Historical Development of the Asia-Pacific Association on Problem-Based Learning in Health Sciences (APA-PHS) and the Subsequent Formation of Asia-Pacific Joint Conference on Problem-Based Learning (APJC-PBL)

Si Mui Sim¹ & Christina Phoay Lay Tan²

The 1st Asia-Pacific Conference on Problem-Based Learning, (APC-PBL, generic) was held in Hong Kong in 1999. In the following year, the National University of Singapore organised the 1st ASEAN Conference on PBL in Health Sciences. The conference was well attended by academics and practitioners from the Asia-Pacific region and a pro-tem committee was set up to form an Asia-Pacific Association for PBL in Health Sciences. Consequently, the following conference was renamed the 2nd Asia-Pacific Conference for PBL in Health Sciences (APC-PHS), held in 2001 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. At the 3rd APC-PHS, held in Taipei, Taiwan (2002), it was decided to hold the Association Conference biennially. After several attempts, the Association was finally registered in Malaysia in 2003, as the Asia-Pacific Association on PBL in Health Sciences (APA-PHS). The first “official” Executive Committee (2004-06), was formalised at the formal inaugural at the 4th APC-PHS held in Manila, Philippines (2004). Since then, biennial conferences have been held in Surabaya, Indonesia (2006) and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2008). At the 2008 meeting, another milestone in the journey of PBL in the Asia-Pacific region was reached: the proposed merger of the two PBL conferences, i.e., APC-PBL and APC-PHS, was formally agreed. The 1st Asia-Pacific Joint Conference on PBL (APJC-PBL) was held in Taipei, Taiwan (2010), followed by Shanghai, China (2012) and Phuket, Thailand (2014). This paper documented the journey of APA-PHS in aiming to strive for excellence in innovative education for health-science professionals in the Asia-Pacific region with a special emphasis on PBL philosophy.

Key words: problem-based learning; Asia-Pacific association; health sciences; PBL joint conferences; APA-PHS.

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Rationale and background

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) was introduced more than 40 years ago in North America as an educational philosophy for instilling ideals of adult learning, life-long learning, self-directed learning and collaborative learning in certain professional schools[1]. Since then, it has increasingly been incorporated into academic curricula, especially in health science disciplines, including medicine, dentistry, nursing, occupational health, physiotherapy, and other similar professions, across North America and Europe during the last three decades.

An inevitable worldwide reform of education in health sciences is evident. However, the majority of the academic and professional institutes in health sciences in the Asia-Pacific region remain deeply attached to the traditional curriculum, imported from the West about a century ago. This traditional curriculum, despite regular remedial modifications over the past century, remains conceptually unaltered. It is still mostly based on didactic teaching and rote learning.

Adoption of the PBL concept in medical education and the training of related health science professionals has been attempted in a number of institutes in this region with encouraging results[2]. Theoretically, it should be possible for PBL to flourish in Asian countries. However, to overcome the conservative barrier and resistance to innovative change in education in health sciences, such as PBL, and to effectively incorporate PBL in new curricula, there is a need for a supportive forum to educate the academic public on the merits of PBL and its limitations. There is also a need to learn from others who have successfully implemented PBL, whether in the Asia-Pacific region or from other parts of the world. Furthermore, there is a need to research on the value of PBL within the context of the development of economics, culture and politics among the Asia-Pacific countries. It was against such a backdrop that the thought of setting up a supportive forum for academics with a shared vision in education in the Asia-Pacific regions to discuss and exchange ideas or research findings was conceived[3].

Initiation (1999-2000)

The first Asia-Pacific conference on PBL (which was generic, and not just for health sciences) was held in Hong Kong in December 1999. Following that conference, the idea for the formation of an association for promoting PBL among the academics and practitioners in health sciences was mooted. At that time, the PBL Committee of the Faculty of Medicine at the National University of Singapore (NUS) had just implemented a new medical curriculum with a hybrid-PBL model. Thus, together with the Faculty of Dentistry and the Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning, this PBL committee took the initiative of organizing the 1st ASEAN Conference on PBL in Health Sciences during the first year of the millennium (November 2000, Table 1). ASEAN stands for Association of South East Asian Nations, and consists of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. However, it turned out that this first conference of PBL for health sciences was well attended by more than a hundred academics and practitioners from 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, which also include Australia, China, Korea, India, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Taiwan. Therefore the proposal to form the Asia-Pacific Association for PBL in Health Sciences (APA-PHS) was made with the intention to provide an avenue for a more organised forum for the institutes of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region to collectively share their viewpoints.
Historical Development of APA-PHS

and experience on the application of PBL in health sciences on a regular basis.

Inauguration meeting and Pre-registration period

The inaugural meeting (before registration) of APA-PHS was held in conjunction with the 1st ASEAN Conference on PBL in Health Sciences at NUS in the afternoon of 21 November 2000. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Matthew Gwee, Chair of the PBL Committee of the Faculty of Medicine at NUS. The formation proposal was drafted with the help of Dr. David Kwan (Canada), who was (and still is) one of the international advisors to the then fledgling association and an advert champion for the cause of PBL in this region. General support for the principle in the official formation of APA-PHS was determined from all participants. Passing that, an election was held for establishing the new Executive Committee (pro-tem committee) who would subsequently organise the office of APA-PHS, including its registration as an association. Dr. Rethy Chhem (Singapore) was elected as the President of the pro-tem committee, with Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia) as the President-Elect and Dr. Grace Ong (Singapore) as the Honorary Secretary (Appendix 1). Some of the activities suggested at this inaugural meeting included (1) circulation of an APA-PHS newsletter, (2) formation of an APA-PHS website and discussion board, and (3) formation of research groups (Minutes of the inaugural meeting on 21 Nov 2000). A list of representatives from 13 countries (Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand) besides Singapore was obtained to facilitate networking and communication between the committee and the various national bodies of PBL practitioners in this region. Dr. Susan Elliot (Australia) suggested that the Association should evaluate the educational effects of PBL in the region and this could be carried out by one of the functional committees appointed by the Association.

During the ensuing year, the pro-tem committee met several times and the main business discussed was on the place to register the Association. After approaching several national representatives regarding the above, it was finally decided to register in Malaysia. The main condition imposed by the Registrar of Societies, Malaysia is that both the Secretary and Treasurer have to be Malaysian citizens residing in Malaysia.
Registration of APA-PHS

Due to unforeseen circumstances, however, it took two years to formally register this international association with the Registrar of Societies, Malaysia in January 2003. The Association was officially registered as “Asia-Pacific Association on PBL in Health Sciences (APA-PHS), Malaysia”. The Association aims to strive for excellence in innovative education for health science professionals in the Asia-Pacific region with a special emphasis on PBL philosophy. The mission statements of the Association are:

- We will dedicate ourselves to achieving the vision of APA-PHS via cooperation and collaboration among members of various academic and professional institutes.
- We will facilitate regional collaboration among academic and professional institutes in health sciences by providing a forum conducive for technical and information sharing on PBL among members.
- We will develop and research innovative educational concepts in implementing PBL strategies suitable for Asia-Pacific region and in keeping with the global standard for better health care delivery.
- We will help sponsor the exchange of knowledge and experience on PBL via conferences, symposia and workshops and to encourage information sharing via publications.

A logo for the Association (Figure 1) was designed by Dr. Bambang Prijambodo (Indonesia) and his team at Airlangga University. A description and explanation of the logo for APA-PHS is as follows:

1. The circle is a symbol showing unity and solidarity among the member countries of this Association.
2. The open book and the pen symbolise an “always-learning” or a “life-long learner” attitude that underpins the philosophy of problem-based learning.
3. The wings on the pen symbolise the spirit of the Association, aspiring to rise to the highest standard attainable.
4. The Asia-Pacific Region is represented by the map on the open book.
5. The 15 founding member countries are represented by the number of leaves in the open book (7 leaves on the left and 8 leaves on the right of the book).
6. The Association was founded in the year 2000 and in the 11th month (i.e. November), represented by the total number of feathers on the wings (5 feathers on the left wing and 6 on the right wing).
7. Blue is the colour for wisdom; yellow the colour for the highest degree or standard (as for the Chinese Emperor), green the colour for continual growing, and black the colour for certainty.

As with most academic or professional associations, there are four categories of membership for APA-PHS: (1) Institutional...
members, (2) Corporate members, (3) Ordinary Members, and (4) Student members. Only ordinary members are entitled to vote and be voted. The President, Vice-President, immediate Past President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and five elected Country Representatives comprise the Executive Committee. The term of service for the Executive Committee is two years. The Council Members consist of the Executive Committee members and all Country Representatives. The list of past Executive Committees is given in Appendix 1.

At the initial stage, the primary activities of the Association were to organise PBL workshops and conferences (Table 1) for enhancing a correct understanding of PBL philosophy and for faculty development.

**Asia-Pacific Conferences on PBL in Health Sciences (2001-2008)**

As a result of the large representation of countries from Asia-Pacific regions who attended the inaugural meeting in Singapore, the following conference was renamed the 2nd Asia-Pacific (instead of ASEAN) Conference on PBL in Health Sciences, and it was held in October 2001 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (Table 1). At this meeting, the Association officially acknowledged Dr Chhem as the founding president of APA-PHS (Minutes of the Business Meeting on 30 Oct 2001). A second pro-tem committee of APA-PHS was elected with Dr. Nor Azila M.A. (Malaysia) as the President and Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan) as the President Elect (Appendix 1). The 3rd Asia-Pacific Conference on PBL in Health Sciences (APC-PHS) was held in November 2002 in Taipei, Taiwan. It was at this meeting that it was decided that our Association Conference on PBL in Health Sciences would be held once in two years. As the Association was still not registered at this stage, the 3rd Pro-tem committee was elected to continue the oversight of the Association matters (Appendix 1). The first “official” Executive Committee (2004-06, Figure 2), was formalised at the formal inaugural at the 4th APC-PHS held in Manila, Philippines (2004). Since then, biennial APC-PHS conferences have been held in Surabaya, Indonesia (2006) and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2008), during which the Biennial General Meeting for the Association was also conducted each time. Although the proposed 2008 APC-PHS in Japan did not get off the ground, and was substituted by Kuala Lumpur instead, Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan) has always been an ardent supporter of the Association activities.

**Asia-Pacific Joint Conferences on PBL (2010-2016)**

While the academics and professionals in the health sciences worked hard to establish its Asia-Pacific Association on PBL in Health Sciences (APA-PHS), the other group (“generic PBL”) continued in parallel with their activities of organising conferences on PBL for nearly a decade (1999-2008), with the effort of an International Advisory Board (IAB) chaired by Dr. Tadahiko Kozu. This is described further by Dr. Kozu in a separate article in this Special Issue. At the 2008 meeting in Kuala Lumpur, another milestone in the journey of PBL in the Asia-Pacific region was reached: the proposed merge of the two PBL conferences, i.e., APC-PBL and APC-PHS, was formally agreed (Figure 3). Suffice to say, this was a significant step taken by the two parallel groups to join force in organising PBL conferences in this region (Table 2). One of the main reasons for this merger was to reduce duplication of efforts and resources as both these biennial PBL conferences were likely catering for the same interested parties. Another reason was to foster a better exchange of information and ideas on PBL between the health
Figure 2. The first “official” Executive Committee of APA-PHS (2004-06) met in Manila, Philippines, 24 Sep 2004.

Figure 3. The out-going Executive Committee of APA-PHS (2006-08; from the left: Debra Sim, Nancy Rehatta; and from the right: Tsann-Long Hwang, David Kwan, Marita Reyes, Osamu Matsuo) met with Dr. Tadahiko Kozu (the IAB Chair of APC-PBL, 3rd from the left) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 Oct 2008, to discuss the merger of the two PBL conferences.
Historical Development of APA-PHS

Although the idea for this merger was first discussed officially at the 2006 meeting in Surabaya, it was not until after some lengthy internal discussions within the Executive Committee of APA-PHS and external communications between Dr. Bambang (APA-PHS President) and Dr. Kozu (IAB Chairman of the APC-PBL) that an agreement was finally reached. Following the 2008 meeting, a new IAB for the joint PBL conference was formed, which included some of the APA-PHS Executive Committee members. Dr. Kwan, the then Vice-President and also Acting President of APA-PHS (Dr. Rogayah, the President, was on medical leave) carried out most of the follow-up communication with Dr. Kozu to ensure a smooth transition in this merger process. As a result of their efforts, the 1st Asia-Pacific Joint Conference on PBL (APJC-PBL) was successfully held in Taipei, Taiwan (2010), and Dr. Kuo-Inn Tsou should be congratulated for her courageous effort in taking up that challenge. This was followed by the 2nd APJC-PBL in Shanghai, China (2012) and the 3rd one in Phuket, Thailand (2014), under the skillful leadership of Dr. Rui-Zhe Qian and Dr. Arnuparp Lekhakula, respectively, and with the support of their respective medical schools. The 4th and current joint conference will be held in October this year (2016) in Daegu, Korea, led by Dr. Bong-Hyung Chang.

Activities to promote PBL among academics and professionals in Asia-Pacific regions – successes and failures

In most of the conferences conducted either by APA-PHS alone (Table 1) or in conjunction with APC-PBL (Table 2), there have been workshops (often hands-on) to help academics and professionals in this region to acquire or improve their knowledge and skills in the various aspects of PBL, such as PBL case design, PBL facilitation, PBL assessment, PBL curriculum development and management. In recent years, inter-professional learning (IPL) and team-based learning (TBL) have also been included as approaches that can complement PBL. Reports on the progress of PBL implementation in the various countries in this region have often been included, more so in the early years than now. During such sessions, selected country representatives gave a 15-20 minute reports on the kind of challenges and opportunities faced by them in their respective countries. Innovative ideas on how each attempted to overcome some of these challenges and their findings were also reported. Since the 2nd APJC-PBL in Shanghai (2012), debates have been added to liven up the discussion at the conference, and in the last APJC-PBL in Phuket (2014), a PBL clinic

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Table 2. Past and Present Asia-Pacific Joint Conferences on Problem-Based Learning (APJC-PBL), 2010-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Organizing institution</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2010 Oct</td>
<td>Taipei, Taiwan</td>
<td>Fu Jen Catholic University</td>
<td>Outcome, Outlook, Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2012 Oct</td>
<td>Shanghai, China</td>
<td>Shanghai Medical College, Fudan University</td>
<td>Innovation, Integration, Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>2014 Dec</td>
<td>Phuket, Thailand</td>
<td>Prince of Songkla University</td>
<td>PBL: Past, Present and Prospect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>2016 Oct</td>
<td>Daegu, Korea</td>
<td>Kyungpook National University</td>
<td>Best Practice of PBL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
session was also included to deal with some of the pressing or practical issues that concerned our regional PBL practitioners.

In-between the biennial conferences, efforts have been made to keep the discussion on PBL going through electronic platforms such as the “PBLASPAC” listserv group (pblaspac@yahoogroups.com), managed by Dr. Adrianta Surjadhana (Indonesia). Some of the topics discussed (and at times debated passionately) included “Assessment tool of PBL”, “Essentials/elements/types of PBL”, “Tutor’s role versus student’s role in PBL”, “PBL in clinical years” in 2008; “Advantages and disadvantages of hybrid PBL”, “Definition and types of hybrid PBL” in 2009; and “Implementation of PBL in allied health sciences” in 2010. Some of these findings were presented at the 2010 APC-PHS conference and subsequently published in a medical education journal[5]. Although the Yahoo email discussion forum continues to be functional, the discussion has not been so active in the recent months – perhaps because there are now more opportunities for such discussions through other digital channels such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and the like. Most of us belong to at least one of such social media discussion groups and it is challenging to keep up with and keep track of all the discussions with the various groups.

At many of these PBL conferences, the medical students have taken an active role, notably the ones in Manila, Surabaya and Phuket. These students not only assisted in the organisation of the conferences, some of them also chaired certain sessions and co-authored papers presented at the conferences. In fact, a clinical year medical student has been scheduled to participate in a debate at the 4th APJC-PBL in Daegu in 2016. Surely this is an encouraging sign and indicator of the increasing acceptance of PBL among the Asian students. The interactions among the participants were also not confined to mere academic exchanges of ideas but often included cultural displays of talents by both students and staff. Amidst the seriousness of academic discussions and moments of organisation-related anxiety, there was also much fun and enjoyment that often left lasting impressions in the memories of the participants. These were but some of the successes experienced thus far in the history of APA-PHS.

There were however some repeated “failings” in the short history of this Association. Despite many enthusiastic responses and promising proposals made during or at the end of past biennial conferences to recruit members and to promote the Association, we have not succeeded in setting up a functioning website for our Association, nor have we managed to produce a book on PBL that is of regional relevance. While some of the abstracts presented at these conferences have subsequently been published as isolated full-length articles in some established journals, the effort in trying to publish a proceeding of the APC-PHS or a book on selected PBL topics appeared to be elusive. This Special Issue, coordinated by Dr. Kwan, which aims to be published in time for the coming APJC-PBL in Daegu, is an attempt to rectify our deficiency in this aspect. In 2002, Dr. T-L Hwang (Taiwan) helped to set up a website for our APC-PHS when the conference was hosted by his institute. He then kept it open for some years after the conference to serve as our Association website. However, it eventually had to be closed because there was no one to manage the website on his retirement and we could not afford to hire someone for this purpose. Following that, Dr. Nemuel Fajutagana (Philippines) has kindly volunteered to set up another website for the Association, which did not cost us a single cent. However, we have yet to find the time and expertise to populate it with
relevant information and make it truly functional. There were some concerns raised as to what kind of articles or information that may be uploaded onto this website for public access, in view of the issues on copyright and privacy matters. Again, it seems like another case of “the heart is willing but the flesh is weak”. We look forward to the time when we will have some younger members who are technologically savvy and able to give the time and effort to help manage the Association website.

So what’s next?

Can Asian students do PBL? Is PBL another fad? Is APA-PHS relevant to the institutes here in Asia-Pacific? Do the curriculum management people know what they are doing? Some of these questions have been investigated and published\(^2,6,7\). The overall impression is that our Asian students have all the potentials to learn by PBL approach, but they need the right environment and guidance to master the skills for this innovative learning approach – innovative at least to some in this region still. With the limited resources and frequent lack of support from senior administrators in this region, we stand at a cross-road to decide whether it is worth the effort to persevere or to give up with this collective effort in enhancing PBL in Asia-Pacific\(^8\). The future of APA-PHS and its relevance to the academic world in this region is in the hand of the “second generation” PBL practitioners in this region. The “first generation” PBL practitioners and advocates have paved the way in the past few decades and are now keen to pass on the baton. Will the next generation PBL practitioners be able to rise to the occasion and continue to champion for the cause of PBL in Asia-Pacific?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the tremendous encouragement and guidance provided by our former colleague, Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan, who has been a formidable driving force in championing the cause of PBL in Malaysia and in the Asia-Pacific region, before her early retirement. This manuscript would not have been made possible without her passion and commitment and her contribution in time past.

REFERENCES

2 (6 pages). doi: 10.3402/meo.v1i.4282
Appendix 1

**The 1st pro-tem Executive Committee (2000-01):**

- President: Dr. Rethy Keith Chhem (Singapore)
- Vice-President: Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia)
- Secretary: Dr. Grace Ong (Singapore)
- Members: Dr. Matthew Gwee (Singapore), Dr. Hoon-Eng Khoo (Singapore)

**The 2nd pro-tem Executive Committee (2001-02) elected at the 2nd APA-PHS conference, held in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), 29-31 October 2001:**

- Past-President: Dr. Rethy Keith Chhem (Singapore)
- President: Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia)
- Vice-President: Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan)
- Secretary: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- Treasurer: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)

**The 3rd pro-tem Executive Committee (2002-04) elected at the 3rd APA-PHS conference, held in Taipei (Taiwan), 31 Oct-2 November 2002:**

- Past-President: Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia)
- President: Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan)
- Vice-President: Dr. Marita V.T. Reyes (Philippines)
- Secretary: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- Assistant Secretary: Dr. Christina P.L. Tan (Malaysia)
- Treasurer: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)

**The Executive Committee (2004-06), formalized at the formal inaugural General meeting at the 4th APA-PHS conference held in Manila (Philippines), 22-25 September 2004, after its registration in 2003, in Malaysia:**

- Past-President: Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan)
- President: Dr. Marita V.T. Reyes (Philippines)
- Vice-President: Dr. Bambang Prijambodo (Indonesia)
- Secretary: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- Assistant Secretary: Dr. Christina P.L. Tan (Malaysia)
- Treasurer: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- Committee members: Dr. N. Margarita Rehatta (Indonesia), Dr. Fortunato L Cristobal (Philippines), Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia), Dr. Hoon-Eng Khoo (Singapore)
The Executive Committee (2006-08) was elected in the 5th APA-PHS conference in Surabaya (Indonesia), 15-17 November 2006. The office bearers were:

- **Past-President**: Dr. Marita V.T. Reyes (Philippines)
- **President**: Dr. Bambang Prijambodo (Indonesia)
- **Vice-President**: Dr. Nor Azila Mohd Adnan (Malaysia), resigned in 2007
- **Secretary**: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- **Assistant Secretary**: Dr. Christina P.L. Tan (Malaysia)
- **Treasurer**: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- **Committee members**: Dr. N. Margarita Rehatta (Indonesia), Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan), Dr. Rogayah Ja’far (Malaysia), Dr. Hoon-Eng Khoo (Singapore), Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan)

The Executive Committee (2008-10) elected at the 6th APA-PHS conference in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), 13-16 October 2008:

- **Past-President**: Dr. Bambang Prijambodo (Indonesia)
- **President**: Dr. Rogayah Ja’far (Malaysia), on medical leave for most period
- **Vice-President**: Dr. David C.Y. Kwan (Canada/Taiwan), also as Acting President
- **Secretary**: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- **Assistant Secretary**: Dr. Christina P.L. Tan (Malaysia)
- **Treasurer**: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- **Committee members**: Dr. N. Margarita Rehatta (Indonesia), Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan), Dr. Francis I. Achike (Nigeria/Malaysia), Dr. Tsann-Long Hwang (Taiwan), Dr. Arnuparp Lekhakula (Thailand)

The Executive Committee (2010-12) elected at the 1st APJC-PBL conference in Taipei (Taiwan), 22-25 October 2010:

- **Past-President**: Dr. Rogayah Ja’far (Malaysia)
- **President**: Dr. David C.Y. Kwan (Canada/Taiwan)
- **Vice-President**: Dr. Rui-Zhe Qian (China)
- **Secretary**: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- **Assistant Secretary**: Dr. Nabishah Mohamad (Malaysia)
- **Treasurer**: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- **Committee members**: Dr. Gregory Tan (Australia), Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan)
The Executive Committee (2012-14) elected at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} APJC-PBL conference in Shanghai (China), 24-28 October 2012:

- Past-President: Dr. David C.Y. Kwan (Canada/Taiwan)
- President: Dr. Rui-Zhe Qian (China)
- Vice-President: Dr. Arnuparp Lekhakula (Thailand)
- Secretary: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- Assistant Secretary: Dr. Nabishah Mohamad (Malaysia)
- Treasurer: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- Committee members: Dr. Gregory Tan (Australia), Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan), Dr. Bong-Hyung Chang (Korea), Dr. Nafeeza Mohd Ismail (Malaysia), Dr. Kuo-Inn Tsou (Taiwan)

The Executive Committee (2014-16) elected at the 3\textsuperscript{rd} APJC-PBL conference in Phuket (Thailand), 4-7 December 2014:

- Past-President: Dr. Rui-Zhe Qian (China)
- President: Dr. Arnuparp Lekhakula (Thailand)
- Vice-President: Dr. Bong-Hyung Chang (Korea)
- Secretary: Dr. Debra S.M. Sim (Malaysia)
- Assistant Secretary: Dr. Nafeeza Mohd Ismail (Malaysia)
- Treasurer: Dr. Zubaidah Abd Rahim (Malaysia)
- Committee members: Dr. Gregory Tan (Australia), Dr. N. Margarita Rehatta (Indonesia), Dr. Osamu Matsuo (Japan), Dr. Nemuel Fajutagana (Philippines), Dr. Kuo-Inn Tsou (Taiwan)