

Research Article

The State of Women and Women's Education at the Beginning of Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1651)

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Abstract

This study attempted to draw a more critical analysis of women and their education at the beginning of the Tokugawa period. Tokugawa, or the Edo period in Japan, was a warrior society. It is one of the most studied fields for many scholars as it highlighted the feature of Japanese culture until today. In Japan, women's studies began in the 1970s, which is considered late than Western. Recently, there is still limited research regarding women's education activities being conducted under the Tokugawa shogunate. This study engaged historical methods, namely heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. At the beginning of the Tokugawa era, women's education was varied based on social status and families' occupation. The gap of education between men and women and noblewomen and commoners is a mystifying matter as some historical accounts address the contrary facts. Many historical writings indicate that women at the beginning of the Tokugawa period experienced great repression and hierarchical subjugation. However, several accounts addressing the role of women during Tokugawa were relatively better as women received fitted and suitable education during the period. Therefore, it is necessary to identify Tokugawa's social and political context more closely than making the judgment based on how it used to be since many classical historiographies in the past solely focus on the ruling class. Finally, the time needed for education equality toward women in Japan indicating that education was important for the whole population that would need to be given to all.

Keywords: Tokugawa Shogunate; Women; Education

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1. Introduction

Women throughout history have been playing a significant part in societies, including Japan. Japan or *Nihon* is considered the eleventh most populous and a great member of the worldwide organization, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and United Nations. Despite Japan being is one the most prosperous Asian countries, it also obtains the dynamic of women's role from ancient to modern

times, which experienced inequality—from the Yamato *Kofun* realm to the Meiji Restoration, showing how women slowly depicted themselves in the historical stage of Japan. The restraint imposed on political patterns has been established by men and historically benefited men and excluded women from being important participants in the political process.

Women in Japan, similar to other ancient and medieval civilizations, were considered inferior and marginalized. They

did not receive the proper treatment as well as their male fellow received. During Tokugawa Shogunate, which Japan achieved one of its golden times, made less significant interest towards women. In many respects, samurai became the center of social and political affairs that officials put their concern (Sheldon, 1983; Ueno, 1987). Samurai held the top position of the social hierarchy, followed by peasants, artisans, and merchants. This social hierarchy was established after Japan being unified in the late 16th century (Sheldon, 1983; Tsurumi, 2000; Andressen, 2002).

Tokugawa, or the Edo period in Japan, was a warrior society (Das, 2019; Gordon, 2003). This era, called Tokugawa after the name of a military family in Japan between 1603 and 1868 that left several features for Japan in later ages (Gordon, 2003; O'Riley 2014). Edo or Tokyo today housed Ieyasu's troupe, which promoted centralized and stabilized the shogunate that adapted Neo-Confucian philosophy, which required unquestioning loyalty to the shogun and state (O'Riley, 2014).

Education during Tokugawa was intended on training the samurai. The warrior society that occurred in Edo established the city as a prosperous one and political center of Japan. The education for samurai and ordinary children was shifted after Edo was selected as Tokugawa capital. Confucianism notion became an integral part of everyday behaviour for samurai (Stephen, 1991; Tsurumi, 2000; Gordon, 2003).

Tokugawa period was marked with outstanding achievements in terms of social, political, military, and economy. According to Dore, the first beginning of the Tokugawa period was not a literacy society, and hardly even a literary society established when Tokugawa Ieyasu completed nation warring and forced to accept throughout the legitimacy of Tokugawa house (Dore, 2011). Education was practiced in the temples for monks that mentioned women's involvement during

the era. To make it worse, Buddhism adaptation by Shotoku Taishi (574-622) encouraged an anti-feminine society, and spiritually based judgment provided a chauvinist society (Jacob, 2014).

Japan finally considered equal education for both males and females after the movement by pro-Western during the first decades of Meiji (Delgado-Algarra, 2018; O'Donnell, 2018). In addition, the research interest regarding women and education has inclined in many disciplines and scopes after the 1970s, especially by Western scholars. Japanese history started slower than the West, at least in the 1970s after the sexual division research of labour was conducted in Japan. Many history writings related to Japanese women slowly began after that. This limited research due to studies towards women in the ancient period was being ignored in terms of traditional academic as patriarchal sense limited women movements. It confirms how the scholars must deal with writing women's history in Japan until recently (Gerhart, 2018).

Several scholars have conducted previous research regarding women in Tokugawa. Kurushima (2004) focuses on marriage and female inheritances in Medieval Japan. It concludes that women's position in modern Japan obtains its roots in the Medieval period. Another research titled "The State and Women in Modern Japan: Feminist Discourse in the Meiji and Taisho Eras". This study examines women's relationship and state through discourse on women's rights from the mid-Meiji era through Taisho. Furthermore, there is a thesis by Mari Nagase that investigates Women Writers of Chinese Poetry in Late-Edo Period Japan. This thesis explicitly *kanshi* poems written by three Japanese women; Ema Saiko, Hara Saihin, and Takahashi Gyokusho.

Hence, there is still limited research regarding women's education activities conducted in terms of the social and political context under the Tokugawa

shogunate. Thus, a historical review would allow us to understand the events that encouraged cultural growth under traditional education and social hierarchy (Delgado-Algarra, 2018). Referring to Peter Kornicki, most women's writing was kept in manuscript with limited circulation as it might have affected the public's knowledge (O'Donnell, 2018). It is also proved rather difficult to confirm women's literacy level before the existence of the school system. Thus, this study tried to draw the education nature carried out for women, examine women's participation in society at the same level as men, and question how women were educated during the beginning of the Tokugawa period. This study stretched from the initial stage of Japan unification under Tokugawa until the establishment of Edo as capital at the beginning of the 17th century

The women's movement in Japan, for historians, tends to equate with national opposition and liberal thoughts from Western. Hence, women who had significant support in the public for Japan's modernization received proper attention, but women who played roles in the imperial state obtained less attention (Mehl, 2001). The history of women and their representation of societies in Japan is very appealing. These present an explanation that external factor is significantly important to improving the gender-based idea and responsible for women of Japan depiction over the last centuries (Jacob, 2014). The idea of examining Japanese women and their role in historical events enhances a wider view of women in general and their part within the development globalized world (Ramos, 2005).

2. Methods

This research engaged the historical research method. Historical research is a series of processes in examining and identifying records to construct events in the past. The steps being taken during the

process namely 1) heuristics, 2) criticism, 3) interpretation, and 4) historiography (Gottschalk, 1975). Heuristics is the process of collecting historical sources. Authors utilized primary and secondary sources in terms of journals, books, thesis, and dissertation. The authors also examined previous research regarding women and education during Tokugawa Era. The second stage is criticism. Authors selected the sources based on validity, reliability, years, authorship, accuracy, and indexation for journals. The qualified sources are then studied thoroughly (criticism), namely education during the Edo era, women state in the Edo era, and the social and economic state of the Tokugawa Era. Then, the next stage is interpretation. Authors conducted interpretation towards historical sources after being criticized. The authors determined that the meaning of facts has been collected through literature review. Historical facts of women and women's education during Tokugawa were being related one and another. The final procedure was performing historiography, which means the authors combined and compiled the narration based on interpretation results. The results were compiled based on chronology and object. The study period started from Tokugawa Ieyasu to Tokugawa Iemitsu (1603-1651).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Overview of Tokugawa's Ideological and Philosophical Foundation

Japanese society was deeply rooted in feudal notions until 1854 when American Commodore Perry opened the Japanese trading door to distinctive Western cultures (Allen 1958; Ooms & Yonemoto, 2004). Western with the ideas of Renaissance and Enlightenment succeeded in replacing the feudal culture with the industrial and urban culture. Japan did not obtain these benefits. Before Western interruption towards this country, Japan had already owned its native ideological foundation, despite

Confucianism and Buddhism that came from China (Gastineau, 2015).

Confucian ideas and writings from China entered Japan similar to Buddhism, which achieved the first peak in the seventh and eighth centuries. After reaching Japan via Korean Peninsula in ancient times, Confucianism was adapted in several stages before reached its influence on society swiftly when Japan entered the Tokugawa period (Gelb, 1994; Sugano, 2000). Japanese rulers engaged their institution based on Confucian practices such Tang Dynasty. Several centuries later, when Confucianism declined, Zhu Xi's neo-Confucianism was developed. Neo-Confucianism was being studied intensely in Japan by Buddhist monks. Those monks who studied neo-Confucianism accommodated Buddhist thought became "Buddhist-Confucian" men. Eventually, during Tokugawa, Neo-Confucianism ideas built their path into secular circles and became an integral part of cultural and political power. Both Buddhist and Confucianism became a significant part of Japanese culture (Gelb, 1994; Gordon, 2003). Education rooted in a Confucian model was to be pursued.

The Japanese interest in Chinese Confucian thought resulted in the liberation of secular scholarship from temples. Chinese works had been recognized in Japan for a long time as they were studied by Zen monks at least in the 13th century. Their interest in Confucian was claimed as philosophy and ethics. Early 17th century, Japanese scholars maintained their intellectual interests by endowing in the temple or feudal lord employment (Dore, 2011).

Some scholars also indicate this period is crucial in establishing the concepts of *honno* and *tatema*, which mean "inner reality" and "outward appearance". These concepts due to the mutual responsibility system that was important for groups to maintain harmonious appearance at all costs, even there were issues beneath the

surface. These concepts turned into behaviour that developed into etiquette in which conflicts were avoided by never being straight or blunt. Nowadays, this pattern of life has marked the feature of Japanese society (Andressen, 2002).

In the first century of the Tokugawa regime, they put their legitimacy through the philosophical claim of religious and secular tradition as they created a broad understanding of some main ideas regarding the proper political and social pattern. A complicated blend between Shinto, Confucian, and Buddhist created the elements upon this ideological synthesis. By the end of the 16th century, Neo-Confucian ideas were engaged to educate rulers and guided fair political order. Since medieval times, Neo-Confucian emphasized direct reading to Confucian ancient text (Gordon, 2003; Das, 2019).

During the Tokugawa Shogunate period, Japan also experienced cultural maturation as citizenship achieved a high literacy level compared to the West (Lukminaitė, 2015; Ooms & Yonemoto, 2004). Literacy percentages for men between 50% to 80% and women 20% (Delgado-Algarra, 2018). After Japan's unification by Tokugawa Ieyasu, political stability, economic development, and cultural revitalization encouraged the educational system to improve to meet literacy demands, literacy demands due to the prestige of Neo-Confucian Chinese learning, and temple schools and private schools were open to the lower class that contributed to the spread of literacy (Delgado-Algarra, 2018; Dore, 2011; Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017). Furthermore, most samurai were literate and very familiar with the basic Chinese classic learned in Chinese literature, philosophy, or history (Andressen, 2002; Dore, 2011; Gordon, 2013). By the half of the Tokugawa period, the literate percentage had access to a vast and varied selection of maps and geographical books (Ooms & Yonemoto, 2004).

Today, the Japanese worship harmonious temple or shrine. Japanese culture emerges between a passion need to achieve unity. “*Wa*”, meaning harmony, was a significant concept in Japan’s history influenced by Confucianism and Buddhism. *Wa* is part of the Japanese moral system. The spirit of *wa* was performed centuries from Heian Era to the internal wars in the 16th century. The feudal culture of Japan during Tokugawa encouraged hard work in the physical environment continues that workers looking for longer hours and wholeheartedly commitment as moral need and both individual or group satisfaction. Interdependence found in Japanese society is recognized as significant support for the individual, that not rigid of the personality (Stephen, 1991).

3.2 Women at the Beginning of Tokugawa Shogunate

The relationship between women and the Japanese state has been the topic of much debate regarding Japanese studies in late years (Molony, 1999). When examining the role of Japanese women within society, there is a tendency to illustrate their subordinate status by admitting that women were put in a lower status and nowadays there are currently considered the heirs of lower rank provided on them in days of yore (Delgado-Algarra, 2018; Kurushima, 2004; Ramos, 2005). In pre-modern times once a rigid social class put women in the isolated cluster, no women could depict all women due to differentiation between nobility and peasant women so significant as to provide what they shared common based on gender (Kurushima, 2004). The argument that is commonly used is that things are the way they are since they have been that way through history (Ramos, 2005). Despite an argument that Tokugawa Japan was a constant, a period is still recognized to depict the nadir status of Japanese women (Tocco, 2003).

Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of Tokugawa Shogunate, integrated the Neo-

Confucian model that separated Japanese society into four classes: warriors, farmers, artisans, and merchants (Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017). Hence, the social mobility was rigid, and the general samurai household was patriarchal (Jacob, 2014; Anderessen, 2002; Gordon, 2013). In the traditional Confucian societies as in Japan, women were in disadvantaged circumstances. Social hierarchies, including royal monarchy, strong class, patriarchal, large family patterns preserving the bloodline, are crucial and tend to remain separate and unequal roles between women and men. Confucianism demands the obediences of women; to father, husband, and son. This three-generation Confucianism family lasted for many centuries. In this belief, the role of women became mainly “heir provider”. Hence, women exist solely as representing their marginality from discourse (Gabrovska, 2009). This perspective of Tokugawa Edo that women were important mainly as vessels to assure paternity and that the husband was the absolute lord in the family.

The imposition of feudalism strengthened Confucian morality and continued the restraint for women’s opportunities in Japan (Gelb, 1994). Later, Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucianism also had established the idea that men were to obtain office and concern themselves with wide social and political issues, women were to perform the household on a day-to-day basis (Sangawa, 2017; Jacob, 2014; O’Donnell, 2018; Ooms & Yonemoto, 2004).

Women in this period experienced great repression and hierarchical subjugation. Repression of women was how the household maintained respect and honour since women who were not submissive could ruin the family name, which applied to the samurai women (Anderson, 2015). Therefore, the woman who presented her husband well brought great honour to his home and the entire community. Otherwise, women who

obtained the bravery to question the regulation experienced that breaking the rules model would result in some punishment for themselves and their families. In addition, Shortly after the Heian period, women's contribution to arts was denied for the rest of the pre-modern era, which some scholars address as "the dark age of women" (O'Donnell, 2018). During the Heian period, Murasaki Shikibu or Sei Shonagon was an excellent *kanshi poet* (Nagase; 2011). It means, Heian period provided more agreement towards women's participation in public compared to Tokugawa.

Considering women's position during Tokugawa Era, social hierarchy was examined, namely samurai women and lower-class women. Lower classes women mainly occupied rural areas. Most of them also remained in their rural surroundings. Their families required their working force to give extra income and supporting hands for daily business. As a result, these women were not allowed to obtain an education useless for peasant women (Jacob, 2015). As for Samurai women, they were housewives, and the main expectations of them were morality. Samurai women were the role model in their dress, hairstyle, how they perform themselves, and their mannerisms (Anderson, 2015). The differentiation of women's state was also encouraged by the *bakufu (daimyo)* system which women in Edo were quite different from women in rural areas (Anderson, 2015; O, Donnell, 2018).

However, several accounts addressing the role of women during Edo were relatively better than common historical writings. Even though Ieyasu had established the hierarchy of social status, these rigid social classes were not as strong as Ieyasu thought. Otherwise, women who lived in rural areas obtained a more egalite surrounding as their workforce was crucial for survival. The samurai children were given a frequent education, and yet women were considered benefits upon this

procedure. Samurai women and common women managed the educational system that established schools and private academic in which women educated themselves in reading and writing (Jacob, 2014; O'Donnell, 2018). Therefore, even men were the main factor in making decisions. Women were also allowed to manage the course or even as well (Jacob, 2014).

In addition, Hara Hiroko, a Japanese anthropologist, explains that Japanese fathers used to assist with children looking after them. A childcare manual was found that addressed men were describing how fathers should give baby milk if the mothers were out of supply. Luís Fróis's journey to Japan observed that in Europe, husbands and wives shared their property while in Japan each obtained their property (Ramos, 2005). These events were not against Tokugawa rule as their ideological philosophy also demanded women's education. Kaibara Ekiken, a Neo-Confucian philosopher, even promoted that men should assess females' appearance and education level before marrying a woman. Therefore, these factors enhanced the high level of education for the nobles, samurai, and average women who could write and read. Furthermore, women who stayed in the area around urban cities were allowed to obtain an education at a higher level (Tocco, 2003).

Some women's works during the Edo period have been mentioned, which refused the presumptions; women's literacy silence during Edo and women's exception from Chinese documents. These presumptions about the Edo period were based on academic descriptions of the Japanese since the Meiji period. Nevertheless, women's works in writing as a poet indicate their ability to create work (Nagase, 2007). This partial truth due to historical research based on written texts that mainly about the ruling class and their ideology (Ueno, 1987). Tokugawa was a period when a discussion of the feminine

most commonly took place in Japanese society, yet women have ignored any active involvement in establishing that discussion (Grisworld, 1995).

Japan began to enter modern times since the Meiji era (Watanabe, 2011). From this era, the transition of government led by the emperor and the influence of western culture into Japanese society. The change of governmental system at that time replaced the feudalism that prevailed in the Tokugawa regime. The government welcomed the western culture as a form of initiation to prepare Japan to become one of the first-class countries in the international community (Watanabe, 2011).

Before the Meiji era, only men were entitled to basic education. However, since the enactment of the Education of Law in 1872, basic education was mandatory for anyone, male and female, regardless of gender (Watanabe, 2011). Thus, from that time onwards, women started obtaining their primary education rights (Lukminait, 2015).

However, there was a gap between the education of men and women due to the family rules. Women's roles were still regarded as helping on the farm. It resulted in them only obtaining primary education and not pursuing the secondary or higher one (Watanabe, 2011). Also, their parents consider European values taught in the school would not be beneficial for the work, resulting in fewer women being sent to enroll in school than the men (Watanabe, 2011).

It was after the Sino War that the enrollment rate for women increased. At that time, people realized that the strength of a strong state begins with a strong household (Yamazaki, 2007). Therefore, women play an important role as supporting figures behind their husbands and raise their children properly. In order to be a good wife, a certain degree of education was essential. In this case, Confucianism value did not wholly disappear but contained in a new concept named *ryosai kenbo*.

The concept of *ryosai kenbo* (a good wife and wise mother) was developed after the Sino war. It is considered that a good woman should be focused more on dedicating their lives to taking care of the family and not placing too much importance on academics (M. Inoue, 2002; Y. Inoue, 2019). This notion was deeply rooted in the Meiji and Taisho eras, hindering women's motivation to develop intellectually (Watanabe, 2011; Yamazaki, 2007). It resulted in women-only finished their primary education and did not pursue secondary education.

If women wanted to pursue secondary education, the choice was a regular national school, a private girls school with the Christianity system (Watanabe, 2011), and Joshi Gakkō (women's school). Although, the Joshi Gakkō itself functioning as preparing women to be suitable *ryosai kenbo*. Then, when Japan entered the contemporary era, though slowly, equality began to be established. It started in 1985 when the Equality of Work Law for men and women was ratified (Hanna, 2009). According to this law, women finally able to vote for their choice in the election.

Before Meiji Restoration, women were commonly known to read, write, have etiquette, and look after the household. What can be expected of women varied based on their rank of society, even though we could still recognize that girls and women in all ranks were allowed to share learning materials since many writings were provided for them in terms of textbooks of morals and primers (Jacob, 2014; Lukminait, 2015). Tokugawa in Edo housed more than one million people and was the biggest city in the world was considered prosperous, yet the representation of women was varied (Jacob, 2014).

3.3 Women Education at the Beginning of Tokugawa Shogunate

Today, there is practically no gender gap in educational opportunities in Japan (Gildart, 2014). Even in education for secondary and higher levels, the difference percentage of boys and girls is rarely found. However, in the early stage of establishing modern education system, education opportunity for girls was limited. Before Meiji Restoration, a feudal culture dominated by male chauvinism, where women's social roles were confined (Jacob, 2014). Japanese literacy rates were already high during the Edo period for the male and female population. However, the publicity towards Western ideas generated new notions about the context of education (Lukminaitė, 2015).

What was new during the early Tokugawa period was scholars. They rejected the mild eclecticism of priestly predecessors and claimed their adherence to Confucianism as a philosophy and ethic that incompatible with and opposed Buddhism. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the only way a scholar could survive was endowed in the temple or the employment of a feudal lord. Thus, as long as the feudal lords were concerned, "reading books was an ability for priests. It is prevalent in the period histories to consider the growth of Confucian scholarship at Ieyasu and his successors' era (Dore, 2011).

In examining women's education during Edo, it is necessary to put social hierarchy into consideration as the society was deeply feudal (Lukminaitė, 2015; O'Donnell, 2018). Before the Meiji period, it was clear that there was no formalized education provided for women. In the Heian period that marked women for their literary achievement, the only available education outside the temple was the official state of the academy. Nevertheless, this academy did not allow women to attend. Noblewomen depended on private tutoring (O'Donnell, 2018).

At the beginning of the Tokugawa period, Confucian ideas obtained a profound part in shaping Tokugawa education characteristics. Confucianism emphasized that rulers should select the officials with the highest ethical and intellectual quality (Gordon, 2003). In addition, Confucianism also required intense pursuit of education that all boys and young men of the samurai class had to be educated in Chinese language and literature (Tsurumi, 2000).

In terms of education, during Tokugawa's reign, there was a varied diffusion of the educational institution. Tokugawa philosophy fostered the expansion of education in general and women's education in particular. Many historians had tried to generate studies regarding Tokugawa thought, yet the ideology about women's education has not been included. Referring to Ooms & Yonemoto's (2004) studies of the early stages of Tokugawa, it has a crucial part of gender history in the period. The rise of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian ideas challenges the credibility to keep asserting that women's life was characterized by single hegemonic discourse for more than two hundred fifty years of Tokugawa. However, women also obtained symbolic and cultural power in the early ideologies adapted to authorize shogun rule; women held symbolic icons in early Tokugawa in Shinto philosophy and obtained symbolic significance within the imperial family (Ko et al., 2003).

At the beginning of the 17th century, a large part of samurai was displaced to cities. The village chief and officials in rural areas were required to improve the higher literacy level to perform administrative jobs. This displacement due to the immense concentration of power for the shogun to conduct stability in the city. This motivation encouraged other villagers to make time and resources to develop their literacy skills. Even though this development commonly influenced male population literacy, women in rural areas

still had difficult access to school and literacy (Stephen, 1991; Mehl, 2001). Those in rural areas should obtain knowledge that suitable for labour in the fields. Slowly literacy spread to household heads and lower-ranking women, servants, despite the education gap until the 19th century.

The homeschooling system since the Heian period continued to the Edo period. If a girl was to study, it was conducted by a family member like mothers and grandmothers. The family members would take turn the role of a teacher as it was not common to hire a tutor for homeschooling. Studying at home was considered more proper for women since it did not take them away from home in performing household. Their studies could also be personalized into the family's occupation and rank. Parents usually teach their daughters the knowledge that would support them in hereditary ranks (O'Donnell, 2018). Apart from homeschooling, there was also Terakoya. Terakoya was a temple-owned school for education merchants and peasants. In Terakoya, one teacher taught children of different ages and subjects as math, reading, and writing. It used to be a one-room house (Yanagisawa, 2015).

For women from lower classes such as peasants, merchants and artisans could work alongside the man on fields, manage the shops, and create valuable products. For samurai women, with their higher class were housewives and the main expectations were morality (Dore, 2011; Jacob, 2014). The kind of morality was obedience to her parents, to her husbands, and in widowhood to her son. It was considered necessary for women to participate in classical Chinese to obtain virtues. Some would grant women at least read the Four Books as women had the chief responsibility for bringing up children (Dore, 2011). Samurai women were submissive but also obtained decent inner power to behave in a very rigid manner expected. Girls of the samurai class were

only taught a concise introduction to the Japanese syllabus to note the dyer and rare latter to the relatives. Their proper training was only sewing and other basic skills in a household that prepared them for marriage later.

Since the official neglected girls' education, it was little attention to regulation than boys' education (Mehl, 2001). As education was significantly enhanced for women, there were plenty of instructional books for women written by men of Confucianists. Slowly, the education for commoners developed and possessed a distinctive pattern than before. This distinctive pattern means that public and private schools were also open for lower classes. Hence they were allowed to learn Chinese classics. In addition, there were also female authors and travel narratives format books written by samurai, noblewomen, and common classes women (Tanigama, 2016) to tell their experiences of journeys. Shiba Keiko has been working in gathering such manuscript travel diaries to prove the scope of women who could read and write. She mentioned that "it was predominantly a man's world when it came to the authorship of widely distributed popular literature..." (O'Donnell, 2018). Hence, although educational opportunities were limited for the aristocratic few, women were still acknowledged for their role as they made history (Jacob, 2014).

Gender differentiation also varied in regions such as rural areas. The male and female comparison of school attendance was 20:1. In urban areas, the difference was not significantly conspicuous. Urban areas of education were encouraged by commerce. Thus, it was normal for women to be involved in trade activities, while in rural areas, literacy skill was needed for administrative duties exclusively for males (Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017). Female education in Japan developed quite rapidly even before the arrival of Commodore Perry in 1854, where women were highly required to obtain more practical and broader

knowledge. It could be assumed that women's education was dynamic and considered appropriate for women depended on families and educators (Lukminaitė, 2015).

After Tokugawa Ieyasu, women scholars increased and were considered an exception to the rule, sometimes the daughters of Chinese learning scholars (Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017; Mehl, 2001). As samurai children were provided with intensive education and samurai women organized the educational system performing newly established public schools and private academics (Jacob, 2014). Women could also obtain some literary skills without losing their femininity. Women should concentrate on Japanese-style education in poetry and novels of the Heian period. Hence, this would present them knowledge of human hearts, refine the feelings, sharpen the intuitions, and provide the skill in literary expression in Japanese necessary for social relationship (Dore, 2011). However, education practice between women and men in a broad context was still different in some respects, namely military education and Confucianism.

4. Conclusion

In most countries, education has been and kept to be viewed concerning women by teachers, institutions, parents, officials, and society in general. Women themselves are unbalanced towards the fact of women's lives today and in the future. In Japan, it is considered hard to put education level for women before the formalized school system in the Meiji Restoration period. There is a tendency of gender inequality for women during Tokugawa due to rigid social hierarchy and Confucian ideas compared to the Meiji period. It is based on the assumption that the modern era is associated with progressive and novelty movements that restrict women,

specifically in education (in general, it covers complexity in many respects).

During the beginning of the Tokugawa era, Japanese women's education is varied based on social status and families' occupation. Noblewomen and samurai women would likely receive Chinese classics literature compared to lower women classes who received basic knowledge to do household. Education for women during the beginning of Tokugawa could also be provided through lectures, training, and apprenticeships. Hence, while someone may perform knowledge of classical literature, it could also be passed down a parent to them by watching kabuki or hearing poets at the teahouse.

The gap of education between men and women, also noblewomen and commoners, is a somewhat controversial issue. Some historical accounts address that women received fitted and suitable education during the period. From time onward, education became available for women, both nobles and commoners. Slowly, it becomes more transparent that education for women in early Tokugawa was not repressed as it seems. The time needed for education equality toward women in Japan indicating that education was important for the whole population that would need to be given to all. Education for all means it would be given to all ranks, male and female, in the egalite way as we find today.

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