

## FOREWORD

As is well known, the first international survey on the academic profession was implemented in 1992-1993, partly financed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Although fourteen countries participated in the international survey, only three Asian countries participated: Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. Based on this earlier survey, the Changing Academic Profession (CAP) project was initiated in 2007-2008. There were twenty-two participating country teams, including China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Hong Kong. Both international surveys have produced hundreds of articles and numerous books. Both research projects have expanded the scope of studies in the academic profession and facilitated in-depth research into the topic. More importantly some of the research findings have affected policy making and institutional practice in some countries and regions. However, by the time the CAP project was implemented, the Asian research teams mentioned above were part of the two international groups, only this Academic Profession in Asia (APA) project can be considered the first regional-level research in Asia. It was not only organized and led by Asian researchers, but also focused on the study of Asian academic profession. Since 2011, three international conferences and one international workshop have been held in Hiroshima, and three international conference reports have been published at the Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University. The participating teams have expanded to eight countries in Asia. They include Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Viet Nam.

Many countries in Asia have achieved economic success in recent years. The same is true of the rapid expansion of Asian higher education and its improved quality in both teaching and research especially in countries like China, Japan and Singapore. Changes and successful stories in Asia have been increasingly drawing global and international attention. However, compared with North America and European countries, several issues face Asia's research in higher education. To illustrate, we do not have a regional-level association or consortium of higher education, neither do we have any internationally-established journal of higher education research which is edited and published by Asian countries. Although not all major countries are included in the APA project, and not every aspect of Asian higher education has

been examined, launch of the APA project should be viewed as a small but important step toward more comprehensive and sophisticated studies of Asian higher education in the future. It is likely that the APA project has not only resulted in interesting findings about the academic profession in the participating countries, but also formed and strengthened regional collaboration of higher educational researchers.

This international conference report includes some of the papers submitted for the fifth international conference on “The Challenges and the Transformation of Academic Profession in Asia,” which was held in Taipei, Taiwan on March 2015. Besides, one specially invited paper from Professor Tilak in India is also included. Based on the theme of the conference, these papers are concerned with major characteristics of the academy in the individual countries; the issues facing them; and what changes have occurred. Although several similarities are found in the academy in individual societies, differences between each are evident and considerable. Publication of the final conference report based on the APA project provides our readers with more useful findings about the academic profession in some selected societies in the region.

Last but not least, on behalf of the participating members, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to our colleagues from Taiwan for their painstaking efforts in organizing the fifth international conference on the APA project in Taipei. My deep thanks also go to our participating members who have made enormous contributions to the APA project and to the publication of the conference reports. Without their hard work and generous assistance, the project could not have yielded such fruitful outcomes.

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