Comparing Japan and Italy in Teachers' Career Development: Focusing on Teachers' School-day Experiences and Factors That Contribute to Their Competency Development

教師の力量形成に関する日伊比較研究
－被教育体験期の経験と教職生活上の意義ある出来事を中心に－

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Abstract

Using data from a survey conducted near the end of the 2010s among teachers in public primary and lower secondary schools in Japan and Italy, we compared the two sets of teachers in terms of their experiences during school days and significant events in their teaching lives that contribute to their career development as teachers, to identify country-specific teacher trends.

The analysis revealed the following: First, differences in education systems between the two countries explain the difference between the two sets of teachers in terms of when they decided to become teachers (people who aspire to teach are influenced by the time at which they come under pressure to pick a career). Second, when asked what inspired them to become teachers, Japanese teachers tended to cite people they knew during childhood, whereas their Italian counterparts tended to cite direct interactions with learners or academic experiences. Third, when asked what experiences helped them form a foundation for developing their teaching career, Japanese teachers tended to cite relationships at school and university, whereas Italian teachers tended to cite formal and informal academic experiences at university. Fourth, when asked what shaped their teaching practice and teaching philosophy, both sets of teachers cited interpersonal experiences in and out of school, research activities, and workplace experiences. Fifth, Japanese teachers tended to relate personal experiences to their lives as teachers as part of their competency development, whereas the teachers in Italy were less likely to do so; instead, they tended to regard social activities and out-of-school research as important for their career development.

Thus, the analysis suggests that teacher culture in Japan is founded upon close-knit ties and general human qualities, whereas teacher culture in Italy has an academic foundation and is characterised by social consciousness.

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1 Research Question

This study aimed to compare teachers in Japan and those in Italy to identify country-specific trends in teachers' competency development. People who pursue a teaching career may share certain tendencies regardless of country. However, there may also be country-specific patterns in the formative experiences that sustain teachers in their career and in what drives teachers' competency development, reflecting country-specific education systems, teacher-training systems, systems for incumbent teachers, and teacher staffing systems, as a result of national history and teacher culture[1]. We therefore compared teachers in Japan and Italy to identify commonalities and differences in how they experience their teaching career, focusing on their experiences during childhood, their experiences during teacher training, and their career development as teachers.

Yamazaki (2012, 2023) surveyed teachers in Japan about their life course. The survey revealed three stages in which the teachers started aspiring to a career in teaching: when they were in primary school (ages 6–12) or lower secondary school (ages 12–15), when they felt pressure to pick a career during upper secondary school grade 3 (ages 17–18), and after they finished practical teacher training. Regarding the primary reasons why teachers picked their career, three reasons were identified: the influence of primary or secondary school teachers, the influence of parents or other family members, and experiences during teaching practice. When asked about experiences during university that helped the teachers develop a foundation for teaching, the respondents cited informal experiences as being more influential than formal educational experiences at university; these experiences included socialising with friends in club activities or other campus activities, and extra-curricular opportunities such as interaction with learners as a private tutor. When asked what experiences proved meaningful in their teaching career, many teachers cited workplace experiences, being allocated to a school that holds meaning for them, and in-school encounters with exemplary senior colleagues and mentors.

We previously conducted an empirical study about teachers' career development, gaining insights pertaining to 2010 and later (Kawamura et al., 2019). We found that primary school teachers typically developed an aspiration for teaching in primary school and that lower secondary school teachers did so during lower secondary school. We also found that, as in Yamazaki (2012), many teachers developed their aspirations while in the third grade of upper secondary school and when they interacted with learners before, during, and after teaching practice. When asked about their primary reasons for picking teaching as a career, both primary school teachers and lower secondary school teachers cited the influence of the teachers they met when they were in primary and secondary school, the influence of parents or other family members, and the influence of teaching practice. Many lower secondary school teachers cited their favourite academic subjects or sports. When asked about the experiences during school and university that helped form a foundation for their teaching career, the teachers cited relationships with exemplary teachers they met in primary or secondary school, interacting with learners directly during teaching practice, and interacting with learners directly during

internships and outdoor education programmes.

Thus, the evidence suggests a common pattern in the life course and career development of Japanese teachers, in terms of their school-day experiences, when they decided to become a teacher, and in experiences that proved valuable for their career development. This finding further implies that teachers' career development is shaped by social and institutional contexts specific to the country. However, since none of the studies compared Japanese primary and lower secondary school teachers with those of other countries, no hard conclusions can be drawn as to which factors of career development are specific to Japan and which ones transcend national boundaries.[2]

To address this issue, we surveyed teachers in Japan and Italy regarding their experiences during schooling and teacher training and what they regarded as meaningful in their teaching life, to contextualise these factors and identify country-specific patterns.[3] We assumed that historical and institutional differences between Italy and Japan would mean that Italy has a different set of factors that shape the career development of primary and lower secondary school teachers from those that do so in Japan (the details for Italy are provided in Section 2.2). Therefore, we designed the survey considering these social and institutional differences, believing that this would help us identify country-specific patterns in teachers' career development.

2 Survey

2.1 Survey Implementation

The Japan survey was conducted in July, August, and September 2017. The subjects were public primary and lower secondary school teachers from one prefecture each in the Kansai, Chubu, and Kanto regions. A school information survey sheet and questionnaires for teachers were distributed to a randomly selected sample of public primary and lower secondary schools in each region. The number of questionnaires for teachers sent to each school was calculated approximately based on the number of students, as the exact number of teachers per school was not available. We asked the schools that conducted the survey to return the survey sheets together with the collection forms on an individual school basis.

The Italy survey was conducted from April to December 2019. Through snowball sampling, questionnaires and web-based surveys were conducted in public primary schools (scuola primaria) and lower secondary schools (scuola media) grouped under comprehensive institutes (Istituti comprensivi) in the northern, central, and southern parts of the country, and in public primary schools in the northern part of the country. Questionnaires and web-based surveys about school information were conducted for school administrators.

Among the questionnaires collected in Japan and Italy from administrators, full-time teachers, and part-time teacher, we covered full-time teachers. Table 1 shows the sample sizes.

Table 1. Number of Survey Participants

	Japan	Italy
Primary school teachers	1605 people	213 people
Lower secondary school teachers	1030 people	128 people

The average age of the sample was 39.4 years old for primary school teachers and 41.4 years old for lower secondary school teachers in Japan, and 48.8 years old for primary school teachers and 50.4 years old for lower secondary school teachers in Italy.[4]

2.2 Sample Characteristics: Teacher-Training System and Teachers' Lives

In this section, we describe the characteristics of the two samples. Japan and Italy differ in terms of the history of their teacher-training systems and the teachers' lives, so we start by describing these differences.

In the case of Japan, since the late 1940s, universities offering a teacher training course have served as the main setting for training teachers for primary and lower secondary education. These include education or general universities with an undergraduate faculty of education. They also include institutions that provide a teacher training course despite having no faculty for teacher education. In the year starting April 2008, teacher education expanded to the graduate level with the creation of professional schools for teacher education. However, it remains the case today that people in Japan obtain a license to teach in primary or lower secondary schools after attending a four-year undergraduate course in teaching-related subjects. To gain a position as a teacher in a public school, a licensed teacher must pass a screening test administered by the local authority. The teacher will then be assigned to a school under the local authority's jurisdiction. Thus, most of the teachers sampled in the Japan survey would have undergone training as a teacher at an undergraduate level.

After teaching at a school for several years, teachers are reassigned to another school under the local authority's jurisdiction. This practice is intended to guarantee equality of educational opportunities in the public school system. Unlike their counterparts in many other countries, lower secondary school teachers in Japan typically supervise student club activities in addition to their regular teaching duties. In this context, 'club activities' refers to students' organised extra-curricular activities. A school may have, for example, sports clubs such as a basketball club, a baseball club, and a soccer club, and cultural clubs such as a brass band club, an art club, and a drama club. After the school day ends, teachers serve as coaches or supervisors during extra-curricular activities. On non-school days, they may look after students attending a sports match.

As for Italy, between the 1960s and 1990s, primary teacher training education was delivered at an upper secondary school (scuola superiore indirizzo magistrale) graduate level. After that, teacher training involved a four-year undergraduate course. In the academic year 2011, the teacher training period was extended from four to five years, such that teacher training now extends to the post-graduate level. Thus, the Italian sample consists of teachers who attained a high school level of education and those who attained an (under)graduate level of education. It also includes a small number of those who attained a post-graduate level of education.

Before the turn of the Millennium, one could become a lower secondary school teacher in Italy by completing a specialised curriculum at an undergraduate level and then passing a teaching exam. However, in the early 2000s, the system was changed; one could now only become a lower secondary school teacher after completing a three-year Bachelor's degree (Laurea) programme, a two-year Master's degree (Laurea magistrale) programme, and then completing a two-year training programme at the Scuole di Specializzazione all'Insegnamento Secondario (School for Specialisation in Secondary Education)—a process that lasts seven years in total. After that, from the academic year 2012, the process was changed to six years; one became a lower secondary school teacher by gaining a three-year Bachelor's degree, a two-year Master's degree, and passing a one-year programme called the Tirocini Formativi Attivi (Active Training Apprenticeships). Thus, in the sample, the route that a respondent took to become a lower secondary school teacher depended on their age.[5]

In Italy, teachers are hired by local administration offices according to regional rankings, and they are not rotated around schools as is the case in Japan; teachers will only be transferred to another school if there is a particular reason (such as if the teacher desires to work at another school). Lower secondary schools in Italy also lack the club activities seen in Japan; therefore, teachers do not manage clubs in addition to their normal teaching duties as Japanese lower secondary school teachers do.

3 Survey Results

3.1 When Respondents Decided to Become Teachers

Table 2 shows the results regarding when the respondents decided to become teachers.

The results for primary school teachers were as follows. In both countries, the most popular response (over 20%) was 'during primary school', followed by 'during the last three upper secondary school years' and 'before going to university' (both around 18%) and in the third place, 'during lower secondary school' (approximately 15%) lower secondary. While differences in the teacher-training system preclude a simple comparison, 20% of respondents in both countries decided to become teachers during university (when the university response options are combined). Overall, many primary school teachers in Japan and Italy decided to become teachers when they were in primary or secondary school, just about a year before going to university, or during university. More specifically, many primary school teachers in Japan answered 'during the last three upper-secondary school years' or 'during university but before starting teaching practice'. Thus, many of the teachers decided upon their careers before graduating from university.

The results for secondary school teachers were as follows. 'During lower secondary school' had a high response rate among teachers in Japan, whereas 'after graduation' had a high response rate among teachers in Italy. Some 30% of teachers in Japan and 20% of those in Italy selected one of the university options.

Table 2. When the participants decided to become teachers

	Primary school teachers			Lower secondary school teachers		
	Japan		Italy	Japan		Italy
During primary school	24.8	>	21.8	11.0	>	10.2
During lower secondary school	13.8	<	18.5	24.4	>	4.7
During the first or second upper secondary school year	10.6	>	9.0	9.0	>	3.9
During the last three upper secondary school years	16.3	>	10.4	13.7	>	10.2
Before going to university	0.8	*<	8.1	0.8	*<	8.7
At the beginning of university	6.5	>	4.7	7.0	>	3.9
Japan: During university but before starting practical teacher training Italy: During university	6.6	<	10.0	11.7	<	17.3
Japan: During university but after practical teacher training Italy: During didactic training	10.1	>	5.2	13.1	>	1.6
After graduation	8.2		9.0	7.3	<	33.1
Other	2.3	<	3.3	2.0	*<	6.3

Note 1: Numbers are percentages.
Note 2: As a result of the chi-square test, items with a significant difference at the 5% level are marked with an 'unequal' sign. Of the items with an expected frequency of less than 5, those marked with an asterisk proved significant at the 5% level in Fisher's exact test.

Table 3 shows the results regarding the primary reasons why the respondents decided to become teachers.

The results for primary school teachers were as follows. Around half of the teachers in Japan cited the influence of primary or secondary school teachers. Two other responses had high answer rates in the Japan sample: 'influence of parents or relatives' and 'experience of educational training'. As for Italy, the most frequently cited response was 'experience of direct contact with children/young people during internships, ecological camps, and the like', followed by 'influence of primary or secondary school teachers', 'discovery of interest in a subject/discipline', 'other' and 'experience of educational training'.

One commonality between the two datasets was that, for a relatively large proportion of primary school teachers in both samples, the critical factor in deciding to become a teacher was a teacher they met in primary or secondary school or their experiences during teacher training. One difference was that the teachers in Japan tended to have been inspired by a teacher, as indicated by the fact that around half of the Japanese sample cited the influence of a primary or secondary school teacher. Also cited frequently in the Japanese sample were 'parents or relatives', denoting that many Japanese teachers were inspired by someone close to them. By contrast, the primary school teachers in Italy were more likely to have been inspired by their direct interactions with learners or by teaching-related subjects/disciplines at university.

As for secondary school teachers, those in Japan cited 'influence of primary or secondary school teachers',

'discovery of interest in a subject/discipline/sport', 'influence of parents or relatives', and 'experience of educational training', whereas those in Italy cited 'discovery of interest in a subject/discipline' and 'influence of primary or secondary school teachers'.

Table 3. Primary reasons for the participants' decision to become a teacher

	Primary school teachers			Lower secondary school teachers		
	Japan		Italy	Japan		Italy
Influence of primary or secondary school teachers	45.6	>	19.8	41.8	>	12.7
Influence of university professors	0.8	>	0.5	1.3	>	0.9
Influence of parents or relatives	15.1	>	5.7	11.4	>	4.5
Influence of friends	1.9	>	1.0	1.9	>	0.0
Japan: Discovery of interest in a subject/discipline/sport Italy: Discovery of interest in a subject/discipline	4.5	<	11.5	15.0	<	36.4
Influence of radio and television programs, films, literary or scientific works, etc.	1.8	>	0.5	1.3	>	0.0
Dissatisfaction with the education received and the current way of teaching	1.9	<	2.6	3.1	>	1.8
Stability of the job, compared to other professions	2.4	<	5.2	2.8	>	1.8
Better working conditions than other professions	0.8	<	1.0	0.2	*<	6.4
Experience in the activities of associations and clubs	0.9	<	1.0	1.8	>	0.0
Experience of direct contact with children/young people during internships, ecological camps, etc.	2.3	<	27.1	1.1	*<	12.7
Experience of educational training	10.4	>	8.9	8.4	>	1.8
Specialist studies at university	0.6	<	2.1	1.0	>	0.9
Study of subjects related to teaching at university	1.2	>	1.0	1.7	*<	9.1
Other	7.5	<	10.9	5.0	<	10.0
I can't say	1.4	>	1.0	1.1	>	0.9

Note 1: Numbers are percentages.
Note 2: As a result of the chi-square test, items with a significant difference at the 5% level are marked with an 'unequal' sign. Of the items with an expected frequency of less than 5, those marked with an asterisk proved significant at the 5% level in Fisher's exact test.

One commonality between Japan and Italy was that, for a relatively large proportion of secondary school teachers in both samples, the critical factor in deciding to become a teacher was 'discovery of interest in a subject/discipline(/sport)' and 'influence of primary or secondary school teachers'. One difference was that the teachers in Japan were inspired by parents or relatives during their childhood, whereas those in Italy were more likely to cite academic reasons.

Table 4 shows the results regarding experiences before and during university that helped the participants develop a foundation for teaching.

The results for primary school teachers were as follows. A large proportion of teachers in Japan cited 'experience of direct contact with children during the didactic training', 'interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower or upper-secondary schools', 'experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.', and 'interaction with friends in the classroom, in associations, in clubs, etc.'. In the Italian sample, many cited 'interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper-secondary schools', 'experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.', 'knowledge and experience gained through voluntary seminars, self-study, etc.', 'experience of direct contact with children during the didactic training', 'experience of direct contact with children as a private teacher or in nursery schools', and 'knowledge and experience gained during university lectures'.

One commonality between Japan and Italy was that many primary school teachers cited their interactions with teachers during primary and secondary school ('interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper-secondary schools') and many cited interactions with learners ('experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.' and 'experience of direct contact with children during the didactic training') as experiences that helped them form a foundation for teaching.

One difference was that the primary school teachers in Italy were more likely than their Japanese counterparts to cite 'interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper-secondary schools' or 'experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.', although these factors had high response rates in both samples. Another difference was that primary school teachers in Italy were more likely than their Japanese counterparts to cite formal and informal academic experiences in university: namely, 'knowledge and experience gained during university lectures', 'experience in academic research related to the preparation of the thesis, etc.', 'knowledge and experience gained through voluntary seminars, self-study, etc.'

Japanese primary school teachers were more likely than their counterparts in Italy to cite interactions with friends and the influence of media ('interaction with friends in the classroom, associations, clubs, etc.', 'knowledge about the profession through mass media such as TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines').

Table 4. Educational experiences up to university graduation that helped participants develop a foundation for teaching

	Primary school teachers			Lower secondary school teachers		
	Japan		Italy	Japan		Italy
Interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper secondary schools	85.4	<	93.2	87.5	<	88.9
Knowledge and experience gained during university lectures	65.9	<	77.5	67.4	<	72.5
Experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.	79.8	<	90.9	69.3	<	94.4
Experience of direct contact with children during didactic training	88.9	>	88.6	83.0	<	86.1
Experience in academic research related to the preparation of the thesis, etc.	33.5	<	63.8	31.5	<	44.4
Knowledge and experience gained through voluntary seminars, self-study, etc.	51.6	<	89.0	49.0	<	81.1
Interaction with university professors	45.5	<	61.4	44.9	<	46.9
Experiences in autonomous student activities	54.7	<	61.5	53.3	>	45.8
Experience in a university residence	49.1	>	40.0	50.4	>	20.0
Experience of negative teaching models	60.5	>	56.8	58.4	>	53.4
Japan: Experience of direct contact with children as a private teacher or a cram school teacher Italy: Experience of direct contact with children as a private teacher or in nursery schools	68.0	<	85.1	66.0	<	72.5
Interaction with friends in the classroom, associations, clubs, etc.	75.1	>	58.4	72.1	>	50.5
Interaction with older students in shared apartments and/or residences, clubs, associations, etc.	65.4	>	53.8	64.0	>	26.7
Knowledge about the profession through mass media such as TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines.	58.5	>	35.9	55.3	>	28.3

Note 1: Numbers are percentages and the sum of 'Useful' and 'Rather useful'. Note also that teachers who had not experienced these things were excluded.
Note 2: As a result of the chi-squared test, items with a significant difference at the 5% level are marked with an 'unequal' sign.

As for secondary school teachers, those in Japan were likely to cite the 'interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper secondary schools', 'experience of direct contact with children during the didactic training' and 'interaction with friends in the classroom, associations, clubs, etc.' Frequently cited in the Italy sample were 'experience of direct contact with children during internships, ecological camps, etc.', 'interaction with motivated teachers in primary, lower, or upper-secondary schools', 'experience of direct contact with children during the didactic training', 'knowledge and experience gained through voluntary seminars, self-study, etc.', 'knowledge and experience gained during university lectures', and 'experience of direct contact with children as a private teacher or in nursery schools'.

In both samples, more than 80% of the secondary school teachers cited interactions with teachers during primary or secondary school, and more than 80% cited interactions with learners during teaching practice, suggesting that such experiences are important to teachers in both countries.

One difference was that more than 90% of secondary school teachers in Italy cited interactions with children in settings other than teacher training, such as during internships and ecological camps. Another difference was that secondary school teachers in Italy were more likely than their Japanese counterparts to cite academic experiences in university ('experience in academic research related to the preparation of the thesis etc.', 'knowledge and experience gained through voluntary seminars, self-study, etc.'). The Japanese lower secondary school teachers were more likely to have been influenced by relationships with fellow school/university club members and by the media ('interaction with friends in the classroom, in associations, in clubs, etc.', 'interaction with older students in shared apartments and/or residences, in clubs, associations, etc.', 'knowledge about the profession through mass media such as TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc.').

3.2 Teaching Life

This section outlines the results regarding factors that influenced the participants' educational practice and views on education (Table 5).

The results for primary school teachers were as follows. In both samples, more than 80% of primary school teachers stated that the following times influenced them: 'relocation to a particularly significant school for you', 'meeting at school with older or more experienced colleagues', 'meeting with significant figures outside the school', 'research activities at school', 'research activities outside the school' and 'experience in teaching practice'. Thus, in both Japan and Italy, primary school teachers tended to be influenced by the people they met in and out of school, their experiences in research and educational practice, and teachers. However, Japanese primary school teachers were more likely to report being influenced by people, whereas their counterparts in Italy were more likely to report being influenced by experiences in educational practice.

Table 5. Factors that influenced the participants' educational practice and views on education

	Primary school teachers		Lower secondary school teachers	
	Japan	Italy	Japan	Italy
Relocation to a particularly significant school for you	92.0	> 82.1	89.0	< 90.5
Meeting at school with older or more experienced colleagues	98.2	> 92.4	97.2	> 88.5
Meeting with significant figures outside the school	89.6	> 82.2	87.7	< 89.0
Research activities at school (reading clubs, study groups, training, etc.)	86.1	> 81.6	66.6	< 69.4
Research activities outside the school (participation in educational research groups, independent research circles, etc.)	80.5	< 82.4	63.5	< 81.0
Activities within teacher associations and school networks	38.7	< 72.2	30.1	< 63.0
Participation in and direction of local sporting activities, educational and social activities, etc.	51.8	< 66.9	49.4	< 67.1
Attention to the relationship between school and territory	59.3	< 78.7	57.6	< 67.6
Change of position in the workplace (assuming the position of headmaster/headmistress; collaborator or deputy headmaster/headmistress, collaborator or didactic manager, etc.)	75.1	> 63.9	73.6	> 55.6
Conduct research at graduate schools, research institutes, doctoral departments, etc., with partial/total leave	46.9	< 75.0	48.3	< 61.0
Trends in the world of teaching	60.7	< 66.1	51.8	< 60.4
Social problems, political situation, etc.	54.0	< 61.9	49.1	< 58.6
Marriage/union with a partner	71.5	> 26.6	68.5	> 31.1
Birth of children	90.6	> 54.9	84.5	> 60.8
Personal injury or illness	56.4	> 28.1	55.4	> 32.0
Illness or death of close persons	58.5	> 30.8	51.6	> 30.4
Experience in teaching practice	88.4	< 98.5	86.2	< 92.8

Note 1: Numbers are the percentages and the sum of 'It has definitely influenced' and 'It has rather influenced'. Note also that teachers who had not experienced these things were excluded.
Note 2: As a result of the chi-square test, items with a significant difference at the 5% level are marked with an 'unequal' sign.

Among Japanese primary school teachers, the answer 'change of position in the workplace' was rated highly, suggesting that the change of position affects the way the teachers engage with learners and affects their

attitude to teaching. We also observed high answer rates for personal experiences (‘marriage/union with a partner’, ‘birth of children’, ‘personal injury or illness’, and ‘illness or death of close persons’).

Among primary school teachers in Italy, we observed a high answer rate for ‘activities within teacher associations and school networks’, denoting that many teachers are influenced by teacher unionism. By contrast, teacher unionism had limited influence on the career development of Japanese primary school teachers. Given the answer rate in the Italian sample for ‘research at graduate schools, research institutes, doctoral departments, etc., with partial/total leave’, research holds important career value in competency development for primary school teachers in Italy. Alongside this, many primary school teachers in Italy cited the influence of public activities and socio-political circumstances (‘participation and direction of local sporting activities, educational and social activities, etc.’, ‘attention to the relationship between school and territory’, and ‘social problems, political situation, etc.’), suggesting that they are more likely than their Japanese counterparts are to take an interest in these factors and relate them to their teaching career.

The results for secondary school teachers were as follows. In both samples, more than 80% of the secondary school teachers were influenced by the following factors: ‘relocation to a particularly significant school for you’, ‘meeting at school with older or more experienced colleagues’, ‘meeting with significant figures outside the school’ and ‘experience in teaching practice’. As with primary school teachers, secondary school teachers were influenced in their teaching careers by social encounters in and out of school and by experiences in their educational practice. While answer rates were high in both samples, we noted that almost all Japanese secondary school teachers cited encounters with colleagues in school.

It is also notable that secondary school teachers in Italy were more likely than their Japanese counterparts to cite research activities in and out of school and public activities (‘research activities outside the school’, ‘activities within teacher associations and school networks’, ‘participation and direction of local sporting activities, educational and social activities, etc.’, and ‘attention to the relationship between school and territory’). By contrast, Japanese secondary school teachers were more likely to cite personal experiences (‘marriage/union with a partner’, ‘birth of children’, ‘personal injury or illness’, and ‘illness or death of close persons’).

4 Discussion

We analysed survey data for teachers in Japan and Italy, focusing on experiences during schooling and the factors that contribute to their career development as teachers. In respect of these factors, we identified commonalities and differences between the Japanese and Italian samples.

We observed the following results regarding when the respondents decided to become teachers. Many primary school teachers in both countries were most likely to make this decision in primary school, followed by, secondary school, just before university, and during university. Lower-secondary school teachers in Japan were most likely to have decided on their career path while they were lower secondary school students. For

the other options, the responses of Japanese lower secondary school teachers were similar to those of Japanese primary school teachers. By contrast, the secondary school teachers in Italy were most likely to have decided after graduating from university. In Japan, teaching licenses are generally obtained at an undergraduate level, whereas in Italy, graduates must undergo further training to obtain the license. We conclude that differences in education systems between the two countries explain the difference between the two sets of teachers in terms of when they decided to become teachers and that people who aspire to teach are influenced by the time at which they come under pressure to pick a career.

Regarding the primary reasons the teachers decided to enter the teaching profession, Japanese respondents tended to have been strongly influenced during their childhood by parents, teachers, and other people socially close to them. If we relate this observation to the life stage at which they typically decided to become teachers, we can surmise that primary school teachers were strongly influenced by teachers they met in primary school, whereas lower secondary school teachers were strongly influenced by teachers they met in lower secondary school. Teachers in Italy were less influenced than their Japanese counterparts were by teachers they knew during childhood, although teachers they met during childhood were still influential. Alongside the influence of teachers, Italian teachers cited, as a major inspiration to become teachers, the experience of interacting with learners directly and the academic subjects that interested them. Thus, Japanese teachers are characterised by how they cited the influence of people close to them during childhood (teachers, parents, relatives), whereas their Italian counterparts are characterised by how they were more likely to cite the experience of interacting with learners and academic experiences.

We observed the following regarding pre-university experiences that proved to be formative experiences (experiences that contributed to a foundation for developing a career in teaching). In the Japanese sample, the teachers cited social experiences such as their interactions with teachers during their childhood, their experience of direct interactions with learners (during teacher training or internships), and school/university club relationships (with peers, seniors, or former club members). If we relate these responses to the responses regarding when and why the teachers decided to enter teaching, we can surmise that primary school teachers regarded as role models the teachers they encountered in primary school and that secondary school teachers regarded the teachers they encountered in secondary school as such. Another distinctive characteristic of the sample was that many of the Japanese teachers cited the influence of the media. The influence of the media might be related to the extensive use of TV dramas, anime, and manga as learning materials in schools; Japanese learners may gain a favourable impression of their teachers through such media from a young age. These factors may explain why the above responses were cited more frequently in the Japanese sample.

Similarly, teachers in Italy cited interactions with exemplary teachers during primary and secondary school and direct interactions with learners (during teacher training and internships) as formative experiences. However, the difference was that a greater number of respondents than that of the Japanese sample regarded experiences during internships and similar programmes as formative experiences. Another difference was that

the respondents were more likely than their Japanese counterparts to cite formal and informal academic experiences at university as formative experiences. The importance placed on academic experiences at university may also explain why many respondents in the Italian sample cited subjects of interest as critical in their decision to become teachers.

In both samples, we observed a similar pattern regarding workplace factors that affect (and possibly transform) the teachers' educational practice or teaching philosophy; teachers in both samples cited relationships in and out of school, research activities, and experiences in the course of their careers. However, one difference was that the Japanese teachers were more likely than their counterparts to cite the influence of relationships with exemplary senior colleagues in school, suggesting that workplace relationships are more influential among Japanese teachers.

One country-specific trend we observed was the tendency of Japanese teachers to report incorporating their life experiences with no direct relevance to teaching (getting married or falling sick, for example), suggesting that, for these teachers, personal and professional lives intersect. By contrast, teachers in Italy were less likely to relate personal events with their profession. Instead, they were more likely than their Japanese counterparts were to describe social activities (union, social, and educational activities in the community) and out-of-school research activities as significant for their career development.

From the above, we infer the following country-specific characteristics regarding career development among teachers. In Japan, teaching is founded upon close-knit ties and general human qualities: In addition, teachers tend to have been inspired to become teachers by the teachers they met during childhood. When training as teachers, their interpersonal relationships tend to prove valuable for their careers. After starting work as a teacher, they find further sustenance for their career development even in personal events. In Italy, teacher culture has an academic foundation and is characterised by a social consciousness: Teachers tend to have been inspired to become teachers primarily by their academic interests. During university, they derive from academic activities value for their teaching career. After starting work as a teacher, they drive their career development by engaging in research and social activities outside of work.

Underlying these country-specific trends in teaching culture may be country-specific teaching philosophies. Japan has a tradition, extending back before the Meiji period (before 1868), involving masters known as *shisho* who taught the way of tea (*sado*), martial arts (*budo*), and other traditional arts; what the shisho taught was an entire way of life as well as a set of skills. Those who had reached a high enough level as an instructor earned the title *shihan*. The psychological effect of respecting shisho or shihan persisted since the Meiji period, when the modern school system was established. As such, schoolteachers are to this day expected to have the capacity not only to impart knowledge and skills to learners but also to serve as role models, as a master would to an apprentice (Iwata, 2022, pp.17-18). This factor may be related to how teacher culture is based on general human qualities.

By contrast, the European image of a teacher is shaped by the concept of 'professional'. Regarding the

concept of ‘professional’, a professional is someone who has vowed to make use of expert knowledge they are entrusted with. In this concept, teachers, as professionals, are sworn to make use of knowledge and skills of particular field of expertise they are entrusted with (Satō, 2006, p.13). This conception may explain why teachers in Italy cited their interest in academic subjects and their academic experiences (when aspiring to be a teacher) as factors that contributed to a foundation for becoming a teacher and as factors that drove their career development. Also worth noting is that Europe has a history of cross-border scholasticism; it has organisations, such as the European Union, that aim at political, economic, and cultural harmonisation (to a modest degree) across different European countries; and European countries grapple with complexly interwoven international issues, such as immigration and asylum seeking. Such factors mean that Europe historically has a mindset that emphasises nurturing the citizens who constitute society, such that citizenship education is treated as essential. Italy is part of this trend (Kawamura, 2015, Kawamura et al., 2021). This backdrop may explain why we observed, in the Italian sample, a high level of social consciousness and engagement in out-of-school activities as part of teaching career development.

Thus, in Japan and Italy, teachers continue developing their careers upon a foundation of teacher culture formed in country-specific historical, social, and institutional contexts.

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Notes

1 Teacher culture is defined as ‘teachers’ vocational awareness and self-awareness, professional knowledge and skills, norms and values that give the feeling of ‘being “like a teacher,” views and ways of thinking, it is a stylized vocational culture that is peculiar to teachers, such as how they feel and how they behave’ (Satō, 1994, p.21).

2 For example, the OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) compared teaching careers in different countries, revealing insights into career-development patterns among lower secondary school teachers around the world (OECD, 2019, 2020). However, it revealed no insights from a life course perspective. The 2018 TALIS survey did include primary school teachers in the survey, but owing to the small number of countries participating in the survey, it gave no national averages, thus restricting international comparisons.

3 This article forms part of a series of research. In this research series, we took the questionnaire format in ta survey we conducted in Japan and used it in a survey among teachers in public primary and lower secondary

schools in Italy with a view to identifying Japan-specific and Italy-specific patterns in the teaching career (Kawamura, 2022, 2023).

4 According to the results of the 2019 statistical survey on schoolteachers (MEXT, 2021) in Japan, which is conducted every three years, the average age of a public primary school teacher was 42.6 years old and was 43.6 years old for a public lower secondary school teacher. As of 2019, about 50% of all primary and lower secondary school teachers in Italy are 50 years of age or older (Eurostat, 2023).

5 As of 2022, teachers were being trained under a new secondary school teacher training system.

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抄　録

本論文の目的は、2010 年代後半の日本とイタリアの公立小・中学校教師を対象とした質問表調査の結果を比較することによって、両国の教師の被教育体験期と教職生活の中で意義あることを相対化し、両国の教師の特徴を捉えることである。

その結果、次のことが明らかになった。第一は、両国の教員養成制度の差異が進路決定の時期の違いとして表れており、教職を目指す者は、進路決定を強く迫られる時期の影響を受けることである。第二は、教職に就くきっかけとして、日本の教師が子ども時代に出会った身近にいる者の影響を指摘しているのに対し､イタリアの教師は子どもと直接接した経験とアカデミックな経験をあげていることである。第三は、教職活動を進めていく上での基礎を培うにあたって役立っている経験については、日本の教師が大学時代までの人との交流経験を、イタリアの教師は大学時代のフォーマル、インフォーマルなアカデミックな学修経験を指摘していることである。第四は、自身の教育実践や教育観に影響を及ぼしていることについては、日伊の教師に共通して、学校内外での人々との出会いや研究活動、教育実践上の経験をあげていることである。第五は、日本の教師は私的経験を教職生活と結びつけることによって力量形成を行うに対し、イタリアの教師はそういうことはあまりなく、社会的活動や、学校外での研究活動を自身の力量形成にとって意義深いと感じていることである。

以上のことから､日本には､親密な人間関係と総合的な人間性を基盤とする教師文化があるのに対し、イタリアでは、アカデミックな基盤のもとでの社会的関心の高い教師文化があることが推察される。