

Enhancing Two-Way International Students Mobility
Challenges to Internationalization of Japanese University
AUN – Kyoto University Workshop on Building Academic Partnership
Through Collaboration and Exchange
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Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman,

It's my great honor to have an opportunity to give you a special presentation.

<Content>

Today, I am going to talk two things.

The first is the internationalization of Japanese universities. Why is it pursued? How we are doing it. In this connection, I will show you students mobility to and from Japan.

Another one is Japan's collaboration with East Asia in university exchange. Recently, collaboration with this region is one of the important national policy agenda items. I will talk about CAMPUS Asia and international symposium on university exchange with quality assurance which my ministry hosts next week in Tokyo.

<At a Glance>

Before talking about internationalization, let me begin with “at a glance” of Japanese universities. Today, I would like to focus on 4yrs colleges and universities.

What I would like you to take note is that the fraction of international students and faculty is low in Japan. For students, it's 3.7% compared to the OECD average of 6.8% for tertiary A. Nevertheless, most of the Global 30 universities have 5-10% of international students.

I think Japanese university, as well as Japanese society in general, is characterized as ethnically homogeneous, and mono-cultural.

<Why>

Why Internationalization of Japanese universities?

For one thing, needless to say, diversity is an essential ingredient of higher education, because cultural diversity of students, as well as of faculty, is a source of quality of academic activities. It is the interaction of players with different cultural background which brings about new

idea and value.

It is the first order business for Japanese universities and my ministry to increase international students and faculty.

Second, strong demand for global talents is rapidly eminent in Japanese business and industries, not only in manufacturing sector but also in service sector.

In this connection, I want to tell you what kind of people is meant by "global talent" in Japan.

<Global Talents>

Here is a definition reached in an industry -academia panel last year.

Important thing in this definition is that, to be a global talent, it is not enough to understand cultural difference, but he/she has to be an active person as to make capital of cultural diversity of members of his/her group and to produce new things and new values.

<Policy development>

Then, how are we doing to internationalize Japanese universities?

The efforts now under way in Japan are stemming from the Basic Policies for Economic and Fiscal Policy Management 2008 under LDP's Fukuda administration.

The Basic Policy proposed to open up Japan to introduce vigor from abroad, that is, to introduce new concept, advanced technology and excellent talent to revitalize Japanese economy, which had long been sluggish.

With respect to education, the policy proposed to invite many international students, to foster educational environment where Japanese youth study with them, and to make a plan for 300 thousand international students in 2020.

<300 thousand plan>

MEXT made the plan, working with the five relevant ministries dealing with foreign relations, immigration, housing, economy and industry, labor and employment.

The plan identified five key components:

- 1) Offering incentives and one-stop service for Study-in-Japan, in overseas;
- 2) Improving admission process and immigration regulation;
- 3) Globalizing universities;
- 4) Robust support to international students, including scholarship, their housing, welcoming local community; and
- 5) Promoting employment in Japan, improving visa status procedure

<Global 30>

Now, let me talk about Global 30.

When Global 30 was mentioned in Basic Policy 2008, it was foreseen that 30 universities be supported as the core of internationalization efforts.

However, only 13 universities were designated because of limited budget availability in FY2009. Furthermore, second years budget was decreased by about 30%, because of JDP-initiated budget cutting exercise. Even amid such hardship, 13 designee universities have been steadily going forward with their program. MEXT highly appreciates it, and intends to support them steadily for five years.

13 universities are actively recruiting overseas. AS the bases for such activities, some of the 13universities are establishing overseas offices. These offices are located where presence of Japanese universities was not strong. That's why this type of office is not here in Bangkok. There have been several offices including Kyoto's.

Anyway, these offices are open to all the Japanese universities for their

use. Kyoto University set an office of this type in Hanoi last year.

Opening of courses in English is in progress.

As of fall last year, 85 such courses were open, with the enrollment of 450. These will be 35 hundred students enrolled in 157 courses in 2013. Of course, most of these courses start in September.

In order to prepare and instruct courses in English, and to internationalize administrative work, 350 international faculty and staff are newly employed in the 13 universities.

As a result of another spending review last fall, networking for transfer of good practices and lessons learned, and more collaboration with industry is sought.

<Students Mobility>

Here, I want show students mobility to and from Japan.

First, mobility to Japan.

This chart shows from where international students are coming to Japan.

Total number of 140thousand is for all the tertiary institutes.

More than 90% are from Asia. 80% are from China, Korea and Taiwan.

Excluding these three countries, the number of international students from Asia is 19 thousand and 13% of international students in Japan.

Next, where is the destination of Japanese study-abroad? The total figure of 67 thousand is the aggregation of statistical figure of destination countries and the UNESCO. The most popular destination is North America. About 20 thousand are studying in Asia, and 10 thousand in Europe.

20 thousand in Asia consists of 17 thousand in China, 2 thousand in Taiwan, 1 thousand in Korea. Very small number in ASEAN countries, I suppose.

<Inward - looking?>

One of the issues of national attention in Japan is declining Japanese study abroad. Very often, you can find Japanese newspaper articles dealing with this.

It is crucially important, in this era of globalization, to have more Japanese youth experience different culture whether abroad or in Japan, preferably abroad. However, the number of Japanese study abroad has been declined from its peak of 83 thousand in 2004 to 67 thousand in five years.

Those studying in the US have declined by 40% in ten years. In late 90's Japanese students occupied the largest share of international students in the US. In 2009, it ranked in 6th.

Why this decline?

Some attribute it to English ability. Others to peculiar employment practice of Japanese companies, which forces university students to search jobs in their third year, good time to study abroad.

Furthermore, most Japanese companies are not explicit whether they appreciate study abroad experiences, while they have begun to recruit Japanese-speaking international students not only in Japan but also abroad.

Of course, mindset of recent Japanese youth works somewhat. I would argue the mindset is a product of Japan's lost two decades beginning 90's. Japan lost opportunity and did not well to incorporate it into globalized world in terms of business, leadership, and education.

On the other hand, there are some remarkably active, out-going students. One example whom I quote very often is a Waseda university student pursuing social entrepreneurship to realize equal opportunity of education in Bangladesh with the advice of Dr. Muhammad Yunus.

I have to go back to the right track.

<Policy Development>

Last June, PM Kan administration defined the cultivation of global talent as one of the urgent policy agenda item in the New Growth Strategy, and set the target number for study-abroad at 300 thousand in 2020.

<New Programs>

To cope with declining Japanese study abroad, we are going to begin two new programs. The intention is to enhance short-term, exchange-type, two-way mobility.

The first one is support to universities to develop collaborative education program with a partner in other country, through which students of both sides exchange. We expect such collaborative programs developed with Asian universities, as well as American and European ones.

Another one is a new short-term (less than three months) two-way exchange program. I expect that 7000 Japanese students taking part in this short visit program will see themselves how their colleague in the world are studying in university and experience different culture.

I expect some of them seek another, full-fledged occasion of study abroad. Also incoming 7000 international students will be good stimulus to Japanese colleagues.

In addition, MEXT, together with industry Ministry and labor Ministry, sponsors dialogue between industry and university to rationalize employment and job-search practices. New movement has begun: trading firms and some corporate executives insists that students should be free of job search activity until they finish the third year.

<Emphasis on EA>

My second theme is Japan's emphasis on East Asian region in its university exchange.

As I said earlier, international students in Japan is heavily Asian. This is the first, natural reason for us to put emphasis on East Asia.

Another factor is rapid globalization of economic activities in East Asian region. More Japanese companies employ Asian people not only in operative positions, but also as the candidate of future executive and managers in their affiliates in Asia, and even in their headquarter or holding company in Japan.

Furthermore, regional cooperation is essential to dealing with global issues. University exchange is important in training human resources to work on that effort, as well as providing solutions to the issues through research collaboration with colleagues in the region.

<New Policy Initiative>

In this context, PM Hatoyama put forward new policy initiatives in his first round of summit meetings with Asian leaders, that is Japan-China-Korea summit meeting in Beijing October 2009, and ASEAN+3 and EAS summit meetings in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand same month.

His proposal was warmly welcome by leaders of these Summit meetings.

<SEED-Net>

But, since before Hatoyama's action, there have been active programs of university exchanges in East Asia.

One example is SEED-Net, which Mr. Shirouzu will elaborate this afternoon. Here, I only say it has significantly contributed to the development of engineering faculty of East Asian universities, and I am impressed very much that it has been generously designed and implemented.

<New Asian Collaboration>

Two programs of Hatoyama's initiative are ongoing well.

<<CMPUS ASIA>>

The first is CAMPUS Asia, meaning Collective Action for Mobility Program of University Students in Asia.

The intention is to develop and implement collaborative educational programs with credit transfer and double/joint degree, among universities of Japan, China and Korea.

To promote the idea, the three countries set up a committee comprising of government official, university presidents and professors, and industry executives.

The committee met twice in Tokyo and Beijing. The guidelines for creating and implementing joint programs were approved in principle, and it was agreed to start some pilot programs during 2011.

The third meeting is going to be held in Seoul, maybe in April. It is expected that the guidelines be confirmed, and timeline towards the

launch of joint programs be agreed.

In future, this scheme may extend to other East Asian countries.

<<Symposium>>

Another specific activity is an international symposium on university exchange in East Asian region, which will be held in Tokyo next week.

It appears apparent that the quantity of exchange-type, two-way students mobility grow in this region, and hence the demand for credit transfer and double/joint degree. In this respect, there already are pioneering regional activities in the area of quality assurance (QA), credit transfer, and joint programs, by ASEAN University Network (AUN) and Regional Center for Higher Education and Development of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organizations (SEAMEO), and other organization. I think we have many things to learn from their activities, and I have no doubt that collaboration with them is an avenue to pursue.

On the other hand, university system, QA system and state of its development are diverse in this region.

Having these in mind, it would be meaningful to discuss how to

promote university exchange in East Asia with proper QA. That's the intention of the symposium. It is organized jointly by Japan, China and Korea.

This symposium is included in the draft ASEAN+3 Plan of Action on Education to be decided in a Ministerial level meeting. I extend my gratitude to colleague in East Asia for their interest and sensible suggestion in preparing the symposium.

<Double Degree Guideline>

In this connection, I want to touch upon the guideline for cross-border, joint educational activities involving double/joint degree.

Japanese universities have more than hundred double/joint degree programs with foreign universities. With increasing cross-border collaboration among universities, especially establishment of joint program, demand for double/joint degree will increase.

While there are success stories like double degree program between Tokyo Institute of Technology and Tsinghua University, there is some confusion in setting up and implementing of double /joint degree programs among new comers.

Therefore, MEXT asked an expert group, headed by Prof. Akira Ninomiya, to make a guideline for Japanese universities when they set up and implement double/joint degree programs to ensure quality assurance, in accordance with present Japanese laws and regulation regarding degree conferment.

The guideline provide definition of key words like double/joint degree programs, format and content of diploma and its supplement document, and most importantly, those points which universities should keep in mind in setting up and implementing double/joint degree programs, including what you have to confirm between you and your partner university, organizing joint implementation structure with your partner, supports to the students enrolled in the program, how to approve the completion of the program, etc.

<Strategy>

This is my summing up of internationalization strategy now under way in Japan. It is almost same as what is said in the plan in summer 2008.

New components are “attractive exchange programs,” “regional framework for university exchange with QA,” and “rational employment and job-search practice.” The intention behind this is to increase two-way exchange with credit transfer and double/joint degrees, and to have more students study in Asia.

Former PM Hatoyama’s emphasis on East Asia seems to me a boost to strategic approach to international university exchanges. I think it is the first instance in higher education history of Japan that government and industry, together with academia, are promoting university exchange.

It has also brought higher education officials like me to the front line of consultation with colleague in other countries. Taking part in international conference like this, I always discover what friends are doing to refine and internationalize their higher education. I think it is important to talk about our experience, to exchange views, and to learn

each other.

Then, what is the essential component to accomplish this strategy?

First, university-industry collaboration.

60% of undergraduate are employed as soon as they complete study. More exchange of views and mutual understanding is to be sought between industry and academia regarding graduate attribute. In addition, more collaboration is to be encouraged between the two in development, implementation and evaluation of educational programs. Preparation of platforms for this interaction is progressing.

Another is transfer of good practices and lessons learned from the 13 universities of Global 30 program. That's why workable, effective networking among the 13 and that between the 13 and others is crucial. And I should add three pioneers as the possible source of good practices and lessons learned. They are Ritsumeikan's Asia Pacific University opened in 2000, and Akita International University and Waseda's School of International Liberal Studies opened in 2004.

In this connection, I want to stress that how specifically individual university is to be internationalized does not have to be uniform across the board of more than 700 Japanese universities, but should correspond to functional profile of individual university.

And above all, money. Financial support is increases in FY2011 draft budget, thanks to political leadership and many public comments supporting higher education.

Still, Japan's public expenditure to higher education is notoriously low; the lowest in OECD countries at 0.5%, while the OECD average is 1%. Then, can we continue the increase of public support to universities? Considering public debt is twice our GDP, it would be no easy task. But we will do our best, working with political leadership, and universities are expected to be more accountable to stakeholders.

<Conclusion>

As I said in the beginning, diversity is an essential ingredient of higher education. Furthermore, I think we cannot cultivate generations who shoulder the future of this planet, without internationalizing higher education institutes.

Today, the globe faces many issues: to attain economic growth with environmental protection, to get rid of poverty, epidemic, and to assure supply of water, energy and food, etc., etc.

What will save the Earth by solving these issues and create new values? I believe that it will be collaboration and competition among youth of the world, and this has to be based on mutual understanding and respect among them with multi-cultural background.

Then, in this context, what is the Universities' social responsibility in a global era? Of course, universities are expected to equip students with state-of -the-art knowledge and skills.

At the same time, we must build firm foundation in every student for the best use of such knowledge and skills. That is the art of learning and of

thinking independently, critically and logically.

And in this global world, I think we need another essential component in this foundation. That is the attitude and aspiration for every youth to be global citizen, to collaborate and compete in a sound manner with colleague in the region and all over the world, to solve issues this planet is facing and to create new value, whether it is economical, societal, or cultural.

Needless to say, global mind is fostered on the basis of firm national identity, deep understanding of history and culture of mother country, and pride in them, and it strengthen the latter in reverse.

I think what we have to do is clear. It is to open up universities each other. Let us realize more two-way mobility of students and faculty with QA, and make every university be a platform of capacity building in global era.

And let all of us in academia, industry and government collaborate further and further. In that instance, we should not forget that QA is indispensable foundation for fruitful university exchange. The last thing we want is to make students victims of inadequate QA in university

exchange.

Thank you very much for your attention.