



# Training National and Vocational Women: Characteristics of Curriculum of Female Secondary Education in Colonized Manchuria

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## Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo (1932-1945) set up a specialized curriculum and published textbooks specifically for girls, with the purpose of training girls to become “good wives and wise mothers”. Over the course of the state’s existence, the regime adjusted its curriculum, following the policies and needs of the Japanese Empire. This paper assesses how the government changed the curriculum, focusing on and what kind of female roles they tried to teach to the Chinese girls.

**Methodology:** This paper compares and analyzes the content and classroom hours of the curriculum of public women’s secondary schools in Manchuria in three periods: 1) 1926-1937, 2) 1938-1941, and 3) 1941-1945. The data of this study was collected from material published by the Fengtian Female Normal School, and the Manchukuo provincial education magazine Fengtian Education.

**Results:** From the state’s earliest period, Manchukuo education officials emphasized females’ “natural duty” as “Good Wives, Wise Mothers.” Over time, however, they also increasingly emphasized learning the Japanese language, vocational skills, and patriotic content, in order to serve the goals of Japan during the World War II.

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**Conclusion:** Despite the consistent rhetoric which emphasized women becoming mothers, and possibly teachers, the curriculum and contents of the education changed according to the interests of the state and the needs of the war, encouraging women to serve the state by taking up some of the roles that men had played.

*Keywords: Manchuria; curriculum; female education; Japan.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

After the Manchurian incident in 1931, Japan occupied the three provinces of Northeast China, and in 1932 Japan established a pro-Japanese government, called Manchukuo. The Manchukuo government dissolved in 1945 after the defeat of Imperial Japan. The last Qing emperor Pu Yi, was installed as the chief executive, and became an emperor in 1933. Han Chinese were the largest ethnic group in Manchukuo, but sizable numbers of Mongols, Manchus, Japanese, Koreans, White Russians, and other smaller minorities were also part of the multi-ethnic region.

Before the creation of Manchukuo, female education in China had seen remarkable growth. From 1907 to 1932 the number of females receiving formal education tripled in size. Although the rate of female education was rising, it remained far behind the number of males in schools. Female education in China tended to be concentrated in primary education and normal education. By 1932, a significant number of higher schools were admitting female students.

The Manchukuo government, immediately after its creation, established an Education Ministry, and began to formulate education policy. From 1932 to 1937 the total number of girls in secondary education remained stagnant, even going down in 1935 and 1936 [1]. However, the Japanese-controlled Manchuria regime devoted considerable attention to female education. It set up a specialized curriculum and published textbooks specifically for girls, with the purpose of training girls to become “good wives and wise mothers”.

Over the course of the state’s existence, Japanese occupiers adjusted the educational systems to meet the changing demands of the colonial state. From the state founding in 1932 until the end of 1937 they retained much of the style of the previous Republic of China education system, although some content was deleted, such as the nationalist “Three People’s Principles”. In 1937, the government instituted a full reform of the education system, which was

enacted in April 1938. The 1938 reform, called the “New Education System (Shingakusei)”, revamped the education system, as well as the curriculums and core education principles. The Manchukuo government instituted another large-scale change when the Pacific War broke out. In December of 1942, Manchukuo government issued its “Basic National Principles” and made changes in the curriculum [2].

Most previous scholarship on Manchukuo education has looked at its general goals, and very little has been done on female education. Yamamuro Shin’ichi emphasized the puppet nature of Manchukuo education [3]. Nomura Akira pointed out that Manchukuo education was essentially “assimilation education” [4]. Likewise, Northeast Normal University’s “*Wei Manzhouguo Nuhua Jiaoyu*” argued that the Manchukuo education was “slave education” [5]. The Chinese historians Qi Hongshen [6], Qu Tiehua [7], Wang Yeping [2], Wu Qiang [8] and Wang Zhixin [9] continued to emphasize the “enslaving” nature of education, but went on to do more detailed study of specific aspects, such as examining the educational policies, system, textbook contents, and the training of teachers. Qi Hongshen collected testimonies of Chinese who had been teachers or students in Manchukuo, and found that one of the main efforts of the puppet regime was to change the students’ national identities, trying to use a manufactured Manchukuo national identity to replace identification with China [6]. Wu Qiang wrote about how the Manchukuo government textbook policy developed, and concluded that the government’s first effort was to identify and censor previous Chinese textbooks and then turned its efforts towards compiling new textbooks to fit the colonial needs [8]. Andrew Hall examined the development of education goals over different periods by analyzing the writings of Japanese colonial language educators, and analyzing Japanese-language textbooks, education journals, and postwar memoirs [10]. While these works provide a solid framework of the history of Manchuria education, however, they at best only briefly touched on female education.

There are a few lesser known studies that have examined aspects of Manchukuo female education. They can be divided into two groups, those that looked at the history through the writings and actions of the students, and those that focused on government policies. The first group, works by Du Xueyuan [11], Wang Jingsong [12], and Zhao Yan [13], examined female education by analyzing female students' articles and resistance activities. Both Wang Jingsong [12] and Zhao Yan [13] studied Manchukuo female education by analyzing females' essays in school journals and education journals. Zhao claimed that the Manchukuo female curriculum was set up to reduce female knowledge levels and propagate feudal moral concepts [13]. However, Zhao explained female curriculum in only general terms. Wang concluded that the school journals and official media contributed to the spread of colonial culture, and how the regime tried to replace the previously influential May Fourth Movement feminist ideology of "new women", which called for equality of the sexes and freedom of choice in marriage, with a national ideology of "Good Wives and Wise Mothers" [13]. Du Xueyuan focused on female student resistance against the regime [11].

The second group is made up of works which analyze government policies, documents, and education system. Su Lin and Sasaki Kei discussed the ideological purposes of Manchukuo female education was to train girls to become "good wives and wise mothers", although the article included few details on how they tried to achieve those goals [14]. Cai Yaqi discussed how the state sought to mold female character during wartime by using school education, women's patriotic groups, and propaganda, but did try to analyze female education curriculums [15]. Both Shinbo Atsuko [16] and Liu Guobing [17] studied female education in Mongolian regions of the country. Again, none of these studies focused on female secondary education curriculum. This paper analyzes female secondary school curriculums made by the Manchukuo government during the three periods, links them to Japan's larger imperialist goals, and examines Japanese intentions concerning the roles that Chinese women could play in the empire.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study examines female secondary school curriculum before and during the Manchukuo

period, including subjects taught and classroom hours, over three periods: 1) 1926-1937, 2) 1938-1941 and 3) 1941-1945. The data of this study come from material compiled by Fengtian Female Normal School [18] and the Manchukuo provincial education journal *Fengtian Education* [19]. This study tries to open a new way to understand females who lived in Japanese-controlled Manchuria, and thereby understand how this education impacted the thinking about women's roles in Northeast China.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS: THE CHANGING CURRICULUM OF FEMALE EDUCATION IN COLONISED MANCHURIA

### 3.1 Education on Language and Confucian Morals (1926-1937)

There is no known set curriculum for Manchukuo female secondary schools in the 1932-1937 period, but there are records of the 1932 curriculum for the Fengtian Provincial First Female Lower Secondary School. This can be compared to the curriculum of the Fengtian Female Normal School in 1926. The curriculum was changed in ways to coincide with the regime's goals (Table 1).

Using the data in Table 1, the changes in emphases in female education curriculum in 1932 will be examined. First, in 1932, some subjects were separated into two or three subjects, illustrating their importance to the government. For instance, the foreign language course (which in 1926 meant teaching English) was divided into Japanese and English language courses, making Japanese language instruction a key part of the curriculum.

Morals instruction increased significantly in 1932. In 1926, "Civic Studies" was taught only one hour a week, and only for second and third graders. In 1932, this class was divided into three separate courses, "Morality", "Filial Piety" and "Mencius". "Morality" was taught one hour a week, in all grades. In addition, the special Confucian courses of "Filial Piety" and "Mencius" were added. Furthermore, in 1933 the Fengtian Provincial Female Lower Secondary School issued a revised curriculum that increased the academic hours of "Mencius". This demonstrates female education's shift from a Republic of China-based civics education to one which focused on traditional Confucian classics.

**Table 1. Curriculums of female education in 1926 [18] and 1932 [19]**

| <b>1926<br/>Fengtian Female<br/>Normal School</b> | <b>Classroom<br/>hours/<br/>week</b> | <b>1932 Fengtian<br/>Provincial First<br/>Female Lower<br/>Secondary<br/>School</b> | <b>Classroom<br/>hours/<br/>week</b> | <b>Units for<br/>each<br/>term</b> | <b>Total<br/>classroom<br/>time/ term</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Foreign language                                  | 6                                    | English   | 3                                    | 7                                  | 21  |
|   |                                      | Japanese  | 6                                    | 7                                  | 42  |
| National language                                 | 6                                    | Chinese   | 6                                    | 7                                  | 42  |
| Civics  | 1                                    | Morality  | 1                                    | 7                                  | 7   |
|   |                                      | Filial Piety  | 3                                    | 1                                  | 3   |
|   |                                      | Mencius   | 4                                    | 1                                  | 4   |
| Mix math  | 6                                    | Math  | 6                                    | 4                                  | 24  |
|   |                                      | Algebra   | 5                                    | 2                                  | 10  |
|   |                                      | Geometry  | 5                                    | 1                                  | 5   |
| Mix science                                       | 2                                    | Science   | 3                                    | 3                                  | 9   |
|   |                                      | Nature  | 2                                    | 7                                  | 14  |
| History   | 2                                    | History and   | 4                                    | 7                                  | 28  |
| Geography   | 2                                    | Geography   |                                      |                                    |   |
| Music   | 1                                    | Music and physical  | 3                                    | 6                                  | 18  |
| Physical education                                | 3                                    | education   |                                      |                                    |   |
| Art   | 1                                    | Art   | 1                                    | 7                                  | 7   |
| Handicraft  | 1                                    | Zuo Ye<br>(Handiwork,<br>Household Affairs)   | 3                                    | 7                                  | 21  |
| Vocational Guidance                               | 1                                    | Self-study  | 8                                    | \                                  | 8   |
| Health  | 2                                    |   |                                      |                                    |   |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>34</b>                            | <b>Total</b>  | <b>63</b>                            |                                    | <b>234</b>                                |

The “Handicraft” course was changed into “Zuo Ye”, which refereed more specifically to female-marked activities such as cooking, sewing, and managing household affairs. Female students were expected to learn more about family life skills than professional skills, so that they could adapt responsibility as housewives, rather than train for a handicrafts job outside of the home. Furthermore, the “Zuo Ye” class was taught three hours a week, which was triple the amount handicraft was taught in 1926.

Second, some of the subjects were merged into a single subject. For example, the courses of “History” and “Geography” were merged into one course named “History and Geography”, and the courses of “Music” and “Physical Education” were merged into “Music and Physical Education”. The teaching time of history and geography did not change, but the teaching time for “Music and Physical Education” decreased by one hour every week.

Third, some of subjects were deleted. For example, the contents of “Health” were deleted

or added into “Household Affairs”. The “Civics” curriculum was changed to “Morality”, and the content changed. The 1926 “Civics” curriculum focused on the ideology of “Three People Principles”, which was the guiding nationalist ideology of the Republic of China, and included content critical of Japan. So it is not surprising that it was deleted after the Manchuria Incident.

Furthermore, “Vocational Guidance,” which was taught in the third year of second female education in 1926, was also deleted in 1932. It was probably deleted because female students were only expected to take charge of family affairs in the home or work as teachers in school, so giving vocational guidance for female students was probably considered to go against the state’s goals.

Comparing the 1926 and 1932 curriculum systems (Table 1), the courses of national language, foreign language and math were equally emphasized in 1926 and in 1932. But the proportion of handcraft curriculum increased from 3% to 8%, a significant expansion. Other

subjects that also saw increases can be seen as being important to the state. These include the subjects of “Japanese Language”, “Morality”, “Filial Piety”, “Mencius” and “Household affairs”. Female students were expected to cultivate three skills: speaking and using the Japanese language, having correct morals, especially filial piety and understanding Mencius’ teachings, and having the skills to take charge of housework. Some basic science instruction was retained, allowing female students advance with the times. Other courses, such as “Nature”, “Science”, “History and Geography”, and “Music and Sports” were framed as helping female students to gain the abilities to nurture their family, to educate their children, and to accept and love their new state. Subjects that could waste energy or mislead female students, such as “Civics” and “Vocational Guidance”, were deleted.

Clearly the female education curriculum paid more attention to Japanese language education, the Confucian classics, and domestic education after Manchuria Incident. The Manchukuo government clearly wanted to train female students to be “good wives and wise mothers”. The one avenue open to women outside of the home was to become a teacher. In short, female education was more liberal and comprehensive in 1926, but more narrow and restricted in 1932-1937.

### 3.2 Education on Vocational and Practical Training (1937-1942)

In 1937 the Manchukuo government announced a “new education system”, a thoroughgoing reform of all Manchukuo education, including female secondary education. The reform adjusted the school ages, lowering the ages in which girls were admitted to elementary and secondary schools. The previous two-level system of lower secondary schools and higher secondary schools, both of which were three-year schools, were synthesized into a single-level school named “National High School”. After issuing of the “new education system” in 1937, some of the weaker schools were demoted to being “vocational schools” [5].

Several changes can be found by comparing Table 2 with Table 1. First of all, the curriculum of “Morality” was changed into “National Morality”. “National Morality” was taught one hour more a week than the 1932 “Morality” class. The separate traditional morality classes, “Filial Piety” and “Mencius”, were eliminated. The “New

Education System” also marked the Japanese language’s rise in status from a “foreign language” to one of the “national languages”. The English language course was deleted, and Japanese was classified as one of two “National language” courses, along with Chinese (called “Manchurian” [*manyu*]) or Mongolian. The academic hours allotted to Japanese language instruction was increased from three hours to six hours every week. In contrast, the curriculum of “Manchurian” or Mongolian was set at just three hours every week. The regime clearly emphasized Japanese language instruction more than the Chinese and Mongolian languages.

The subject “Music and Sports” was re-separated. Each subject was given two hours every week, an increase from the three total hours in 1932. The 1932 drop in time may reflect a return to a more traditional view of women not participating in these activities, while the 1936 rise may indicate the growing influence of the Japanese female education philosophy, which emphasized improving female health and perseverance.

Academic hours of “Mathematics” were cut in half from the 1932 level, from 6 to 3 hours. Academic hours of “Science” were increased by one or two hours every week. However, the “Mathematics”, “Science” and “History and Geography” courses only existed in the first and secondary year. The government appears to have felt that women did not need to gain a deeper knowledge of these subjects. Basic knowledge, which may be used in family and daily life, was enough for them.

It is noteworthy that “Zuo Ye” (Handicrafts) was divided into two independent courses: “Household Affairs” and “Sewing”. “Household Affairs” and “Sewing” were taught for four hours and five hours per week, respectively. Therefore, the academic time of “Zuo Ye” tripled from three hours to nine hours per week. What is more, the academic hours were increased to fifteen hours per week in the third and fourth years. In these years, these subjects were taught five times the amount that they were taught in 1932. The subjects “Household Affairs” and “Sewing” took up large proportions of female secondary education. Female students were expected to acquire knowledge and skills for nurturing the family, including conserving the country’s precious resources. They would also be encouraged to use their domestic skills to directly serve the country, such as helping to sew soldier’s uniforms.

**Table 2. Female National High School curriculum hours, 1938 (Hours/week) [5]**

| Curriculum            |                      | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Percentage of curriculum in Grades 3 and 4 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| National language     | Japanese             | 6       | 6       | 6       | 6       | 16%  |
|                       | Chinese or Mongolian | 3       | 3       | 3       | 3       | 8%   |
| National Morality     |                      | 2       | 2       | 2       | 2       | 5%   |
| Math                  |                      | 3       | 3       | \       | \       | 0  |
| Science               |                      | 4       | 4       | \       | \       | 0  |
| History and Geography |                      | 4       | 4       | \       | \       | 0  |
| Music                 |                      | 2       | 2       | 2       | 2       | 5%   |
| Physical              |                      | 2       | 2       | 2       | 2       | 5%   |
| Art                   |                      | 1       | 1       | 1       | 1       | 3%   |
| Sewing                |                      | 5       | 5       | 8       | 8       | 21%  |
| Vocational Training   | Lecture              | 2       | 2       | 2       | 3       | 13%  |
|                       | Practice             |         |         | 2       | 3       |  |
| Household Affairs     | Lecture              | 2       | 2       | 3       | 4       | 18%  |
|                       | Practice             | 2       | 2       | 3       | 4       |  |
| Education             |                      | /       | /       | 2       | 2       | 6%   |
| Total                 |                      | 38      | 38      | 38      | 38      |  |

Besides these changes, the curriculums of “Shi Ye” (Vocational Training) and “Education” were added into female education in 1937. “Shi Ye”, which included theoretical and practical courses, was taught for two hours per week in the first and second year and five hours per week in the third and fourth year. “Education” was taught two hours per week in the last two years for female students, to prepare students to become teachers. These vocational education courses indicate that despite the greater emphasis on domestic training, the government was also becoming more open to women working outside of the home.

In general, the 1937 academic hours for female students increased five hours per week beyond the 1932 levels. In addition, while the most emphasized subjects in 1932 were national language, foreign language and mathematics, the most emphasized subjects in 1937 were Japanese language, “Household Affairs”, “Sewing”, and “Vocational Training”. Academic hours for mathematics, science, history, and geography were cut down and shifted into learning household affairs, sewing skills and practical training. Furthermore, time for learning English language was diverted into Japanese language learning. Japanese language, sewing, handicrafts, and vocational education were the primary knowledge the government wanted females taught from 1938 to 1942.

### 3.3 Education on New National Spirit, Physical Training, and Off-Campus Labor (1943-1945)

The Manchukuo government again revised the curriculum in 1943, with significant changes in three areas: history and morality education, physical education, and vocational education. History and geography were curtailed and folded into morality education to create a new “Founding Spirit” course. “Physical Training” replaced the earlier “Physical Education”, moving away from sports, and towards military training and obedience. While there was a slight decrease in classroom instruction of vocational education, there was a significant increase in off-campus hands-on labor.

#### 3.3.1 “Founding Spirit”

In 1943 the regime created the new course, “Founding Spirit,” for the female national high schools. It was created by combining the courses “National Morality” and “History and Geography” [20].

Manchukuo education official Hikari Yasuhiro’s explained the logic behind combining the two old courses into a new “Founding Spirit” course by discussing these two old courses’ objectives: “The course of ‘National Morality’ was to teach students Manchukuo’s position and mission in

the world, and comprehend the essence of "Founding Spirit" completely [21]. The course of 'History and Geography' was to teach students more details about the development of culture and the current situation of Manchukuo, Japan and other key countries all over the world, and to make a stable foundation for the development of "Founding Spirit". ... So it is reasonable to combine these two courses into one. ... Both a "Founding Spirit" textbook and a "National Situation" textbook will be used in the new course "Founding Spirit" [21].

Kazuo Isoda has noted, "Because of [Japan's] defeats in the war, the planned "National Foundation" textbook was never published. The "National Situation" textbook has not yet been found, so it is difficult to find more information about it [20]." However, Manchukuo education official Nagao Gunta wrote in 1943 about the contents of the two new textbooks. "National Situation" was to include material about Manchukuo and the wartime situation, and "Nation Foundation" which was to focus on morality, particularly loyalty to the state [22]. On the new "Founding Spirit", he wrote, "1) the basic points of the course are the foundation of country and the purpose of imperial edicts. 2) The goal of the course "Founding Spirit" is to train students become a loyal citizens who could understand the meaning of "Founding Spirit" and have a new view on Manchukuo . . . 4) The citizens' moral cultivation and practical training should meet the special needs of our country, both its comprehensive and practical needs [22]." According to Nagao, the "National Situation" textbook, which replaced earlier history textbooks, would largely ignore the region's pre-1931 history, including the Manchukuo Emperor's own ancestral Qing dynastic history. Instead, it would focus on the state's practical needs. Students were expected to become loyal subjects of Manchukuo, understand the wartime situation as the government presented it, and cooperate with the war aims of a united Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere.

### 3.3.2 "Physical Training"

In the new education act in 1943, the course "Physical Education" was changed to "Ti Lian", or "Physical Training". Hikari Yasuhiro expounded the goals of the course "Ti Lian" in detail: "This course should try to build up a strong constitution and active personality based on the students' body and mental situation, and pay high attention on national group training, obedience to rules,

coordination, responsibility, and other good qualities for training nationals." [21]. He continued, "It is done in order to foster citizens with pure honesty and loyalty, and improve their ability for the national defense" [21]. Female secondary education also included this "Physical training" course. "Physical Training" was different from "Physical education"; it placed a greater emphasis on military training and obedience, while nothing was mentioned about playing sports. Female secondary education not only had the purpose to strengthen students' bodies, but also intended to prepare the girls to be able to support the military in wartime.

"Physical Training" was considered just as important as any of the other subjects. The Manchukuo government wanted female students not merely to acquire basic modern life knowledge and skills but also to build healthy bodies and obedience at the same time. There was 2 hours per week arranged for Physical Education in Middle schools in 1936. In 1938, it remained 2 hours. But in the 1943 system, it was increased to 3 hours per week for National High Schools and Female National High Schools [23]. The emphasis can be seen in the creation of special physical training days. Under the 1943 Ministry of Education regulations, special all-day vocational and physical training sessions were created. The boy's National High Schools spent 45 days a year on vocational and physical training, while the Girls National High Schools spent 20 days a year, or 9% of school days, on vocational and physical training. Clearly the normal study time for students was significantly reduced, and greater weight given to physical training and labor service.

### 3.3.3 "Shi Wu"

For the third point, in National High Schools and Female National High Schools, another new course, "Shi Wu" was created by combining five courses: "Education", "Household Affairs", "Sewing", "Handicrafts", and "Shi Ye" (Vocational Training) [21]. The objective of the new course "Shi Wu" was "'vocational training' with the purpose of educating and training students in daily life knowledge and skills, help them to adapt the environment, cultivate in them a diligent spirit, guide them understand their duty, and teach them to devote themselves to the public. Now we all know Manchukuo education need to develop its vocational education characteristics . . . So we decided to combine these courses into one course [21]." That is to

say, the new course “Shi Wu” had three main goals: 1) Modern knowledge: it would train students to become modern females who keep up with changes in daily life skills. 2) Diligent spirit: it would train students in traditional female morality; 3) Public devotion: it would cultivate students’ ability to recognize their responsibilities to devote themselves to the country by doing work.

In another article, the textbook editor Fu Xizhen wrote about female education, particularly on the course “Shi Wu” in the Female National Higher School. “The objective of the course “Shi Wu” was established based on the reality of national life, with the aims to educate and train students with knowledge and skills of household affairs, train the students in research and creativity skills, and let them use these skills on their own. Meanwhile, this course should train them in the good morals of diligence and thrift, and train them with good habits, such as compliance with orders, cleanliness, and obeying public morality.”[24] She pointed out two more key points on the course “Shi Wu”: training in research and creativity skills, and the good habits of thrift and other public morals. Fu Xizheng stated, “The course ‘Shi Wu’ could be taught in three sections: 1) Household affairs and Farm work; 2) Parenting and Education; 3) Sewing and Handicrafts.” [24].

So, while “Household Affairs”, “Sewing” and “Vocational Training” were emphasized in female middle schools in 1937, female students in 1943 were also expected to learn farm work.

In 1937, the course of “Vocational Training” in female secondary education trained students for a specific set of vocational opportunities, such as being a teacher, clerk, or secretary, which required mental work, but not hard physical labor. But in 1943, Kai Guilu, the chancellor of Xinjing No. 2 Female High School, commented, “To resolve the shortage of labor, women should work in society to take place of men. Some jobs such as mechanical workers and operators can be done by women.” [25] Kai’s comments indicate the contents of the “Vocational Training” course in 1943 became wider and more diverse. It had come to include training females to do jobs which required physical labor.

Vocational education time in secondary education rose significantly in 1938, going from two hours per week for each grade in 1932, to 12 to 21 hours a week in the 1938 system [23]. In

1943, the number hours for “Shi Wu” decreased to 10 to 12 hours a week. However, at this same time a new program of “whole day internship” was created, in which secondary students spent as many as 15 7-hour days on hands-on projects outside of the school grounds, for a total of 105 additional hours a year. Therefore, although classroom vocational education may have decreased, the amount of total time spent on vocational training actually increased greatly under the 1943 system.

A second education reform in 1943 aimed to prepare students to contribute to the war effort in a more concentrated fashion. Vocational education, forced student labor, and, surprisingly, a more student-focused, flexible education approach were all seen as ways of training women to take an active part in the war effort, and not just prepare them for domestic roles.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Female secondary education focused on three aspects to training female students as new “Good wives and wise mothers”: 1) Modern science and technology education: the building of modern family under the wartime system, including the value of thrift. 2) Labor education. Under the wartime system, female was trained to have diligent ability and more professional skills to work for the national production. 3) Ideological education. Female education tried to encourage students to value the state and its ties to Japan.

Under the wartime system, a new concept of “Good wives and wise mothers” for female secondary education developed based on the interests of country and the needs of the war. In 1932 the focus of female education shifted to a greater emphasis on duty to family, and then by 1943 it had shifted to a greater emphasis on duty to country. For instance, the course of house economics were no longer training females how to increase the quality of life for the family as it did before, but instead trained them how to save more resources for the country and society. What is more, the needs of the war caused the rhetoric to change in a way in which females were encouraged to find an occupation, not for their own personal fulfillment, but for the contribution they could make for the country. The people were being mobilized for war, and many men had left their positions to serve in the military. Women, therefore, were being asked to serve the state both by taking up some of the roles that men had played.



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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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