CHAPTER IV
STATE INVOLVEMENT IN JAPANESE HIGHER EDUCATION

In the 1990s the Japanese government policy was largely preoccupied with economic issues especially, to improve its economic competitiveness on a global scale. Workforce training was the major focus of the government while formulating policies concerning higher education. Also, the central and local governments directed universities and colleges to alter institutional practices and become more productive and efficient.

The state-influence or behaviors towards higher education can be of two types: the interventionary state and the facilitatory state. In the form of interventionary state, government is actively involved in institutional activities and actions, intervening directly to ensure such outcomes as economic efficiency, student access and accountability. The interventionary state can be interpreted as an instrument of economic interests and particularly capitalism. It may be seen as an agent of policy influencers of higher education-- these include the interests of business and students as well as state and institutional officials. With regard to higher education, governments’ social policy as well as economic policy and other actions attempt to reinforce the authority, political longevity and social control of the state. On the other hand, from the point of view of facilitatory state, although workforce training and economic competitiveness may indeed reflect the state’s imposition of capitalistic behaviors on institutions, positive


support of funding and students policies could be seen as expressions of social policy.

Government involvement in university is so much that at times it seems that the university has no autonomy. The relations between the state and universities are cooperative and conflicting because of their uneven nature. Education is a responsibility of the state and it is also the responsibility of the state to create an appropriate environment for scientific development and to set guidelines for scientific policies. The relation between government and the university is not always easy. The government wants to see results on its investment but the university on the other hand wants to protect its autonomy.

In the context of higher education, Japan recognizes the significance of education within the larger social and political infrastructure of the country. Because education provides the source of ‘national power’, with the increasing economic pressure on the Japanese economy from world markets bureaucrats are reassessing the role of higher education in the national infrastructure. Japanese Ministry of Education is actively involved in bringing about structural changes in the higher education which is more suited to the contemporary society. It desires to raise the quality of education and research in Japan which is on par with its western counterparts. The University Council 1998 report stated “Japanese universities must elevate the level of education and research and develop side by side with highly ranked university of the world in the 21st century” (MOE 1998). In 1885, the first education minister of Japan, Mori Arinori stated that

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“Education in Japan is not intended to create people accomplished in the techniques of the arts and sciences, but rather to manufacture the persons needed by the state”.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{IV.1 REFORM INITIATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT}

The post war reforms followed the US system as their model and under the new system rapid progress was made in improving educational standards. Higher education was also expanded based on a policy of developing human resources to meet the objectives of the state. This rapid quantitative expansion gave birth to a variety of strains and in an effort to overcome them, the government of Japan has been engaged in reform initiative. Currently it is engaged in a reform initiative with a long-term view toward the 21\textsuperscript{st} century\textsuperscript{8}.

In the past the focus of discussion was either on the educational system itself or on its relationship with other social systems, especially the economy. The educational system was asked to provide a higher level of efficiency in selecting and training the workforce needed to achieve the rapid growth of the economy and to progress toward equality of educational opportunity. The continued expansion of the educational system was the main means for developing human resources. However, after continual growth for a century, it is neither efficiency nor equality but a “crisis” in education that is the focus of the current reform debate.\textsuperscript{9}


\textsuperscript{9} Ikuo Amano, “Educational Crisis in Japan”, Cummings, W.K. ed., Educational Policies in Crisis (New York: Praeger, 1986), p. 41. Also, Kazuyuki Kitamura says that there are two groups of people .One of these groups holds the view point that there is no real crisis as such and it is an over reaction to the problem. But Kitamura taking the side of the other group emphasizes the point that presence of a high level of consciousness is necessary at this point of international situation.
In the field of higher education in Japan as a result of the campus unrest in the late 1960s, stemming from persistent student protests against “the old power structure” of academia and sweeping public criticism of university’s faculty's inability to cope with student violence, administrators and faculty after an initial hesitation began discussing ‘university reforms’. Reformers focused attention on the purpose of university education, governance involving student participation, curriculum change, finance, the relevance of research and teaching, and other issues mainly identified by students and external groups. Subsequently, by the onset of 1970s a number of reform plans were proposed and during the 1990s many of the reform plans were introduced.

IV.1a Higher Education Reform till 1970s

Japan’s post war higher education reform was formed after World War II, under the strong guidance and enforcement of the US-led Allied Forces. The major aim of postwar university reform was to transform Japanese higher education of elitism to institutions opened to the masses. In the new system, old college-preparatory schools, vocational colleges and normal schools were reorganized with existing universities into new university system and the elitism of the imperial university led to ‘open’ Japanese universities.

The campus strife of the late 1960s gave rise to publication of many reform reports by universities, governments, political parties, business circles, teachers and labour unions and other groups during the period from 1967 to 1970s. But Kitamura argues, the reform process reached a deadlock without bringing about required change immediately though, it paved the way for reform in the later period.
The university reform campaign in the 1970s dissipated as soon as student demonstrators were silenced by legislative measures enacted in 1969. These legislative measures were identified as the provisional measures concerning university administration, which empowered university presidents to handle campus problems by force if necessary. At the same time, the mass media, politics and the public turned their attention to more business issues in the 1970s such as pollution, social welfare, and the like. Overall, the reform movement was short-lived creating little substantial change in higher education and sustained research on university problems. The rest of the problems were left for the next generation to resolve.\textsuperscript{10}

Although the period of campus strife brought the issue of the university to the forefront of the national agenda, Japan did not mandate reform in higher education, by enacting laws in the way, as the French had.\textsuperscript{11} On 3 July, 1967 the Minister of Education, Kennoki Tosihiro, issued a formal request for advice (shimon) to the central council on education, calling on the MOE’s premier advisory organ to deliberate on basic guidelines for the development of an integrated educational system suited for contemporary society. This action culminated in the CCE’s publication of a comprehensive set of reform proposals in 1971, which effectively set the agenda for Japanese education policy-making in the 1970s and into the 1980s.\textsuperscript{12}

In 1971 the Central Council for Education (Chukyoshin) an advisory body to the minister of education, recommended many important


\textsuperscript{11} Hitoshi Osaki, “The Structure of the University Administration in Japan”, \textit{Higher Education}, Vol. 34, 1997, p.159.

\textsuperscript{12} Schoppa, n. 6, p. 172.
reform initiatives, to overcome the problem of higher education. The significant proposals were the national planning of higher education, public financial aids to private institutions, and the creation of several innovative universities representing new types, including the University of Tsukuba\textsuperscript{13} and the University of the Air. These measures characterize the first substantial, comprehensive policy on higher education, which had tremendous impact on its development in later period.

In the 1970's the Japanese government tried to instill greater flexibility in the existing university system to facilitate self-initiated reform. It also tried to create new concept universities to serve as models for university reform. To make the university system more flexible, the government relaxed the framework for the universities' curricula and internal organization with regard to regulation/standards and budgetary rules. In creating new-concept universities, the government put into practice many of the reform concepts that had emerged from the debate during the period of campus strife in the 1960s. It was also expected that the older universities would follow the new-concept universities. In addition to considering the proposals for the structural reform of higher education, the CCE also dealt with the issue of university administration. The CCE endorsed policies recommending that universities should be made more open (through the participation of

\textsuperscript{13}Tsukuba University was a new concept university proposed by CCE in which the administration was to be more rational and open. It was to be administered by strengthen executive composed not only of the president but also five vice-presidents. Personal decisions were to be made not by the faculties but a central personal committee. The president was to be advised by a university advisory body composed of individuals from out side the university. The whole organization of the university staff was to be restructured based not on the traditional faculty system but on a dual system with separate organization for teaching and research. For detail see, Schoppa, n.6, pp.195-96.
learned persons from outside the universities in their administration) and more rational (by strengthening central authorities).14

However, the government was not very successful in making the administration of universities very rational and open. It sought to establish a University Reform Promotion Council (*Daigaku Kaikaku Suishin Kaigi*) as a body to work with universities to encourage administrative reform, but was ultimately compelled to give up the idea due to continued protest from university officials who insisted that they should be totally free to develop their own reform plans.15

During 1970s, one of the major reforms of the government was the national subsidy to private institutions. At this time, the government policy towards private universities was 'no control, no support'. But as the rapid expansion of private universities was being financed mainly through escalating student payments, this triggered student protest and to address the cause of the conflict, the government formulated a new higher education plan which emphasised quality over quantity. So, it called for financial assistance to private universities while restricting their expansion and subsequently in the year 1975, the Private School Promotion Law was enacted whereby the government would subsidize a part of private universities' expenditures, including staff salaries. At the same time, the private school law was also amended, giving the Minister of Education power to regulate a university's authorized enrolment and size, over which the private universities had their own discretion. However with the granting of

subsidies, there was increasing in the Ministry’s responsibility and administrative functions over the private universities.\textsuperscript{16}

In the late 1960s when the Central Council for Education called for eliminating uniformity and promoting diversity in education, the then Minister of Education, Sakata Michita called it the “third major educational reform in Japan’s history.” This was followed by a government commissioned report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1970, which called for a more flexible and diversified curriculum with an emphasis on cooperation and creativity in the Japanese context.\textsuperscript{17} Thus, the reform in higher education in 1970s sought for more reform in due period.

\section*{IV. 1b Nakasone Reform Initiative}

In 1984, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro formed the Ad Hoc Council on Educational Reform (AHCE, \textit{Rinkyoshin}) to take more concrete comprehensive reform measures in response to a crisis in the schools and education system. During the period between 1985 and 1987 the AHCE covered number of issues- moral education, teacher training examination reform, liberalization, curriculum, lifelong education, the use of computers and technology in education, and internationalization.\textsuperscript{18}

During the Nakasone era, it was important for the new education programs to respond to the internationalization and information-ization of society. It was also important to liberalize reforms i.e. policies aimed at introducing a competitive mechanism into the


\textsuperscript{18} Tokutake, n. 8, p. 48.
education system. So, AHCE was totally committed to flexibilization (junankō) i.e. policies aimed at ending the uniformity of the content of Japanese education. The idea was central to the councils guiding philosophy of an emphasis on individuality. This flexibilization campaign of AHCE was - its recommendation calling for greater, decentralization (Chihobunken). Again, AHCE's proposals for expansion programs focused on graduate education, scientific research and programs to internationalize and informationize the schools.

Prime minister Nakasone had long been interested in education policy from a nationalist perspective and he felt that the postwar education system was failing to teach the new generation to accept traditional Japanese values, and he saw the 'occupation imposed' 6-3-3 system as symbol of Japan's defeat. Therefore, he proceeded for a radical solution to the nation's educational problem in view of a total clearance of the post war 'political accounts'. He issued his own 'seven point proposal for education reform', during his general election campaign. They are (i) Reform of the 6-3-3-4 school system (ii) An improvement in the system of high school entrance examinations (iii) Improvement of the university entrance examination system-including reform of the Kyotsuichiji entrance examination (iv) Incorporation of work experience activities and overnight camps into the education system (v) An increased emphasis on moral and physical education (vi) Continued promotion of the internationalization of education (vii) An improvement in the quality of teachers.19

19 Schoppa, n. 6, pp. 214-15.
Proposals for university reform was one of the big task of reform initiative of the Nakasone plan and Ad Hoc Council harshly criticized institutions of higher education, stating that university education lacks individuality and little research being done in Japan has achieved international recognition. It also stated that universities were largely closed rigid systems, insufficiently responsive to the needs of the society and the international community.  

The Ad Hoc Council had issued the following objectives for university reform: (i) The revision of university entrance exams, which would permit more differentiation between the examinations of various universities (ii) An internationalization of education with an increase of foreigners studying in Japan and of Japanese studying abroad, (iii) A development of 'lifelong learning' which would increase revenue for universities and provide a wider career opportunities (iv) the cultivation of both individuality and creativity within students.

Moreover, all of the reform proposals raised during the 1970s reform initiative were subjects of debate within the AHCE: stronger central administration, greater input from outside universities, reform of the system of general studies, the incorporation (hojinka) of the national universities and conversion of life time faculty positions to contracted posts. In addition, the liberalizationist position in the council was also with a new issue - a proposal that national universities be encouraged to rely on private endowments to provide extra support for their operations. But as in most of the cases the council was not able to endorse firmly any of these changes. Again, the rapid expansion of

20 Tokutake, n. 8, p. 48.
21 Doyon, n.17, p.454.
graduate universities, the grand scheme for incorporating technology into the schools needed more funds.

Nakasone's reform initiative had to compromise on many points in the face of challenges from different quarters. But the basic underlying differences of opinion about Prime Minister's education reform issues had not been solved despite the compromise.\textsuperscript{22}

The Nakasone education reform initiatives had several advantages over the education reforms initiative of 1970s. Built around a cabinet-level council rather than just an MOE council, it began with a much greater opportunity to build government-wide support for education reform. The council was also authorized to make policy recommendations on behalf of the entire government rather than just a single ministry. Nevertheless, the second initiative was not any more successful than the first because where the CCE was able to at least put together a substantive reform package-failing mostly in the implementation stage - the Ad Hoc Council did not even get that far. So most of its far-reaching ideas died down inside the council.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{IV.1c Higher Education Reform in 1990s}

The discussions and deliberations of the 1970s and 1980s laid the groundwork for the reform measures in the 1990s.

In 1991 the "university establishment standards" were extensively revised for the improvement of university education. They were (i) To enable universities to structure curricula that reflect their own educational ideals and objectives, it was decided that there should be no definition of subject areas such as general education and

\textsuperscript{22} Schoppa, n. 6, p.219.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, p.211.
specialized education, in the standards for the establishment of universities. It was also decided to discontinue the practice of requiring students to obtain a certain number of credits in each subject area as a prerequisite for graduation and to make the acquisition of a minimum total number of credits the only requirement. The university-council called for the formulation and publication of syllabi in an effort to improve the course content and teaching methods through faculty development. The enhancement of curriculum guidance the expansion of courses designed to improve information-processing and foreign language skills, the use of seminar-type teaching and the employment of teaching assistants (ii) Relaxation of criteria for credit calculation methods and course duration. Relaxation of criteria has allowed universities to rationalize their credit calculation methods and has facilitated experiments, practical training in skills studied in the classroom. The university council's recommendation in this area also called for greater flexibility with regard to course duration, including observance of the stipulation in the standards for the establishment of universities that course be completed in semester-length units. (iii) It was decided to allow universities to grant credits for study at institutions of higher education other than universities, provided that the educational standards is equivalent to that of university courses and the course content is considered educationally significant by the universities concerned. (iv) A process of self evaluation (which was also to be made available to the public) allowing universities to access how well they are achieving their goals (v) A loosening of strict government control over the organization of academic units and curricula (vi) An easing of the restrictions which limited the hiring process of faculty members
and the responsibilities they are allowed to maintain outside their departments.\textsuperscript{24}

The university council also recommended that the graduate school system be made more flexible and pointed out the need for substantial qualitative and quantitative improvements. A number of measures were implemented in response to its recommendation as per September 1989 amendments of the standards for the establishment of graduate schools. They were: (i) the definition of the aims of doctorate courses was expanded to include creation not only of researchers but also of human resources with advanced abilities who are capable of contributing to various sectors of society (professionals with advanced specialized skills). In addition, provision was made for the conferment of doctorate on people who had such skills (ii) It was decided to make two years the standard period for a master's degree programme but to allow exceptional students to complete programmes in a minimum of one year (iii) It was decided that non academic members of society who possess exceptional knowledge and experience in specialized fields and superior instructional skills in education and research should be eligible to teach in graduate schools. (iv) Masters degree course students should be able to undergo research instruction at other graduate schools or equivalent institutions of higher education for periods not exceeding one year, when this is deemed educationally valuable (v) To facilitate the establishment of independent graduate schools (universities that have

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Doyon, n. 17, p. 455.}
only graduate schools) and comprehensive standards were established concerning organizational structures, facilities and equipment.\textsuperscript{25}

Moving toward the 21st century, the Mombusho is now encouraging the building of relationships on the individual level based on understanding of foreign cultures and mutual respect. To accomplish these ends, it is also encouraging reform in foreign language education. Again, with regard to curricula reform number of measures are sought by Mombusho: (i) integration of curricula in which courses are systematically and organically linked (ii) establishment of new interdisciplinary courses (iii) enhancement of foreign language education (iv) promotion of information processing education (v) provision of diverse study opportunities for students through a credit transfer system between universities involved in inter-university tie ups. Moreover, after 1990s enhancing the quality of teaching has become the main concern. The reform measures are: (i) publication of syllabi offering students details about specific courses (ii) expansion of small group education in which the teachers are aware of individual students and there is more two way interaction between teachers and students (this has been noticeable in foreign language education) (iii) need for faculty development in which teachers work together to enhance their own teaching abilities (iv) increase in the use of multimedia as a teaching aid (v) classes held in foreign languages (vi) class evaluation by students.\textsuperscript{26}

So far the improvements in entrance examinations were concerned, the University Council in 1993 in its report 'Deliberations Concerning


\textsuperscript{26} Doyon, n. 17, p. 457.
the Improvement of University Entrance Examinations' advocated for (a) the promotion of the use of the National Centre of University Entrance Examinations (NCUEE), (b) diversification in university entrance selection methods, and (c) an improvement of admissions based on recommendations (MOE, 1995). In addition to, in June 1997 a law allowing for a "term-limit system" (ninkisei) was passed in the diet and enacted in April 1998, to inspire research scholars to raise their level of achievement while they are young, and before one is elevated to a tenure-track position.27

With the goal of moving toward a system of life long learning, in July 1992, the lifelong learning council recommended - promotion of recurrent education, support and promotion of volunteer activities, improvement and expansion of out-of-school activities for young people, and greater opportunities to learn about modern issues. These proposals are now being worked on at both the national and local levels.28

IV.2 POLITICAL ATTITUDE AND CHALLENGES

Educational reform has become one of the most controversial political issues in Japan. The history of modern Japanese education reveals a recurrent pattern of political focus on education.29

The crisis in terms of political challenges is related to excessive involvement of LDP in higher education reform issue, immobilist politics and issues of university autonomy. Conflicts between different players in the policy-making arena have often implied that proposals for educational reform have never been translated into policy

28 Tokutake, n. 8, p.72.
29 Amano, n. 9.,p. 41.
measures. There were divisions between agents of reform, political attachment to the status quo resulting from long term dominance by one party i.e., LDP, and the skill of the ministry of education in manipulating the policy-making process. Duke has also postulated the point of view that, a gap exists in Japan between the grand rhetoric of educational reform and the cautious reality and often due to political challenges.

It has been found that, the proposals of the Provisional Council on Education Reform (PCER) were supported in substance by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and by two opposition parties—the Democratic Socialists and the Komeito. But, the socialist and communist parties, along with the JTU, strongly opposed the council recommendations, charging that the government was bowing to industry demands to revive an elitist educational policy, which would not be in the best interests of the general public. Both JTU and women’s groups critical of the PCER, put forward their own ideas for reform. Even the Ministry of Education and the LDP were not 100% in favour of PCER recommendations for reform. So, in the Japanese society of diverse values and interest groups, it is virtually impossible to propose reforms that satisfy everyone, as commented by some educationists.

IV. 2a Immobilist Politics

In Japanese educational policy-change there is mainly one pattern in which it becomes immobile until the situation changes to allow it to

30 Schoppa, n. 6.
32 Ibid.
33 Tokutake, n. 8, p.51.
become mobile again\textsuperscript{34}. The Ministry of Education, the LDP, interest groups like business world, and opposition parties and interest groups- are four competing actors in this process. MOE and LDP are actors internal to policy making and various interests groups along with opposition parties are actors external to policy making. "Immobilism" emerges due to high conflict involving various conservative camps resulting in little conservative consensus. The policy making process requires a consensus within the conservative camp. However, sometimes the progressive forces are able to play an indirect role by breaking the conservative consensus\textsuperscript{35}.

As far as the LDP is concerned, because of its continuing dominance, conflicts could not be resolved through party alteration. More and more interests have moved under the LDP banner in the 1990s over its prolonged rule. During this period, the LDP had been seen as the party of both rising industries and declining industries of both small business and large business of both farmers and consumers. So, without the option of party alteration, all conflicts related to higher education had to be resolved or at least avoided within the stable system of LDP. Moreover, due to the influence of a group of politicians called the 'education zoku (clan)' (who are specialists in education policy in the 1980s) promotion of nationalism in education was emphasised leading to immobilism.

**IV. 2b Involvement of LDP after 1993**

LDP which was continuously in power in Post-war Japan till 1993 played a dominant role in influencing higher education policy. How

\textsuperscript{34} Schoppa, n. 6.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
ever the situation has changed after 1993 because of the emergence of coalition politics. 36

Japan's postwar constitution states unequivocally that "the Diet shall be the highest organ of state power and shall be the sole law-making organ of the state'. So, bureaucrats have no choice but to depend on politicians to propose and pass bills on their behalf, and as changing circumstances have repeatedly forced agencies to draft new legislation requiring Diet approval, party politics has intruded into Japanese policy making. In addition, stable one party dominance till 1993 had forced government agencies to collaborate closely with the LDP in policy matters. 37 It was the LDP's continuous reign that provided ministries with the political support and stability necessary to formulate and implement policies. However, the temporary banishment of the LDP to the opposition caused confusion in officialdom. The intensified electoral competition and the alternation of parties in power over the long run encouraged bureaucratic neutrality and greater political intervention in administration. This affected the higher education policy in the country.38

IV. 2c Issues of University Autonomy

Japanese style university autonomy integrates the forces of external and internal administration, giving the university an administrative structure which is unique to Japanese university system. Japanese university administration includes both external administration from the government and the founder and internal administration.

The issues of university autonomy came into being after two events that took place in universities of Tokyo and Kyoto which were known as "Tomizu Incident" and "Sawayanagi incident". In 1905, a professor at the Faculty of Law named Hirondo Tomizo was suspended from his university post by the government for his anti-hard line policy stance towards Russia. Challenging this action of the government the professors in the faculty of law as well as many professors from other faculties protested. Professor Tomizu's suspension was regarded as a violation of both of academic freedom and university autonomy. This created such a furore that ultimately Yuzuru Kubota, the Minister of Education and Kenjiro Yamakawa, President of the Imperial University of Tokyo had to resign. This incident was interpreted to mean that no drastic action involving a professor could be taken unless it is discussed and proposed by the university's president. This interpretation plus the reinstate of professor Tomizu to his post gave the Imperial University autonomy and established a tradition that the autonomy of the university was to be respected. In 1914 "Sawayanagi Incident" took place at the Imperial University of Kyoto where Masataro Sawayanagi, the president, had proposed to the Minister of Education the suspension of seven professors on grounds of incompetence. This action led to protest saying that only the Faculty council should have the authority to decide whether to dismiss or retain a professor. Subsequently, President Sawayanagi had to resign and the Ministry of Education expressed view that it would be appropriate for a university president to consult the faculty before taking action affecting professors. So, in the Japanese context, university autonomy since pre war period much rests with the faculty.
council. Minister of Education can take action only when a law or ordinance is violated. 39

Earlier in pre-war period, the university autonomy in Japan had a socio-political rather than industrial focus. University autonomy inextricably tried to search for a new worldview called democracy. But the post-war university autonomy is for the establishment of autonomous personality in postwar Japan, without which the democratization process would be rendered illegitimate. The development of university autonomy was to create an open society in Japan characterized by pluralism and dynamism. It also implies a responsible collectivity of individuals establishing a relationship with the industrial and corporate enterprise. 40

IV.3 AGENDA OF HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

Shoichiro Toyoda, chairman of the Federation of Economic Organisation (Keidanren) has been quoted as saying: “if the Japanese economy is to survive in the midst of progressive hollowing out, we need talented people who are highly creative, have a broad international perspective, and are well-developed individuals”. 41 This reflects the viewpoint that, higher education reforms in Japan would not only address current problems but it would also try to respond to social changes and cultural developments in a way that would enable Japan to sustain development in a rapidly changing global international environment, of the 21st century. The Provisional Council of Educational Reform (PCER) also defined the three most important themes of educational reform for the 21st century: an open mind, a

41 Tokutake, n. 8, p.75.
sound body and a wealth of creativity; freedom and self-determination, and sense of public spiritedness; and Japanese in the world order.\textsuperscript{42}

Japanese society has reached to a post industrialized society with a sophistication of people's intellectual needs and institutions of higher education are under increasing pressure to respond positively to the demand for education as a means of achieving self-fulfillment. Again, the accelerating pace of technological innovation and the rapid trends toward internationalization and an information-oriented society are creating a need for the continuous upgrading of sophisticated human resources and a lifelong learning. Finding ways to meet these needs has become a national priority in Japan. Universities and other institutions of higher education must provide an appropriate response based on their individual characteristics. The mission of any university should not be limited only to simple visible curriculum that is taught at prescribed times and in prescribed schedules but must go beyond it. There is another curriculum that could be called a hidden curriculum underlying the university's educational commitment. It assumes the indefinable and imprecise task of providing full learning, that is, learning to learn, learning to understand, learning to create and produce, learning to co-exist with others and with nature, learning to become leaders.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{IV. 3a Internationalization}

PCER report says, "we have put behind us the catch up type of modernization we have been pursuing vis-à-vis the west during the century since the Meiji Restoration. Japan will experience an

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.p.49
\textsuperscript{43} Jean Bocock and David Watson, ed., \textit{Managing the University Curriculum: Making the Common Cause} (Buckingham: Oxford University Press, 1994).
unprecedented degree of internationalization. It also goes on saying, "universities are largely closed rigid systems, insufficiently responsive to the needs of the society and the international community". So, internationalization of higher education became a serious social concern in the 1980s, which resulted in a series of policy agenda and institutional initiative. In 1984, internationalization became a principal issue in discussions of the Ad-hoc council on education because of Prime Minister Nakasone's interest in raising Japan's status in the international community. While Japan's national interest meant its position in international politics to Nakasone, for the business world the emphasis was on the achievement of economic goals overseas. After the 1970s, the desirable human resource for the business world became to grow people who could communicate with people from other countries. Intercultural understanding of Japanese who could contribute to worldwide development were emphasized. With this backdrop, the issue of internationalization got momentum in higher education reform policy agenda in Japan.  

Foreign students:

One of the ways of achieving internationalization is to welcome foreign students' entry into higher education institution. At the national level, a report of the Consultative Committee to the Minister summarized the future policy agenda with three major points (Monbusho, 1992). First, the current distribution of foreign students by the country of origin is concentrated too heavily on neighboring countries. Second, 60% of foreign students are living only in three urban population

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44 Y Ishii, "Teaching about International Responsibilities", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 37, No. 3, August 2001, p. 339-341. See also, "A costly dearth of leaders", Opinion Page, *The Japan Times*, Tuesday, 4 April 2000, p.18. Here it has been argued that Japanese politicians and public alike have had been interested only in domestic issues and are generally unconcerned about international relations.
centres—Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya. Third, increasing concentration of foreign students in special training school. Again, when private universities’ achievement towards internationalization have been substantial, national universities fall behind due to their institutional framework in which their finances are wholly dependent on the government and they follow government regulation. Inflexibility makes it difficult for them to pursue policies to internationalize. 45

*Mombusho* has also taken steps to attract foreign students to Japan. In 1996, there were 52,921 foreign students studying in Japan. The goal of government since the 1980s has been to have 100,000 foreign students studying in Japan every year. The *Mombusho* has also been encouraging Japanese universities to establish ties with universities in other countries. To help foreign students, arrangement is made for them to study. Tough Japanese language has been identified as one of the major barriers to attracting foreign students. These days, a number of national universities offer courses which are taught in English. Reforms in foreign language are carried out at certain universities with regard to—(i) the use of language labs and video technology (ii) introduction of smaller classes (iii) ability grouping (iv) an increase in the number of hours for foreign languages. 46

To promote internationalization of the education system proposals were formulated to expand international exchanges and to provide education which is relevant to an information oriented globalize competitive world. In response to change PCER/AHCE emphasizes that, for the nation to build a vital and creative society, the

46 Doyon, n.17, pp. 456-57.
educational system must be able to respond positively and flexibly to the constant changes in the times and in society. The most important of issues faced by education are how to respond to internationalization.47

IV. 3b Individualism

The current higher education reform in Japan is influenced by the agenda of market-led reforms whereas business leaders emphasise on individuality. Proposals from business organizations and business related commentators tend to put forward their points for more diversity within higher education, coupled with more freedom of choice for the consumer, and more attention to the different development needs of individual students. In this context they follow higher education policy of the United States and United Kingdom and explicitly advocate looking to American education as Model. There is certainly evidence that the reform of the 1990s have been indirectly influenced by progressive pedagogical ideas from the west. Education policy debates are infused with the idea of "globalization" and that higher education is seen as a key to international economic competition, so, the need for focus on "individuality" in education.48

A move towards individuality was laid down as one of the important principle of educational reform by the Rinkyoshin’s first report submitted in 1985. For the growth of "Individualism", the Ad Hoc Council report advocated a slimmed down curriculum, smaller classes interdisciplinary study, more elective subjects and a relaxation of exam competition. The report also pointed out that the uniformity of

47 Tokutake, n. 8, p.50.
the school system makes it incapable of instilling independence of mind and individuality. The emphasis on individuality is put forward in the following words by educational critic Tokutake:

The most important aim of the educational reform to come is to do away with uniformity, rigidity and closedness, all of which are deep-rooted defects of our educational system, and to establish the dignity of the individual, respect for individuality and the principles of freedom and independence, and individual responsibility. All aspects of our educational system, including curriculum content, methodology, organization and government policies should be reviewed drastically in light of this "principle of putting emphasis on individuality".49

Japan is a society where individuals are seen as interdependent rather than independent, and this fundamental understanding of the world and self is the result of the dominant philosophies and social values of the past which still continue to be instilled in the schools, companies and other social institutions even today. Japanese culture tends to emphasize on people to be sensitive to others concerns and to avoid self-assertion, and this encourages conformism. Individualism is a concept which is rather ambiguous to many Japanese. Despite the praise which Japan has received from overseas observers for its education over the last 20 years, within Japan it has become the focus of increasing discontent because of its supposed rigidity, uniformity, and exam-centeredness. This discontent has given rise to a series of educational reform proposals and policy measures during the late 1980s and 1990s. These reforms have emphasized on individuality

49 Tokutake, n. 8, p. 49.
(Kosei jushi), and are aimed at encouraging creativity by introducing more freedom and choice into the education system. However, critics have also alleged that the emphasis on ‘individuality’ marks a new liberal agenda driven by business demands.  

**IV.3c Diversity and Creativity**

Diversity and creativity is another major requirement. The neo-conservatives call for Diversity and creativity in higher education and think this quality is necessary for the Japanese people and industry in a new world order. For them, the issue has nothing to do with violence or erosion of values, but with a need to relax the strict control that the Mombusho had over the educational establishment. They call for less rigidity and less standardization. At the university level, they advocate a "system composed of diverse universities less clearly stratified on a topography of multiple pyramids", rather than the present single-pyramid university system.  

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50 Cave, n. 47, p. 173.  
51 Doyon, n. 17, pp. 452-53.