Japanese academia for the scholarly development of foreign early career researchers

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Background of the project

- Experience as an **international student** and **teaching staff overseas**
- Interested in **teaching and learning** in international settings
- Rapid **increase** of foreign/international ECRs – "**Tokenisation**" (Brotherhood, Hammond, & Kim, 2019)
- **Lack** of sound & healthy **relationships**
- **Emic** – **etic** perspectives

Background of the project

■ Some perspectives of **sociology of education**:

☐ **61% of lecturer/assistant professors** were positive about their posts (米澤 & 石田, 2012)

☐ Foreign ECRs' experience of **tokenisation**/**marginalisation** (Brotherhood, Hammond, & Kim, 2019)

   ✓ "いくら仕事を頑張っても、なんとなく外人扱いされている感じがします。"

   ✓ "I hope to have more chances regarding to positions, competitive research funds and career promotions for the foreigner researchers. I think the diversity will contributes to the development."

   ✓ "日本の研究機関は長年、日本優位の固定概念をもっていて、欧米でなければ日本より劣ると思い込んでいる。特に人文科学系はこの傾向が強い。これを捨てないと向上できないと思う。"

   ✓ "Communication between foreigners and Japanese researcher in the same lab is not very active. One reason may be language and another may be Japanese are little shy to share their research."

Increase of foreign academics

出典：広島大学高等教育研究開発センター／総務省統計局
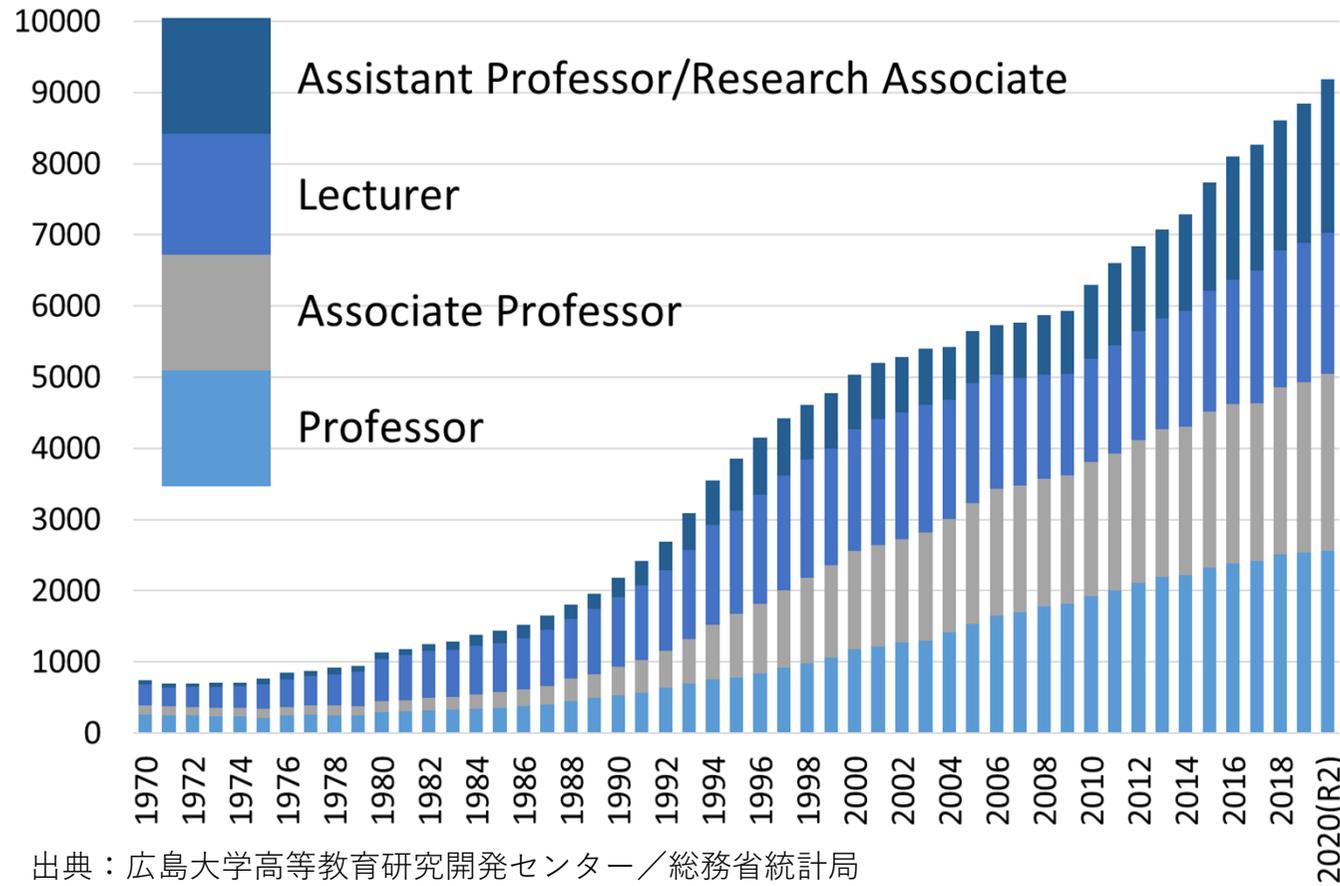
The Project

- **Professional development** of foreign ECRs
  - ☐ Contribute to **better scholarly communities**
  - ☐ Sound SCs for life-long **career development**
- Survey & Interview
  - ☐ **ECRs**: either less than 8 years since Ph.D, or 39 years old or younger without Ph.D. (JSPS)
  - ☐ **300+** survey responses
  - ☐ Many potential **interview informants**

Conceptual framework:
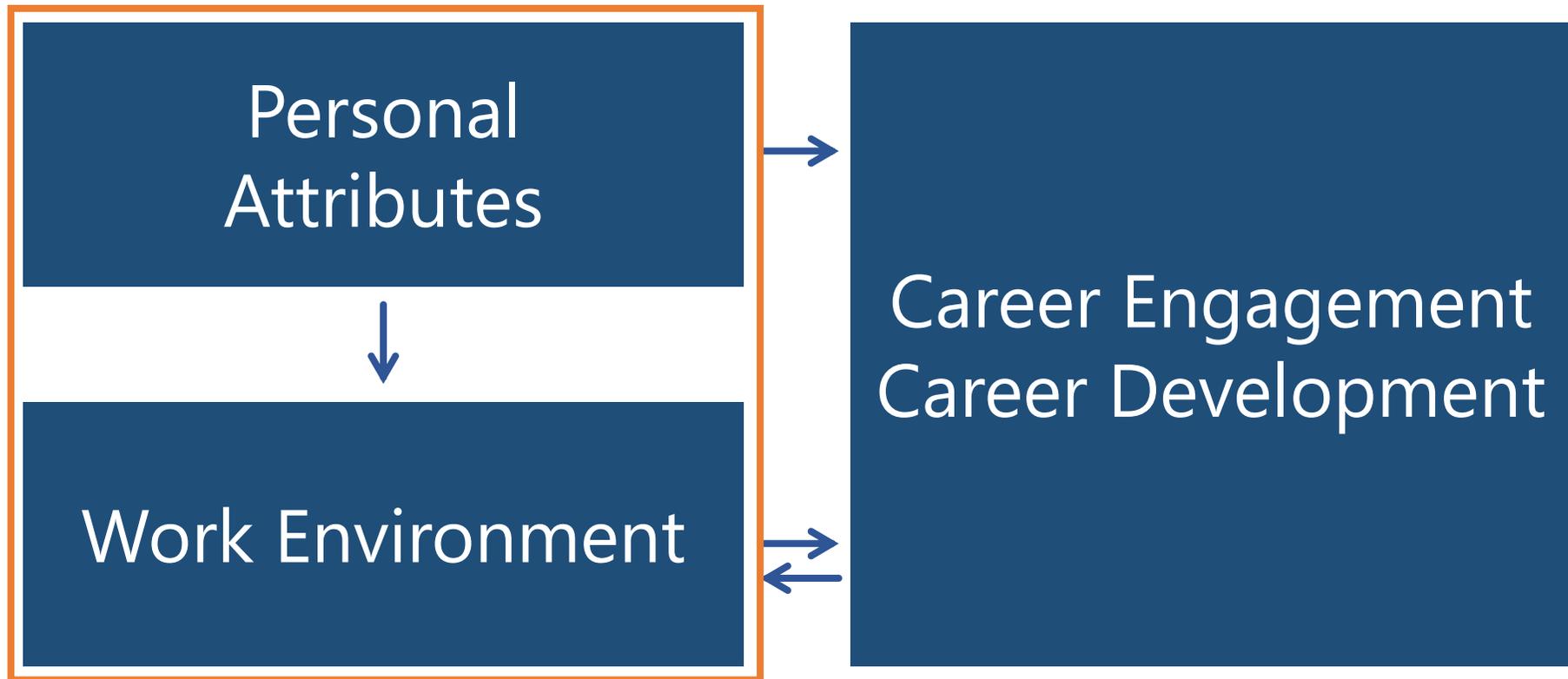
Preliminary Findings

- **Survey** responses
- Foreign ECRs' experience
  - **Work Environment** (Houston et al., 2006) *I am willing to put in a great deal of effort in order to help my institution(s) be successful.*
  - **Sense of Belonging** (Rubin, et al., 2019) *I feel accepted by my co-workers.*
  - **Work Stress** (Elo et al., 2003)
- **Clustering** based on **participants' response patterns** (model-based clustering; R)
  - Three unique clusters

Preliminary Findings

Cluster Profiles
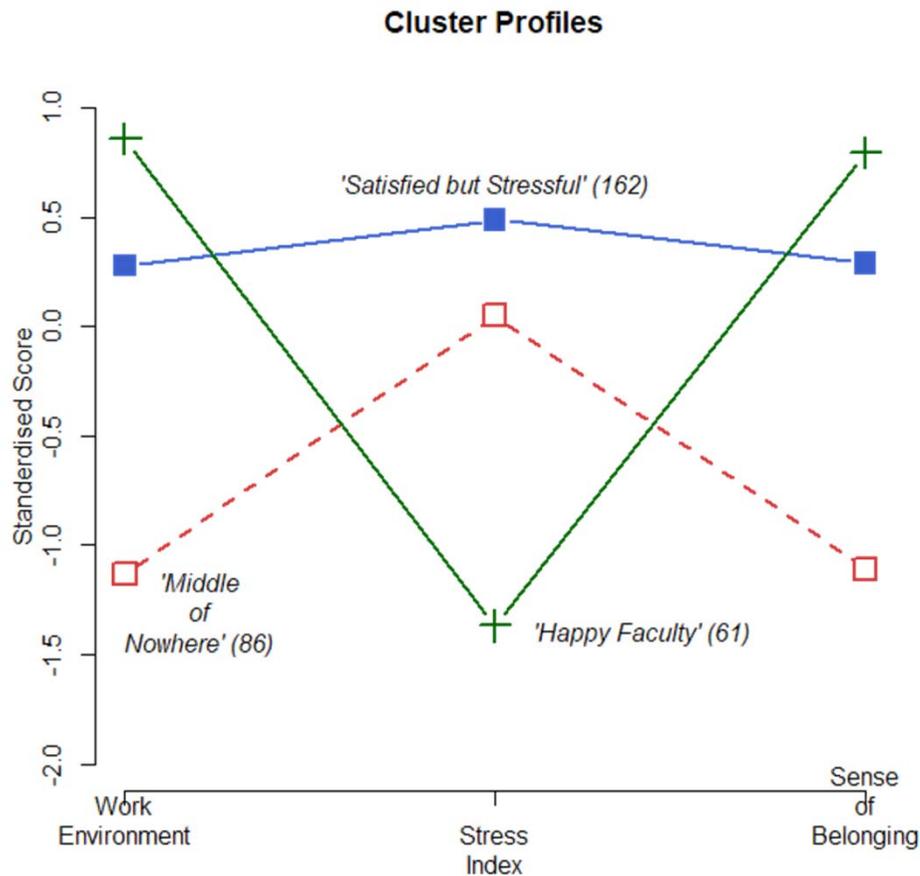
- □ **'Satisfied but Stressful'**
  - Evaluate their workplace positively but feel stressful
- □ **'Middle of Nowhere'**
  - Evaluate their workplace poorly and feel stressful
- □ **'Happy Faculty'**
  - Evaluate their workplace positively and feel little stress

Who are they?

- No clear patterns concerning their **gender**, **institution types** (National, Private & Public) & **degree-awarded countries**.

- Some tendencies concerning academic **ranks**, **age**, **contract** & Japanese **language** competence.

Rank * Work experience cluster

Cluster	Professor	Associate Professor	Lecturer	Assistant Professor	Postdoctoral researcher	
'Satisfied but stressful'	0	16	46	77	13	**162**
'Middle of Nowhere'	1	7 (x2)	16 (x3)	52 (X1.5)	7	**86**
'Happy Faculty'	2	10	12	32	5	**61**
	3	**33**	**74**	**161**	**25**	**309**

Including fixed-term position, excluding small groups (e.g., "Junior researcher")

Similar patterns were found on ECRs' age and contract.

Language skill * cluster

Cluster	Native speaker (level)	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5	<N5
'Satisfied but stressful'	43	57	16	18	7	4	6
'Middle of nowhere'	10	29	12	14	6	4	3
'Happy Faculty'	10	19	10	2	4	6	4
	63	**105**	**38**	**34**	**17**	**14**	**13**

x4 (arrow pointing up from 10 in Native speaker column)
x2 (arrow pointing up from 29 in N1 column)

JLPT: Japanese-Language Proficiency Test

Things to consider:

- Stress levels: not "**the lower the better**"?
- Those who are **satisfied stay**—Those who are disappointed will leave
  - **??** "Generally happy with their position" ??
- Language barrier (Huang, 2018): "**Simple Japanese**" & "**Simple English**"
- **Lack** of **mentoring** framework & system (Boeren et al., 2015)

Our on-going projects

Sakurai, Y

- Development of foreign ECRs in Japan and their workplace environment
- Japanese ECRs with long-term overseas experiences (e.g. Gaitanidis & Shao-Kobayashi, 2020)

Mason, S

- A study of the use of Academic Social Networks by researchers in Japan
- Experiences navigating doctoral education and motherhood

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