

Disaster preparedness, adaptive politics and lifelong learning: a case of Japan

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1. Introduction

The number of both empirical and theoretical studies that connect ‘lifelong learning’ and ‘disaster’ are on a rise in recent years. Dahl and Millora (2016), for example, explore university leaders’ reflective learning experiences after a super typhoon in the Philippines, which facilitated transformative collective learning and resulted in the improvement of universities’ disaster preparedness schemes. Preston et al (2015) develop an ecological learning framework examining community response in disasters. Drawing on international case studies, they identify navigation, organisation and reframing as broad types of community learning in a disaster. These studies focus on communities’ learning processes after disasters, while others discuss ‘pedagogies of preparedness’ in both formal and informal settings (Chadderton, 2015a; Preston et al, 2011). What this article aims to do is to delve into the politics of lifelong and lifewide disaster preparedness, drawing on the case of Japan. Conceptually, the article treats preparedness broadly as ‘a pedagogical strategy’ (Preston, 2008), which encompasses citizens’ efforts, as well as governments’ initiatives in preventing and reducing disaster impacts. ‘Preparedness’ is ‘rarely pedagogical in a didactic sense’ (Preston, 2008, 469), like other synonyms such as ‘civil defence’, ‘homeland security’ and ‘civil contingency’. Consequently, these terms have allowed various ‘behavioural’,¹ ‘emotional’² and ‘cognitive’³ interpretations. Some examples of such interpretations are introduced in the later sections.

In Japan that frequently experiences natural disasters, disaster preparedness has been a prioritised national agenda (Kitagawa, 2015b; Cabinet Office, 2011). Preparedness education – ‘*bosai kyoiku*’ in Japanese – is taught at school as part of the national curriculum and organised as lifelong learning programmes in communities (Kitagawa, 2015b). Citizens’ awareness and interest in the community (re)building through disaster volunteering rose dramatically after the Hanshin/Awaji Earthquake of 1995. The expansion of voluntary activities contributed to the development of Japan’s social or cultural model of lifelong learning (Ogawa, 2015; Okumoto, 2010; Okumoto, 2008). An emphasis on social considerations has been regarded as a specific feature of lifelong learning in Japan (Ogawa, 2015; Okumoto, 2010; Okumoto, 2008; Ogden, 2010; Maruyama, 2009; Ogawa, 2005).

There is a policy framework that has been widely utilised as preparedness strategies in Japan, particularly since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of 2011, and that is, the four forms of aid: ‘*kojo* [public aid]’, ‘*jijo* [self-help]’, ‘*gojo* [mutual aid in the neighbourhood]’, ‘*kyojo* [mutual aid between strangers]’. This article offers a theoretical and political understanding of this discourse, drawing on the theory of the adaptiveness of neo-liberalism⁴

¹ ‘Duck and Cover’ drills used in the US to instruct children to adopt the ‘atomic clutch position’ in the event of a nuclear attack and hide under their desks (Grossman, 2001 cited in Preston, 2008, 469).

² The 2005 DfES publication ‘Getting over 7/7’ deals with the emotional consequences of past and future terrorist attacks (DfES, 2005 cited in Preston, 2008, 469).

³ The short ‘Protect and Survive’ films emphasised knowing what to do in the event of hearing an attack warning (Central Office of Information, 1976 cited in Preston, 2008, 469).

⁴ According to Harvey (2005, 2), neo-liberalism is: ‘a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an

(Spours, 2015; Hall, 2005). Neo-liberal governments are facing new and complex challenges (e.g. Ogawa, 2015; Spours, 2015). On one hand, they have responsibilities to prepare for diversifying risks and threats within austerity budgets, and on the other hand, their ideology must appeal to as wider populations as possible to stay in Office. As Ogawa (2015, 18) states, neo-liberal governments innovatively distribute the ‘responsibility between the state and the individual’, employing ‘risk’ in ‘various technologies’. The promotion of lifelong learning being one of them. The governments hence operate adaptive strategies which allow them to spread responsibilities and mobilise resources. This study aims to demonstrate how the current Abe Administration of Japan has adapted neo-liberalism. The study looks at the Japanese case, however, the significance is global, given that states are increasingly having to deal with a range of disaster situations.

Such ‘adaptive character’ (Spours, 2015, 15) of neo-liberalism is manifested as what Hall (2005) refers to as ‘double shuffle’. Analysing the New Labour programme led by Tony Blair who came to Office in 1997 in the UK, Hall (2005, 329) indicates that its double shuffle comprised ‘the neo-liberal’ which held ‘the dominant position’ and ‘the social democratic’ that was ‘subordinate’. Following Hall, Spours (2015) demonstrates the ‘Conservative version’ of double shuffle in reference to ‘Conservative hegemony’ derived from their election victory in May 2015. He argues that Prime Minister (PM) Cameron and Chancellor Osborne are utilising the double shuffle of ‘a dominant neo-Thatcherite economic and political approach’ and ‘a subordinate social liberal agenda’ (Spours, 2015, 5). Building on Gramsci’s concept of ‘transformism’, both Hall and Spours stress that such hybridity is not ‘a static formation but the process’, and that ‘the latter social democratic party always remains subordinate to and dependent on the former dominant one and is constantly being “transformed” into it’ (Hall, 2005, 329). Applying the notion of double shuffle, this study examines the two seemingly divergent discourses in the politics of PM Abe: rebuilding ‘a strong nation’ based on neo-liberal socio-economic reforms, and ‘beautiful Japan’ promoted through the restoration of traditional and patriotic values.

Methodologically, data collection and analysis were arranged to examine the discourses of the four forms of aid in the following way. ‘Discourse’ is used as a generic term to mean ‘text and talk’ as defined by Van Dijk (2002). First, existing academic literature and research in the fields of disaster or crisis politics, disaster management and preparedness, neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism and the four forms of aid were carefully interrogated to gain an understanding of the key issues and debates relevant to the focus of this article. With regards to laws, policies and practice of disaster management and preparedness, the Japanese government’s educational approach being ‘overt’ (Preston et al, 2014), information is made available to the public via official websites. This study made use of it. To supplement the above data made available to the public, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three experts: a policy maker,⁵ an

institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.... State interventions in markets... must be kept to a bare minimum because... the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions... for their own benefit’.

⁵ An official from the ministry of education, who has been involved in disaster education policy development. Interviewed in March 2013.

academic⁶ and a journalist⁷. Their identities are anonymised as ‘a policy maker’, ‘an academic’ and ‘a journalist’ in quoting them in this article. In addition, conference papers (e.g. Chadderton, 2015b; Murosaki, 2013) and general articles (e.g. Yamori, 2012b) were also used to fill any gaps. The collected data were analysed to construct the core narratives of the five sections of the article.

The article is structured in the following way. After reviewing the development of the four forms of aid, the first section looks at the current policy framework for disaster management and preparedness education. This is followed by a discussion on the adaptive nature of neo-liberalism, and how it is manifested in the current Abe Administration’s hybrid politics. It is argued that a ‘double shuffle’ can be identified: a dominant neo-liberal economic agenda and a subordinate moral conservative assertion. The article then turns to an examination of each form of aid. The key examples of policies and initiatives as pedagogical strategies are analysed with reference to the framework of the neo-liberal/neo-conservative hybrid approach. The argument here is that in the area of disaster preparedness, the four forms of aid utilised as pedagogical strategies legitimise the hybrid politics of the current government. Focusing on one of the forms, *kyojo*, the fifth section delves into the unique dual role that it entails and its implications for lifelong learning. *Kyojo* in particular is the most important ‘balancing act’ (Hall, 2005) that mediates the differences within the hybridity. In disaster-prone countries like Japan, disaster preparedness is a major lifelong learning agenda, and developing lifelong and lifewide approaches to disaster preparedness is a necessity. The article concludes with an account of the relationship between the *kyojo*-preparedness model and the building of a lifelong learning society.

2. The four forms of aid as a policy framework for preparedness education

Kojo, *jijo*, *gojo* and *kyojo* have a common word ‘*jo*’ at the end, which means ‘aid’. *Kojo* is the public aid provided by the central, prefectural and municipal governments. *Jijo* is self-help, which is closely connected with the notion of individual responsibility. Both *gojo* and *kyojo* refer to mutual help, often being understood as synonyms. However, there is an important difference between *gojo* and *kyojo*: the former is help between people you know, within the community you live in and amongst friends, family and relatives; whereas the latter is ‘philanthropic’ or ‘humanistic’ aid towards someone whom you do not necessarily know, which can be in a form of volunteering and charitable activities (An academic, 2013). It should be noted that the government and also a number of other stakeholders refer to the framework of *kojo*, *jijo* and *kyojo* rather than the one which differentiate *gojo* and *kyojo*. The significance of the difference between the two will be discussed later.

The four forms of aid are not new, but how they originated is not entirely clear. They were already applied in the field of health and welfare policy, prior to entering into the disaster policy domain, which was after the Hanshin/Awaji Earthquake of 1995. There were two major drivers for this. The first is environmental. After the earthquake, a shared understanding developed that the damage from a natural disaster can be reduced, even if the disaster itself cannot be stopped. The goal was set by the Cabinet Office (2011) in 2003 to reduce damage by 50 percent

⁶ A professor in disaster management and preparedness, who has extensively written and engaged in civic activities on the topic of the four forms of aid. Interviewed in February 2013.

⁷ A journalist from a national broadsheet newspaper, who has covered the stories of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 2011. Interviewed in March 2013.

in the case of a large-scale earthquake. As evidenced by the Tohoku disaster in 2011, the country has entered into a quake-active period, and the existing preparedness schemes – both formal and informal – were challenged by it (Kitagawa, 2015b). Similar-scale earthquakes are predicted to strike different parts of Japan in the coming 30 years,⁸ and policy-makers and experts started to search for a more convincing paradigm. The focus here is the preparedness for natural disaster, but the subsequent Fukushima nuclear plant disaster also raised questions about the preparedness for man-made disaster. The aftermath of the triple disaster has been well documented in, for example, Hasegawa (2015), Gill et al (2013), Samuels (2013) and Kingston (2012), which report victims' and communities' diverse responses to the earthquake and the tsunami, which are natural disasters, and the nuclear disaster, which is man-made. One of the common themes amongst those studies seems to be that Japanese leaders have chosen not to change despite a range of opportunities and choices after the disaster of such magnitude. This theme will be revisited later in the article. Not only earthquakes, but other natural hazards such as volcano eruptions and torrential rains have also been a serious concern in Japan (Kitagawa, 2015a).⁹ Thus, there are urgency and necessity across Japan to improve preparedness for mega disasters which are predicted (Preston et al, 2014). The reinforcement of the four forms of aid is perceived to increase preparedness for future disasters.

The second driver is financial. Shrinking *kojo* [public aid] has had an impact on approaches to disaster management. Since the Bubble Economy burst of 1991, the role of the government has changed, and spending cuts have become a norm in public services (National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, year unknown). Both the central and local governments began emphasising civic participation, as well as devolved governance. An understanding that the way to maintain the same quality and quantity of the administration is by coproduction [*kyodo*] between the government and the community has developed (Hashimoto, year unknown). Such discourse led to the development of the 'New Public Commons [*atarashii kokyo*]' policy in the late 2000s (Ogawa, 2015), which refers to 'mutual support' amongst citizens, not-for-profit organisations and businesses in providing public services, including 'education, childcare, community development, nursing care and welfare services' (Cabinet Office, 2014b). The field of disaster management was no exception, joined-up working amongst various stakeholders being promoted.

With this background, the four forms of aid are now stressed as the principle approach to disaster management in the Basic Disaster Management Plan, which is the paramount plan issued by the Central Disaster Management Council¹⁰:

*A natural disaster can happen whenever and wherever.... **kojo** provided by the public administration, **jijo** based on self-awareness and **kyojo** of local communities are all equally necessary. This is a long-term national campaign for everyday disaster reduction, which is*

⁸ The largest possible damage is predicted to be 18,000 fatalities, 360,000 totally collapsed buildings and 370 billion pounds [57 trillion yen] economic damage (Aota et al 2008, 177-178).

⁹ According to Japan Meteorological Agency (2015), 47 out of the 110 active volcanoes require particular attention for a large-scale eruption.

¹⁰ It is the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act originally enacted in 1961 that established the system for disaster management. The act stipulates the Central Disaster Management Council situated within the Cabinet Office to be responsible for the overall disaster management at the national level. The Basic Plan then lays out policies and measures for different disasters and for each disaster cycle, and also clarifies the responsibilities of the central, prefectural and municipal governments, and the general population.

participated and invested by various stakeholders in the society, including individuals, families, communities, businesses and government bodies (Central Disaster Council, 2015, 7).

The basic system and policy framework for disaster management has remained unchanged during the post-war period (Kitagawa, 2015b), but recent revisions have addressed the four forms of aid, particularly *kyojo*, in promoting ‘coproduction’, ‘collaboration’, ‘co-operation’ and ‘network’.

The other documentation enforced by the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act was the White Paper on Disaster Management [*bosai hakusho*].¹¹ Similarly in recent White Papers, an emphasis on *kyojo* can be identified. For example, the 2014 version focused on the theme of ‘how to strengthen local preparedness through *kyojo* [*kyojo ni yoru chiikibosairyoku no kyoka*]’. Reflecting on the experience of the Tohoku disaster, the White Paper concluded that:

*‘the limitation of **kojo**’ has become clear because it is impossible for the public administration to offer immediate help to all victims.... It is necessary to effectively utilise ‘soft power’ of local communities through **jijo** and **kyojo** in order to reduce the damage predicted by forthcoming large-scale disasters* (Cabinet Office, 2014a, 11).

The White Paper goes on to indicate three strategies in developing such ‘soft power’. The first is to integrate disaster preparedness activities into general community activities. This approach has been increasingly emphasised in Japan. Another strategy is joined-up working between community members and the municipal government. The role of local businesses is emphasised as well in building networks and collaboration between the business sector and community members.

In short, self-help and mutual aid in supplementing shrinking public aid has thus become a new coping mechanism for disaster scenarios. A clear division has been built: *kojo* serves critical mass, and *kyojo* responds to specific needs (Murosaki, 2013). As the above analysis has identified, the preparedness policy framework of the four forms of aid entails both neo-liberal principles – individual responsibility – and neo-conservative values – collaboration and community. This hybridity is significant in the current Abe government’s politics, which is the topic of the next section.

3. Adaptive neo-liberalism and the hybrid politics of PM Abe

This section suggests that capitalist governments appear to adopt neo-liberalism and adapt it to fit into their purposes. The adaptiveness of neo-liberalism allows different forms, and this is to be demonstrated by the case of Japan. It is also suggested that a similar ‘double shuffle’ can be identified with the hybrid politics of PM Abe: a dominant neo-liberal economic agenda and a subordinate moral conservative assertion. It should be stressed that in comparison with neo-conservatism in Anglo-Saxon countries, the Japanese version has been strongly associated with moral education in which ‘the spirit of Japanese’ is taught (Rear and Jones, 2013; Okumoto, 2010; Okamoto, 2001). This article therefore refers to the Japanese version of neo-conservatism, ‘moral conservatism’, borrowing Rear and Jones’ (2013) term.

¹¹ The White Paper issued annually by the Cabinet Office serves two purposes: it records the government measures undertaken against the disasters occurred during the fiscal year, and it identifies foreseeable challenges in the area of disaster administration in the following year. The White Paper is presented to the Diet and also made available to the public.

In Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party embarked on implementing neo-liberal reforms since the late 1980s, promoting deregulation and privatisation (Kingston, 2011). In fact, it was when ‘lifelong learning’ was also first introduced into the educational policy domain (Okumoto, 2010). Under lifelong learning initiatives, ‘individuals are expected to be autonomous, self-responsible, prudent subjects who rationally weigh the pros and cons of choices (Ogawa, 2015, 18)’. ‘Individuality’ and ‘ability [*noryoku*’] were central to the neo-liberal conception, with a strong pressure from the Japan Business Federation [*Keidanren*] which has been influential in educational policy making.¹² ‘Individuality’ intends to foster self-governing and self-directed individuals who are able to take responsibility for themselves. ‘Ability’, on the other hand, has a ‘skill connotation’ (Rear and Jones, 2013, 383), which is often associated with the term ‘creativity [*sozosei*]’. This can be identified in, for example, one of the PM’s speeches: ‘As we look to the 21st century, we will continue to pursue a policy stressing individuality and creativity (Hashimoto, 1996, 3 cited in Rear and Jones, 2013, 383).’ The following is an extract from the 2002 education white paper, which includes a number of neo-liberal terminologies:

One of the main pillars of the educational reforms is the ‘principle of respect for individuality’ (kosei jushi) and...reforms to promote individualization and diversification are being implemented. However, since Japanese society is strongly oriented to homogeneity, lock-step mentality, school education was apt to place too much emphasis on conformity. It is necessary to provide well-tailored education so that each and every child can develop his or her individuality and ability, while flexibly and proactively responding to social changes (MEXT 2002 cited in Rear and Jones, 2013, 382).

Under PM Koizumi (2001-6), increased risks and disparities prevailed in society producing ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ (Fujita, 2014; Kingston, 2011; Fujita, 2006; Otake and Ohara, 2009). Koizumi pursued neo-liberal reforms without hesitation, which was often shown in his statements such as, ‘widening [economic] disparity is not necessarily a bad thing ... Japanese society cannot develop unless the population refrain themselves from being jealous of successful people or getting in the way of talented people’s way’ (Cited in Otake and Ohara, 2006, 256). Although inequalities did not start in Koizumi’s period, they became more recognisable in people’s livelihood being addressed by the media and opposition parties (Ogawa, 2015; Kingston, 2011). This was also supported by research evidence. Otake and Ohara (2009), for example, examined the shift in the Gini index since the 1980s and argued that the 2000s experienced an increase of income disparity, particularly amongst young people largely due to the decrease in the number of permanent fulltime employment. OECD’s economic survey on Japan in 2006 concluded that one of the major challenges that the country was facing was how to address ‘emerging concern about income distribution and poverty while containing the growth of government spending’, and also ‘rising income inequality and the increasing proportion of the population in relative poverty threaten to weaken the consensus for further economic reforms’ (OECD, 2006, 11).

When Abe became PM for the first time in 2006, he continued Koizumi’s neo-liberal reforms, but with a stronger emphasis on neo-conservative values to tackle the economic inequality developed during the time of Koizumi. The solution to the problem for Abe was to combine neo-liberal economic policies with patriotic and traditional values (Rear and Jones, 2013). Abe was proactive in campaigning for his vision through publications such as *Towards a Beautiful*

¹² Keidanren’s (2015) mission includes summarising the requests and proposals of businesses on the wide-ranging priority agendas faced by the economic community and to have dialogues with the administration, trade unions and citizens. Education and training is one of the priority agendas of Keidanren.

Nation [jutsukushii kuni e] (Abe, 2006). One of the most controversial reforms undertaken by Abe was the revision of the 1947 Fundamental Law of Education in 2006. His argument was that Japan would require a shift from ‘the post-war regime’ and return to patriotic and traditional values (Rear and Jones, 2013, 384). In the revised version of the law (MEXT, 2006), both neo-liberal notions such as ‘ability’, ‘creativity’, ‘voluntary participation in civic activities [*kokyo no seishin*]¹³ and ‘self-discipline [*jiritsu*], and moral conservative phrases including ‘moral standards [*dotokushin*], ‘respect towards tradition and culture [*dento to bunka o soncho*]’ and ‘affection towards our nation and land [*wagakuni to kyodo o aisuru*]’ were inserted. Thus, the ‘fundamental’ of education was amended to integrate the two ‘seemingly contradictory’ perspectives. The hybrid approach has now become a law.

Traditional and moral values have been taught through ‘student guidance’ and ‘career guidance’ (Yukawa, 2013), and in ‘moral education’ – a new subject introduced in the national curriculum which is due to become compulsory from 2018/19 (MEXT, 2015).¹⁴ Moral conservative emphasis can also be identified in the concept, ‘*kokoro* [heart]’. It is ‘an example par excellence of the Japanese ethos’ (Befu, 2001 cited in Rear and Jones, 2013, 384), which appears often in education policy, referring to ‘the spirit of Japanese’ that stresses morality and ethics. ‘The Notebook for the Heart [*kokoro no noto*]’ (renamed to ‘Our Morals and Ethics [*watashitachi no dotoku*]’ in 2014) is a learning material created by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), which has been distributed to elementary and junior high schools across Japan.

Rear and Jones’ (2013) research confirmed that the hybridity is more evident in educational policy materials after the 2006 revision of the Fundamental Law of Education. Investigating major policy documents from MEXT, speeches given by prime ministers and major reports issued by the Japan Business Federation in the period between 2001 and 2010, the researchers identify both the language of ‘individual-centered neoliberalism’ represented by ‘individuality [*kosei*], ‘creativity’ and ‘self-reliance’, and the language of ‘group-centered moral conservatism’ emphasising ‘collectivism’, ‘tradition’ and ‘self-sacrifice’. The overall finding is that neo-liberal language has been apparent in the materials throughout, while moral conservative language has increasingly been visible since the second half of the 2000s.

When PM Abe returned to office in 2012 after the three-year rule of the Democratic Party of Japan, he had clearer hybrid reform plans to revive ‘strong’ and ‘beautiful’ Japan, positioning education reform entitled ‘Education Rebuilding [*kyoiku saisei*]’ as one of the prioritised agendas. One of the first subjects discussed in the reform council was the implementation of compulsory moral education which PM Abe originally referred to as ‘patriotic education’. Along with such moral conservative measures, PM Abe has strengthened neo-liberal initiatives, including a national academic ability test, merger and abolition of schools, school evaluation and parental choice. Research has warned that the ‘seemingly contradictory’ (Apple, 2004, 15) nature of such hybridisation could confuse the population as to what the

¹³ Rear and Jones’ original translation is ‘public service spirit’, but what ‘*kokyo no seishin*’ actually means is ‘voluntary participation in civic activities’.

¹⁴ The implementation of compulsory citizenship education in the US and Europe is a clear example of education playing a ‘stabilising’ role through inculcating traditional values of family, religion and community in the population, and developing civic responsibilities and mutual respect in order to enhance social cohesion and national identity in society (Yukawa, 2013; Pykett, 2010). This has not been the case in Japan, although the introduction of citizenship education is being discussed in MEXT at the moment.

government's educational visions and goals are (e.g. Mori 2008, cited in Yukawa, 2013; Yukawa, 2013; Rear and Jones, 2013; Takeshima, 2011).

The above analysis has highlighted hybridisation represented in the recent educational policies, and also, PM Abe's increased emphasis on moral conservative values. His reform programme has received a range of critiques, from which an argument can be drawn that the hybridity involves 'double shuffle', as follows. One of the leading economists Tachibanaki (2010) criticises PM Abe's excessive focus on neo-liberal market competition and self-help, which is likely to stratify educational provision and increase income disparity in society. One of the leading political scientists Watanabe (2007) condemns PM Abe's convenient and 'indecent' approach to neo-conservatism installed as a facade for neo-liberal economic reform. Kimata's (2012) term is 'recycled fascism', which refers to the manipulative state control undertaken on the basis of neo-liberal principles of marketisation and individualisation, supported by moral conservative educational initiatives. These perspectives indicate that the Japanese version of double shuffle comprises neo-liberal socio-economic reform as dominant, and moral conservative agenda as subordinate. Thus, the case of Japan reinforces the adaptiveness of neo-liberalism.

4. The four forms of aid as hybrid preparedness strategies

Moving on to the field of disaster preparedness, the focus here is to discuss how the hybridity of neo-liberal/moral conservative principles and the double shuffle of dominant/subordinate positions are translated into the discourse of the four forms of aid. Each form contains many examples of policies, initiatives and campaigns from formal schooling, public pedagogy and informal learning, suggesting its use as a pedagogical strategy in disaster contexts to promote particular ways of being a member of Japanese society.

1) Shrinking *kojo* [public aid]

Following the Basic Disaster Management Plan, prefectural and municipal councils are required to design their Regional Disaster Management Plans taking their specific risks and needs into consideration. The Basic Plan also designates 24 government¹⁵ organisations and 56 public corporations¹⁶ to design their own Disaster Management Operation Plans for emergency situations (Cabinet Office, 2011, 8). Those regional and organisational plans set out protocols and arrangements as well as areas of responsibilities within the institution in case of an emergency. In each plan, preparedness activities have to be defined and planned, responding to the needs of the region and/or the organisation. The operation plan of MEXT, for example, details information, advice and guidance (IAG) to individual schools for them to develop their own manuals on disaster drills and operation as evacuation centres. MEXT also provides IAG on the curricula of disaster education undertaken at school, which aims to foster in pupils' self-protection skills, the ethos of respect towards human life and voluntary spirit. Disaster education is for school staff as well for them to gain scientific knowledge on disasters, and the skills for First Aid and counselling.

¹⁵ They include Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Defense.

¹⁶ They include the Bank of Japan, Japanese Red Cross Society, NHK (national broadcasting company) and electric and gas companies.

In terms of school curricula, the Course of Study (national curriculum) regulates ‘Safety Education [*anzen kyoiku*]’, which is a multi-hazard approach that addresses school’s preparedness for various hazards ranging from traffic accidents to natural disasters (Kitagawa, 2015b; a policy-maker, 2013). In the 2011 New Course of Study, ‘enrichment of Safety Education’ (MEXT, 2013a) was for the first time included as one of the foci. In addition to disaster drills which have already been in place in schools, individual schools are now obliged to implement suitable safety initiatives. MEXT has produced the latest edition of a guideline in 2013, reflecting the lessons learned from the experiences of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami (MEXT, 2013b). Safety Education in schools has been reinforced, aiming to foster in pupils the ability to protect themselves – *jijo* – and to support each other to reduce damage – *kyojo* (MEXT, 2012). In this way, the public aid by the ministry of education promotes *jijo* and *kyojo*.

Outside of the school curriculum, more broadly, a range of IAG, including disaster-related laws and policies, educational materials and event information are made available to the public via government websites. In memory of the 1923 Kanto Earthquake which killed more than 100,000 in Tokyo, 1 September is officially established as ‘Disaster Prevention Day [*bosai no hi*]’, and the week commencing 30 August as ‘Disaster Prevention Week [*bosai shukan*]’ (Statistics Bureau, 2015), during which awareness-raising events and practical training drills are implemented at the national, prefectural and municipal levels.

Pedagogically, thus, the *kojo* approach to disaster preparedness has been overt (Preston et al, 2014) and diverse. Neo-liberal governments’ austerity measures have exacerbated ‘the limitation of *kojo*’, which has led to the stress on self-help and mutual help.

2) Taken-for-granted *jijo* [self-help]

Self-taught coping strategies have been passed down from generation to generation in Japan that has severe natural environments. A number of old sayings such as ‘if you are prepared, you don’t have to worry [*sonae areba urei nashi*]’ and ‘a natural disaster strikes you when you have forgotten about it [*saigai wa wasureta koro ni yattekuru*]’ are taught at home and school to remind you of the importance of being prepared. Certain regions have developed their own lessons in response to the specific disaster they are prone to. ‘*Tsunami tendenko*’ in the Tohoku region is one of them, which has become familiar across Japan after the 3.11 tsunami. The dialect is a practical survival strategy for tsunami meaning, ‘if you see a tsunami approaching, run towards a higher ground on your own, do not rely on anyone else, do not worry about others including your family and friends’¹⁷. A tsunami expert, Yamashita, originally spread the phrase to advocate self-protection (Yamori, 2012a; Murashima, 2011; Saito, 2011). In fact, ‘the miracle of Kamaishi [*Kamaishi no kiseki*]’ proved the effectiveness of *tsunami tendenko* after the tsunami of 2011. All pupils from Kamaishi Elementary School, who had been taught *tsunami tendenko* and trained to protect themselves in case of a tsunami, survived. Kamaishi has been compared with other schools in the region that lost many pupils after the tsunami because they did not make their own decision to escape (Yamori, 2012a). ‘The miracle of Kamaishi’ was reported widely through the media and discussed amongst policy-makers and experts, and the effectiveness of self-help has been re-evaluated and re-emphasised (a journalist, 2013).

The notion of ‘self’ is often extended to mean individual families and institutions, as well as individual citizens. The population is highly aware that each household or workplace should

¹⁷ The saying is not promoting self-centred ways of thinking. The underlying principle is trust has to be there to be able not to worry about family and friends.

have First Aid, ‘an emergency bag’ and a stock of water and food, and also that stabilising the furniture and preventing glasses from scattering can save family and colleagues. Organisations are increasingly addressing disaster preparedness agendas in their Business Continuity Plans (Aota et al, 2009). The culture of preparing – ‘*sonae*’ in Japanese – is very much embedded in everyday life, although whether individuals actually implement them or not is another matter. With an emphasis on individual responsibilities, *jijo* is an explicitly ‘neo-liberal’ notion.

3) *Gojo* [mutual aid in the neighbourhood] to be maintained

In tandem with *jijo*, the importance of helping each other in the local neighbourhood in times of difficulty has been emphasised in Japan, as expressed in sayings such as ‘(have good relationships with) your neighbours up to three doors away [*muko sangen ryodonari*]’¹⁸. The nature of the neighbourhood has changed during the post-war period, particularly in urban cities, due to the declining birth rate, an ageing population and diversifying life styles. Despite such change, there has been a shared understanding in the country that neighbourhood plays an integral part in disaster preparedness (FDMA, 2013, 3).

Voluntary Disaster Prevention Organisations (VDPOs) [*jishu bosai soshiki*] which promote voluntary cooperation in the local neighbourhood in emergency situations is one of the important components of *gojo*. VDPOs are stipulated in the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act (e-Gov, 2013a), and guided by the Disaster Management Basic Plan (Central Disaster Management Council, 2012) and further elaborated in Regional Disaster Management Plans to meet regional needs. But organisations and activities of VDPOs should be considered as *gojo* as they are left to be decided by community members. VDPOs can therefore be seen as a *kojo*-and-*gojo* setup. Most of the wards in Japanese cities and towns have a VDPO, which tends to be led by retired firemen (Sugiura, 2010, 74-76).¹⁸ It is the local fire brigade that carries out initial measures, and VDPO members’ role is to assist them. If the disaster is large-scale or happens in a small town, the role of the VDPO becomes critical in saving the community.

Other forms of *gojo* groups include Neighbourhood Associations [*chonaikai*] (Paton et al, 2013) and Fire Control Clubs [*bosai kurabu*]. The latter stemmed from the fact that most of the fire incidents occurred at home, and FDMA called for forming citizens’ groups for fire control in 1975. Most municipalities have such clubs, which in some cases, have developed into multi-purpose community groups promoting neighbourhood disaster preparedness (Fire Protection Association, 2005).

An academic (2013) indicates that mutual help used to be in the form of *gojo* – cooperation between the people who know each other in the neighbourhood. ‘A sense of belonging’ matters in Japanese society, and people feel comfortable helping each other within own community. Thus, *gojo* can be regarded as a moral conservative notion. *Gojo* is a support mechanism

¹⁸ A VDPO normally comprises of an administration/communication team, a fire extinguishing team, an evacuation instruction team and a first-aid team. The practice of the traditional form of neighbourhood support is diverse, depending on urban or suburban, and the frequency and scale of natural disasters experienced in the community. VDPOs which are from the areas that have experienced large-scale disasters tend to be more developed in terms of the structure, communication and motivation, and to have an established stake in the community (Saïdo et al, 2004). They also tend to be stronger in suburbs that still preserve a community spirit or the cities that have been damaged by disasters. For any community in Japan, working with local organisations such as VDPOs and fire clubs in preparing for diverse disaster scenario has been implemented.

developed amongst ‘insiders’, whereas *kyojo* is a cooperation in a wider context which involves ‘outsiders’ whom you do not necessarily know.

4) *Kyojo* [mutual aid between unfamiliar persons] to be developed further

Kyojo being a much more complex concept than ‘mutual aid’ has been addressed by some researchers (e.g. Yamori, 2011; Yamori et al, 2011).¹⁹ *Kyojo* differs from *gojo* because of *kyojo*’s ‘philanthropic and humanistic’ nature. Building on this view, this section further suggests that *kyojo* on the one hand, has a meaning of coproduction, cooperation or joined-up working between unfamiliar persons and/or institutions, but on the other hand, *kyojo* implicitly promotes individuals’ participation in volunteering activities. The former type of *kyojo* is not necessarily associated with the philanthropic or humanistic nature of the aid. One example is a range of preparedness workshops organised by government agencies, local governments and disaster experts. The Japan Meteorological Agency (2016), for instance, offers a workshop called ‘What to do if you experience torrential rain’ to communities which are likely to be hit by heavy rain and typhoons. The workshop procedure as well as the benefits of the workshop have been summarised as a guidance book, which has been distributed to schools across the country for them to apply in their preparedness lessons. Another example is in relation to the ‘Stranded Commuters Measures Ordinance’ introduced after the Tohoku disaster when a large number of commuters were stuck in the City of Tokyo not being able to go home due to transport disruption. Municipal governments and various businesses are working together to plan ahead so as to minimise the impact on commuters in case a similar disaster occurs again (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2016). Although it may not be an explicitly shared view amongst policy-makers and academics, research and development could also be considered as this form of *kyojo*, given that research centres – whether as a quango, a not-for-profit organisation, or a university faculty – promote collaboration and partnerships.²⁰ Joint research teams undertake educational projects, aiming to help foster preparedness and resilience in a target group of the population. Focusing on teamwork and partnerships, this type of *kyojo* emphasises collective and group-centred principles.

The latter type of *kyojo* tends to be linked with the philanthropic or humanistic nature of the aid. Historically, philanthropic aid in time of a disaster was provided by institutions such as the Red Cross, religious groups and trade unions, and neighbourhood support was provided by aforementioned VDPOs and Neighbourhood Associations. The trigger was the Hanshin/Awaji Earthquake of 1995 when the population’s interest in philanthropic and humanistic activities in disaster contexts emerged (Murosaki, 2013; Okumoto, 2010). For this, 1995 has been referred to as ‘the start year of volunteering’ in Japan, volunteering being treated as one of the major lifelong learning activities. As the participation number in volunteering grew in

¹⁹ For example, Sugiman (2010 cited in Yamori et al, 2011, 37-42) – an expert on ‘group dynamics’ – recognises the three trends of the contemporary society from how *kyojo* is used: 1) a new trend amongst young volunteers who want to be part of ‘thick experiences’ through getting involved in response/recovery; 2) traditional groupism represented in VDPOs or fire companies; and 3) mutual commitments such as mutual-aid earthquake insurances within which ‘real’ individual responsibilities can be identified. This variation is insightful, however, for the purpose of delving into the politics of the four forms of aid of the current government, this section draws on the differentiation between *gojo* and *kyojo* identified by the academic interviewed (2013).

²⁰ The National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention (2011), for instance, was set up after the Isewan Typhoon in 1959 and became independent in 2001. The institute has worked together with the Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, the Building Research Institute, FDMA, public and private universities, for-profit firms and not-for-profit organisations, and also the general public. Universities, including Kyoto, Tohoku, Tokyo and Meiji and many others, also have an established centre for research and innovation for natural disasters, positioning ‘coproduction’ or ‘collaboration’ as their important mission.

subsequent disasters, a not-for-profit independent organisation called the Council of Social Welfare [*shakai fukushi kyogikai*] (2008) came to organise training, develop guidelines to professionalise the role and promote a culture of volunteering at national, prefectural and municipal levels. ‘Disaster volunteer [*saigai borantia*]/disaster reduction volunteer [*bosai borantia*]’ became the titles to refer to the workers who offer their time, skills and expertise in all phases of the disaster cycle. As a new pedagogy widely promoted for disaster preparedness, volunteering contributed to the development of lifelong learning in Japan (Okumoto, 2010; Okumoto, 2008). Ogawa (2015) links this movement with a ‘new’ neo-liberal notion of the New Public Commons, which promotes becoming ‘good citizens’ through ‘voluntary participation’ for the improvement of society. He argues that ‘against the backdrop of the deepening socioeconomic nationwide divide...the Japanese neoliberal state has attempted to manage the risk of governing society by the introduction of a strong lifelong learning initiative’ (Ogawa, 2015, 19), which is in fact, the New Public Commons policy.

The 2011 Tohoku experience challenged such positive perception on the effectiveness of volunteering. First, the scale of the damage – 450,000 evacuees, 2,500 evacuation centres, 100,000 evacuated outside of the region – meant a far larger number of volunteers were required compared with previous disasters. Second, a long-term aid was required because many people lost houses, lands, jobs, literally everything. The recovery process started step by step, ‘with volunteering and community learning of an incremental nature’ (Preston et al, 2015, 745). Third, volunteers with diverse expertise were needed because a number of government offices and public facilities were destroyed.²¹ A challenge was identified on the recipient side as well. Some victims refused to receive help and support because of a sense of a shame (an academic, 2013; a journalist, 2013). Such issues and challenges revealed that the culture of philanthropy had not yet fully developed in Japan, even though the number of participants in voluntary activities had dramatically increased. Experts such as Murosaki (2013) and Kawato et al (2012) have since advocated that building a culture of philanthropy that enhances disaster preparedness to develop civil society is the way forward. This approach to preparedness is described as *kyojo*, which emphasises individual responsibilities and civic participation.

To sum up, *kojo* and *jijo* are a dominant neo-liberal notion, and *gojo* and *kyojo* are a subordinate moral conservative approach. However, the Japanese version of ‘double shuffle’ is not simply two-sided because of the duality of the concept ‘*kyojo*’ described above. *Kyojo* has been promoted without its duality being clarified in the field of disaster management. It permits both neo-liberal and moral conservative interpretations. It also endorses lifelong learning from New Public Commons perspectives which emphasises voluntary participation, community activities and social action – this argument is elaborated next.

5. The role of lifelong learning in building a *kyojo*-based civil society

Besides the environmental and socio-economic driving forces, the current Abe Administration has a political motivation in promoting *kyojo* and positions it as the pillar of PM’s ‘revitalisation strategy’ (Prime Minister’s Office and His Cabinet, 2013):

it is vital to develop policy which has a balance between jijo, kojo and kyojo. Jijo should be taken for granted. Kojo is limited due to financial restriction.... In order to develop a vibrant

²¹ The quality of activities was also questioned – some of them focused too much on what the volunteers wish to achieve, neglecting victims’ needs, and others ran out of capacity quickly not being prepared for long-term operations (Murosaki, 2013).

society, citizens are required to proactively engage in civic activities with the spirit of kyojo (Cabinet Office, 2013, 1).

Disaster preparedness is considered as one of the key areas of civic responsibilities, and the importance of maximising the potential of ‘diverse actors’ – local governments, non-governmental organisations, charities, businesses and citizens – is stressed. In comparison with the New Public Commons policy where ‘mutual support’ was promoted, what the quote illustrates appears to be an increase in the tone of ‘participation by all’ in building civil society. The three forms of aid – not four – are applied to legitimise first, the significance of *jijo* and *kyojo* to cover shrinking *kojo*, and second, neo-liberal principles of individual choice and self-responsibilities through an emphasis on *jijo* – self-help, and moral conservative values of collaboration, joined-up working and civic participation through *kyojo* – mutual aid. These forms of aid suit the Abe Administration’s ideological stance which is the double shuffle of dominant neo-liberalism and subordinate moral conservatism. *Kyojo* legitimises the coexistence of neo-liberalism and moral conservatism within the Abe Administration’s politics because the concept’s duality signifies both ideologies simultaneously. Playing the role of the ‘balancing act’ (Hall, 2005, 329), *kyojo* is perceived to be the solution to the contradiction within the hybridity of neo-liberal and moral conservative perspectives. *Kyojo* thus mediates the dominant and the subordinate of the double shuffle, which leads to suggest the Japanese double shuffle differs from that of the UK versions identified by Hall and Spours.

The government claims that *kyojo*-based preparedness supports the building of civil society. The role of lifelong learning in this is highly significant because Japan does not have a choice but to build prepared and resilient communities to cope with frequent natural disasters. Looking back at the historical development of lifelong learning in Japan, it was in the late 1980s when the government first introduced ‘lifelong learning’ as an educational policy, aiming to transform ‘the credential society’ to ‘a lifelong learning society’ (Okumoto, 2010). Experiencing a range of upheavals in the 1990s, including the 1995 earthquake, Japan developed a social model of lifelong learning, volunteering being one of the major learning activities. With this basis, three decades on, Japan seems to be facing an opportunity to further a lifelong learning society in which disaster preparedness is embedded. This is echoed by some disaster experts (Yamori, 2011, 2012b; Yamori et al, 2011; Shiroshita, 2010), who promote the notion of ‘everyday life preparedness [*seikatsu bosai*]’, which indicates lifelong and lifewide preparedness activities that suit the individual’s and the community’s needs. Empirical studies are required in testing whether everyday life preparedness is a form of *kyojo* approaches, and whether it assists interconnectedness, collaboration and cohesion through civic participation and preparedness activities.

6. Conclusion

Capitalist governments employ a similar methodology called ‘neo-liberalism’, but by tweaking it to suit different needs. Such adaptive strategies are particularly necessary in the area of disaster preparedness which affects state’s continuity. In some states, risks are too high or threats are too huge to rely on being ‘a small state’, maintaining neo-liberal austerity measures, market principles and individual responsibilities. Japan is indeed one of them. After experiencing the catastrophic damage brought about by the 2011 Tohoku disaster, the Abe Administration has shifted its adaptive strategy to position *kyojo* at the centre of building civil society based on disaster preparedness and lifelong learning.

There are some studies which indicate a failure of the Japanese government’s strategy, although they do not necessarily refer to *kyojo*. Samuels (2013) for example, demonstrates Japanese

leaders' choice to 'stay the course' rather than to 'put it in gear' after the Tohoku disaster, despite its magnitude that provided them with 'a greater range of choices' for rethinking about existing institutions and structures. Reviewing security, energy and local governance policies for the two years after the disaster, he concludes that the opportunities for societal-level transformation risen from 'a good crisis'²² were wasted. Another example is Hasegawa's (2015) report on post-Fukushima social actions. Despite a high number of public opposition against nuclear energy, the government retains its position to restart nuclear power plants. There were civic demonstrations and activist movements, which were interconnected and collaborative, but they were not influential enough to alter government decisions. Hasegawa (2015) critiques that in theory, Japan can be a nuclear-free country, but it is the government's political and economic ambitions that have been prioritised. In this light, it could be seen that *kyojo* approaches that the government proclaimed have not worked, or did not even exist.

What these authors seem to be addressing is 'path dependence' of national systems. As discussed by Preston et al (2015) and Wilson (2012 cited in Preston et al, 2015), path dependency has been identified in disaster contexts. Their focus is community learning in disasters, but their argument that learning follows historical patterns and then becomes an indicator for future practice can be extended to the national level. This suggests that Japanese systems, which are managed by a small number of leaders, prefer to follow what has been done in the past. National systems which are path dependent are slow or resistant to change, as illustrated by Samuels (2013) and Hasegawa (2015). It could be seen that the successive governments have retained similar neo-liberal strategies, despite the variations in policy discourses such as lifelong learning, the New Public Commons and *kyojo*.

Following on from the point about the path dependent nature of state-led preparedness programmes, Preston et al (2015) speculate that disaster preparedness programmes may be more effective when they are developed by communities which share similar disaster factors. This idea resonates with everyday life preparedness. Communal approaches are based on the needs of the community and developed by the community. Given that communities in a country tend to have different environmental and geographic conditions, developing community-based preparedness initiatives do seem to make sense. If so, returning to Preston's definition of 'preparedness', 'communal' could be added to the typology of 'behavioural', 'emotional' and 'cognitive' pedagogical strategies. In addition to behavioural strategies – disaster drills and a tsunami simulator, emotional strategies – the old sayings such as 'if you are prepared, you don't have to worry' and cognitive strategies – the information websites and 'Disaster Prevention Day', communal strategies will broaden the boundaries of lifelong learning opportunities in and for disasters in disaster-prone countries.

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²² Samuels draws on a quote by White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, 'never allow a good crisis to go to waste'.

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