

## Editorial

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# Memorial Essay for Professor Naoto Yamauchi

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## 1 As a Pioneer in Nonprofit Research in Japan

Many scholars and practitioners recognize that Professor Naoto Yamauchi has made significant contributions to practice, research, education, and the global academic community. For example, in 1997, he published a monograph entitled *The Nonprofit Economy*, which has become an important reference work in Japan.

Professor Yamauchi was born in Ehime, Japan, on June 18, 1955. After studying macroeconomics at Osaka University, he worked at the Economic Planning Agency. He advanced his education at the London School of Economics and Political Science, where he earned his M.Sc. degree. Following his return to Japan, he researched policies and produced many studies, including the *Product Liability Law and the Economic White Paper*. Notably, he was the first in Japan to address philanthropy and donation taxation as a form of corporate performance sharing in a government document (Yamauchi 2022).

In April 1992, I was seconded to Osaka University by the government for two years. Subsequently, Osaka University decided to establish a new graduate school and was looking for faculty members, so he was hired. This was the Osaka School of International Public Policy, where he dedicated himself to research and education until his retirement.

In 1995, he participated in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector International Comparison Project led by Lester Salamon, which drew attention from researchers regarding NPOs and volunteering in the aftermath of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in Japan. In 1997, he took a sabbatical at Yale University's

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Program on Nonprofit Organizations (PONPO) and attended the Association of Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) for the first time.

Since then, Professor Yamauchi has attended ARNOVA's annual conference almost every year, built an international network of researchers, participated in many international comparative studies, and written numerous papers that hold significant value for academic and practical applications with various international colleagues.

## 2 As a Researcher and Educator in Managing Projects

Since accepting the first student in 1993 in the master's program and 1996 in the doctoral program, he has admitted 55 doctoral students and awarded Ph.D. degrees to 38 of them. He also served as an associate supervisor for 33 doctoral students. Additionally, by the time he retired in March 2022, he had supported 120 master's students and served as an associate advisor for 13 master's students. In total, he guided over 220 graduate students. Meanwhile, his undergraduate seminar was also popular, and I recall that he guided over 20 students each year, contributing to the development of countless students who have gone on to make significant contributions to society.

Professor Yamauchi worked on numerous projects in Japan and abroad every day. He also offered many of these projects as practical research opportunities for doctoral students. The authors of this article were similarly engaged in various research and survey projects. For instance, one of his early students, Yoshiho Matsunaga, worked on creating the Japanese Satellite National Account for the third sector. This initiative was part of Professor Salamon's broader effort to enable international comparisons of the third sector. Following his passing, the collection of international comparative data on the nonprofit sector was paused. Yet, from Professor Yamauchi's proposal for this session, it is clear that he remained committed to the importance of resuming such efforts.

One of the joint papers, based on the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, explored government failure theory and was published in *Voluntas* (Matsunaga et al. 2010). The core of government failure theory is the concept of demand heterogeneity in quasi-public goods. At ARNOVA 2004, Professor Yamauchi presented a paper on this topic, examining why the size of the nonprofit sector varies by locality. He remained hopeful that internationally comparable data on the nonprofit sector would eventually return.

Numerous other projects existed, including research on social capital conducted by the Cabinet Office in Japan and studies on public-private partnerships carried out by the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry (RIETI) in Japan. Professor Yamauchi frequently chaired research projects initiated by the central government. In particular, government research on social capital and NPOs preceded that of the private sector, significantly influencing subsequent research in Japan. He also organized graduate students to participate as assistants or members in these projects, which involved data analysis from questionnaire surveys and international interview studies.

Additionally, he diligently disseminated the research findings obtained with his students. For instance, Yu Ishida was invited to engage in the public-private partnership research project at RIETI, and the results were published in the inaugural issue of the Nonprofit Policy Forum (Okuyama et al. 2010). Ienori Tatefuku participated in research on Japanese well-being indicators, which was presented at the Cabinet Office of the Japanese Government (Matsushima et al. 2013).

Before we became his Ph.D. students, everyone had distinct areas of focus. Professor Yamauchi's research on policy evaluation and civil society attracted students from various backgrounds. The seminar included bureaucrats, local government officials, corporate employees, NPO members, international students, and full-time students representing a diverse range of specialized fields, such as economic growth, educational evaluation, public choice, and health economics.

### **3 As the President and Secretariat of the Associations Who Empowers Members**

During our time as graduate students and afterward, Professor Yamauchi's office also served as the headquarters for the Japan NPO Research Association (JANPORA), so there were always two or three staff members collaborating with us. Just before his retirement, he founded a new academic society, the Japan Society of Social Relations, and subsequently acted as its secretariat from his private home. The volume of activity and management of these two societies would not have been possible without Professor Yamauchi.

#### **3.1 Japan NPO Research Association (JANPORA)**

On March 20, 1999, JANPORA was founded at a conference held at Keio University. The name was simply decided to be the Japan NPO Research Association. Annual

conferences were generally held at universities in the Tokyo and Osaka areas, attracting significant participation.

Since the society was established in March 1999, he has been in charge of its secretariat. For many years, he served as a committee member for the annual research conference, collaborating with the staff to manage nearly all aspects of the event. We have vivid memories of him driving a van filled with documents, supplies, and staff from Osaka to Tokyo and other cities in preparation for the conferences.

In addition to organizing the conference, he actively created and distributed a 20-page quarterly newsletter to all members, showcasing his commitment to member services. He also coordinated monthly study groups and retreat seminars during long vacations, and established a listserv for members to share information about their research, practice events, and new publications. At that time, it was uncommon for an academic society to have a mailing list.

From 2006 to 2011, he served as JANPORA president for three consecutive terms, totaling six years. During this time, the society gradually expanded, reaching a peak of 1,200 members. Along with growing interest in NPOs, his contributions to the academic society and its members fostered the growth of the organization.

### **3.2 Japan Association of Social Relations (JASR)**

Professor Naoto Yamauchi established a new academic society, the Japan Association of Social Relations (JASR), in September 2020, just before his retirement from the Osaka University Graduate School of International Public Policy (OSIPP) in March 2021. JASR was founded with 190 members, bringing together researchers and practitioners from various fields, focusing on Social Capital, Civil Society, and Policy Evaluation as its three core research areas.

Remarkably, he reached out to nearly all 190 founding members, either via email or in person, and took the initiative to develop the organization's administrative structure. Furthermore, many of the materials and tools currently used by the secretariat and in managing the association were created by him and continue to be utilized today.

He had a strong passion for fostering young researchers at JASR since its inception. He not only consulted and provided guidance on research but also created a platform for learning and reporting by hosting monthly research meetings, publishing journals, and organizing an annual conference. At one point, the secretary-general suggested that we should stop holding monthly research meetings because preparing for them was too much work. His response was, of course, "No," a memory now fondly recalled.

JASR has grown to include over 300 members and continues its activities. Not only do the board members, but many of the other members share his passion for fostering young researchers. He was also a top-notch practitioner, as evidenced by the functioning of Social Capital, one of his research themes and a key area of research for JASR.

## 4 Gratitude and Farewell

As the night grew late, Professor Yamauchi brought a bottle of wine and glasses to the office for us graduate students to enjoy together. He was a warm and humorous person with a vast social network. He truly enjoyed working with students and organizing social activities. He would take many students wherever he went in his eight-seater van. Thanks to his mentoring, our research journey continues as his van travels to and from anywhere and everywhere. The authors obtained their Ph.D. degrees under Professor Yamauchi and are currently teaching at universities and conducting research.

He was an exceptional researcher and educator, with his educational efforts extending beyond Osaka University. Many of us may have witnessed him actively engaging with young researchers at various academic conferences, consulting with them, and inviting them to take part in his research projects. In Japan, it is notable how many nonprofit sector scholars have recounted being approached by him early in their careers. He also played a vital role in connecting numerous researchers with opportunities to broaden their activities from domestic academic societies to international ones. He would have wanted to continue teaching young researchers after June 2024, when he passed away. It is profoundly regrettable for those of us who were his students that this vision was abruptly cut short.

We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to honor and share the lasting legacy and contributions of Professor Naoto Yamauchi to research, education, and the global academic community.

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