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The impact of mass and universal higher education on curriculum and instruction: case studies of China and Japan / Futao Huang

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Abstract

Based on case studies of China and Japan, this study undertakes comparative research on major aspects of university curriculum and instruction-teaching activities of academics, their role in curriculum development, and their perceptions of these activities—between a mass and a universal higher education system. Major findings from the APA (Academic Profession in Asia) surveys administered in the two countries in 2011–2012 with a similar questionnaire provide hard data. However, the study also explores other contextual factors and drivers which might have affected the teaching activities undertaken by academics, their involvement in curriculum development, and their views of relevant activities. The paper argues that, although differences can be found in some aspects of the curriculum and instruction and academics' participation in these activities during the shift from the mass to universal phase of higher education, seen from the two case studies, it is less clear that the differences show the impact of transforming from mass to universal education. The national

21.1.2025

contextual factors, especially the origins of higher education and ongoing national policies in both countries, appear to play a significant role in how current academics perceived the curriculum development and instruction, and their participation in these activities. More importantly, as fundamental changes do not necessarily occur in all aspects of the curriculum and instruction, as well as the academics' views across universal and mass higher education systems, Trow's research can only be partly applied to the analysis of the curriculum and instruction in both countries. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Huang, Futao, E-Mail: futao@hiroshima-u.ac.jp