Research on the Current Status of Faculty Development in Teacher Colleges and Departments
– Based on the Results of a Questionnaire Survey to Four-year Public/Private Universities –

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1. Purpose of research

I would like to clarify the following three matters as the aim of our research: first, the initiatives being taken to improve the qualifications of academic staff at public and private universities and colleges offering teacher-training courses; second, the organizations implementing such initiatives; and third, the characteristics, goals and issues of these initiatives.

Amid rapid changes in the social environment surrounding school education, teachers must deal with educational issues that are far more complicated than ever before. In other words, it has become necessary for teachers to also possess the ability to deal with them as well. To enable prospective teachers to learn the basics of handling such complicated issues, colleges and departments with the unique mission of teacher education have advocated that teacher training should be even more sophisticated, specialized and made practical. It is said that teachers, administrative staff and relevant organizations capable of guaranteeing the implementation of this kind of training are indispensable.

However, to ensure high-quality teacher training, what do teacher-training colleges and departments aim to achieve and how do they encourage individual teachers and administrative staff to improve their educational abilities and enhance such abilities for their institutions as a whole? How do they enable students to develop advanced skills and acquire advanced knowledge? The overall situation of related initiatives undertaken by these institutions and the challenges they face have not been fully explored yet. To elucidate these issues, our research group sought to clarify the actual situation of organizations and initiatives for the professional development of teachers and administrative staff at teacher-training colleges and departments by investigating the following three matters: 1. the principles of faculty development (FD) and staff development (SD) at institutions in Japan and elsewhere, 2. unique university organizations for related activities, and 3. various educational improvement programs being implemented.

In academic year 2013, we conducted a Questionnaire Survey on Faculty Development (FD) Initiatives at Teacher-training Colleges and Departments of 47 national universities offering teacher-training courses across Japan to clarify the actual situation of teacher-training colleges and departments. Results of the survey revealed the current status of organized FD activities at such colleges and departments.

First, the development of a basic policy and regulations for FD support had no direct relation with the positioning of organizations offering FD programs, but did affect the development of FD activities. Second, universities with a trans-departmental organization had an FD section within the organization to implement specific programs. Third, there are a variety of FD activities and organizations implementing FD activities. According to the survey results, the organizations that implement FD activities at teacher-training colleges and departments can be divided mainly into three types. This, however, is a broad classification; the types of organizations implementing FD activities were actually more diverse with each organization implementing varying support activities. These activities were also intended to enhance the quality of educational programs offered by the universities and to take the improvement of teacher education quality into account. The teacher-training colleges and departments were actively working on FD activities to meet specific needs in fields of specialization while implementing training sessions and course evaluations that were also implemented in other colleges and departments.

Based on these research results, we conducted a questionnaire survey on public and private universities and colleges offering teacher-training courses in academic year 2014.

2. Awareness of problems

In September 2005, the Central Council for Education, an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, published a report entitled "Graduate School Education in the New Age" Following the publication of this report, quality assurance in education and the reinforcement of systematic development of school curricula were mainly discussed. In this context, as a measure to ensure quality assurance in education, efforts to implement faculty development in graduate schools were made compulsory. In December 2008, the council defined the term *faculty development* as a general term for organizational efforts to improve course contents and teaching methods in a report entitled "Toward the Rebuilding of Baccalaureate Degree Program Education."

Guided by these government policies, universities vigorously engage in FD activities. In the meantime, previous studies pointed out a variety of issues, including the stagnation of FD activities during efforts to organize them, stereotyped content of FD activities and the disconnection between FD activities and the actual needs of teachers.

Reconsideration of whether it is appropriate to limit the scope of FD to instructional development is necessary when efforts are made to clarify these issues. Originally, the concept of FD was developed in the U.S. and introduced into Japan. In the U.S., the qualifications of professionals in fields of specialization have been guaranteed by independent and autonomous activities known as professional development (or PD for short). Based on this idea, the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD) defines faculty development as consisting of three major areas: faculty development, instructional development, and organizational development, or a combination of all three.

In Japan, Kayo Matsushita discussed in 2011 the POD's definition of faculty development[ii] and redefined it as an activity within the university by a faculty member or the faculty as a whole to develop their own teaching skills while engaging in individual and organizational educational improvement activities. Other than studies and investigations conducted by researchers, individual universities interpret FD differently. For example, Ehime University defines FD as the systematic efforts toward 1. improving teaching and courses, 2. improving curricula, and 3. developing and reforming organizations.

In this research, when we considered the current status and issues surrounding FD at universities offering teacher-training courses based on the understanding of FD concepts in Japan and beyond, we focused on the fact that university teachers cannot do business on their own and instead demonstrate their expertise only through employment despite being part of a classical profession like physicians or legal professionals.[iii] To promote collective self-learning activities intended to promote the qualities of university teachers as professionals, we investigated the principles of faculty development at universities, organizations for related activities, and various educational improvement programs being implemented. This was intended to clarify the actual situation of organizations and initiatives for the professional development of teachers and administrative staff at teacher-training colleges and departments.

3. Research method

(1) Selection of target schools for the survey

In academic year 2014, we conducted a questionnaire survey on public and private universities offering teacher training courses. We limited our selection to four-year universities among public and private universities and colleges with teacher-training course accreditation, in consideration of the current status of teacher training at universities and the characteristics of the four-year universities covered in the questionnaire survey conducted in the previous year. As a result, from among 52 public universities, we selected all 49 institutions with teacher-training courses. We also selected 121 private universities and colleges from among those with teacher-training courses. The selection was based on the following three viewpoints:

a. Viewpoint of the history of teacher training and education reform after World War II

b. Viewpoint of teacher-training organizations

c. Viewpoint of the number of accredited teacher-training courses

(2) Responses to the questionnaire survey

Our questionnaire survey covered 49 public universities offering teacher-training courses. Of them, 31 institutions responded to the questionnaire; the response rate was approximately 63 percent. We set up five questions in line with the aim of the survey. The responses received were all valid, and we analyze them using the Affinity Diagram technique, which is also known as the KJ Method. (The analysis results were also valid.) We also conducted the survey for 121 private universities and colleges offering teacher-training courses. Of them, 28 institutions responded, and the response rate was approximately 23 percent. We categorized the responses in line with the aim of the survey. (The analysis results served as reference data.)

4. Actual situation of faculty development at public universities

(1) Basic policy and regulations regarding faculty development (FD)

Of the 31 universities that responded to our questionnaire, 14 institutions had a basic policy and regulations regarding faculty development. 12 of them, or 40 percent of the total, had a basic policy and regulations for the institution as a whole, and two institutions, or 7 percent, had a basic policy and regulations for the department. On the whole, about 47 percent of the surveyed institutions had a clear faculty development policy. About 33 percent of the surveyed institutions did not have a clear policy for faculty development, but provided support for faculty development activities. Six

universities, or 20 percent of the total, had no basic policy and regulations regarding faculty development and did not engage in any faculty development activities.

(2) Faculty development support organizations

a. Types of support organizations

Of the 31 surveyed universities, 27 institutions, or about 87 percent of the total, had an organization supporting or related to faculty development and engaging in faculty development activities. 63 percent had a committee, and about 30 percent had a center. Approximately four percent had both a committee and a center. One university supported FD activities through an educational and learning support team established in collaboration with other universities.

b. Sizes of support organizations

All told, 27 universities responded to questions concerning support organizations. Of the 20 surveyed universities, two universities, or seven percent of the total, had a faculty development support organization consisting of 20 or more teachers and administrative staff. Twelve universities, or about 44 percent of the total, had a support organization composed of 10 or more but no more than 20 teachers and administrative staff. 13 universities, or about 48 percent of the total, had a support organization consisting of less than 10 teachers and administrative staff. We also investigated the members of the support organizations at the 27 surveyed universities. The support organizations at three universities included teachers, administrative staff and researchers, and those at 22 universities had teachers and administrative staff. Those at five universities consisted only of teachers. Looking at the status of employment of the teachers and administrative staff within the support organizations at the 27 universities, 15 universities had full-time teachers, and 10 universities had full-time administrative staff.

(3) Content of FD activities

a. FD activities carried out by the entire institution

The three main activities implemented by the support organizations at the 31 surveyed universities were as follows. The top activity, implemented by 77.4% of the universities, was the hosting of faculty development training sessions by lecturers from within the school and elsewhere. The second activity, implemented by 64.5% of the universities, was course evaluations, and the third activity, implemented by 61.3% of the universities, was the promotion of faculty development

activities for new teachers. In the meantime, it appeared that the support organizations implementing course evaluations hadn't implemented activities effectively leveraging the evaluation results, such as assessment and commendation, research presentations and training.

b. FD activities responding to globalization

Of the 31 surveyed universities, 15 institutions conducted faculty development activities in consideration of globalization. In light of globalization exemplified by an increasing number of international students and exchanges with foreign institutions, these institutions primarily engaged in: 1. dispatches of teachers abroad, 2. international exchange activities (which were implemented by 38.7% of the institutions), and 3. language training and international exchange support training (which were implemented by 19.4% of the institutions). The results of the questionnaire survey showed that although universities implemented faculty development activities, few of the activities were designed to respond to globalization. It was also revealed that some universities did not position their activities responding to globalization as faculty development activities.

c. Characteristic teacher education/faculty development activities

Of the 31 surveyed universities, 13 institutions described their faculty development systems and initiatives unique to universities offering teacher education, such as teacher training and in-service training. 8 universities replied that they implemented no particular initiatives.

5. Actual situation of faculty development at private universities and colleges

(1) Basic policy and regulations regarding faculty development (FD)

A total of 16 private universities and colleges had a basic policy and regulations for faculty development. All 16 of them, or 59.3 percent of the total, had a basic policy and regulations for the institution as a whole, and none of them had them for the teacher-training department. Approximately 26 percent of the colleges and departments supported faculty development activities despite lacking a clear faculty development policy. Four institutions, or 14.8 percent of the total, had no basic policy or regulations regarding faculty development and also did not engage in any faculty development activities.

(2) Faculty development support organizations

a. Types of support organizations

Of the 28 surveyed institutions, 26 engaged in faculty development activities through organizations established to support or related to faculty development (Two institutions gave no

response). We analyzed the types of organizations supporting faculty development. Approximately 73 percent of the surveyed institutions had a committee and about 23 percent had a center. Approximately 3.8 percent had both a committee and a center.

b. Scale of support organizations

Three institutions had a faculty development support organization consisting of 20 or more teachers and administrative staff. Thirteen institutions had a support organization composed of 10 or more but no more than 20 teachers and administrative staff. Ten institutions had a support organization consisting of less than 10 teachers and administrative staff. We also investigated the members of the support organizations at the 26 institutions. The support organization at one institution included teachers, administrative staff and researchers, and those at 23 institutions had teachers and administrative staff. Those at two institutions consisted only of teachers. Looking at the status of employment of the teachers and administrative staff within the support organizations at the 26 universities and colleges, 18 institutions had full-time teachers, and 16 institutions had full-time administrative staff.

(1) Content of FD activities

a. FD activities carried out by the entire institution

The three main activities implemented by the support organizations at the 28 universities were as follows. The top activity, implemented by 89% of the institutions, was course evaluations. The second activity, implemented by 75% of the institutions, was the hosting of faculty development training sessions by lecturers from within the institution and elsewhere. The third activity, implemented by 54 percent of the institutions, was exchange activities, such as the holding of open classes. Some of the surveyed institutions implementing course evaluations were found to be leveraging the course evaluation results: 21.4 percent conducted training based on the results, 17.9 percent engaged in assessment and commendation, and 14.3 percent held research presentation sessions using the results. Eight of the surveyed institutions, or 28.6 percent of the total, promoted faculty development activities in collaboration with the staff development (SD) section.

b. FD activities responding to globalization

Of the 28 surveyed institutions, 16 institutions conducted faculty development activities in consideration of globalization. In light of globalization exemplified by an increasing number of international students and exchanges with foreign institutions, these institutions primarily engaged

in: 1. dispatches of teachers abroad, 2. international exchange activities (which were implemented by 28.6% of the institutions), and 3. Language training and international exchange support training (which were implemented by 25.0% of the institutions). These faculty development activities responding to globalization had two characteristics. First, many of the institutions dispatching teachers abroad and engaging in international exchange activities promoted exchange activities for faculty development using their foreign partner institutions. Second, many institutions provided their teachers with language training and international exchange support training to increase the number of international students and promote exchanges with foreign institutions.

  c. Characteristic teacher education/faculty development activities

  Of the 28 surveyed institutions, 16 institutions filled in the column asking them to describe their initiatives for faculty development systems and programs unique to higher education institutions offering teacher education (e.g., teacher training and in-service training). Eight of these institutions noted they had not implemented any particular initiatives. We divided the initiatives highlighted by the other eight institutions into three types: training session type, workshop type and regional collaboration type. While the surveyed institutions had not yet actively implemented characteristic teacher education/faculty development activities, it appeared that they had been looking for ways to develop various types of faculty development activities under teacher education themes. When private institutions establish graduate schools for teacher education or strengthen their teacher certificate courses in the future, they are considered to be seeking to improve the abilities of teachers through teacher-training courses and ensuring the quality of such courses by implementing characteristic teacher education/faculty development activities.

6. Conclusion – Actual situation of faculty development activities at public and private universities and colleges and related issues

  (1) Actual situation of faculty development activities at public universities and related issues

  Approximately 80 percent of the 31 public universities that responded to our faculty development questionnaire had implemented faculty development activities. More than half of them had a clear policy or regulations. The most popular form of faculty development support organizations was committees, and their sizes varied significantly by university. Analysis of faculty development activities at the universities indicated that such activities were basically intended to achieve instructional improvement and quality assurance for the university as a whole.

Replies from the surveyed universities clarified four issues facing the implementation of faculty development activities. First, since many public universities were small, they did not have a system to offer their own specialized faculty development training. Second, although many universities had implemented faculty development activities, only a small number of people participated and therefore the activities lacked substance. Third, some universities could hardly offer any faculty development programs involving students or those for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. Fourth, few universities had the know-how to implement faculty development training suitable for their respective sizes and characteristics.

Of the 31 surveyed universities, 15 institutions had implemented faculty development activities responding to globalization, and seven institutions had implemented faculty development activities in consideration of teacher education. This result indicated that the surveyed universities were more active in responding to globalization than they were in considering teacher education. It is considered necessary for public universities offering teacher-training courses to plan and implement characteristic faculty development programs related to teacher education when they foster teaching professionals capable of remaining relevant in local communities and meeting the needs of those communities.

(2) Actual situation of faculty development activities at private universities and colleges and related issues

Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, we summarized the faculty development principles, support organizations and challenges at private universities and colleges as follows. First of all, several institutions had no regulations concerning faculty development. We believe an additional survey will be necessary to clarify how they plan faculty development activities and under what principles when they promote and implement such activities.

Next, it was unclear what types and sizes of support organizations were appropriate for the professional development of teachers and administrative staff, and the establishment of such organizations was an issue. While the sizes of the support organizations were proportional to the sizes of the institutions, we cannot say for sure that there were clear correlations between them.

Lastly, there was a problem with bipolarization of faculty development activities at large institutions and those at small institutions. The surveyed universities had implemented certain levels of faculty development activities responding to globalization and characteristic teacher

education/faculty development activities. Large institutions, in particular, promoted various types of activities. However, small provincial institutions or single-faculty institutions did not implement faculty development activities responding to globalization or characteristic teacher education/faculty development activities. The gap may widen as faculty development activities build up momentum in the future.

Institutions face several issues when it comes to implementing faculty development activities. Common issues highlighted by multiple institutions are as follows:

First, the number of participants in faculty development activities was small. Second, the institutions did not know how to connect the results of training sessions and course evaluations to future activities. Third, the verification of faculty development activities and the evaluation of their achievements were both insufficient. Fourth, collaboration between officials involved in faculty development and those in staff development was necessary.

Acknowledgements

References

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[i] In view of the importance of systematic development of school curricula, it is necessary to systematically examine the objectives and content of graduate school curricula and teaching methods and implement faculty development (FD) programs while ensuring that the characteristics of educational and research programs, creativity and other features of the graduate schools will not be undermined. Accordingly, it is appropriate to include in the Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools the regulations obliging universities to implement systematic training and research programs to improve classes, research guidance and other considerations.

[ii] POD divides the area of faculty development into three areas: faculty development, instructional development and organizational development, and considers the promotion of the development of these areas through programs as faculty development.

[iii] Takashi Hata (2011). *Daigaku kyoin no noryoku kaihatsu o meguru kadai* [Issues Facing Faculty Development of University Teachers]. Nagoya Journal of Higher Education (in Japanese) Vol. 11. p. 295.