

***New Challenges for Teacher Education Deep-Rooted East Asian Concept of Teacher in an Increasingly Globalized World :***

***A Proposal for International Comparative Study on Current Conditions and Perspectives of Program Design and Quality Assurance System for University-Based Teacher Education in East Asia.***

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# *Purpose and Background (1)*

The purpose of this paper is to propose an international collaborative research plan of a comparative study on current conditions and perspectives of program design and quality assurance system for university-based teacher education in East Asia, focusing on individual university's challenges, in order to deepen mutual understanding and to accumulate and organized knowledge which contributes to improvement of the system and its operation, and ultimately, to aim at quality assurance and its enhancement in university-based teacher education in East Asia.

## *Purpose and Background (2)*

It is needless to say that public education is one of the fundamental state undertakings, and teacher education underpins the foundation of public education. **Recently, the enhancement of quality levels of teacher education has been the big issue around the world.** Many countries and regions have tackled a number of issues of university-based teacher education in their respective demographic, social, political, institutional, and cultural contexts.

# *Japanese Context (1)*

In Japanese context, this movement can be surveyed as follows;

***The first is the demographic.*** The number of school age children in Japan has been decreasing since 1990, and the demand on teachers has also been decreasing.

As a result, ***the number of students admitted to teacher education courses*** at national universities and faculties of teacher education ***decrease of more than fifty percent from 1986 to 2000, going down to about 9,500 in 2005.***

## *Japanese Context (2)-1*

**The second is the social.** Japanese public school system has been facing tremendous problems. The school social environment was rapidly changing, generating many hurdles to overcome. Ministry of Education's statistics (2010) pointed out that, for this fifteen years, the number of **school violence** increased 90% in elementary and 40% in secondary schools, **the emigrants' children** who need to train Japanese increased 160% in elementary and secondary schools, **the developmental disabilities** increased 320% in elementary and 1060% in secondary schools, **the children of families needed some livelihood protection** increased 50% in elementary and 90% in secondary schools.

## *Japanese Context (2)-2*

On the other, further pursuits of **quality education in terms of the child's individuality and personality** were called for. The better qualified teachers were needed to meet and solve these complicated and many-sided problems.

There has been **a demand on better teacher education** to improve teacher's qualifications, and calls for better teacher education **at graduate schools** as one of the alternatives.

## *Japanese Context (3)*

**The third** is the institutional. Teacher education at the graduate school master's programs, however, has been constantly complaining that it tends to be oriented toward the researcher training without any perspectives for school education.

The Central Council for Education criticized the current state of graduate schools for teacher education in its progress report in 2005, and recommended establishing professional schools to improve the preparation of qualified teachers at the master's level.

Twenty-five universities started the professional graduate school for teacher education from 2008.

# *Japanese Context (4)-1*

*The fourth is the political.* Japanese government introduced the new policy in 2004 that every national university should transform into the national university corporation system. While many difficulties were brought to teacher education in universities by this policy, *two problems are particularly serious to university-based teacher education.*

The first is that, there must be *a budget cut* which consists of two parts: the first is *a personnel cost* that must be reduced more than five percents by the end of 2009. The second is *a general cost reduction* of one percent every academic year for six years beginning in 2004.

## *Japanese Context (4)-2*

Every university corporation should determine their own numerical targets about teacher education every sixth year, in consultation with the M. E.

Each university corporation must determine, for example, how many graduates from each program for teacher education should be able to get positions as teachers in a certain academic year. Then, each university is to evaluate the outcome by the standard of its numerical targets, and demonstrate with facts that it has achieved its goal, otherwise the university corporation would receive imposed reductions.

# *Japanese Context (5)-1*

***The last is the cultural.*** Relating with the policy of university, The School Education Act was amended in 2002 that, in order to assure the quality of education and other activities, ***every university and professional graduate school should be evaluated every certain period by one of the evaluating agencies*** that the Minister of Education certified. This certified evaluation system for universities must be took root in the American accrediting system for higher institutes, although two systems differ from each other in that the power of state is not concerned in the latter.

## *Japanese Context (5)-2*

It became clear that **this certified evaluation system would also bring to many difficulties to university-based teacher education in Japan. Because the system and its procedures originally took root in the American system deep-rooted American concept of education and teacher,** which is much different from Japanese one arising from Japanese culture, it is very difficult for us to establish the appropriate evaluation standards emphasizing on outcomes of Japanese university-based teacher education.

## *Japanese Context (5)-3*

Moreover, it should be also pointed out that, because Japanese system is against the background of the power of state, in contrast to Americans based on the professional collaborative peer review culture, **there seems to be always danger in Japanese system** that, under the traditional bureaucratic culture over public education, **undue control might be exercised and a deadening effect might operate toward a standardization upon the universities trying to develop teacher education creatively in their own professional leaderships.**

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(1)*

Japanese context mentioned above, must be one example. But it seems to suggest **the framework of problems about quality assurance of university-based teacher education common to East Asian areas**. Broadly speaking, it represents a conflict of the East Asian peculiar concept of teacher and education with the inclination to accept the higher education's institutions of Anglo-Saxon societies in a process of globalization.

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(2)*

Most of East Asian people share the similar concept of teacher. It differs from **the Western concept in which, under the Christian culture, teacher is reminded as the specialist of instruction whose main job is to instruct the objective truth, namely scientific knowledge and so on to younger generation.** Comparing with this, East Asian concept of teacher has broader meanings than the specialist of instruction, emphasizing on the personality aspect of whom we call a teacher.

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(3)*

In East Asian peculiar concept that may be under the influence of the Confucianism culture, teacher is reminded as the master of way to live whose main job is to suggest the proper way of living through her/his own living as a learning person to youngsters. The parents and children's respect toward teachers that their authority has been based on, depends upon their personality as a model who has good quality and behavior that younger generation should copy.

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(4)*

The fact that this concept of teacher has been sharing among teachers, children, and parents in East Asia areas is one of the most important reasons why children in this area can get the highest level of some international achievement tests such as PISA.

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(5)*

At the same time, it should be clear that, **it is more difficult for East Asian people** to establish an evaluation standards for teacher education within the context of their peculiar concept of teacher, **because of its' the broader meanings including with the personality aspect.**

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(6)*

On the other hand, the globalization has been one important factor in discussing the quality assurance of university-based teacher education.

The term “globalization ” is interpreted “a wide variety of phenomena which have been much facilitated by the easier and cheaper contacts made possible by modern communications and transport” (Ronald Door, 2003).

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(7)*

But, the effects of the globalization on higher education in each state, actually means the Anglo-Saxon Americanization, and have cultivated the mentality around the globe that is the inclination to accept the institutions of Anglo-Saxon societies such as the accrediting system as somehow “normal”, a norm which other countries’ institutions are deviations.

## *Framework of Problem about Quality Assurance of Teacher Education in East Asia(8)*

When we recognize the problems for teacher education we face in this framework, the challenge for us to tackle must be clear, that is, the development of program designs and quality assurance systems for teacher education deep-rooted East Asian concept of teacher and peculiar cultures in an increasingly globalized world.

## *Outline of Research Project (1): Purpose ①*

For building the foundation of it by international cooperation, the project aims:

- (a) **To deepen mutual understanding** the current systems and actual conditions of program designs and quality assurance for university-based teacher education in East Asia, through comparing and analyzing the data that participants of this project offer about their own areas.

## *Outline of Research Project (1): Purpose ②*

(b) To accumulate and to organize the useful and meaningful knowledge about notable program designs, quality assurance systems, and their practices and so on in a certain common format, which would contribute to improvement of university-based teacher education in East Asia, through the way of case study, focusing on individual university's challenges.

## *Outline of Research Project (1): Purpose ③*

(c) To develop some international currency graduate programs for teacher education and teacher educator education common to universities of education in East Asia, through synthesizing the above-noted two research activities.

# *Outline of Research Project (2):Objective*

The objectives of the project cover:

- (a) Topics of program designs and quality assurance systems in education **for general teachers in primary and secondary schools.**
- (b) Topics of program designs and quality assurance systems in education **for educational leaderships, such as principals and supervisors.**
- (c) Topics of program designs and quality assurance systems in education **for teacher educators** in charge of general teacher and educational leadership education at universities.

## *Outline of Research Project (3): Organization*

- (a) **Research group** on program designs and quality assurance in education **for general teachers** in primary and secondary schools. This group may be sub-divided into elementary and secondary teacher groups.
- (b) **Research group** on program designs and quality assurance in education **for educational leaderships**.
- (c) **Research group** on program designs and quality assurance in education **for teacher educators** at universities.

## *Outline of Research Project (4): Timeline ①*

**FY 2011**; Confirming the program of research, researchers from East Asia will be divided into the three groups in line with the target of each group, report the present state and the issues of the system, operation, and actual condition of program designs and quality assurance in university-based teacher education in each areas, and **aim to come to a common understanding within each group**, through sufficient deliberation.

## *Outline of Research Project (4): Timeline ②*

**FY 2012**; Researchers will continue the tasks from the previous year. Considering the progress status, we will hold **a joint seminar by the three groups in Tokyo Gakugei University**, organize outcomes of the research activities at the time, and share a common recognition of subsequent tasks as a whole.

## *Outline of Research Project (4): Timeline ③*

**FY 2013**; Researchers in line with the target of each group, will report as **case studies on notable and progressive approaches** to program design and quality assurance in university-based teacher education in each areas. After sufficient deliberation, the case studies will then be collected and accumulated in a standardized format. The third research group with other two will try to develop international graduate programs for teacher education and/or teacher educator education which aim to be applicable to universities of education in East Asia.

## *Outline of Research Project (4): Timeline ④*

**FY 2014**; Continuing to collect and accumulate case studies and to develop international graduate programs, we will summarize the fruits of the four-year research and publish the report as a book in four kinds of language.

Would you please join us  
with this research project.

Thank you for your attention.