

FOREWORD

Higher education research in many countries face numerous challenges to its contribution to academic research, policy making and institutional practice, among them potential crisis of a reduction in the size of higher education researchers, becoming increasingly marginalized, and decreased academic and social impacts compared to hard sciences in particular.

The Research Institute for Higher Education (RIHE), Hiroshima University was founded in May 1972 and is the first institution being specifically concerned with higher education research in Japan and in East Asia. Like some similar institutes and centers of higher education research in Japan and abroad, while the RIHE has made huge efforts to be responsive and relevant to growingly diversified demands from the various levels: government, academia, society, and the university it belongs to, it has been confronted with many challenges, which may affect its survival and further development in the future. As part of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the RIHE, this international symposium analyzed and discussed what general and unique challenges individual centers and institutions of higher education face, and how to respond to these challenges in the case countries in a global and comparative perspective. More specific research questions and other relevant questions were addressed.

1. Are there any challenges facing your center, institution or your country in higher education research and further development? if any, what are they? How does your center or institution deal with these challenges? If not, what are the main missions of your centers or institutions, and how does your affiliation undertake higher education research?
2. What is your suggestion to help centers or similar organizations of higher education research to stick with the mission of conducting higher education and overcome any challenges?
3. What do you think of prospects of higher education research in your country and by and large?

As suggested in this report, the symposium consists of two sessions. The first session began with two opening remarks made by Manabu Abe, Vice president of

Hiroshima University and Shinichi Kobayashi, Vice President of Hiroshima University, Director & Professor of RIHE, Hiroshima University. Subsequently, Richard James, Professor of Higher Education and former director of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Melbourne, Australia argued possible futures for higher education research and research centers in Australia. Fenqiao Yan, Professor, dean, Graduate School of Education, Peking University, China described modernization of Chinese higher education and impact from Japan. Niancai Liu, Dean, School of Education, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China, talked about challenges and suggestions for higher education research institutions in China. Ulrich Teichler, Professor at the University of Kassel, Germany, outlined possible futures of higher education research in Germany. Simon Marginson, Professor at the University of Oxford, the UK, made spatial analysis in the study of international higher education focusing on his ‘glonacal’ paper in collaboration with Gary Rhoades that was published 20 years ago. Philip Altbach, Professor at Boston College, the USA, investigated higher education research centers based on a case study and broader patterns. In the panel session, all the five presenters answered questions raised by participants and further elaborated their thoughts on the topics they presented. Finally, Motohisa Kaneko, Distinguished Service Professor, the University of Tsukuba; and Professor Emeritus, the University of Tokyo, Japan, offered a response to the five speakers’ presentations and shared his views on issues and prospects of higher education research.

Most of the discussions and suggestions are believed to be of relevance and importance to the situation of higher education centers or institutes in other countries, some might be controversial and impractical. We realize that not everything in this report is applicable to all higher education research centers or institutes, but we hope this report will stimulate new debate about the future development of centers and institutes focusing on higher education research. After all, despite facing crisis, most centers and institutes have been contributing for academic research, institutional research, academic development of faculty and staff, talents production, as well as helping their belonging institutions shape good governance arrangements for the last decades. The fate and future development of these centers and institutions deserve further consideration by the leaders and administrators of the universities in which they are located and a better environment for their healthy development need to be provided.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the speakers, the commentator and all participants for their participation in and contribution for the workshop.

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