



Holistic Education: Japanese Hands-on Approach (whole child education)
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Email: albinodeng6@gmail.com

FROM OBSERVATION TO ACTION

A Framework for Holistic Education in South Sudan

My name is ALBINO DENG . Representative from South Sudan

My key learning in Japan was that holistic education is not a subject, but a philosophy of integrated living.

It is the beautiful interplay of the Head for critical thinking based on Solid Academic Experience, Wealth in Humanity for social moral transformation for character, empathy Change, and on Hands for better Health and Fitness practical skills, service.

From Bunkyo Gakuin University to Numazu City schools

I saw this in action students running their own budgets, practicing tea ceremony, mentoring younger peers, cleaning their classrooms as an act of community care and running their own school club activities for better healthy bodies and enhance Socialization. Education here builds capable, compassionate citizens

THE EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE IN SOUTH SUDAN

In South Sudan, our challenge is a system often focused heavily on academic knowledge, missing the crucial elements that build a resilient and unified nation.

We need an educational paradigm shift that cultivates not just scholars, but **ethical leaders, skilled innovators, and active citizens** who can contribute to our national renewal.

My Action Plan **The "Whole Learner" Initiative**

My plan is to pilot the **"Whole Learner Initiative"** in my context, focusing on three core areas inspired by my Japanese experience.

1. Head & Hands: Integrated Project Weeks

- ❖ Action: Dedicate one week per term to do interdisciplinary, community-focused projects. E.g “School for all”.
- ❖ Japanese Inspiration: The "Holistic Education " model and hands-on learning at Bunkyo Gakuin University Girls’ Junior and Senior Schools and Ota City factories.

Example: A "Food Sustainability Week" where students learn math (calculating crop yields), science (soil chemistry), and practical agriculture by starting a school garden, linking it to entrepreneurship.

2. Heart & Character: Daily "Kizuna" Activities

- ❖ Action: Implement 30-minute daily activities focused on community building and character.
- ❖ Japanese Inspiration: Student-led cleaning, club activities, and the profound respect observed in every school I have visit .

Examples: Peer Mentoring: Older students assist younger ones, replicating the natural mentorship.

- ❖ Classroom Responsibilities: Rotating roles like "class Treasurer" or "materials manager" to build ownership and responsibility.
- ❖ Cultural Circles: Discussions on local ethics, stories, and conflict resolution to strengthen moral identity.

3. School & Community: The "School as a Hub" Model

- ❖ Action: Transform the school into a community resource after hours.
- ❖ Japanese Inspiration: The community-supported kindergarten and the whole learning community environment where Municipality provide educational centers for working parents to keep their children busy until they return from work.

Examples are Parent & Community Workshops: Use school facilities for workshops on literacy, vocational skills, or peacebuilding, led by teachers or skilled community members.

- ❖ Student-Led Exhibitions: Showcase student projects (art, agriculture, innovation) to the community, fostering pride and connection.

My Conclusion & Commitment..

My time in Japan has been a transformative journey. I learned that education is about raising a "whole person."

I return to South Sudan not just with notes, but with a renewed spirit and a concrete plan.

I am committed to piloting this "**Whole Learner Initiative**," its a promise to our children that I see their whole potential and I'm really committed to helping them reach it this will make our children grow not only in knowledge, but in character, skill, and a sense of shared responsibility for a peaceful and prosperous South Sudan.

Thank you, JICA, our hosts, and all my colleagues for this inspiring experience.



Japan plays a leading role in addressing global educational disparities, working tirelessly towards the universal realization SDG 4.