

The Development of Vocational Continuation Schools

Mamoru Satō

With the 1872 ordinance establishing the School System, the modern school system up to the turn of the century began to develop at both extremes—regular primary education at the lowest level and higher education at the highest level—and thus vocational education at the primary and the secondary levels was underdeveloped. In response to economic development from around 1900 on, the vocational education system was gradually implemented through the enactment of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools in 1893. The establishment of these regulations gave momentum, and full-scale efforts were made in primary vocational education aimed at the children of the general populace. In succession, efforts also came to be directed toward the fulfillment of secondary vocational education. Vocational continuation schools thus bridged the gap between regular primary education and higher education in the late 1800s.

I. The Beginning of Vocational Continuation Schools

Primary vocational education was not systematized in the first half of the Meiji period for several reasons. First, the Meiji government's interest centered on the implementation of a modern regular primary educational system. Second, the establishment of higher education to absorb advanced science and technology from the West was urgent. Third, the diffusion of primary vocational education was not necessary because modern industries were underdeveloped.

Nevertheless, there was a category designated as Various People's Schools in the School System of 1872. When the Elementary School Act was revised in 1890, a stipulation was made regarding vocational

continuation schools which were classified as a type of elementary school. Although these two types of schools were never created, they are noteworthy for implanting the idea of primary vocational schools prior to the promulgation of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools in 1893.

1. Various People's Schools

Various People's Schools designated in the School System were to be part-time schools held at night and during a lull in the farming season. These schools would offer studies to the youth who had been working since graduating from elementary school so that the studies could benefit their vocations. Since elementary school enrollment at the time was at most around 30%, it can be said that various people's schools would have been supplementary to elementary education. Nevertheless, the schools were never actualized according to the regulations, and the system of Various People's Schools disappeared with the abolishment of the School System and the establishment of the Educational Ordinance in 1879.

2. The Elementary School Act

The president of Tokyo Imperial University, Hamao Arata, came to advocate the necessity of vocational continuing education, because he took note of the German *Fortbildungsschule* while he was on an educational observation tour in Europe and the United States in 1885. His theory on vocational continuation schools had meaning from the viewpoint of social policy because he believed that supplementary elementary education as well as simple vocational education should be given to working youth. At the same time, circumstances were such that 55% of the children who had not been enrolled in elementary school, and youth who were past school age, had been engaged in strenuous labor for three-quarters of a day as live-in apprentices. Consequently, Hamao's educational theory had significant meaning as a measure to improve such a state of affairs.

Although initially there was no conspicuous reaction to Hamao Arata's proposition, it later came to be discussed by men of learning. At the time of the revision of the Elementary School Act in 1890, a stipulation on vocational continuation schools was included in the Act. This was the first stipulation regarding vocational continuation schools in the Japanese educational system. Nevertheless, although there was not even one vocational continuation school which was founded in accordance with this stipulation, the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools came to be established on this basis.

II. Establishment of Vocational Continuation Schools

Inoue Kowashi, who became the Minister of Education in March 1893, emphasized the promotion of vocational education as the core of his educational policy and endeavored to systematize vocational schools. First, he established the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools on 22 November 1893. In succession, he enacted the National Subsidy for Vocational Education Act to provide a financial basis for the nationwide establishment of vocational continuation schools.

1. Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools

First, according to the Regulations, the objectives of the vocational schools modeled after the *Fortbildungsschule* were to give supplementary elementary education and to provide simple vocational education to working youth, as had been the case with the Hamao Arata's theory of vocational continuation schools.

Second, those who wished to enter vocational continuation schools had to have an academic background of more than the ordinary four-year elementary school graduation. The period of study was set for less than three years, and the courses were divided into regular subjects and vocational subjects. While regular subjects comprised ethics, reading, calligraphy, and arithmetic, vocational subjects were chosen in accordance with the industrial conditions of the areas in which the schools were to be established. It was decided that vocational subjects in the industrial regions would consist of drawing, model making, geometry, physics, chemistry, crafts, designing, and handicrafts. In the commercial regions, vocational subjects offered would be business correspondence, commercial mathematics, merchandise, commercial geography, bookkeeping, business economics, foreign languages, and others. The vocational subjects in the agricultural regions would be crop cultivation, vermin control, fertilizer, soil analysis, drainage, irrigation, farm tools, dendrology, livestock, sericulture, forestry, agricultural bookkeeping, and others. Apart from these subjects, however, additional vocational subjects could be offered whenever suitable. There was great flexibility regarding the courses to be studied at vocational continuation schools because the aim was to cope with the diversified backgrounds of the students to be admitted as well as with the local industrial structure.

Third, the classes to be offered by the vocational continuation schools were limited to those that could be directly applied to vocations, and the schools designated as part-time schools were to be held

on Sundays and at night or for a certain season dependent upon the region.

Fourth, the vocational continuation schools could be annexed either to ordinary elementary schools or to upper elementary schools. It was stated that not only the elementary school buildings and equipment but also elementary school teachers could be jointly used.

As seen above, the intention of the vocational continuation schools was to implement an education which unified science and technology with vocation for the children of the general populace so that they could contribute to the promotion of future national wealth. Moreover, the historical significance of the vocational continuation schools was extremely great; although they provided only part-time schooling, working youth who conventionally had been isolated from education were given opportunities to study.

2. The Vocational Continuation School System in the First Transition Stage

With the revision of the Elementary School Act in October 1890, the vocational continuation schools together with apprentice schools were designated as a type of elementary school. The elementary schools stipulated by the School System were systematized with reference to the elementary school system extant in the United States. First, ordinary elementary schools were divided into lower grades with four years of study for children aged six years to nine years, and upper grades with four years of study for children aged 10 to 13 years. However, because the cultural level of the time was such that it was difficult to establish ordinary elementary schools throughout the country, it was stipulated that other such schools as pauper schools, rural schools or charity schools could be established. The nationwide enrollment in the period when the School System was promulgated was at most around 30%.

The School System was replaced in September 1879, six years after its enactment, by the Educational Ordinance. While the School System had been based upon eight compulsory years of elementary schooling, the Educational Ordinance eliminated such control on the basis of a liberalism that valued the will of the people. This ordinance was liberal in the sense that children of school age were expected to attend regular primary education from the ages of 6 years to 14 years for 16 months consisting of 4 months of schooling a year for 4 years. The idea of a compulsory educational system can be seen in this ordinance. The concept of compulsory education in this case was not "schooling duty" (*Schulpflicht*) but "educational duty" (*Unterrichtspflicht*). This

concept can be inferred by the fact that the ordinance stipulated that those who had received regular education without attending school were the same as those who had attended school.

Because elementary school attendance had been made compulsory initially by the School System, the enrollment rate had risen gradually. However, due to the liberalization of school attendance by the Educational Ordinance, the enrollment rate dropped. As a result, the Meiji government revised the Educational Ordinance in December 1880 to reinforce the children's duty to attend school under parental responsibility and supervision.

In April 1886 the Educational Ordinance, revised in 1880, was rescinded and the Elementary School Act was enacted. The Elementary School Act categorized elementary schools as consisting of ordinary elementary schools and upper elementary schools each with four years of schooling of which four years of ordinary elementary school attendance was compulsory. Since the period of compulsory schooling stipulated by the Revised Educational Ordinance of 1880 was three years, the Elementary School Act extended it by one year, thereby establishing the system of compulsory education in Japan in both name and fact. Subsequently, through the revision of the Elementary School Act in March 1907, six years of ordinary elementary school education were designated as the period of compulsory education, an extension by two years in comparison with the past. At the same time, upper elementary school began offering studies for two or three years. Compulsory education lasting for six years remained basically unchanged until the 1947 educational reform after World War II.

The enrollment rate in compulsory education in the late 1800s fluctuated. However, as seen in Figure 3.1, the enrollment rate of boys and girls exceeded 50% in 1897 and exceeded 90% in 1904. Consequently, the compulsory education system became solidly established from the 1900s onwards.

As seen in Figure 3.1, the average enrollment rate for school-aged boys and girls in 1893 when the Regulations for Vocational Schools was established just exceeded 50%, but the enrollment rate for girls was lower than 40%. Therefore, a major governmental task concerning educational policy at that time was to increase the enrollment ratio of school-aged children to accomplish compulsory education. To accommodate such historical conditions, the vocational continuation schools had to pursue the dual role of assisting the compulsory education system through the provision of supplementary elementary education to those who had not been enrolled or who had dropped out and of offering introductory vocational education.

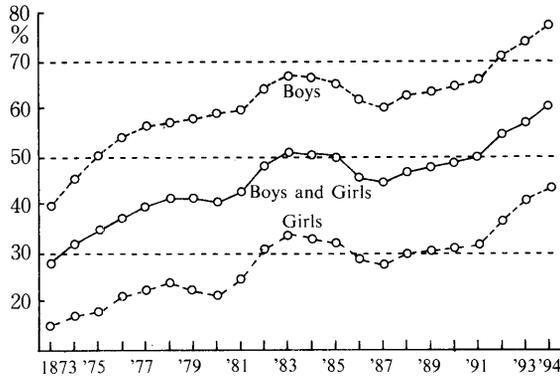


Fig. 3.1. Enrollment Rate of School-aged Children, 1873-94
 Source: Ministry of Education, *Mombushō dai 33 nempō* [Ministry of Education 33rd Annual Report], 1905.

As a result of the rapid rise in the enrollment of school-aged children from 1897, the supplementary role played by vocational continuation schools in elementary school education gradually declined. As will be described later, by the enactment of the Vocational School Act in 1899 the vocational continuation schools came to be designated as vocational schools rather than elementary schools. Consequently, the vocational continuation schools starting from the establishment of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools in 1893 to the promulgation of the Vocational School Act in 1899 exhibited a dual character: they catered to both elementary education and low-level vocational education, and they had a transitional character in changing from elementary-level schools to vocational schools.

3. Apprentice Schools and Vocational Continuation Schools

The revised Elementary School Act of 1890 designated both apprentice schools and vocational continuation schools as elementary schools. However, after Inoue Kowashi became Minister of Education in March 1893, he established the Regulations for Apprentice Schools in July 1894. His policy emphasized low-level technical education. The issue became one of distinguishing vocational continuation schools formed the previous year under the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools from apprentice schools.

Apprentice schools in accordance with the revised Elementary School Act of 1890 were considered to be pauper schools offering elementary education to those children who had become live-in apprentices at

their masters' houses because their families were too poor to afford elementary enrollment. Nevertheless, Inoue Kowashi envisioned apprentice schools actively involved in worker training.

One difference between vocational continuation schools and apprentice schools was that vocational continuation schools were to provide a vocational philosophy and offer supplementary elementary education as well as preparatory vocational education. On the other hand, the primary duty of apprentice schools was to provide instruction on vocational subjects to produce workers. While the apprentice schools emphasized vocational subjects, the vocational continuation schools featured their supplementary function to elementary education.

Part of the Regulations for Apprentice Schools was revised in 1896. This revision authorized the establishment of apprentice schools by prefectural or county governments, although the establishment of apprentice schools thus far had been restricted to city, town, and village governments or to private concerns. Thus, while the vocational continuation schools being designated as a kind of elementary school continued to be established primarily by the city, town, and village office, the apprentice schools founded by prefectural or county governments began to move away from being elementary schools, thereby clarifying their nature as technical schools.

4. The Government Subsidy for Vocational Education Act

The enactment of the Government Subsidy for Vocational Education Act in June 1894 contributed remarkably to the rapid development of vocational education. The objective of the Act was not the education of high-grade engineers who were to hold leading positions but rather the education of low-level technicians who would work under them. The schools which were entitled to receive national subsidies were public technical schools, agricultural schools, commercial schools, apprentice schools, and vocational continuation schools. In addition, subsidies were granted to vocational schools founded by agricultural, technical, or commercial associations with authorization from the local governor.

On the basis of the same Act, the Regulations for Technical Teacher Training were established in June 1894. To train teachers for apprentice schools and technical continuation schools, the Institute of Technical Teacher Training was attached to the Tokyo College of Technology. As the students of this institute received their educational expenses from the state, they were obliged after graduation to teach at the schools to which they were assigned by the Minister of Educa-

tion. Thus, through the establishment of the Government Subsidy for Vocational Education Act, the Meiji government not only took the initiative to open vocational schools at the primary and secondary levels but also made efforts to foster these schools through the rapid training of technical teachers.

5. Vocational Continuation Schools in the Early Stage

The promulgation of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools as well as the Government Subsidy for Vocational Education Act contributed to further the implementation of the primary-level vocational education system in Japan. Although the number of vocational continuation schools in 1894 was only 19, it soared to 108 three years later in 1897. Of these 108 schools, 62 schools were agricultural continuation schools, namely 57% of the total, followed by 28 commercial continuation schools (26%), and 18 technical continuation schools (17%). Agricultural continuation schools showed a remarkable growth while the establishment of technical continuation schools, which was stressed by the Meiji governmental policy of vocational education, did not progress as had been expected.

The earliest vocational continuation schools were found more frequently in the prefectures of western Japan and hardly at all in the prefectures of eastern Japan. Commercial continuation schools existed in commercial areas, technical continuation schools in the areas with traditional industries, and agricultural continuation schools were scattered throughout rural communities. Many of these schools offered studies for two or three years to those who fulfilled the admission requirement of graduation from four years of ordinary elementary school. Although some schools operated on a part-time basis, many were full-time schools like the upper elementary schools. Therefore, vocational continuation schools in the early stage functioned partially as upper elementary schools.

III. The Development of Vocational Continuation Schools

The enactment of the School Act by Minister of Education Mori Arinori in 1886 reformed the educational system in Japan in an epochal manner and determined the basic structure of the subsequent pattern of schools. As stated earlier, however, the promotion of vocational education had to wait until Inoue Kowashi took office as the Minister of Education in 1893.

The Sino-Japanese War from 1894 to 1895 greatly stimulated the development of modern industries. Supported by such a social back-

ground, the vocational education system in Japan was perfected through the establishment of the 1899 Vocational School Act and the enactment of the 1903 Special School Act. The establishment of the Vocational School Act, in particular, provided various vocational schools which previously had been regulated separately with a unified law. On the basis of this Act, vocational continuation schools and apprentice schools, both of which used to be regarded as a type of elementary school, came to be newly designated as vocational schools. Furthermore, a rapid rise in the enrollment ratio of school-aged children in the 1900s came to change distinctly the basic character of the vocational continuation schools.

The following section gives an outline of the general trend in the latter half of the Meiji period and examines such aspects as the reflection of the Act itself upon vocational education. Attention will also be given to the manner in which the character of vocational continuation schools was changed by the enactment of the Vocational School Act and the correlation between vocational continuation schools and the secondary educational system.

1. The Development of Modern Industries

The Sino-Japanese War triggered the modernization of Japanese industries. Within several years of the Sino-Japanese War, 7,217 enterprises had been founded which made up 84% of the 8,612 enterprises existing in 1902. Many of the modern industrial enterprises in this period were engaged in textiles which had a production capacity 80 times greater after mechanization replaced conventional manual spinning. Apart from satisfying domestic needs, textiles became the top export industry. The second remarkable development was seen in the extension of private railways by railway companies. The extension of railway tracks and the improved transportation capacity destroyed the self-sufficient economy of traditional rural communities and opened up the rural villages as markets for industrial products. At the same time, the mass transportation of foodstuffs and industrial raw materials was made possible, and a mutually dependent relationship between industry and agriculture was developed. As a result, the development of a capitalistic economy was promoted.

The Russo-Japanese War from 1904 to 1905 also contributed to the rapid growth of modern industries. Modern industries after the Russo-Japanese War concentrated on the establishment of heavy industry. Because there was a marked development in the domestic production of various machine tools, train engines, battleships, and steamships, Japanese capitalism had reached the stage where it could be self-reliant.

The driving force behind such growth in heavy industries was based upon the development of electricity projects, which laid the foundation for gigantic industries. Nevertheless, despite an accelerating development in the secondary and tertiary industries, the primary industry with agriculture, forestry, and fisheries remained stagnant. Thus, the labor force of the commercial and industrial sectors in the secondary and tertiary industries were provided by the second and third sons of farmers as well as by female labor. Since such a labor force was unskilled, enterprises which used modern technology imported from the West had to suffer from a constant shortage of skilled labor. To solve this difficult issue, it was imperative to nurture a large number of rural youth as low-level technicians and foremen at production sites. This social trend inevitably correlated to the promotion of primary and secondary vocational education.

2. The Promotion of Technical Education

The social interest in vocational education which came about as a result of the 1899 Vocational School Act was primarily directed toward technical education. It can be said that the above was one of the inevitabilities of the rapidly progressing industrial revolution from the Sino-Japanese War. Some of the opinions that stressed technical education at that time will be introduced next.

First, when a reform bill regarding the National Subsidy for Vocational Education Act was laid before the Thirteenth Diet in February 1899, the bill was rejected due to the opposition put forth by Kubota Yuzuru, a member of the House of Peers. The aim of the reform bill was to rearrange vocational schools to "public agricultural, technical, and commercial schools" from the original wording which was "public technical, agricultural and commercial schools." Kubota opposed this reform bill saying it was contrary to the legislative spirit of the Act, which stressed industries.

Second, in June 1901, a speech was given by Minister of Education Kikuchi Dairoku who stressed the significance of technical education when he attended the Principals Conference of Nationwide Technical Schools held at the Tokyo Higher College of Technology. According to his speech, there was an increasingly strong desire among those who finished elementary school to go on to middle school and then to university. This was because people aspired to become bureaucrats while disliking to take up practical vocations. This tendency he urged had to be rectified at any cost because it was harmful to the industrial development of Japan.

Third, enterprise managers also expressed opinions supporting the

importance of technical education. For example, in May 1905, the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce emphasized the need for superior worker education as an industrial promotion policy to be followed after the Russo-Japanese War and requested that the Tokyo Prefectural Worker Training School and the Worker Apprentice School Annexed to the Tokyo Higher College of Technology take concrete measures to the need.

Lastly, it should not be overlooked that from the 1890s, there was an upsurge in the movement to establish special vocational schools throughout the country. Starting from the introduction of a bill regarding the establishment of higher polytechnic schools before the Thirteenth Diet in 1899, the movement almost annually made proposals for the increased establishment of special vocational schools before the Diet. This demand ultimately bore fruit in March 1903 as the Special School Act.

3. The Enactment of the Vocational School Act

Vocational education, which had received little attention, showed rapid development due not only to the impetus given by the 1894 enactment of the National Subsidy for Vocational Education Act, but also to the revolutionary growth of industrial circles. Consequently, various technical, agricultural, commercial, and other vocational schools were being founded nationwide. In spite of this haphazard growth of vocational education, there was virtually no legal basis for vocational schools. The only thing was the existence of the aforementioned low-level vocational school regulations such as the Regulations for Apprentice Schools, the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools, and the Regulations for Ordinary Agricultural Schools enacted in July 1894. Thus there was a lack of a comprehensive legal basis for vocational education as a whole. Through the establishment of the Vocational School Act in February 1899, various vocational schools for the first time came to have unified legal regulations. Vocational continuation schools, which thus far had been designated as a type of elementary school by the Elementary School Act, were amalgamated with apprentice schools and classified as a type of vocational school.

Simultaneously with the promulgation of the Vocational School Act, regulations in accordance with the Act, such as the Regulations for Technical Schools and the Regulations for Commercial Schools, were established. These regulations stipulated the length of study, the number of periods, the subjects, and the admission requirements for each type of school. In succession, the following was accomplished: the

establishment of the Regulations for Fishery Schools in December 1901; the revision of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools in January 1902; and the revision of the Regulations for Apprentice Schools in March 1904. As for agricultural, commercial, and merchant marine schools, they were divided into advanced level and ordinary level schools. Agricultural schools, commercial schools, and merchant marine schools of the advanced level as well as technical schools and fishery schools provided three years of study to those aged over 14 years who had graduated from four years of upper elementary school. Moreover, the period of study ranged very widely from less than three years for ordinary level agricultural and commercial schools to less than two years for ordinary merchant marine schools, and to more than six months but less than four years for apprentice schools. The admission to these vocational schools required that students be over the age of 10 years and graduates from four-year ordinary elementary schools. In this case, the apprentice schools denoted were those classified as ordinary level technical schools.

While advanced vocational schools were systematized secondary level institutions of vocational education, ordinary level vocational schools were regarded as institutions for vocational education with flexibility to meet the actual conditions of the local communities. Therefore, the classification of vocational schools into advanced and ordinary schools reveals not only the difference in level but also the difference in quality. As a result, the vocational education system came to incorporate a dual system comprising the advanced and ordinary levels.

In accordance with the Vocational School Act, the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools were revised in January 1902. The revised regulations stipulated that, in addition to elementary schools and vocational schools, vocational continuation schools could be annexed to other types of school, and that dependent upon regional circumstances, the type of vocations and the amount of free time, classes would be offered at the most convenient time and season for the students. Admission was given to those who were older than 10 years and who, in principle, had graduated from four-year ordinary elementary schools. However, the specification was made that admission could be granted to those who were older than school age (14 years) even though they had not graduated from ordinary elementary school. Thus, regarding admission requirements and flexibility, the vocational continuation schools operated in the same way as the ordinary level vocational schools. There was, however, a decisive differ-

Table 3.1. Public Vocational Schools, 1898-1917

Year	Total	Agriculture		Technical	Appren- tice	Commercial		Fishery		Merchant Marine
		Ad- vanced	Ordi- nary			Ad- vanced	Ordi- nary	Ad- vanced	Ordi- nary	
1898	67 (100.0)		15 (22.4)	13 (19.4)	23 (34.3)	16 (23.9)				
1899	117 (100.0)		49 (41.9)	17 (14.5)	19 (16.2)	28 (24.0)				4 (3.4)
1900	135 (100.0)	36 (26.7)	20 (14.8)	15 (11.1)	22 (16.3)	8 (5.9)	30 (22.2)			4 (3.0)
1901	166 (100.0)	51 (30.8)	26 (15.7)	18 (10.8)	25 (15.0)	3 (1.8)	38 (22.9)			5 (3.0)
1902	214 (100.0)	56 (26.1)	44 (20.6)	24 (11.2)	33 (15.4)	9 (4.2)	41 (19.2)			7 (3.3)
1903	237 (100.0)	57 (24.1)	50 (21.1)	28 (11.8)	37 (15.6)	9 (3.8)	43 (18.1)			7 (3.0)
1904	256 (100.0)	61 (23.8)	53 (20.7)	30 (11.7)	40 (15.6)	12 (4.7)	46 (18.0)			7 (2.8)
1905	269 (100.0)	63 (23.4)	54 (20.1)	30 (11.1)	46 (17.1)	12 (4.5)	47 (17.5)			7 (2.6)
1906	305 (100.0)	65 (21.3)	71 (23.3)	29 (9.5)	57 (18.7)	14 (4.6)	50 (16.4)			8 (2.6)
1907	361 (100.0)	70 (19.4)	91 (25.2)	31 (8.6)	75 (20.8)	17 (4.7)	54 (14.9)			9 (2.5)
1908	397 (100.0)	77 (19.4)	103 (26.0)	32 (8.1)	81 (20.4)	18 (4.5)	60 (15.1)			12 (3.0)
								5 (2.1)	1 (0.4)	
								5 (2.0)	2 (0.7)	
								6 (2.2)	4 (1.5)	
								7 (2.3)	4 (1.3)	
								8 (2.2)	6 (1.7)	
								8 (2.0)	6 (1.5)	

Table 3.1 (continued)

Year	Total	Agriculture		Technical	Appren- tice	Commercial		Fishery		Merchant Marine	
		Ad- vanced	Ordinary			Ad- vanced	Ordinary	Ad- vanced	Ordinary	Ad- vanced	Ordinary
1909	431	77	125	34	87	62	19	9	6	12	
	(100.0)	(17.8)	(29.0)	(7.9)	(20.2)	(14.4)	(4.4)	(2.1)	(1.4)	(2.8)	
1910	476	78	140	36	103	66	24	11	6	12	
	(100.0)	(16.4)	(29.4)	(7.6)	(21.6)	(13.9)	(5.0)	(2.3)	(1.3)	(2.5)	
1911	502	80	157	34	107	67	30	9	6	12	
	(100.0)	(15.9)	(31.3)	(6.8)	(21.3)	(13.3)	(6.0)	(1.8)	(1.2)	(2.4)	
1912	514	81	164	36	107	67	32	9	6	12	
	(100.0)	(15.8)	(31.9)	(7.0)	(20.8)	(13.0)	(6.2)	(1.8)	(1.2)	(2.3)	
1913	526	82	167	35	112	69	34	9	7	11	
	(100.0)	(15.6)	(31.7)	(6.7)	(21.3)	(13.1)	(6.5)	(1.7)	(1.3)	(2.1)	
1914	535	83	168	35	117	69	39	9	4	11	
	(100.0)	(15.5)	(31.4)	(6.5)	(21.9)	(12.9)	(7.3)	(1.7)	(0.7)	(2.1)	
1915	547	82	178	36	123	68	38	9	2	11	
	(100.0)	(15.0)	(32.6)	(6.6)	(22.5)	(12.4)	(6.9)	(1.6)	(0.4)	(2.0)	
1916	570	81	189	36	129	72	40	10	3	10	
	(100.0)	(14.2)	(33.2)	(6.3)	(22.6)	(12.6)	(7.0)	(1.8)	(0.5)	(1.8)	
1917	587	83	195	36	131	79	42	8	3	10	
	(100.0)	(14.1)	(33.2)	(6.1)	(22.3)	(13.5)	(7.2)	(1.4)	(0.5)	(1.7)	

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Formulated from the statistics for respective years in *Mombushō nemppō* [Ministry of Education Annual Report].

ence in that the ordinary vocational schools operated full-time whereas the vocational continuation schools were part-time schools.

The objective of the vocational continuation schools was to provide those who either had been engaged in various jobs or were seeking employment with necessary knowledge and skills by a simple method as well as with supplementary regular education. Because the true intention of the vocational continuation schools was to meet simultaneously the two aims of the vocational curriculum and supplement regular education, they were different from middle schools which only offered regular education and from other vocational schools which had been founded to offer vocational education alone.

The following exemplifies the subjects taught at vocational continuation schools:

Technical Continuation Schools: Physics, Chemistry, Drawing, Model Making, Geometry, Drafting, Designing, Dynamics, Materials, Tools, Manufacturing.

Agricultural Continuation Schools: Physics, Chemistry, Natural History, Soil, Fertilizers, Crops, Cultivation, Farm Tools, Vermin Control, Horticulture, Sericulture, Livestock, Forestation, Surveying.

Fishery Continuation Schools: Physics, Chemistry, Natural History, Geography, Fishery, Production, Breeding, Commercial Fishing Operation.

Commercial Continuation School: Business Mathematics, Business Correspondence, Major Commercial Affairs, Commodities, Commercial Geography, Bookkeeping, Business Law, Foreign Languages.

The above vocational subjects are examples, and they were either offered or eliminated dependent upon the circumstances of the region. To earn a means of living for themselves, the students were expected to use the knowledge acquired through these vocational subjects which could neither be studied at home and in the factories nor at the shops. Thus, it can be seen that the vocational continuation schools comprised a part of the education for working youth and ranked at the base of secondary vocational education. Furthermore, the system of secondary vocational education was formed in a hierarchical order of vocational continuation schools, ordinary vocational schools, and advanced vocational schools. These three types of schools were mutually closed to each other because students could not transfer from one to another.

4. The Development of Vocational Continuation Schools

After the promulgation of the 1899 Vocational School Act, the number of vocational schools increased rapidly. Table 3.1 shows the number

of public vocational schools from 1898 to 1917. The total number of vocational schools was increased nearly ninefold in this twenty-year period. In particular, there was a marked increase in the number of ordinary agricultural schools and the apprentice schools which belonged to ordinary technical schools. Because this was followed by agricultural schools of both the advanced and ordinary levels making nearly half the total number, priority was given to agricultural education. As stated already, the National Subsidy for Vocational Education Act had intended to emphasize the promotion of technical education, which was contrary to expectation. A rapid increase in the number of vocational schools, in effect, not only promoted agricultural education but also furthered the development of institutions of ordinary level vocational education.

Table 3.2 shows the transition in the number of vocational continuation schools in the same period. It is amazing to find the number of vocational continuation schools in a twenty-year period increased by over 95 times, and the number of agricultural continuation schools, in particular, increased by over 127 times. Despite the promotion policy for technical education pursued by the government, however, the number of technical continuation schools grew slightly over five-fold. As was the case with the vocational schools, the development of vocational continuation schools in technical and commercial education lagged behind agricultural education.

What was the cause for relative stagnation in technical and commercial education? As mentioned already, the German *Fortbildungsschule* had become the model for vocational continuation schools in Japan. Development of this type of school as a result of a close affiliation with the guilds was overlooked in Japan. On the contrary, the idea had been brought into Japan because plans for apprentice schools and technical schools which negated the traditional guild and apprentice system had been drafted. Its introduction could be regarded as one of the reasons that led to the stagnation in technical and commercial education.

Regarding the rapid increase in the number of agricultural continuation schools, the formation of youth associations in rural communities throughout the country, the movement for regional improvement, and the movement for popular education can be mentioned. Rural youth came to be incorporated into agricultural continuation schools through these movements.

62 OVERVIEW

Table 3.2. Vocational Continuation Schools, 1898–1917

	Total	Agriculture	Technical	Commercial	Fishery	Others
1898	113 (100.0)	62 (54.9)	24 (21.2)	27 (23.9)		
1899	108 (100.0)	62 (57.4)	21 (19.4)	25 (23.2)		
1900	151 (100.0)	73 (48.3)	29 (19.2)	33 (21.9)	15 (9.9)	1 (0.7)
1901	222 (100.0)	123 (55.4)	32 (14.4)	45 (20.3)	20 (9.0)	2 (0.9)
1902	630 (100.0)	480 (76.2)	44 (7.0)	82 (13.0)	23 (3.7)	1 (0.1)
1903	1,349 (100.0)	1,121 (83.1)	82 (6.1)	109 (8.1)	36 (2.6)	1 (0.1)
1904	1,684 (100.0)	1,436 (85.3)	82 (4.9)	124 (7.4)	41 (2.3)	1 (0.1)
1905	2,746 (100.0)	2,450 (89.2)	95 (3.5)	133 (4.8)	67 (2.4)	1 (0.1)
1906	4,211 (100.0)	3,785 (89.9)	155 (3.7)	167 (4.0)	103 (2.4)	1 (0.0)
1907	4,919 (100.0)	4,407 (89.6)	277 (4.6)	190 (3.9)	94 (1.9)	1 (0.0)
1908	4,751 (100.0)	4,185 (88.1)	252 (5.3)	215 (4.5)	97 (2.0)	2 (0.1)
1909	5,192 (100.0)	4,541 (87.5)	294 (5.7)	230 (4.4)	125 (2.4)	2 (0.0)
1910	6,111 (100.0)	4,592 (75.1)	161 (2.6)	201 (3.3)	111 (1.8)	1,046 (17.2)
1911	6,740 (100.0)	5,061 (75.1)	167 (2.5)	213 (3.2)	121 (1.8)	1,178 (17.4)
1912	7,386 (100.0)	5,530 (74.9)	199 (2.7)	197 (2.7)	128 (1.7)	1,332 (18.0)
1913	8,014 (100.0)	6,032 (75.3)	174 (2.2)	203 (2.5)	127 (1.6)	1,478 (18.4)
1914	8,343 (100.0)	6,100 (73.1)	170 (2.0)	213 (2.6)	129 (1.5)	1,731 (20.8)
1915	8,908 (100.0)	6,528 (73.3)	168 (1.9)	221 (2.5)	142 (1.6)	1,849 (20.7)
1916	9,698 (100.0)	7,064 (72.8)	161 (1.7)	219 (2.3)	142 (1.5)	2,112 (21.7)
1917	10,781 (100.0)	7,908 (73.4)	133 (1.2)	239 (2.2)	141 (1.3)	2,360 (21.9)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Same as Table 3.1.

IV. The Transformation of Vocational Education

From the 1900s, vocational continuation schools were upgraded from elementary vocational education schools to secondary vocational education schools. This trend was related to the rise in compulsory education enrollment which occurred in the latter half of the Meiji period. In 1907 the length of compulsory education was extended from four years to six years, and the enrollment rate reached nearly 100%; vocational continuation schools no longer needed to play a supplementary role to compulsory education. From 1906, youth associations which had been actively organized under the guidance of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Education directly and indirectly determined the direction of subsequent vocational continuation education. Moreover, the vocational continuation schools were changed decisively by the enactment of the Youth Training Center Act in April 1926 which was followed by the establishment of the Youth School Act in 1935.

1. Youth Associations and Vocational Continuing Education

The prototype of youth associations in Japan derived from the youth fraternities which had played a role in the age-ladder group of each rural community in the period of the fief governments. Together with the implementation of the modern local autonomous system from the middle of the Meiji period, these youth fraternities disappeared and were reorganized into youth associations so that they could adapt to the new local autonomous organizations. After the Russo-Japanese War, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Education, in particular, were intent on the promotion of local autonomies and actively encouraged the organization of youth associations which thus far had been formed spontaneously. These youth associations carried out such tasks as tax solicitation, road and water channel repairs, village-owned forest care, night watch services, cooperative cultivation, and cooperative saving, and during the off-season they put their efforts into holding night study meetings and continuation schools.

In 1915 the Ministry of Education issued a decree which clarified that the youth associations were neither merely social associations nor organizations for the purpose of projects but were associations primarily for character building. Each of these associations was organized in every city, town, and village. Moreover, the members to be organized into associations were youth who had completed compulsory education, those older than the age of compulsory education (12 years) and those up to 20 years old. Subsequently, the second decree issued

by the Ministry of Education in 1918 designated vocational continuation schools as institutions in charge of the educational movement of the youth associations. As a result, enrollment in vocational continuation schools was encouraged. Without exception youth associations were organized in every city, town, and village, so vocational continuation schools grew rapidly. In consequence, vocational continuation schools came to incorporate most of the youth who had completed compulsory education. Thus, they began to develop into institutions which functioned as an extension of compulsory education.

The vocational continuation schools in the initial stage did not enforce education as they offered two to three years of voluntary part-time education to working youth who either had started to work after completing elementary school or who were seeking employment. Nevertheless, as a result of the designation by the Ministry of Education of vocational continuation schools as character-building institutions for youth associations, there developed a general notion that the length of study at the vocational continuation schools was to be from elementary school graduation to 20 years of age. Furthermore, because all the youth residing in any city, town, or village were enrolled, the vocational continuation schools turned into institutions of semi-compulsory education.

2. Revision of the Vocational Continuing Education System

In accordance with the great revision of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools in December 1920 and the promulgation of the Teacher Training Act for Vocational Continuation Schools in October of the same year, the system of vocational continuing education showed a new development. The revised regulations had acted as the basis of vocational continuation schools for about fifteen years until they were rescinded in April 1935 due to the establishment of the Youth School System.

The conventional Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools were so free and easy that such items as the length of study, subjects, and the number of class periods were randomly assigned. Thus, the intention of the revision was to establish a standard with regard to not only the period of study, the number of class periods and subjects, but also the school organization. This revision reorganized the education of vocational continuation schools at a higher level.

Due to the revision of the National Subsidy for Vocational Education Act in August 1920, vocational continuation schools were granted subsidies on a large scale. In consequence, it became possible to em-

ploy full-time teachers solely for the vocational continuation schools. It was thus natural that a teacher training institution for these schools became necessary. Upon the promulgation of the Teacher Training Act for Vocational Continuation Schools in October 1920, teacher training centers began to be founded throughout the country. Thus, the systematization of vocational continuing education was completed because vocational continuation schools became solidly established as educational institutions for working youth. As seen in Table 3.3, the number of vocational continuation schools in 1924 exceeded fifteen thousand schools, and there was no big fluctuation in the number until 1934, which was immediately prior to the abolishment of the schools in 1935. Therefore, the number of vocational continuation schools, which had shown a maximal increase at the end of the Taishō period was henceforth fixed at the same level. Of these schools, about 80% were agricultural continuation schools, and it was commonly accepted that the vocational continuation schools were synonymous with agricultural continuation schools.

3. The Establishment of the Youth Training Center System

In April 1926 the Youth Training Center Act was promulgated. The primary objective of the youth training centers was to provide those aged between 16 and 20 years who had graduated from elementary school but had not entered middle school with four years of military training.

In Europe after World War I, a great reduction of armaments was carried out resolutely to recover from the devastation of war and to seek permanent peace. Japan was also influenced by this trend and pursued an armament reduction. As part of the reduction, the period of active service for soldiers was shortened. Since the shortened period of active service denoted a weakened military force, there was a need for a supplementary measure. Thus, military training of male youth outside the military was offered. Starting from April 1925, students were drilled by active army officers who were allocated to the schools above the secondary level. Starting from April 1926, youth training centers were established to give military training to the general working youth who were not enrolled in secondary or higher level schools. Reservists were appointed to act as instructors.

In 1926 when the Youth Training Center Act was promulgated, there were 15,588 centers with over 890,000 students. It was possible to establish the training centers very rapidly because they were annexed to vocational continuation schools and relied upon their teaching

Table 3.3. Vocational Continuation Schools, 1918-34

	Total	Agriculture	Technical	Commercial	Fishery	Others
1918	12,213 (100.0)	8,827 (72.3)	146 (1.2)	272 (2.2)	144 (1.2)	2,824 (23.1)
1919	13,338 (100.0)	10,019 (75.1)	131 (1.0)	277 (2.1)	154 (1.2)	2,757 (20.6)
1920	14,232 (100.0)	10,591 (74.4)	132 (0.9)	373 (2.6)	184 (1.3)	2,952 (20.8)
1921	14,839 (100.0)	10,791 (72.7)	137 (0.9)	370 (2.5)	182 (1.2)	3,359 (22.7)
1922	14,879 (100.0)	11,506 (77.3)	123 (0.8)	421 (2.8)	192 (1.3)	2,637 (17.8)
1923	14,944 (100.0)	11,833 (79.2)	119 (0.8)	410 (2.7)	205 (1.4)	2,377 (15.9)
1924	15,024 (100.0)	11,973 (79.7)	146 (1.0)	438 (2.9)	202 (1.3)	2,265 (15.1)
1925	15,301 (100.0)	12,046 (78.7)	101 (0.7)	447 (2.9)	206 (1.3)	2,501 (16.4)
1926	15,300 (100.0)	12,945 (84.6)	135 (0.9)	549 (3.6)	196 (1.3)	1,475 (9.6)
1927	15,361 (100.0)	12,943 (84.3)	120 (0.8)	560 (3.6)	217 (1.4)	1,521 (9.9)
1928	15,297 (100.0)	12,791 (83.6)	105 (0.7)	547 (3.6)	226 (1.5)	1,628 (10.6)
1929	15,284 (100.0)	12,684 (83.0)	98 (0.6)	551 (3.6)	243 (1.6)	1,708 (11.2)
1930	15,248 (100.0)	12,630 (82.8)	101 (0.7)	527 (3.5)	247 (1.6)	1,743 (11.4)
1931	15,083 (100.0)	12,381 (82.1)	107 (0.7)	519 (3.4)	242 (1.6)	1,834 (12.2)
1932	15,091 (100.0)	12,330 (81.7)	101 (0.7)	544 (3.6)	250 (1.7)	1,866 (12.3)
1933	15,140 (100.0)	12,160 (80.3)	98 (0.6)	535 (3.5)	248 (1.7)	2,099 (13.9)
1934	15,306 (100.0)	12,391 (81.0)	103 (0.7)	549 (3.6)	279 (1.8)	1,984 (12.9)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Same as Table 3.1.

staff. The educational content of the youth training centers consisted of the education given by the vocational continuation schools plus military drills. The students at the centers were also the same. Thus, as was the case with the vocational continuation schools, the youth training centers were also designated as character-building institutions

for the youth associations, and most working youth became members of these two institutions.

Through the establishment of the youth training centers, most of the working youth who had graduated from six years of compulsory ordinary elementary education but had neither entered middle school nor upper elementary school went on to part-time vocational continuation schools. Upon reaching the age of 16, while remaining students of vocational continuation schools, they—together with those who had graduated from upper elementary school—entered the youth training centers.

4. The Establishment of the Youth School System

Due to the promulgation of the Youth Training Center Act in 1926, the vocational continuation schools, as educational institutions for working youth, came to stand in line with the youth training centers. Nonetheless, these two institutions shared many things in common. For example, the teaching staff and the educational content were the same for both institutions; the male youth, in particular, had to be doubly enrolled in two educational institutions. Therefore, it was asserted from the beginning that these two should be unified to one educational institution. In April 1935, with the establishment of the Youth School Act, the vocational continuation schools and the youth training centers were discontinued, and these two institutions were amalgamated to form the youth schools.

Even though youth schools came into being as a result of the integration of the vocational continuation schools and the youth training centers, the vocational curriculum which prevailed in the vocational continuation schools proportionately regressed while the militaristic character of the youth training centers was emphasized. Moreover, upon entering 1939, on the basis of the revision of the Youth School Act, education at the youth schools was made compulsory for boys. Excluding those who were enrolled in secondary level schools or schools higher than these, boys between the ages of 12 and 19 years were obligated to enroll in the youth schools. The fact that the enrollment obligation to the youth schools was enjoined on boys alone denoted that the primary aim of the education given by the youth schools was to provide male youth with military training.

Although the youth schools played a militaristic role, they also contributed greater educational opportunities to the general working youth because of the compulsory system. After World War II the extension of compulsory education in Japan to include three years of junior high school went relatively smoothly despite the financial

difficulties, because the compulsory nature of the youth schools acted as a historical background for the new system of compulsory education. At any rate, through the establishment of the youth school system, the system of vocational continuing education which had been started in 1893 came to an end.

V. The Historical Role of the Vocational Schools

The history of vocational continuation schools can be divided into the early, the middle, and the late periods. The early period of the vocational continuation schools lasted for nine years starting from 1893 when the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools were established on the basis of the Elementary School Act, to 1902, when the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools were revised in accordance with the promulgation of the 1899 Vocational School Act. The vocational continuation schools in this period were classified as a type of elementary school and emphasized supplementary elementary education.

The middle period of the vocational continuation schools lasted for 18 years starting from 1902, when the regulations were revised on the basis of the Vocational School Act, to 1920, when the regulations were greatly revised again. The vocational continuation schools in this period were designated as a type of vocational school which placed more weight upon vocational education for working youth.

Lastly, the late period of the vocational continuation school lasted for 15 years starting from 1920, when the regulations were greatly revised, to 1935, when the Youth School Act was promulgated. The vocational continuation schools in this period stood in line with the youth training centers founded in 1926, and they not only offered vocational education but also stressed civic education. Ultimately, the youth schools were established through the amalgamation of the youth training centers and the vocational continuation schools. The vocational character regressed in proportion to the increase in their militarism. Nevertheless, the youth schools which used to be designated as secondary-level educational institutions for working youth provided the basis for three years of compulsory junior high school after World War II.

The basic character of the vocational continuation schools in each of the above-mentioned periods was not only affected by the revisions of the Regulations for Vocational Continuation Schools, but also prescribed by the pattern of mutual relationships between them and other schools. First, there was a close relationship with elementary schools in the early period. The vocational continuation schools as

institutions for primary vocational education played a supplementary role to regular primary education. This was a result of the stagnation of the elementary school enrollment ratio. Next, although the vocational continuation schools in the middle period had been upgraded from a type of elementary school as a result of the promulgation of the Vocational School Act, they were not necessarily prescribed clearly as institutions of secondary vocational education. There were such schools as ordinary and advanced vocational schools as well as apprentice schools in the category of institutions of secondary vocational education. Thus, vocational continuation schools were placed in an intermediate position between institutions of secondary vocational education and institutions of primary education. This intermediate character was brought about because the vocational continuation schools had outgrown their supplementary role to elementary schools as the elementary enrollment ratio increased. Furthermore, there were many cases in this period whereby vocational continuation schools were being upgraded to ordinary level vocational schools and then to advanced vocational schools. This fact realistically illustrates the intermediate character of the vocational continuation schools. In addition, the school system during this period clearly showed that it was based upon a dual system. They were designated as educational institutions which provided working youth, who could not go on to middle school, with a part-time education.

Lastly, the flexible regulations which had existed in the middle period were greatly revised in the late period to implement systematization. While vocational education was clearly set forth by the vocational continuation schools, the basic character was changed as more emphasis was placed on civic education. The vocational continuation schools in this period together with the youth training centers were prescribed as character-building institutions for youth associations, which inevitably meant that both came to be unified into the youth schools. Upon the establishment of the youth schools, therefore, the vocational continuation schools with about 42 years of history came to an end.

Corresponding to the development of the economy from the turn of the century, the vocational continuation schools which were deeply involved in the facilitation of regular primary education and secondary vocational education not only supplemented these but also bridged the gap between regular primary education and higher education. In doing so, the vocational continuation schools systematized the educational needs of the general populace, especially those of working youth, and also responded to the national demand of each period.