

# A Contrastive Study on the Present Situation of Well-being Education Between China and Japan\*

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**Abstract**—As the first longest-lived country, Japan is facing even more serious aging problem, which lead to the enormous manpower and financial resources invested in the well-being education. The relatively systematic well-being education in Japan has solved some of the aging problems, but it also shows some other problems. The aging population in China is also increasing year by year, so we can get some enlightenment and the future direction by understanding the current situation of well-being education in Japan.

**Keywords**—China; Japan; well-being; education

## I. INTRODUCTION

What is well-being? In China, many people interpret well-being as welfare and confuse these two words. Whether they mean the same thing or not, we can get the answer from the definition of the two words. The definition of welfare in Baidu is the interests of life, specifically refers to the interests of taking care of the worker's lives, generally including paid holidays, health insurance and so on. However, the definition of well-being is relatively simple that it means happiness, benefits and welfare. However, some explanations are added after that well-being also represents a happy and peaceful living environment, a stable and safe social environment, and a relaxed and open political environment. It can be seen that welfare and well-being are two different concepts. Although they have similarities, welfare mainly focuses on the material conditions of people's lives, while well-being focuses more on people's living conditions and quality of life.

In Japanese, well-being is interpreted as that social members can obtain the enriched, satisfied and secured state of life through public services equally, and also can be defined as to create a happy living environment through public assistance. There are definitions of social well-being in the narrow sense and broad sense. The definition in the narrow sense is to provide public services to the people in need, i.e. the vulnerable groups, from the perspective of guaranteeing basic human rights (especially the right to life). The definition in the broad sense is to solve the general life problems of the whole people.

Whether in China or Japan, the definition of well-being is simply to create a happy living environment for everyone, but a happy living environment cannot be created only by the

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power of a few individuals. Well-being education can improve the well-being awareness of the whole people, and cultivate the ability of social members to create a happy environment, face and solve various problems in life together.

## II. NECESSITY OF WELL-BEING EDUCATION

On November 29, 2012, General Secretary Xi Jinping formally put forward the important guiding ideology and ruling idea of "China Dream" at the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. On March 27, 2014, at the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and France, General Secretary Xi Jinping said, "the Chinese Dream is the dream of pursuing happiness, and also the dream of every Chinese. Our aim is to give everyone the opportunity to develop themselves and contribute to society, to share the opportunity to live a brilliant life, to share the opportunity to make dreams come true, to guarantee people's equal rights in participation and development, to safeguard social fairness and justice, to make development achievements more equitable and benefit all people, and to move steadily towards common prosperity." Well-being is happiness, so the dream of pursuing happiness is the dream of pursuing well-being. Well-being education is of great importance and necessity if we want to achieve the well-being of the whole people.

Since 1970, Japan has entered a stage of high-speed economic growth. At the same time, some problems have begun to arise among Japanese teenagers. To sum up, there are five kinds, namely (1) the weakening of interpersonal relationship and self-expression; (2) the loss of self-existence; (3) the loss of sense of achievement; (4) the weakening of group consciousness and sense of belonging; (5) the weakening of basic life skills.

In 1993, Japan conducted a survey on parenting awareness among adolescents. As a result, only 22.6% of adolescents chose "whatever happens, I will support my parents".

In order to solve these problems, Japanese society began to pay attention to welfare education. In 1996, the educational guidelines put forward by the Central Review Committee of Japan clearly pointed out that "young people must learn to be self-disciplined, to understand cooperation with others, and to have a heart care for others." As well as to create opportunities for teenagers to contact with society as much as possible, such as requiring students to participate in various volunteer

activities and communicate with the disabled and the elderly people.

### III. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF WELL-BEING EDUCATION IN CHINA AND JAPAN AND THE CURRICULUM OF SCHOOLS

Ideological and moral lessons in elementary school and volunteer activities in university can be regarded as well-being education. Ideological and moral education is a compulsory course, but in our country, college students' participation in volunteer activities is currently a voluntary form, not a compulsory course of the school. Well-being education in colleges and universities is also in progress that many of them have set up majors related to well-being education. For example, Dalian Vocational and Technical College has set up the major of geriatric service and management since 1999, and more than 100 colleges have also set up this major, such as Beijing Geriatric Security Vocational College and Tianjin Sino-German Vocational and Technical College. But most of these colleges are vocational colleges or junior colleges, aiming to training talents that have an international perspective, be familiar with the elderly policies and regulations, and the operation and management of pension institutions. Courses opened include introduction to sociology, introduction to gerontology, social work for the elderly, social psychology, policies for old people, presbyiatrics, management of geriatric welfare institutions, geriatric nursing and geriatric health care, and social survey, etc.

In 2010, the College of Humanities of Northeast Normal University in Jilin Province established the Well-being College, which opened the first undergraduate education of social well-being in the whole country, with the characteristics of "elderly well-being" and "international education". The university has adopted the joint cultivation methods of "3+1", "2+2" and so on with many universities in Japan and South Korea, aiming to cultivate innovative undergraduate social work professionals (direction of social well-being) with a sense of social responsibility, solid professional background and international vision. Courses opened include high-end nursing facilities for the old people, health industry development, public welfare and social security, social psychology and so on.

In Japan, according to the Japanese school education law, high schools need to implement general education and specialized education. Since 1999, Japan has added well-being courses to the teaching catalogue of high school specialized education. The following seven courses are offered.

#### A. Basics of Social Well-being

The most basic course is the well-being curriculum. The contents are modern society and social well-being, the concept and significance of social well-being, the history of social well-being, the present situation and topics of social well-being, the backbone of social well-being and the prospect of well-being society, etc. The total credit is 4 credits and the required class hours are 140.

#### B. System of Social Well-being

In this course, you mainly study the status quo of social well-being and the laws and systems related to well-being. Courses include laws and systems for social well-being, the well-being of the elderly and the disabled, the well-being of children and families, policies related to social well-being, and facilities for social well-being. The total credit is 2 credits and the required class hours are 70.

#### C. Assistance Technology of Social Well-being

This course helps one to learn specific assistance skills, recreational activities, communication technology and other related content. The content of the course includes the significance and methods of social well-being assistance technology, the methods and practices of social well-being assistance technology, the thinking methods of recreational activities, and the methods of communication. The total credit is 4 credits and the required class hours are 140.

#### D. Basic Nursing Care

This course helps one to learn the basic knowledge and skills of nursing care. The content of the course includes the meaning and function of nursing care, the life and characteristics of the elderly, the life and psychology of the disabled, the self-reliance assistance and nursing care, and the system of maintaining social life, etc. The total credit is 6 credits, and the required class hours are 210.

#### E. Practice of Social Well-being

Through the on-site learning of social welfare facilities, the theoretical content learned in the classroom is applied to practice. The course includes the basic and practice of nursing care, the nursing care of the elderly and the disabled and on-site practice of social well-being. The total credit is 6 credits, and the required class hours are 210.

#### F. Exercise of Social Well-being

Through the study of the subject or case, we can cultivate students' ability to solve problems in practice. The total credit is 3.

#### G. Social Information Processing

Use computers and other devices to learn how to retrieve information related to social well-being and develop specific nursing care plans. Course contents include highly intelligent communication society and well-being services, computer construction and usage, well-being services and computer applications, etc. The total credit is 2 credits and the required class hours are 70.

The purpose of opening these well-being courses in Japanese high schools is to cultivate students' attitudes to actively solve various issues related to social well-being and contribute to the development of social well-being while learning basic knowledge and technology related to social well-being and understanding the concept and significance of social well-being.

In 1957, the Central Short-term University of Social Work in Aichi Prefecture of Japan officially changed its name to Japan Well-being University and opened the major of social well-being, became the first four-year university in Japan to offer the major of social well-being and the first undergraduate education of well-being. At present, there are 38,000 graduates majoring in social well-being in Japan Well-being University who have engaged in all walks of life. Until 2018, there were over 80 universities in Japan that opened well-being major like social well-being and nursing well-being and so on, including 4 public universities like Iwate Prefectural University and Nagano University, and 22 well-being universities like Tohoku Fukushi University and Shizuoka University of Welfare. The “well-being university” is to carry out the education of well-being in Colleges and universities, and the majors offered are also related to well-being. There are many well-being related majors, such as social well-being, education well-being, regional well-being, medical well-being, health well-being and so on. Take Tohoku Fukushi University as an example, located in Miyagi-ken Sendai-shi of Japan, it is a private university of Buddhism, with the educational concept of “working together to build a society that supports each other and makes everyone feel meaningful.” The undergraduate course is divided into four departments, namely, the Department of Comprehensive Well-being, the Department of Comprehensive Management, the Department of Education and the Department of Health Science. Under the Department of Comprehensive Well-being, there are three disciplines, namely, social well-being, social psychology and well-being administration. Courses opened include well-being law, well-being psychology, well-being sociology, social well-being history, regional well-being theory, general medicine, nursing technology, well-being appliances and life assistance, home economics, etc. Under the Department of Comprehensive Management, there are two disciplines, namely, well-being industry management and well-being information management, and courses opened include the theory of regional co-creation of well-being, the theory of international well-being, the theory of industrial well-being management, the basis of social investigation, the theory of NPO, the theory of international cooperation, the theory of well-being management and so on. There is only one discipline under the Department of Education, which is pedagogical. Courses opened include children family well-being theory, social well-being theory, well-being sociology, interpersonal relationship theory, family assistance theory, and moral guidance methods, etc. Under the Department of Health Science, there are three disciplines: health care, rehabilitation and medical management. Courses opened include public health, cognitive psychology, social well-being theory, regional well-being theory, well-being volunteer activities, the well-being of the elderly, children and the disabled people, and social security, etc.

#### IV. WELL-BEING RELATED VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT

At present, there are 140 vocational qualifications according to the national vocational qualification catalogue of China, of which 59 are for the professional and technical personnel and 81 are for the skilled personnel. Among the 140

occupations, the well-being related occupations are social workers professional qualification, maternal and infant health care technical service qualification, health counseling service personnel (health administrators), rehabilitation and correction service personnel, health service personnel (health care regulators), life care service personnel (orphans and disabled children caregivers, infant caregivers, nurses) and so on.

In Japan, the well-being related national qualifications are massager, speech therapist and audiologist, acupuncturist, therapist, artificial limb fitter, social well-being practitioners, visual trainer, well-being equipment operator, health care practitioner, judo restorer, mental health well-being practitioner, physiotherapists, etc. There are also some official and non-governmental qualifications, such as nursing care support specialist, visiting nursing care and so on. Among the national qualifications, the social well-being personnel, the nursing care well-being personnel and the mental health well-being personnel are the three major well-being personnel in Japan.

Social well-being personnel and nursing care well-being personnel are the national qualifications determined by the Law on Social Welfare Personnel and Intermediary Welfare Personnel passed by Japan in 1987. Mental health well-being personnel are the national qualifications determined by the Law on Mental Health Welfare passed by Japan in 1997.

- Social Well-being Personnel

Also called certified social worker. They are mainly responsible for advisory services on well-being issues, as well as guidance and liaison with the well-being services industry.

- Nursing Care Well-being Personnel

Providing high-quality care services to those who need in facilities for the elders and disabled by the professional knowledge acquired.

- Mental Health Well-being Personnel

Also called certified mental health social worker, mainly responsible for mental health care in the field of medical or well-being counseling, help people with mental disorders to return to society and maintain daily life.

According to the data released by the Japan Social Well-being Revitalization and Examination Center until March 2018, there were 221,251 people qualified as social well-being workers, 1,558,897 of them are nursing care workers and 80,891 are mental health workers. In 2018, the total number of applicants for social well-being examination was 43 937, and 13 288 of them passed the examination and received the qualification; the qualified rate was 30.2%. The total number of applicants for the nursing care well-being examination was 92 654, and 65 574 were qualified, with a qualified rate of 70.8%. The total number of applicants for mental health well-being is 6992, and the number of qualified persons is 4399, the qualified rate is 62.9%.

From the employment status, there are a lot of work related to well-being, such as work in social welfare and non-public welfare institutions like nursing homes, orphanages, welfare

homes for the disabled, as well as theoretical research in education industry and social well-being development.

According to the survey results in Japan, the majority of people who has well-being qualifications engage in work related to the well-being of the elderly. 84% of those who hold nursing caring qualifications are engaged in work related to the well-being of the elderly, 43.7 % of those who hold social well-being qualifications are also engaged in work related to the well-being of the elderly, and 17.3 % and 14.7% are engaged in work related to the well-being of the disabled and medical work respectively. People with mental health well-being qualifications have more choices. More than 30% of them are engaged in work related to the well-being of the disabled and medical care, and nearly 40% of them are engaged in administrative work, education-related work and regional well-being-related work. The average annual income is about 4.76 million yen for social well-being workers, 2.5 million yen for nursing care workers and nearly 4 million yen for mental health care workers.

## V. CONCLUSION

According to the Statistics Bureau of the Ministry of General Affairs of Japan, the total population of Japan was 126.71 million by September 2017, with a decrease of 210,000 people, but the elderly population (over 65 years old) has reached 35.14 million, with an increase of 570,000, accounting for 27.7% of the total population, of which more than 2 million people were over 90 years old.

By the end of 2017, the elderly population over 65 years old in China is 158 million, accounting for 11.4% of the total population. It is estimated that by 2050, the total elderly population will probably double.

With the increase of the elderly population, there will be a large demand for well-being workers, especially in the field of nursing care. In 2000, there were only 210,000 nursing practitioners in Japan, but the number of nursing practitioners had exceeded 1.3 million by 2014. According to a survey by Japan's Ministry of Postnatal Labor, the number of nursing practitioners needed may reach nearly 2.5 million by 2025.

At present, there are more than 1.5 million people in Japan who hold the national well-being qualifications, but many people have gradually left the post. At present, only 700,000 people are engaged in this work. That is to say, at present, more than 700,000 workers in Japan's pension facilities are not with certain qualifications. There are many reasons for resignation, such as the incompatible incomes, often staying up late, don't understand by family members, poor working environment, often need to face death and so on. In Japan, how to solve these problems has become the biggest issue.

The aging problem in China is not as serious as in Japan, but if we let it go, we will have to face the same problem sooner or later. Should we have to rethink about and strengthen the well-being education in China?

First of all, we can start the well-being education from childhood, cultivate children's thinking for others, let them learn to accept and be inclusive. Well-being courses can be

added in the junior and senior high schools so as to broaden the scope of well-being education. In addition, the well-being education is only opened in some colleges, few in the undergraduate education and can be increased accordingly. For those who are already engaged in well-being related industries, first of all, we should improve the treatment, working environment, and require them to be trained, so as to improve the quality of service to a certain height. The government can also introduce some preferential policies to attract people to engage in well-being industries.

Japan has started the well-being education for people from their senior high school, and the education has been flourishing in the colleges and universities, but even so, it has encountered such serious problems. The aging problem in China will be even more serious in the future, so we must start right now to make certain plans to face the aging problem.

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