Higher education financing in Japan: Trends and challenges

Futao Huang
Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University, 1-2-2 Kagamiyama, Higashi-Hiroshima 789-8512, Japan

ARTICLE INFO
Article history:
Received 29 June 2016
Received in revised form 27 December 2016
Accepted 28 December 2016

Keywords:
Financing mechanisms
Japanese higher education
Corporatization of national universities
Challenges
Market forces
Comparative education

ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to address the basic model of Japanese higher education financing mechanisms, the main changes that have occurred in these mechanisms, and their influences on higher education development. This analysis is based on previous academic studies, national statistics, and case studies of three different sectors since the early 2000s. The analysis begins with a brief review of earlier studies and a description of the research framework. Subsequently, the study outlines the main characteristics of Japan’s higher education and the key features of its financing mechanisms. In the following part, the study analyzes major changes that have occurred in Japanese higher education financing in recent years, and key factors that have affected these changes. Furthermore, it discusses the major influences and outcomes of these financing mechanisms on higher education development and institutional strategies. The final part summarizes and offers implications for research, practice and educational development.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction
Unlike North America and most European countries, since the end of WWII Japan has formed a diversified higher education system consisting of three different and distinct sectors of higher education institutions: national, local public, and private. Prior to the early 2000s significant differences existed between national, local public and private sectors, not only in their roles, functions and student composition, but also in their financing mechanisms. However, since the early 2000s, especially with the incorporation of national universities in April 2004, followed by a similar incorporation of public universities, radical changes have occurred in the relationship between the central government and national and local public universities. On the one hand, there has been a gradual and steady drop in the amount of government expenditure in both national and public sectors. On the other hand, the government has increased the amount of competitive funding, including both research project grants and special budgets for a variety of national projects or programs related to educational activities (Huang, 2010). As will be discussed in the following section, as the financing mechanisms have been restructured at a national level, since 2004 individual national and public university corporations have been granted more freedom and autonomy and asked to increase their own revenues by diversifying the channels through which they generate resources.

The purpose of this study is to address the basic model of Japanese higher education financing mechanisms, the main changes that have occurred in these mechanisms, and their influences on higher education development. This analysis is based on previous academic studies, national statistics, and case studies of three different sectors since the early 2000s. The analysis begins with a brief review of earlier studies and a description of the research framework. Subsequently, the study outlines the main characteristics of Japan’s higher education and the key features of its financing mechanisms. In the following part, the study analyzes major changes that have occurred in Japanese higher education financing in recent years, and key factors that have affected these changes. Furthermore, it discusses the major influences and outcomes of these financing mechanisms on higher education development and institutional strategies. The final part summarizes and offers implications for research, practice and educational development.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.12.010
0738-0593/© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
In Fig. 1, key characteristics include the basic structure of Japanese higher education, general frameworks of Japanese financing mechanisms, the origins and tradition of higher education, and the extent of higher education expansion. The main contextual factors considered include both global and domestic factors such as economic globalization, marketization of higher education, a drop in the 18-year-old population, corporatization of both national and public universities, and so forth.

3. Higher education in Japan and its financing mechanisms

3.1. Key characteristics of higher education

Contemporary Japanese higher education basically consists of three major types of institution: universities, junior colleges (Tanki Daigaku in Japanese), and colleges of technology. In some cases, specialized training colleges (Sensyu Gaikkou) are also considered as part of higher education. In addition, the number of students being officially enrolled in the Open University of Japan (changed from the University of Air in October 2007), and those pursuing their higher education learning through TV or radios in other regular universities and junior colleges are also included in the data regarding Japan's post-secondary education.

As shown in Table 1, as of 2015, excluding 3201 special training schools, there are 1254 higher education institutions in Japan, of which the private sector accounts for 77.5%. By institution type there are 779 universities, 346 junior colleges, and 57 colleges of technology. With regard to the proportion of individual types of institutions by sector, while the national sector provides the majority of colleges of technology (89.4%), in contrast the private sector constitutes the biggest share of both universities and junior colleges, at 76.7% and 94.8% respectively.

As indicated in Table 2, as of 2015, there are 2,860,210 students in total, including 249,474 students at graduate level, 2,716,134 students at undergraduate level in universities, junior colleges and colleges of technology, and 187,528 students in correspondence schools. The proportion of enrollments in the private sector constitutes 75.7% of the total. Furthermore, with an enrollment of 2,514,228 students, students at the undergraduate level make up the largest proportion. A closer look at percentages of students at different levels by type of institution reveals that the national sector represents the largest enrollment percentage of students studying at the graduate level and in colleges of technology, at 61.2% and 89.6% respectively. Conversely, private institutions represent the largest share of student enrollment in undergraduate universities and junior colleges, at 77.5% and 94.8% respectively.

Key characteristics of Japan’s higher education may be practically identified as follows.

First, by the early 2000s, on the one hand, the central government maintained strong regulatory control of the scale, budget, and organizational structures of each college and university. For example, until March 2004 when all national universities became national university corporations, faculty

---

3 A higher education institution that offers a unified five-year education (five years six months for mercantile marine studies) aimed at nurturing technical experts. It requires graduation from lower secondary schools or equivalent academic ability for admission. A minimum of 167 credits are required for graduation (147 credits for mercantile marine studies). Graduates are awarded the title of “Associate”.

4 A higher education institution that provides practical and technical learning and skills in a wide variety of disciplines such as medical care, technology, culture and general education, business, personal care and nutrition, education and welfare, fashion and home science, agriculture and much more. Graduates are conferred with “Certification”.

---
دریافت فوری
متن کامل مقاله

امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات