The Mobility of International Students and Higher Education Policies in Japan

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Today, as international students become more mobile, and as further diversification of mobility takes place, transnational strategic development is demanded of Japan's higher education policies in lieu of traditional concepts such as "international intellectual contribution" and "mutual international understanding." Global 30, the Project for Establishing a University Network for Internationalization, the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Development, and the Top Global University Project embody the direction of internationalization and reformation of universities set forth by the Japanese government. Furthermore, efforts to develop talent across borders using a common platform of multilateral cooperation and networks have been undertaken as seen in the Re-Inventing Japan Project. These are the new models for international higher education. Faced with only incremental increases in foreign students and a decline in the number of Japanese students studying abroad, defining the role of Japan in international higher education and developing its strategies are vital for Japan's higher education policies.

1 Introduction

As the pace of internationalization of higher education increases, today's international student policies have become important aspects of political and economic strategy. International students are human resources that support various countries' social development, and they are targets for the competition to secure talent. Actors in this competition include not only the developed countries that have been the destination of many international students in the past, but also emerging nations and developing nations that are more recent participants in creating a new situation known as "brain circulation," where international students might go back to their home country to start a business, or go to yet another country from the destination country; this varies the traditional "brain drain" where the international students from developing countries remain in the developed destination country. What effects will international student policies and these new trends in interna-

tional student mobility have on higher education in the future? Also, what function should higher education serve in the near future, and what role should Japan's higher education institutions play in it? This paper will analyze the global state of student mobility that affects international student policies and will shed some light on the issues of student mobility and higher education policies in Japan.

2 The State of International Student Mobility

2.1 Diversification of International Student Mobility

Today's international student mobility is different from the student mobility of the past, and is characterized by its diversity and increased scale. With the arrival of across-the-border transnational programs, students are given many educational opportunities, signaling a departure from the past when a handful of elite, state-funded students studied abroad as representatives of their countries in order to gain knowledge and skills, and always returned to their homeland after finishing their studies. Owing to today's popularization of higher education and increased educational demand, expanded opportunities exist for "everyday people" to study abroad freely and easily. According to OECD's research, the number of international students globally in 2000 was 2,071,963, and the numbers have increased to 2,982,588 in 2005, 3,707,756 in 2009, 4,265,579 in 2011, and 4,500,000 in 2012 (OECD, 2014). Compared to 800,000 students (OECD, 2010: 313-314) in 1975, and 1,300,000 students in 1990 (OECD, 2010: 313-314), the numbers of students have exploded by over fivefold in approximately 35 years.

Next, looking at the trend in students studying abroad in the world in 2012, the number one destination is the US with 16.0% of the total number of students, followed by the UK with 13.0%, Germany with 6.0%, France with 6.0%, Australia with 6.0%, Canada with 5.0%, Russia with 4.0%, and Japan with 3.0%. What is interesting here is that while the percentage of international students going to top destination countries declined, other actors have appeared. For example, the US received about 24.0% of students in 2000, but that percentage has fallen to 16.0%. When comparing the percentage of students received, the UK, Australia, Canada, Russia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands' percentages have risen while the percentages for the US, Germany, and France have fallen. Spain, China, Italy, Austria, South Africa, South Korea, and Switzerland have appeared on the list in 2012 (OECD, 2014).

The new characteristics of international students' mobility seen here contrast with the vertical movement, from the southern developing countries to the northern developed countries, of studies abroad in the past. Mobility is more diverse now that there is horizontal mobility among the developing nations where education standards are similar, movements reflecting the trends in the economic market, educational support for education development of developing countries, and movements created by the introduction of

transnational programs that adopt highly political and/or economic themes. Behind the increase in the amount of student mobility is the fact that many different players are now in the game compared to the past when the US held an absolute dominance, and the fact that the various countries are now actively and strategically engaged in higher education, owing to the internationalization of education and international student policies. Governments now consider securing international students as part of their human resource acquisition policy, and strategize to enhance their political and economic standing by becoming key players in the international exchange. A major issue for Asian countries is how to become an important international exchange player for student mobility in the future, but they must also deal with the asymmetry of being destinations from other countries and regions while continuing to send students to Europe and the US. This is an issue they must tackle as they deploy their internationalization efforts. Asian countries' concerns for securing talented workers while responding to brain drain coincides with the US's issues regarding "the new brain drain," where talented students from India and China are moving back to their homeland or to another country or region to look for new opportunities after completing their studies.

2.2 Factors for the Mobility of International Students

De Wit et al. (2008) mention several push and pull factors in their discussion of student mobility. Push factors are factors that send students out of a country, and pull factors are those that attract students from other countries. De Wit et al. categorized the various factors into educational factors, political/societal/cultural factors, economic factors, human resource development index (whether or not there are employment opportunities), and geographic factors, and analyzed the students' perspectives for studying abroad. The push and pull factor model indicates that quite a variety of factors contribute to student mobility. At the top of the list of student mobility factors are evaluations such as rankings of educational programs and the destinations' higher education systems, compatibility with the educational system of the student's homeland (transferability of units and accreditation), and the ease of admissions procedures. However, there are other factors outside of education itself that rank highly. These are political factors such as issues surrounding immigration control policies, stability of the society, the suzerain-colony relationships, and historical national relationships. In addition, employment opportunities after graduation and geographic proximity are some of the issues that also come up in today's situation.

With today's increased student mobility, and with the increase in the number of international students, factors related to societies and cultures are becoming more influential. An example of student mobility based on religion is the movement between Islamic countries from the Maldives to Malaysia and from Indonesia to Malaysia. Another example is a Buddhist student from Sri Lanka listing the destination country being Buddhist as a

condition for his study abroad. Another factor that determines mobility alongside religion is language. As noted earlier, the reason that transnational programs have a large influence is because most of them take place in English. In another words, it is the versatility of English and its influence that contribute to the success of these study abroad programs.

Other factors that influence the mobility of students from the southern developing countries are social factors such as the connection to another country from the colonial era. For many emerging countries that gained independence from a colonizing nation, the language of the colonizing nation often continues to be the main language, and in many instances common language is a major factor in the mobility of students and people. However, looking at the mobility of students in Asia, the increased student mobility between China and South Korea as of late is an example of the two countries mutually valuing the language of the other country as being advantageous for economics and trade, and where efforts to learn each other's language has increased with the increase in economic activities.

2.3 Mobility of International Students and Changes in Higher Education Policies

As noted above, student mobility has become quite diverse and varied. As indicated in OECD (2010: 313), the traditional study abroad programs have transformed into an educational service industry model where each educational institution deploys its program with an eye on the international education market. Taking the internationalization of higher education in the US as an example, with the recent advancement in higher education of other countries, American students are now more interested than ever to look overseas for their degrees and to avoid paying high tuition in the US. Behind such development lies the fact that, aside from cost, children of immigrant communities are looking to enter schools in their homelands for language and cultural similarities, but what is more notable is the increased enthusiasm of American universities to send more students abroad than ever. The number of students studying abroad as part of the undergraduate curriculum has increased dramatically recently. De Wit et al. (2008) have summarized the issues in internationalization of American higher education into the following five points:

1) How to maintain leadership that would attract the world's top students and researchers.
2) How to keep the proper balance between the mobility of students and researchers across borders and programs and institutions across borders.
3) How to expand the selection of overseas learning for American students.
4) How to advance the discussion about international education at the national policy level.
5) How to fully incorporate the internationalization trend at the level of individual ed-

ucational institutions.

Although the US is the destination of approximately 16.0% of all international students in the world, close examination of higher education policies and cultivation of human resources have become important issues for the US, while keeping a keen eye on the trends of other countries' and regions' internationalization strategies and mobility of students. An effect of the new human resources mobility is also evident. In the US, particularly, a phenomenon called "the new brain drain" has surfaced in the last four to five years surrounding the mobility of students from Asia. In the past, most students studying in the US from India and China stayed in the US to work after finishing their studies, but many are now going back to their homelands to work as highly skilled workers or as entrepreneurs instead of working in the US. This points to the birth of a new concept of choosing the West for education but choosing China or India for business opportunities. The reality is that staying to work in the US is no longer the rule for many international students.

Shifting the priority from receiving students from other countries to sending their own students overseas can also be seen in other English-speaking countries aside from the US. Australia is one example, with their pilot program that began in 2014 called the New Colombo Plan. When the plan takes full effect in the future, Australia hopes to support their undergraduate students' studies abroad and internships in the Indo-Pacific region to cultivate human resources with expertise in the region and to enhance societal and cultural ties with the region in order to create a stronger relationship between the Indo-Pacific region and Australia. The project is aimed at undergraduate students aged 18 to 24 to participate in short- and long-term study abroad programs that last a maximum of one year and internships that last from one week to a maximum of six months. In 2014 already, 1,300 students and 40 scholarship students have been sent to four countries and regions including Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Starting in 2015, the program plans to expand the destination to more than 30 countries and regions, including the Asian Pacific area east of Pakistan. The program also plans to increase the number of scholarship students to 60.

Another characteristic of changes coming to higher education policies is that, whereas past higher education policies were set by each country, with the sudden jump in transnational programs across borders, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a country to manage its own higher education system without international coordination and cooperation. At the center of internationalization of higher education today are double degree programs, twinning programs, and distance learning programs that are quickly spreading in the West and in Asia, and they require setting up credit transfer systems and degree certification systems. The introduction and spread of these transnational educational programs promote the spread of English as a language of instruction, and, along with its popularization that began with the privatization of higher educational institutions in the mid-90's in

Asia, they are transforming the state of higher education from one centered around elite education to something more practical and pragmatic, shifting the emphasis to subjects such as IT, computer science, and business management. This change reflects students' needs for programs that enable the efficient acquisition of degrees and certificates at the lowest cost possible.

3 Trends in International Student Mobility and Higher Education Policies in Japan

As shown above, the mobility of international students around the globe has changed from the one-way, south-to-north movement to "brain circulation" where students return home, and to movements from the south to emerging countries outside the West. What are the trends in international student mobility and higher education policies in Japan in this diversified mobility of international students?

3.1 Trends in International Student Mobility in Japan

3.1.1 Trends in International Students Coming to Japan

Even after the number of international students in Japan reached 100,000 students following the "100,000 Foreign Students Plan" that began in 1983, Japan continued to further its efforts to admit international students, and in 2010 the total number of international students in Japan reached an all time high of 141,774. Since then, Japan has implemented a post 100,000 Foreign Students Plan to keep pace with the number of international students in other countries that Japan had originally targeted. The centerpiece of the policy is the "300,000 Foreign Students Plan" drawn up in July 2008. The 300,000 Foreign Students Plan aims to "increase the number of foreign students admitted to Japan to 300,000 by 2020 as part of deploying the 'Global Strategy' that would expand the flow of people, things, money and information between Asia and the rest of the world as Japan becomes a nation that is more open to the world." To such an end, Japan has established five provisions as follows: 1) recruitment of students to Japan – motivate students to study in Japan and deploy a one-stop service; 2) improvement of entrance exams, school admission, and immigration – make studying in Japan easier; 3) promote globalization of universities, etc. – make universities more attractive; 4) creating better environments for international students – undertake projects to make environments that allow students to study worry-free; 5) promote the entry of international students into Japanese society after graduation/completion – internationalize Japanese society. These provisions will be implemented by cooperation between the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare; the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry; and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport.

However, in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred in March of 2011 and the response to the nuclear disaster that developed after the earthquake, some international students in Japan opted to return home, and the number of students wishing to study in Japan also declined. Except for a large decrease in FY 2005, the number of students applying to study in Japan had grown continuously according to the trends seen in the applicants for Japanese study abroad examination overseas that began in FY 2002, but the numbers continue to decline after the earthquake. Although in FY 2010, the number of exam takers had increased to 52,596 from 30,135 at the start of the exams, the number of exam takers in FY 2011 saw a decrease to 44,368, and the first round applicants for FY 2012 decreased to 17,777 compared to the number of first round applicants of 22,829 from the previous fiscal year. This clearly shows that many international students are concerned about aftershocks of the earthquake and the radiation problem. Considering the extended period of time that it might take to resolve these issues, a fundamental rethinking of Japan's higher education and its international student policies may be necessary.

Behind the success of the 100,000 Foreign Students Plan that ran for twenty years from 1983 to 2003 in attaining its goals are the tremendous increase in privately funded students from China after the 1990s as China changed its study abroad and international student policies, and Japan's appeal to international students as "a safe and stable developed country" where students can study science and technology, businesses, and work ethic. What characterized studying in Japan was the ever-so-attractive "Japan Brand" despite the higher cost of living and studying in Japan, and in terms of the aforementioned study abroad factors mentioned by De Wit et al. (2008), the quality of education programs was the selling point. However, as noted above, Asian nations are now deploying international student policies as part of their political and economical strategies, and with the spread of transnational programs that stretch beyond borders and the diversification of study abroad models, the competition to secure human resources in the form of international students has intensified. Today's conditions are acutely different from the era when the 100,000 Foreign Students Plan was taking place, when Japan was being selected from a limited number of destinations. Whether or not the 300,000 Foreign Students Plan will succeed is anyone's guess. In addition, the secondary damage caused by the earthquake and the nuclear accident has damaged the "Japan Brand" whose main feature was "a safe and secure society."

As of May 2013, the number of international students in Japan was 135,519, which was an increase of 6,297 students (3.9%) compared to May 2012, showing a small sign of recovery. Looking at where students came from, as of 2013, China sent 81,884 students (a decrease of 4,440 students (5.1%) compared to the previous year) and South Korea sent 15,304 students (a decrease of 1,347 students (8.1%) compared to the previous year.) While China and South Korea continued to account for the majority of international students, the number of students from these countries was on a downward trend. On the

other hand, countries that were on an upward trend were Vietnam with 6,290 students (an increase of 1,917 (43.8%)), Taiwan with 4,719 students (an increase of 102 (2.2%)), and Nepal with 3,188 students (an increase of 737 (30.1%)). In terms of regions from which the students originate, students from the Asian region accounted for 91.9% of students (92.3% the previous year) and European and North American regions together accounted for 5.3% (5.0% the previous year.) Of these, short-term international students from the Asian region accounted for 60.6% students (61.7% the previous year) and European and North American regions together accounted for 35.1% of students (34.0% the previous year) (Japan Scholarship Foundation 2014). These facts point to a trend where Asia continues to supply the majority of international students to Japan, while also showing a trend for diversification in the countries sending their students to Japan, with a majority of students coming for short-term programs.

3.1.2 Trends in Japanese Students Studying Abroad

On the other hand, the number of Japanese students wishing to study abroad has been decreasing overall since 2004. The number of Japanese students studying abroad was at its all time high of 82,945 students in 2004 and has been declining ever since. In 2005 the number was 80,023, in 2008 the number fell to 66,833 students, and in 2011 it further decreased to 57,501 students. As for their destination, in 2011 19,966 students went to the US, 17,961 students went to China, 3,705 went to the UK, 2,861 went to Taiwan, 2,117 went to Australia, 1,867 to Germany, 1,851 to Canada, 1,685 to France, 1,190 to South Korea, 1,061 to New Zealand, and 3,237 students went to other countries. Of these, the number of students studying in the US has declined drastically from 48,872 students in 1999 to 21,290 students in 2010, a number that is less than half of 1999 (MEXT, 2014a). This is in stark contrast to the continued increase in the number of international students going to the US from Asian countries and regions such as India, China, South Korea, and Vietnam.

Increased introversion of young people is commonly cited as a reason for the decline in Japanese students' studying abroad, but in actuality the following four obstacles are indicated. According to the statistics of the Japanese government's analysis regarding making improvements to the study abroad system, conducted in 87 universities in 2007 by the National Universities Association International Exchange Committee's working group for improving the study abroad system, the most frequently listed obstacle was the conflict with the students' job hunting activities (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, n.d.). Students were concerned about the effects that possibly having to delay graduation and stay another year in college would have on getting a job. The second issue was the cost of studying abroad. Studying abroad, including studying in the US, is much more expensive than even attending private universities in Japan. For this reason, many students were not able to afford the cost of studying abroad. The third issue cited was the insufficient support provided by Japanese universities for studies abroad. Specifically, credit approval af-

ter completion of studies abroad, the lack of faculty able to give advice about studies abroad, the poor-back up system of universities in general, and the lack of information regarding the destination universities, etc. were mentioned. These issues gave students enough reason to hesitate to participate in study abroad programs. In addition, the fact that most schools in Japan begin their school year in April, which differs from the school year in the rest of the world, was another reason that made studies abroad and job hunting after returning home difficult.

These factors tell us that young people's "introversion" is not always the cause. Some students are hoping to live and work overseas if an opportunity arises, while some plan to attend graduate school overseas in the future but feel they need to work and save up before furthering their studies. The students can be categorized into two types: those that want to study abroad based on their plans for the future and others that look for stability.

3.2 Internationalization Strategies and Higher Education Policies

3.2.1 Characteristics of Japan's Internationalization Strategies

In contrast to increased diversity in the mobility of international students, the number of Japanese students going abroad is on the decline while the number of international students coming to Japan is increasing slightly. For Japan, where the birthrate is dwindling and the population is aging, and where securing the labor force is a pressing issue, this poses a serious problem from the human resources development point of view.

Japan's perspective on securing human resources in the context of its internationalization strategy is indicated in the strategies found in the "Council for Asian Gateway Initiative" (May 2007) in the "100,000 Foreign Students Plan." The council cited a goal to "build a vigorous and open economic system for the dynamic growth of Japan," and while expressing concerns for Japan's delayed response to Asia's accelerating economic growth, it indicated the direction to "show the future image of Japan as a gateway connecting Asia and the rest of the world, and by accelerating the opening up of our society and strengthening ties with our neighbors, we can share prosperity with other Asian countries. Developing Asia, the growth center of the world, into a region that is open to the world, not closing it out, is important to Japan and to the rest of the global community."

The initiative contained policies related to economy and finance, transportation and communication, cultural policies, etc., and listed three items related to higher education policies: rebuilding the international student policy to become a hub for Asia's network of highly skilled workers, creating universities that are open to the world, and reinforcing the core function of cooperation and research related to common issues in Asia. Based on these, the following points were incorporated as a basic plan of action: 1) in light of the sudden expansion of the international student market around the world, aim to secure at minimum the current share of incoming students (about 5%) along with securing quality talent in order to maintain intellectual contributions and influence around the world; 2) in

order to expand opportunities for Japanese students to study abroad, develop the universities' offshore programs and short-term study abroad programs, etc., improve the system for sending young researchers abroad, expand youth exchange programs, and promote strategic dispatch of students and researchers to countries of importance; 3) promote industry-academia cooperation, etc. with an eye to the career paths of students, and re-examine the resident status system in order to promote hiring and entrepreneurship of international students; 4) promote improving Japan's gateway functions in various areas of the world, and encourage cooperation and linking up with overseas universities as well as dealing with issues such as admissions processes before entering Japan; strengthen cooperative ties between universities/private sectors with related organizations such as diplomatic establishments abroad, the Japan Student Services Organization, and the Japan Foundation, and re-evaluate the existing division of roles to improve and enhance functions and cooperation among the organizations; also drastically increase the number of overseas sites for Japanese language education by employing the franchise system; 5) taking advantage of the appeal of Japanese culture, promote the Japanese culture industry strategy, such as Japan's pop culture, and the international student strategy together as a whole; 6) improve the state-funded international student program; 7) expand and develop the short-term exchange programs that last from a few weeks to under a year and provide support for securing and preparing boarding facilities for international students.

Regarding the internationalization of universities, the initiative states that it is effective for the majority of universities to advance their internationalization efforts by promoting cooperation with overseas universities in both education and research while expanding international exchange of students and faculty in order to generate high quality education and research that are attractive globally, and to incorporate the vitality from across the seas to Japanese universities. Specifically, the following recommendations were made: 1) undertake research regarding the state of internationalization of universities; 2) execute radical expansion of competitive fund distribution and promote various plans for the internationalization of universities, including developing international programs such as double degree programs and joint degree programs with overseas universities, developing systematic education programs conducted in English, and joining international inter-university networks; 3) make improvements to the system of evaluating universities' internationalization efforts done by each university or by third parties, increase language and population diversities on campus, implement and participate in international joint research projects, build and operate overseas schools, and improve international certification and evaluation processes.

The main characteristic of the Asian Gateway Initiative is that it indicates specific measures for strategically internationalizing Japan while continuing to value international ties and cooperation, whereas past Japanese international student policies only reflected the perspective of "international intellectual contribution" and "mutual international understanding." The initiative also points to the importance of cultivating talent as human

resource belonging to the entire Asian region where opportunities are mutually shared, instead of fostering talent only within the borders of one's nation and keeping it there, and the importance of re-evaluating the strategies for internationalization from a much wider perspective by placing Japan within the route of talent mobility. The second report from the education reform meeting was submitted six months after the Asian Gateway Initiative was announced, and there, too, the promotion of international students' policies was mentioned as part of the national strategy.

3.2.2   Specific Measures for Internationalization

Asian Gateway Initiative's internationalization strategies were implemented starting in 2009 and ended in March 2014. The initiative was succeeded by a network-formation promotion project for internationalization of universities. The strategies were put into practice by Global 30, the Project for Establishing University Networks for Internationalization. The project's aim was "to provide support for the best universities in providing high quality education that is commensurate with the strengths of the schools, to secure an attractive environment that encourages students to study in Japan in order to enhance the international competitiveness of our country's higher education, to provide education that is attractive to international students, etc. in a world where international competition to secure human resources is getting more fierce, and to cultivate human resources that can flourish internationally in an environment of positive mutual competition with international students." Thirteen schools, Tohoku University, University of Tsukuba, University of Tokyo, Nagoya University, Kyoto University, Osaka University, Kyushu University, Keio University, Sophia University, Meiji University, Waseda University, Doshisha University, and Ritsumeikan University, were chosen to participate in the program. In addition to making improvements to the overall system as a key base for internationalization representing Japan, such as building a practical system for conducting classes in English, building a system related to admitting international students, promoting strategic international cooperation, and holding presentations about studying in Japan, various efforts to promote the internationalization of our country were implemented, such as cooperation with industries, and promoting networking and sharing resources and results between the key-base universities. Another characteristic of Global 30 was that shared overseas offices for universities were installed in eight cities in seven countries as liaison offices for studying in Japan, which became the key bases overseas for Japan's international students policies.

Another project that was undertaken alongside Global 30 was Go Global Japan, the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Development. The Council on Promotion of Human Resources and Globalization Development, established by concerned cabinet ministers under the umbrella of Japan's New Growth Strategy in 2011, undertook studies aimed at cultivating a new generation of creative and energetic talent. This issue was seen as of utmost concern for Japan, a country that had just experienced one of its

most serious crises, the Great East Japan earthquake, in order to return to the path of real growth. It was recognized that in the global economy of the 21st century, continued cultivation of "global talent" with excellent linguistic abilities, communication skills, and with the ability to succeed internationally is a must. As a result, the concern for the "Galapagosization of Japan" was highlighted, as well as the importance of fostering not just elites but also middle-class citizens, the "21st century citizens," who will play a central role in various fields in the future. The importance of building a "leading country of solving issues" model that satisfies and balances "the continued vitality of industry and economy" and "the society's happiness/satisfaction and emotional wellbeing" were emphasized. It also stressed the fact that fostering global talent is essential to achieve these goals. "Global talent" as mentioned here is explained as someone possessing 1) language proficiency and communication ability, 2) independence and identity, active participation and willingness to challenge oneself, cooperation and flexibility, a sense of responsibility and a sense of purpose, 3) an understanding of foreign cultures and identity as a Japanese national. Other characteristics mentioned are being well cultured and having high expertise, ability to discover/solve issues, ability to work and lead teams, being aware of the public good and being ethical, and media literacy (Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Council, 2012).

The issues that higher education must resolve in order to fulfill the human resources demands are increasing the opportunities for overseas experiences including studying and living abroad, strengthening English education and improving college entrance exams, and improving recruitment activities. In addition, building a world-class university system, installing a flexible and diverse academic calendar, promoting and incentivizing studies abroad so that the number of students with experience of studying and living abroad for at least one year between the ages of 18 to early 20's will reach 80,000, increasing the flexibility of the education system that would allow cooperation with industry, and allowing early graduation were emphasized together with implementing quality assurance of education (Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Council, 2012).

In terms of primary and secondary education, proposals were made for measures such as radical enhancement of English education and increasing the number of students with experience studying and living abroad, expanding the number of schools offering International Baccalaureate diploma programs to approximately 200 within five years, and taking the results of TOEFL and TOEIC into consideration when hiring English language teachers. Furthermore, industries and economic organizations have been encouraged to actively hire people with study abroad experiences, and government offices have been called upon to secure diverse talent by getting an accurate understanding of the ratio of workers with study abroad experience and language abilities, to send volunteers to developing countries, and to promote collaborative industry-academia education across borders, internships and exchanges of young talent, etc. Alongside these projects and mea-

sures, 42 universities were selected to participate in the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Development, and programs were planned to stimulate Japanese students to study and live abroad.

In addition, with the conclusion of the Global 30 program in March 2014, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology began recruitment for its Top Global University Program, a ten-year program lasting until 2023. It is stated that "what is sought from the university as the intellectual center that leads the country's growth is to gather talented researchers and students from around the world, and to become a recognized player in the global higher education market, to gain ranking in the world while fostering human resources who have the ability to solve global issues with an understanding for different cultures and are able to create the future and act globally, and to cultivate talents with a strong will to creatively and actively contribute to regional societies with a global perspective. In order to attain these goals, characteristics and strengths of each university must be leveraged while improving the international validity of the university's structure as well as its organizational culture, thereby enhancing competitiveness in the world" (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2014b). The program is composed of two types of universities. Type A schools are the 13 universities that have the potential to be ranked in the top 100 global higher education ranking in the next ten years offering world-class education and research, and Type B schools are 24 universities that were selected to lead Japan's globalization by tackling pioneering test runs based on their past performance.

What characterizes this project is that while it serves as a guideline for internationalization and cultivation of global talent, it also calls for direct university reform in order to promote internationalization. By undertaking internationalization and reform of universities concurrently, the project aims to improve the universities' international validity and to formulate and implement overall and medium/long-term project plans to enhance international competitiveness. This point differs from past internationalization measures such as Global 30 that dealt mostly with tangible measures for internationalization, such as increasing the number of students going abroad or coming to Japan, and establishing new programs that use English for teaching. The new project instead focuses on the universities' decision-making mechanisms that allow implementation of measures for internationalization, and has a ten-year, long-term goal for governance reform that would enable internationalization to take place quickly and effectively.

Also underway at the same time is the Re-Inventing Japan Project since FY 2011. This program was instituted to reinforce the fostering of global human resources capable of acting internationally, and to enhance the global development of university education. It aims to support Japanese students studying abroad and to support international cooperation in education with universities in Asia, US, and Europe, etc. that are strategically accepting foreign students, while maintaining the quality of higher education. It has been implemented by region: 1) Japan/China/South Korea's "Campus Asia" (started in FY

2011), 2) support for inter-university exchange with ASEAN countries (started in FY 2012), 3) "ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) program" to support the strategic cooperation of higher education overseas (started in FY 2013), 4) "support for the formation of inter-university exchange with Russia and India, etc." (started in FY 2014).

4 The Role of Higher Education in Japan in the Age of International Mobility

4.1 Issues Facing Higher Education Policies

Japan's international student policies discussed above stand in a very different place from past international policies of Japan. While international student policies such as "international intellectual contribution" and "mutual international understanding" are still valued, what has become more important are international cooperation and fostering of global human resources. The Top University Project that began in 2014 calls for the reform of university governance while still focusing on conventional internationalization, which points to the fact that Japan's higher education policies are at a major turning point.

However, there are still a number of issues to be overcome in order to gain and increase talented international students as outlined in these policies. As already shown in a variety of ways, the system for admitting international students must be enhanced by the higher education institutions in Japan, where Japanese as a teaching language stands as an obstruction, living cost is high, and insufficient grants and living quarters/dormitories are constant problems.

Furthermore, "increasing the number of programs that use English as the teaching language," intended to be a means to increase the volume of international students, has not led to solving the issues of internationalization of Japan and procuring highly talented workers as industries had hoped. Neither has it solved the labor shortage issue. The increase in the number of international students is meaningless if the students do not work in Japan after graduation, but Japan does not offer a solid route to jobs for international students. Some companies have started to hire international students actively by establishing hiring quotas, but unlike other regions such as the West, where getting hired is easy depending on the qualifications, most Japanese companies still require international students to go through the same recruitment process as Japanese students, which makes the search for the road to the next course or to a job difficult for international students. For Japanese students with study abroad experiences, too, the corporate world has yet to embrace the students' strengths. As it was delineated in an earlier discussion about push and pull factors of studies abroad, what is important to students in deciding to study abroad is not just the ease of participating in the program, but also what is possible and what kind of paths are available in the near future if one were to participate in the program. The fact

that this is not clear is a major issue.

Another aspect requiring attention that is unique to Japan is the fact that the number of Japanese students studying abroad is on the decline. The Global 30 project emphasized both receiving and sending students, and as inviting international students to Japan has become physically difficult in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, some say that Japan's international policies have placed the focus on sending students abroad. However, in reality the number of Japanese students studying abroad has decreased, and now the results of the measure that tried to actively promote studying and living abroad under MEXT's Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Development is in question.

Additionally, there are now Japanese students opting to attend overseas universities rather than universities in Japan. While the numbers are still small, increasing numbers of students are applying to overseas universities directly from Japanese high schools or from international schools in Japan. Furthermore, there are international students coming to Japan that go to yet another country to study via Japanese universities. What motivates these students are the evaluation standards that highlight more internationally competitive schools, schools with better research, schools with more prestigious degrees, and higher quality programs and faculty. The trend shows student mobility reflecting the students' flexibility for selecting a better education and future outlook. In other words, there are signs of Japanese universities becoming transit points for students to pass through as part of the student mobility already occurring in other Asian countries (Sugimura, 2010; 2011a).

4.2 The Role of Higher Education in Japan: Exploring the International Higher Education Model

In this environment, what higher education in Japan must do is to clarify the strategy for establishing the Japan Model and to improve the programs and systems with a focus on quality.

The 300,000 Foreign Students Plan calls for the comprehensive management of study abroad programs from entry to exit, but creating a coherent system bringing together industry, government, and schools in order to reflect such an endeavor at the policy level has been delayed, and in reality, what has been emphasized is simply reaching the numerical goal of international students, a relatively easy feat. The same can be said of various higher education institutions. Universities were asked to attain the target number of international students and to institute new courses taught in English, and to establish an overseas network of offices that have started to open and to operate. However, what the universities must do is to formulate visions and strategies for implementing such a large-scale reform. This type of consideration must also take place at the government's policy level whose task is to lead the overall higher education policy. While expanding the scale of international student education, it is also important to focus on developing the quality

that attracts overseas students to study in Japan.

This does not mean simply having classes taught in English. Conducting classes in English does dismantle one of the barriers of studying in Japan, the language barrier, and it does have its own merit. However, if teaching in English leads to a decline in the quality of education, higher education for Japanese students would also suffer. Such is the dilemma accompanying the improvement of the English program, but without these features, Japan's programs would only be considered as second or third rate when collaborating internationally, which would pose a great risk of turning Japan into a transit point as mentioned earlier.

In terms of collaboration with other countries, Japan must actively seek to take on roles that the country ought to handle or it is best suited to handle. This would be collaboration and cooperation in higher education. In today's higher education, as each country positions their national education system within the context of expanding transnational programs, each country must make an appeal for its relevance as it forms relationships with other nations, and the significance of cooperation and collaboration is huge. For example, when evaluating and assessing the relevance of a nation's education system against other countries, it is necessary to rank one's own higher education system within the framework of the international quality assurance system. The regional cooperation between universities seen in Asia today is a reflection of the importance of collaboration/cooperation in internationalization of higher education. Ninomiya (2008: 67) stated that, from the perspective of fostering talent for the age of internationalization, "what is required is to shift the model to an 'intra-regional short-term exchange study abroad plan' where Asian nations mutually dispatch students in order to foster human resources that promote mutual understanding, aspire to coexist, and shoulder the future of Asia as it continues to become globalized," and to replace the "modern study abroad model" where students go back to their homeland and make their contributions there after studying abroad. This model of higher education is "international higher education," where, while still subject to each nation's education policy, a multiple number of countries cooperate to foster the next generation.

For example, under the Re-Inventing Japan Project deployed since FY 2011 mentioned earlier, exchange programs focusing on certain regions, such as Campus Asia focusing on Japan, China, and South Korea, and other programs focusing on the ASEAN nations, Russia, India, etc. have been rolled out, and Japan also takes part from outside the program region in programs like the AIMS Program (ASEAN International Mobility for Students Program), a student exchange program for undergraduate students that is run by the governments within the ASEAN region. The AIMS Program is run by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Higher Education and Development (SEAMEO-RIHED), and while there are hurdles for Japanese universities to participate, such as the credit transfer system, academic calendar, language, etc., they have assumed the role of creating a platform for international higher education that

goes beyond the framework of each country's higher education. If students educated using the study abroad scheme can be developed into the kind of talent that can flourish in any country using what they learned in Japan, whether Japan, the home country, or yet a third country, it would be a success for the multinational cooperative human resources fostering program that includes Japan. This is different from the strategic and competitive model of higher education policies of yesterday, and the significance of international higher education by the cooperation by the international community can be seen when higher education is placed inside the network.

5 Conclusion: The Diversification of Student Mobility and the Development of Higher Education Policies Under the Transnational Framework

In this paper we sorted out the reality of international student mobility in Japan and the changes taking place in the higher education policies based on the understanding of the international trends in the mobility of international students and the transformation of higher education policies, and discussed the role of higher education. As student mobility diversifies into mutually circulating movements from a one-directional movement between just two countries, higher education is being rearranged within the transnational framework that stretches across borders. The strategic roll-out of higher education policies within the transnational framework, such as competition and cooperation among the nations is required, and past policies formulated for the formation of human resources for Japan alone from the perspective of "international intellectual contribution" and "mutual international understanding" must be replaced. The direction for internationalization and university reform set forth by the Japanese Government in the Top Global University Project to be undertaken in the future based on Global 30 and the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources Development is highly conscious of these frameworks. As one can see in the Re-Inventing Japan Project, efforts cognizant of cooperation and networking with other countries are taking place. The latter is different from the former in that it is an effort to foster talent under a common platform that stretches across borders, and as international mobility increases, it poses new possibilities for higher education. As Japan deals with dismal growth in the number of visiting international students and a declining number of Japanese students studying abroad, and as it faces the possibility of becoming a transit point in student mobility, Japan's higher education must address the issue of finding its role in international higher education based on the characteristics of Japanese universities and clear strategy.

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