

Whither or Wither the Higher Education?

Challenges faced by the higher education systems
in the UK and Japan

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Aims and the structure of this talk

1. The Higher Education systems in the UK and Japan

- Common issues and challenges
- Characteristics of Japanese higher education systems
- Policy learning and emulations between the UK and Japan?

Aims and the structure of this talk

2. Higher Education research in the UK and Japan

- What are the common research topics?
- Interdisciplinarity
- International comparison
- Methodological issues

An overview of common issues

- ***The higher education policy reforms and changes 1990~;***
New Public Management; policy emulation - from the UK to Japan
- ***Higher education as a public and private good – privatisation and marketisation forces – different forms in Japan and the UK***
- ***Sustainability and affordability of the systems***
- ***Internationalisation – inwards and outwards – and uncertainties***

Common Challenges

- Demographic and socio-political challenges
- Marketisation challenges
- Resource challenges; affordability and equity issues
- Reputation games and metric management
- Broadened students' profiles and students' experiences; employability; engaging with employers and beyond
- Sustainability of the systems
- Internationalisation for whom? – students, researchers, academics, HE leaders

Challenges faced by the Japanese HEIs 1

Demographic challenges

- Japan's population of 18-year-olds dropped from 2.05 million in 1992 to 1.19 million in 2011.
- Competition for students is expected to become more intense as the youth population shrinks, possibly leading to the *reduction of tuition revenue*.

Attracting foreign students and talents

- The government is keen to attract more international students, by globalising the Japanese higher education.
- It has recently set a target of having 300,000 foreign students in the country by 2020

Challenges faced by the Japanese HEIs 2

The strained state of public finances

- The cumulative national debt increased from 76.7% of GDP in 1997 to 250.35 % of GDP in 2016
- The government subsidies for both national and private universities are on the decline due to the continuing cuts in public finances.
- The total amount of student loans has drastically increased; the fear of “defaulting” on these student loans.

Policy interventions...?

- The government is likely to take a measure to restructure both public and private universities by mergers.
- A recent government initiative to set up a new grant in aid scholarship
- Political debate - “Free higher education”?

The Japanese higher education system 1

- Coexistence of three higher education sectors with different legal status (*national, private and local public*) with different privatisation forces and varying degrees of state control at work.

Types of HEIs	National	Public local	Private
Numbers (2015)	86	89	779
Budgetary allocation (Japanese yen) (2011)	1,202 billion		321 billion

- The gross enrolment rate at HEIs, including junior colleges, colleges of technology and specialised training colleges, amounted to nearly 80 per cent of the age cohort (Huang, 2016)

The Japanese higher education system 2

- Historical **collaboration between the public and private sectors**, with a strong privatised financing i.e. *tuition fees* over the decades to get to the state of the near “universal access” to higher education (Trow, 2006)
- **Private higher education** has taken an important role for absorbing the demand for higher learning unmet by the public higher education provision since 1960s (Yonezawa, 2013).
- Public funding for higher education has been **highly concentrated** toward top national universities.
- Recent policy to **differentiate the system** e.g. World Class University initiatives

The Japanese higher education system 3

QS World University Rankings as of
2016/17

- The University of Tokyo - 34th
- Kyoto University - joint 37th
- Tokyo Institute of Technology - 56th
- International faculty, international students percentage low
- Extremely low outbound Exchange students
- Low inward Exchange students

QS University rankings: Asia

<https://www.topuniversities.com/asian-rankings>

	International faculty	students
1. National University of Singapore	• 100	99.9
2. University of Hong Kong	• 100	100
3. Nanyang University of Science and Technology	• 100	99.9
	• 100	100
4. HKUST	• 100	100
5. Tsinghua	• 76.2	67.7
6. KAIST	• 51.5	33.1
13. University of Tokyo	• 24.4	54
14 Tokyo Institute of Technology	• 54	65
15 Kyoto University	• 35	49.7

Asia University Rankings THE 2016

[https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2016/regional-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2016/regional-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort%20by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats)

	International students
1 National University of Singapore	• 32%
2 Nanyang Technological University; Singapore	• 32%
2 Peking University; China	• 15%
4 University of Hong Kong; Hong Kong	• 39%
5 Tsinghua University; China	• 10%
6 HKUST; Hong Kong	• 38%
7 University of Tokyo; Japan	• 10%

Japanese government funding initiatives to support 'elite' universities since the 2000s

2002 21st COE programme (COE 21)

2003 Enactment of the National University Corporation Law

2004 ***Incorporation of national universities***

2007 Global COE programme; World Premier International Research Center (WPI) Initiative

2009 Global 30 programme

2013 Programme for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities

2015 Top Global University Project

2016 Categorisation in budgeting the operational funds for national universities

2017 ***"Distinguished National University Corporations"***

Differentiated higher education system

“deliberate erosion” (Eades 2005) of the difference between the three sectors as the pace of national university reform accelerates.

The government has requested national universities to choose from three categories, in their mid-term goals and evaluation scheme starting from 2016.

- *“internationally competitive in all the major fields”*,
- *“internationally competitive in some fields”*,
- *“serving local needs”*

Gaps – the government objectives and institutional capability

- Recent ‘competition’ and ‘differentiation’ policy promoted by the government
- Increased competition among universities is expected to give rise to further questioning of the difference in governmental funding between national universities, and between national and private universities.
- HEIs developing their own institutional strategies and intermediary organisational capabilities.
- Overall, there are widening gaps between the objectives of government policy and the resources and means available for its implementation at the institutional level.

Common Structural Issues in Japan and the UK?

- Mismatch between societal expectations and institutional capacities to deliver (see Kitagawa and Oba, 2010)
- External demands are reshaping or even undermining the very nature of the university (see Perry, 2006)
- Differentiation – no room for choice? Isomorphic forces? (see Kitagawa et al., 2016)

Policy learning between the UK and Japan?

Institutional types

- UK HE sector

Old and New Universities

Recent newer universities

New private actors

- Japanese HE sector

National, private and public-local

New private actors

- Centralised government policy
 - Research funding concentration
 - Teaching quality issues and students experiences
 - Perils of Humanities and social sciences?
- Asymmetrical internationalisation
 - Attracting and retaining foreign talents
 - Geo-politics – Brexit etc

Higher Education research in the UK and Japan

- What are the common research topics?
- International comparison - Methodological and data building issues
- Japan in East Asia; UK in Europe.....
- Interdisciplinarity of HE research
- IR and management implications

How to make the International HE research more *visible* and *impactful*?

- What is the HE research for?

Students agenda – TEF agenda

HE researchers - REF agenda

HE managers - Institutional
Research

Government agenda

International equity agenda

- Tensions between stakeholders

- Academic freedom vs
Government intervention

- Short term, mid term and long
term

Thank you for listening