' In-Service Professional Development and Distinctive Practices for *Tokkatsu* Activities Related to Food Education and Food Sustainability in Japanese Schools.

The background to this research is the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP) which has been introducing Japanese educational practices into Egyptian schools as part of a wider program of educational reform. Launched in 2016, the number of schools operating as Egyptian Japanese Schools under the partnership had grown to 100 schools as of 2024, covering around 13,000 students. *Tokkatsu* (特別活動) activities have been introduced into these schools, including the Japanese school lunch system, which is linked to food education (食育) and food sustainability education.

Wafaa Abdo received a scholarship under this partnership to conduct doctoral research on the in-service training of nutrition teachers within the framework of *Tokkatsu* in Japan to subsequently create training programs for Egyptian teachers. Her disciplinary background is food education, and she has worked as a teacher trainer at her university in Egypt.

The aim of this research was to conduct a 'critical analysis of the professional and pedagogical practices for *Tokkatsu* activities relating to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability with an emphasis on in-service training programs offered to nutrition teachers in Japan'. The study objectives to realise this aim were:

1) To examine the role of nutrition teachers in the implementation of *Tokkatsu* activities related to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability
 2. To analyze the content of in-service training programs offered to nutrition teachers in Japan
 3. To investigate the main teaching methods and strategies used to conduct training programs for nutrition teachers in Japan. 4. To study the professional and pedagogical practices of nutrition teachers in Japan in relation to implementing *Tokkatsu* activities related to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability. 5. To discuss the effectiveness of in-service training programs offered to nutrition teachers in Japan in terms of empowering them to implement *Tokkatsu* activities related to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability.

The research questions were:

RQ 1: What in-service training programs are offered to Japanese nutrition teachers, and how do they perceive them?

RQ 2. What are the professional and pedagogical practices of Japanese nutrition teachers in implementing *Tokkatsu* activities related to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability in schools?

A qualitative methodology was employed with semi-structured interviews conducted with 13 nutrition teachers working in elementary or junior high school in 4 cities in Osaka Prefecture (9 teachers) or were working full-time in school lunch centres in one of the 4 cities in the prefecture (4 teachers). The interviews were conducted between November 2020 and April 2021. This was during the COVID-19 pandemic making it difficult to reach participants who were busy dealing with pandemic measures. The interviews were conducted in Japanese with an interpreter. The interpreter supported Wafaa in translating the transcribed data into English.

The thesis is made up of 7 chapters. Each chapter is well-structured and polished in terms of academic writing style. The first chapter outlines the background to issues relating to health and education in contemporary Egypt and the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP) partnership's attempts to reform education with a focus on holistic education, health and nutrition. The second chapter covers a range of issues including an overview of school health and nutrition education in Japan, the pedagogical practices of nutrition teachers through *Tokkatsu* activities, and broader issues such as the characteristics of effective in-service training and the focus on sustainable food education. There is also a comparison of food education and school feeding practices between Japan and other countries. Overall, this literature review chapter follows a logical line of analysis and demonstrates a high level of engagement with the existing literature on the topic. It reveals the author's depth of knowledge in the area as well as her academic writing skills. My only criticism would be that there are places where the descriptions of the Japanese system are unveiled without sufficient critical analysis. Japanese schools are not without their problems, including absenteeism, but negatives were not covered.

Chapter 3 introduces the research design, sampling and data collection method, analytical method and ethical considerations. The coverage is solid and covers all the main items needed for such a chapter. We are told that the research employs a philosophy of critical realism, but there is only superficial reference to this in the results sections.

Chapter 4 and 5 report on the results of the study. Chapter 4 provides insights into the range, frequency and modalities of in-service training programs for nutrition teachers based on the interview data. This chapter is addressing RQ 1. The thematic analysis of the data revealed three overarching themes: 1) attendance disparity in ongoing professional training, 2) the key topics in training programs from teachers' perspectives, 3) commonly used educational strategies in training programs, and 4) teachers' viewpoints on the efficacy of professional training. The interview data is then used to elaborate on each of these themes and to take the analysis deeper. The data reveals the creativity and innovation that goes into the delivery of the courses and the high evaluation of the courses as a result. The autonomy of the teachers to chart their own professional development through their choices over what to attend is key finding. The providers of the courses are themselves nutrition teachers, seconded to the Board of Education, and they are well placed to respond to the needs of the teachers. The data transcripts reveal enthusiasm, confidence and high motivation on the part of the teachers to be constantly improving their skills and knowledge. The organization and presentation of the data is very well done. It backs up the claims made by the researcher.

The second results chapter responds to RQ2, including two sub-questions: 2.1. What professional practices do nutrition teachers employ in performing *Tokkatsu* duties related to *Shokuiku* in Japanese schools?

2.2. What pedagogical practices do nutrition teachers employ in teaching *Tokkatsu* activities related to *Shokuiku* and food sustainability in Japanese schools? This focuses on the school lunches and the teachers' organizing and implementation in this area. The researcher gained detailed responses in this area and organized the results thematically as follows:

- 1) the nutrition teachers' involvement in the preparation of school lunches,
- 2) the procedure used for creating school lunch menus; and
- 3) the notable features associated with the school lunch arrangements.

The thematic structuring of the data made it highly accessible, and the data itself was rich in detail. The interview data reveals the high level of time commitment to planning and creating menus for the school lunches that source local ingredients and reduce food waste. The teachers' elaborated on the criteria used for this planning which included 'calories, nutrients, taste, food allergy and safety, feasibility, and the prescribed budget, as well as the implementation of seasonal and local ingredients, traditional Japanese recipes, and special occasion dishes' p109.

Section 5.2 examined the pedagogical practices relating to *Shokuiku*. This focused primarily on 'educating students on the basics of healthy eating and food safety, providing practical guidance on how to improve eating habits, including addressing students' habit of skipping breakfast, and developing students' practical skills through cooking education' (p116). Again, the data is well laid out and the chapter is highly readable. Interview citations are detailed and translated with attention to speech patterns. Student participation was a key component of the teachers' pedagogy with many 'hands-on' activities (P118-119). The effectiveness of the teaching is assessed by

looking at the comments and writings by students in their notebooks. Teaching content may be modified based on this 'feedback'. The content and the hands-on approach mean that *Shokuiku* is often popular with students, even those not academically strong (p122).

Section 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 explore the links between *Shokiku* and *Tokkatsu*. This shows how the teachers link up various aspects of teacher, formal and informal, emphasizing flexibility and diversity of approaches (p127). Section 5.3.1.1 on teaching food sustainability was very interesting and shows how these teachers are doing leading work, but probably without much recognition. The practices are exemplary and should be a model for food education elsewhere in the world. This section really does show the high value of the research and bringing these insights to the non-Japanese food education community. The theme of promoting personal accountability in food consumption and waste reduction was similarly a model example of good practices. The attention to using local and seasonal foods was outlined in detail (p140-141) Again, we can see why it takes time to plan lunch menus when so many considerations go into this activity. I have not seen any research to-date that shows this level of detail about how the nutrition teachers approach their work and the many principles and pedagogical considerations that guide it. As with the first results chapter, the analysis and presentation of data is excellent. There are important insights and generation of new knowledge in this work.

Chapter 6 is a discussion chapter. Here the distinctive features of the in-service teaching programs and their positioning in the teachers own construction of themselves as professionals is outlined. The next part focuses on the pedagogical practices of the teachers' employ. In both sections there is engagement with the research literature on professional training as well as teaching and learning. The final part of the discussion summarizes the key findings that highlight the high level of teacher autonomy, flexibility, and professionalism, as well as their important contribution to *Shokiku* and pedagogies that support *Tokkatsu*. The final chapter is the conclusion and offers a summary of main findings and recommendations for future research. Through this study we can understand the high value of the school lunch system as a pedagogical vehicle to teach a variety of values and principles. It also imparts knowledge, but also encourages students to discover for themselves. The nutrition teacher's critical role in this practice is clarified.

Wafaa Abdo has published part of this research in an article entitled Egypt's Legacy of Dependence and Educational Underdevelopment in the International Journal of Education Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol 5., No. 1, 2022.

The overall conclusion of the Committee was that there are some important, original findings in the study. The thesis is interesting, polished in writing style and provides a wealth of information about the practice of *Shokiku* and *Tokkatsu*, the role of nutrition teachers, and the important role of in-service training in ensuring they are up-to-date and motivated. We were unanimous that the research and the thesis meet the standards for the award of a PhD in Human Sciences.