



Academic Consortium 21



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

Maximising the Benefits of Internationalisation

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Internationalisation of universities and its positive effect on local students: case of the Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University

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Abstract

This paper will seek to link the internationalisation of the university with its positive effect on local students from an example of a graduate school which has high concentration of international students. The Graduate School of International Development (GSID), Nagoya University has a mission to develop human capital in developing countries so as to contribute to their home countries' development. Therefore, of the total student body, about half are international and the rest are Japanese. The international students are from 36 countries, mainly in East Asia and Southeast Asia. This high concentration and diversity of international students in one particular graduate school has a positive effect on local Japanese students. They have close and daily contact with international students not only in the classroom, but also in their daily life. As most of classes are taught in English, English is the de facto official language in GSID. This daily contact with international students and daily use of the English language in the practical communication gives Japanese students the opportunity to gain not only practical English language ability but also insights into intercultural communication, foreign culture and customs. Because of declining population and the economic downturn in the domestic market, there now exists an economic environment in which Japanese companies are increasingly expanding business in overseas emerging countries. Many companies are thus positively looking for 'Global Human Capital' with English and other language abilities, overseas experience, and a good understanding of foreign customs and culture. Because of their daily and intense contact with various international students, Japanese students in GSID are likely to be advantageous as this employment trend continues. This paper mainly argues that interaction between international students and local students gives greater benefit in terms of developing 'Global Human Capital', which is increasingly becoming important in the Japanese employment market.

Keywords: Internationalising local students, intercultural competence

Introduction

One of the main circumstances of Japanese universities' recent promotion of internationalisation is the globalisation of the world's economy and society. This means that economic activities are no longer limited to the sphere of one country; rather, they are closely connected to many regions and countries. As a major importer of goods and services, the Japanese economy and society has also been rapidly globalised, and the globalisation and internationalisation of every section of its society has become increasingly important in order to keep its economy active and to maintain living standards in an aging society. In this environment, there are strong expectations of the university sector to be at the forefront of globalisation and internationalisation.

Traditionally, the internationalisation of universities in Japan has been conceived of mainly as increasing the presence of international students and increasing courses and classes taught in English. This is in the context of expanding the function of Japanese universities from the teaching of only Japanese students to the teaching of students from various countries in addition to local students. In this context, the internationalisation of local Japanese students has not necessarily been seen as related and has been discussed in a separate context.

However, as the Japanese economy is rapidly globalising, many Japanese companies are expanding their business overseas, mainly in emerging countries in East and South-East Asia. Those companies are therefore looking for human resources that can deal with their internationalised and globalised business practices. These people have been called ‘Global Human Capital (GHC)’: people who have English and other language abilities, overseas experience and cross-cultural understanding. However, many companies are struggling to find good GHCs, partly because of recent Japanese university students’ ‘inward looking’ attitude.

Because of this background, Japanese businesses as well as the government are strongly advocating the active development of GHCs in university education. In the year 2011, especially, government reports on the development of GHC were published, and expectations of the university sector regarding GHC development are now quite high. In this context, the internationalisation of Japanese universities is now defined not only as expanding their role of education to international students, but also expanding their role of education to the local Japanese students in terms of the development of GHCs.

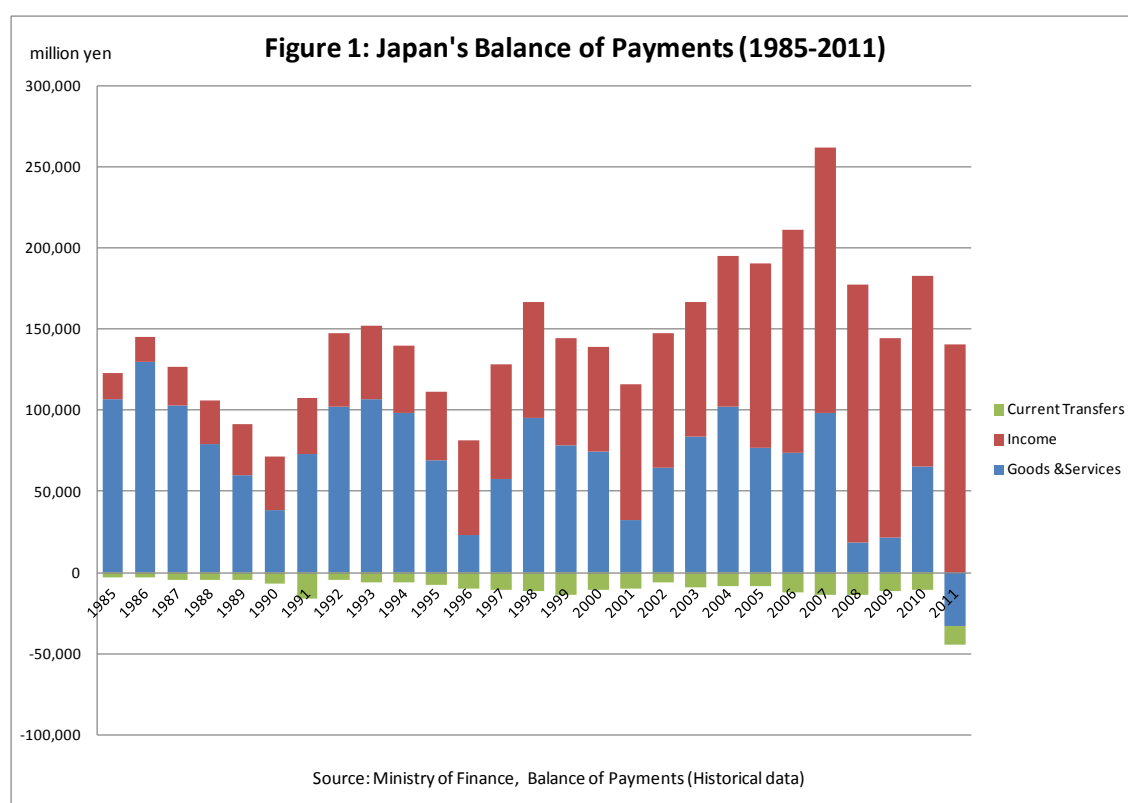
However, as the development of GHCs among Japanese students is a very new sphere, both contexts of internationalisation tend to be discussed separately. If cross-cultural experience and understanding is one of the main components of GHC, around 140,000 international students currently enrolled in the Japanese universities could be utilized as an asset in developing cross-cultural experience without physically going overseas. In this sense, it is a very good time to explore the possibility that the accumulation of international students can have a positive and productive effect on local students in the context of globalisation.

In this paper, in order to show this aspect, one graduate school in one of the main Japanese universities is taken into consideration. The Graduate School of International Development (GSID) at Nagoya University has a high concentration of international students, which make up half its total number. This means that international students are not a minority but a main component, and Japanese students have regular, constant and daily contact with them, not only in classes, but also in various activities outside the classroom.

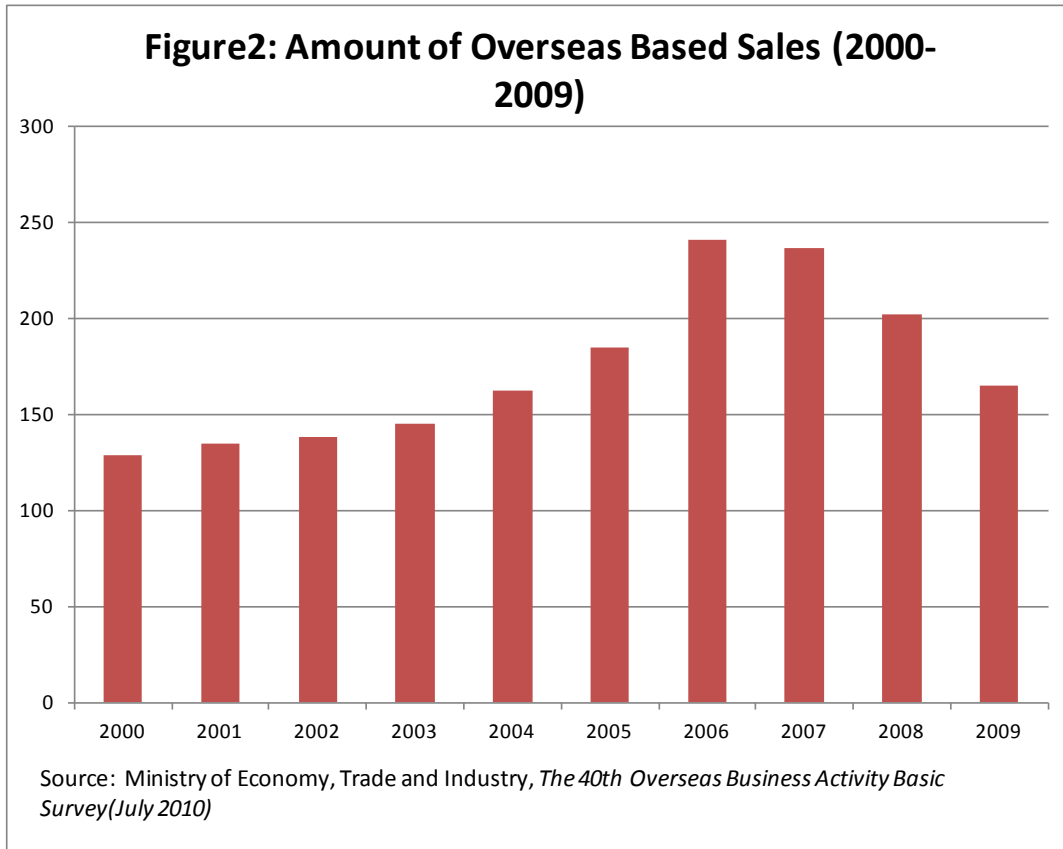
First, the general background of the globalisation of the Japanese economy is discussed. Second, the definition of GHCs in the Japanese context is mentioned. Third, the example of GSID in terms of international students and its effect on the local Japanese students is examined.

Globalisation of the Japanese Economy

In the 21st century, particularly, the Japanese economy is experiencing accelerating globalisation. One of the reasons for this is strongly related to the domestic economic and social situation in Japan. Japan is now facing a rapidly aging society, as about twenty four percent of the total population was over 65 in 2011. In addition, the total population has started to gradually decline. Therefore, there is little possibility of expansion in the Japanese domestic market. This is driving many Japanese companies to seek markets and profit overseas. Traditionally, the manufacturing sector in Japan has off-shored its production base to countries where wages are cheaper, such as China, Thailand, and Vietnam. Recently, not only relocating factories but many Japanese traditional domestic sectors such as convenience stores, clothing, cosmetics, and insurance are seeking an expanding market in emerging countries which are experiencing economic and population growth.



This trend is exactly reflected in the Japanese balance of payments statistics. Figure 1 shows its trend from 1985 to 2011. During these years, the balance of trade (or goods and services) has been decreasing, while the balance of income is steadily increasing. In the year 2011, especially, the Japanese balance of trade went into the red for the first time in twenty four years, but massive gain from income has kept the total balance in the black. This clearly shows that the Japanese economy is making the transition from being an exporting country to a country that gains income from overseas investment. Recent rapid expansion of business by Japanese companies is clearly reflected in these particular statistics.



More directly, figure 2 shows Japanese companies’ overseas-based sales from 2000 to 2009. There are some decreases in recent years, partly because of the Global Financial Crisis; however, there has been a trend of increase over the past ten years.

These statistics clearly show the ongoing trend of the expansion of Japanese businesses outside Japan. Therefore, virtually all sectors of Japanese companies are directly or indirectly dealing with businesses overseas. In these circumstances, it is quite natural that many Japanese companies are seeking human resources that can deal with overseas business, can work in overseas countries, and have good command of cross-cultural understanding and communication, which has recently been called ‘Global Human Capital’.

Definition of ‘Global Human Capital’

Because of the above-mentioned circumstances, the necessity of the development of GHCs is currently being advocated mainly from the private sector in Japan. However, as the concept of GHC has only been discussed for the past few years, there is no fixed and universal definition. However, it is possible to find tentative definitions in various reports and recommendations on GHC.

First, in June 2011, the Japan Business Federation, or Keidanren, which represents 1,281 major companies in Japan, published a *Proposal on the Development of Global Human Capital*. According to this proposal, GHCs are expected to have:

- a) a challenging attitude and mentality which does not get stuck in existing ideas,
- b) communication skills in foreign languages, and
- c) an interest in differences between Japanese and overseas cultures and values.

This definition is derived from their survey on *Human Resources Required by Industrial Sector and Expectations for University Education*, published in January 2011. This survey is based on answers from about 600 companies. Approximately half the companies answered that they are doing business overseas and planning to expand in the future. As for human resources management dealing with globalisation, 233 companies said that they will hire and develop Japanese employees with the aim of sending them overseas. This shows that many Japanese companies are expanding their business overseas and that they require human resources prepared to work overseas.

At the same time, the Japanese Government established the ‘Council to Promote Global Human Capital’ in May 2011, chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary. This council submitted a mid-term report in June 2011. In this report, three factors of GHCs are pointed out:

Factor One: Language ability, Communication ability

Factor Two: Independence and forward looking-ness, Challenging spirit, Cooperativeness and flexibility, Sense of responsibility and determined mind

Factor Three: Understanding of different cultures and Identity as Japanese

These factors are largely compatible with the *Keidanren* or business sector’s report on GHC. As more and more Japanese workers are expected to work abroad and to do work related to overseas issues even if they do not physically relocate, ‘language ability’ and ‘cross-cultural understanding’ seem to be very important criteria for GHCs. In both reports, factors such as ‘challenging mentality’ or ‘challenging spirit’ are also stressed. This also relates to the globalisation of Japanese business, which needs human capital to seek business opportunities proactively in a time when Japan is facing population decline and low growth. However, this particular factor is rather difficult to measure compared with language ability and cross-cultural understanding. Language ability such as English language ability can be objectively measured by internationalised language tests like TOEIC or TOEFL. It is rather difficult to measure cross-cultural understanding, but living overseas or having contact with foreigners should be important factors.

Therefore, the development of GHCs, especially in relation to university education, can be roughly summarized as ‘how to develop language skill and cross-cultural understanding’. If these two important factors are effectively developed, factors such as ‘challenging spirit’ can also be developed in accordance with the other two factors.

In this sense, from the university sector’s point of view, it is becoming more and more important to give students various opportunities for learning languages and deepening cross-cultural understanding, in order to cope with the strong expectations from the business sector regarding the development of GHCs in Japan.

Japanese Students’ ‘Inward Looking’ and Lack of GHCs

The two important factors of GHCs, language ability and cross-cultural understanding can be effectively developed from overseas study experience. However, the number of Japanese students studying abroad is decreasing instead of increasing.

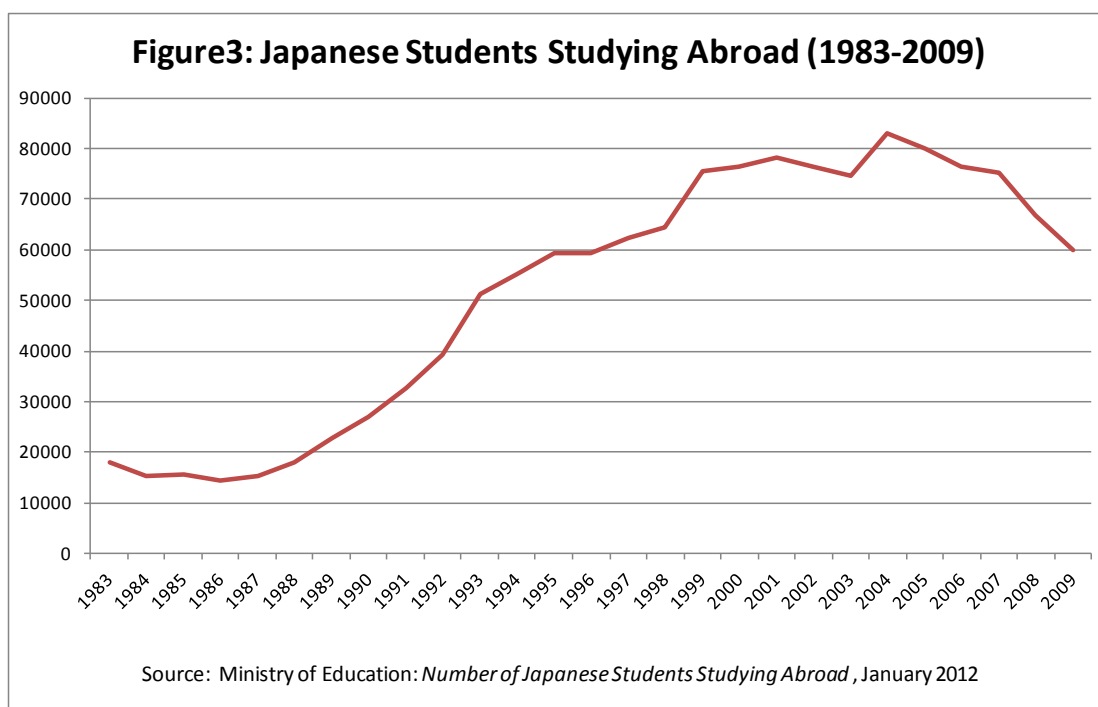


Figure 3 shows the number of Japanese students studying abroad from 1983 to 2009. The number was increasing until the year 2004, but started to decline in 2005 and has been decreasing continuously ever since. There was about a 28% decrease from 2005 to 2009. This can be related to the decrease in the total number of the Japanese younger generation; however, the rate of decrease is very rapid. This trend is now explained in the context of the ‘inward looking’ attitude of current Japanese students, even in this age of rapid globalisation of the Japanese economy and society.

According to the ‘Survey on Awareness of Globalisation of New Employees’ conducted by the Sanno Institute of Management in 2010, about 49% of new employees (from age 18 to 26) do not wish to work overseas. This can be compared with the survey results in 2001, when only about 29% answered in this way. At the same time, those who answered that they ‘wish to work, whatever the countries and regions’ increased from 17% in 2001 to 27% in 2010. As these two trends are happening simultaneously, it is not necessarily accurate to say that the entire Japanese younger generation is becoming ‘inward looking’. However, there are a growing number of people who are rather ‘inward looking’, even though globalisation has accelerated in the last decade.

In addition, an opinion survey conducted by the Japanese Government's Cabinet Office, entitled 'Survey on the International Movement of Workers' was published in July 2010. According to this survey, 22% of respondents answered that they are interested in working abroad, while 77% of them are not interested. Among those who are interested in working abroad, 70% are concerned with security and 63% are concerned with language ability. Among those who are not interested in working abroad, 52% said that they are not interested because they do not have confidence in their language ability. 47% said they are worried about living abroad.

This could be another indicator of the 'inward looking' attitude of the Japanese younger generation. At the same time, this survey shows that the background of 'inward looking' is partly due to the lack of language ability and overseas experience or cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, in terms of encouraging more of the Japanese currently 'outward looking' young generation into being even more outward looking, and encouraging currently 'inward looking' people to overcome it, the development of language skills and cross-cultural understanding is an important agenda in current Japanese university education.

In facing these contradicting trends, one of which is the high expectation of GHCs from the business sector and the other the increasing tendency of 'inward looking' among Japanese students, the university sector in Japan is increasingly expected to educate and develop Japanese students to become GHCs with language ability and cross-cultural understanding in the current globalised economic and social situation of Japan.

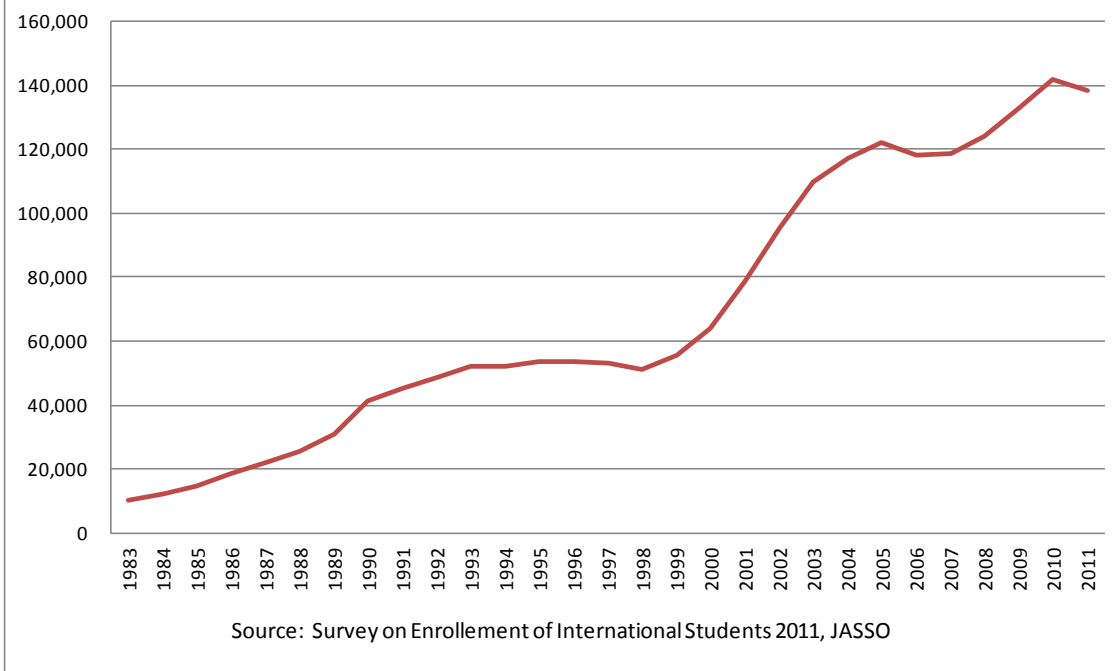
Good Practice of GSID for GHC development

GSID's Environment: Half the Total Students are International Students

Of course, there are various ways of developing GHCs. One important and effective method is to promote overseas education, which is beneficial for cultivating language ability and cross-cultural understanding. In fact, the Japanese Ministry of Education is promoting overseas study by Japanese students, and has dramatically increased the number in the 2012 budget. The number of long-term study students has been increased from 100 to 200, and short-term study students have been increased from 760 to 2,280.

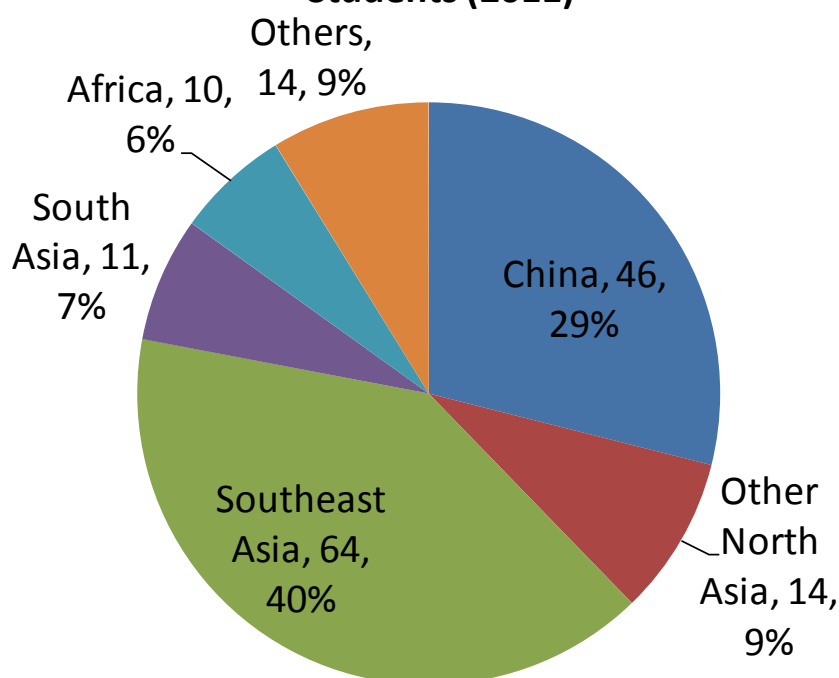
However, it is impossible to send all Japanese students overseas within the current budget constraints. It is also impossible to send students overseas against their will. Therefore, in addition to encouraging Japanese students to go overseas, other measures need to be undertaken proactively by universities.

Figure 4: Number of International Students in Japan (1983-2011)



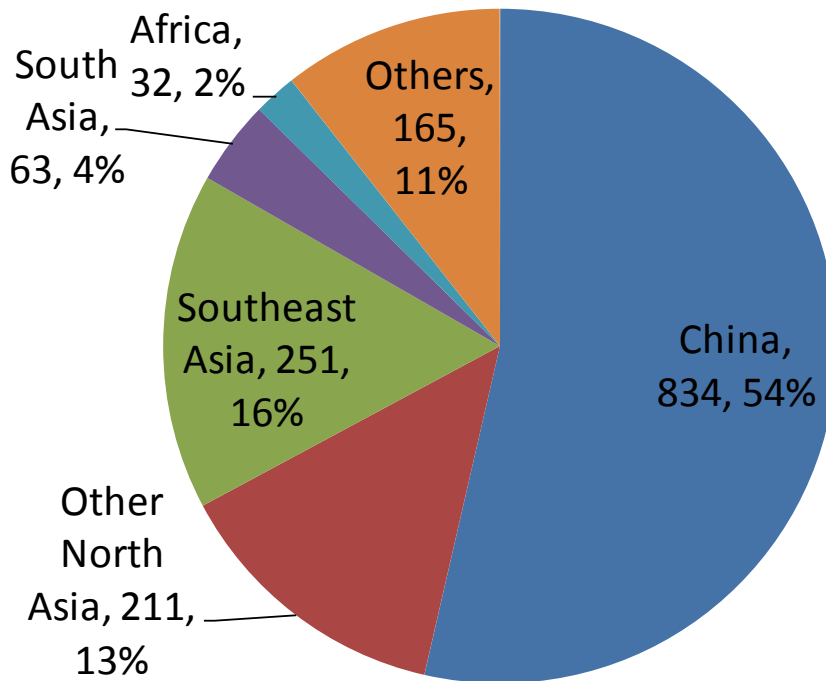
In doing so, the whole idea of this paper is that international students in Japan can be a valuable asset for the education of Japanese students as GHCs. Figure 4 shows the number of international students in Japan. Even though there was slight decrease of students, possibly because of the earthquake in March 2011, the number of international students has risen significantly in the last three decades. International students consisted of about 4.9% (141,774 out of 2,887,414) of total university students in Japan in 2010. Research-intensive universities in particular, such as Nagoya University, have a much higher concentration of international students. In 2011, about 9.3% of the total students at Nagoya University were international students (1,556 out of 16,597). As almost one in ten students is an international student at Nagoya University, the ways in which to utilize these international students for the education of Japanese students as GHCs will be a very important point.

Figure 5: Composition of GSID's International Students (2011)



For this purpose, one of the good practices of a particular graduate school within Nagoya University should be introduced. The Graduate School of International Development, or GSID, was established in 1991; it has only graduate programs, with no undergraduate students. At least 50% of the total students have been international students in the last decade. In 2011, GSID had 159 international students out of a total of 303. The composition of nationalities of international students is shown in Figure 5; students from various regions of the world are enrolled in GSID. If this is compared with the composition of total international students at Nagoya University, it is clear that GSID's composition is more diverse, in the sense that there is less of a predominance of students from China and other North Asian countries. In GSID, students from those countries make up about 38%, as compared to 67% in total in Nagoya University (Nagoya University's total composition of international students is shown in Figure 6).

Figure 6: Composition of Nagoya University's International Students (2011)



Chance for Practical English Language Communication

In this kind of environment, where international students are the majority, not the minority, English is virtually the second official language in GSID, and many Japanese students are fluent in English.

GSID has three departments: the Department of International Development, or DID, the Department of International Cooperation Studies, or DICOS, and the Department of International Communication, or DICOM. Almost 93% of the classes in DID and DICOS are taught in English, though almost all DICOM classes are taught in Japanese. This means that Japanese students, especially those in DID and DICOS, have a lot of opportunities for using English to communicate with international students from various backgrounds on a daily basis, not only in classes but also in daily life. Figure 7 shows a student study room where both Japanese and international students sit side by side and have regular communication. There are also student lounges where students can gather and chat (Figure 8).



Figure 7: Student Study Room



Figure 8: Student Lounge in GSID

Because an important factor of GHCs is language ability, this environment in GSID, where there are many chances for communication and facilities which promote it, is significantly contributing to the development of GHCs.

Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding

As mentioned above, cross-cultural understanding is another important factor of GHCs. Direct communication with international students from various countries is ideal for the practice of developing an understanding of different cultures. As previously stated, GSID's Japanese students have a lot of chances for communicating with international students on daily basis; many Japanese students work as 'tutors' for newly arrived international students. This 'tutor' system is conducted throughout Nagoya University, and the University pays 1,000 yen for Japanese students to look after newly arrived international students for a total of up to 80 hours. Every year, around 60 students work as tutors in GSID. Tutors are expected to assist with the daily life of international students,

such as accompanying them to government offices and mobile phone shops, communicating with Japanese people, assisting with paperwork, and so on. In addition to conversation with international students, tutors can learn in depth about cultures and lifestyles of their student's origin country, through the much closer contact that comes with helping them.

In a report of tutoring activity, some Japanese tutors mention their experience of cross-cultural understanding:

'The tutor system not only enables us to help international students, but it can also enhance our cross-cultural communication skill and language ability'.

'The tutoring experience was good in the sense that I could know about the difficulties international students face living in Japan, which I could hardly understand from my own daily life'.

'The tutor system is an important support mechanism, because even Japanese-speaking international students face difficulties in alien registration, looking for an apartment and so on. Japanese tutors can understand various values by having contact with international students. It was a very stimulating experience'.

'The tutor system is good for Japanese students because we can be friends with international students, not just help them'.

'The good thing about the tutor system is that it enables us to strengthen our relationship with international students. We can spend a long time with international students during the tutoring activity. Also, by seeing how international students face inconveniences in their daily life in Japan, I was able to broaden my insight'.

'The tutor system is quite meaningful because Japanese tutor students can mingle with international students and discover new things'.

'It is a good opportunity for Japanese students to understand how difficult it can be to live in a foreign country.'

'The tutor system enables both Japanese and international students to get to know each other's culture and customs'.

'The tutor system is good because Japanese students become interested in international students' countries' customs and culture, and international students become interested in Japanese customs and culture as well.'

'Even Chinese students, who are not far from Japan in terms of geography and culture, have so many differences from Japanese students. The tutor system is a good one, which enables us to get in touch with other cultures while staying in Japan'.

It should be obvious that Japanese students in GSID have the advantages of learning and having contact with foreign cultures and customs first hand from of the many international students enrolled in GSID. As cross-cultural understanding is an important component of GHCs, the high concentration of international students in GSID is benefitting the Japanese students in day-to-day contact with them.

Overseas Experience and Notion of Internationalisation

In addition to language ability and cross-cultural understanding, actual overseas experience should be an important element of developing GHCs. As mentioned previously, in GSID’s environment, it is true that Japanese students can develop their language skills and cross-cultural understanding without physically going overseas; however, the intention is not to undermine the benefit of an actual stay in a foreign country.

The fact that Japanese students in GSID can have close contact with international students virtually every day does not discourage them from going abroad; rather, it seems to promote travel overseas, compared with Japanese students who are enrolled in other graduate schools where there is not so high concentration of international students.

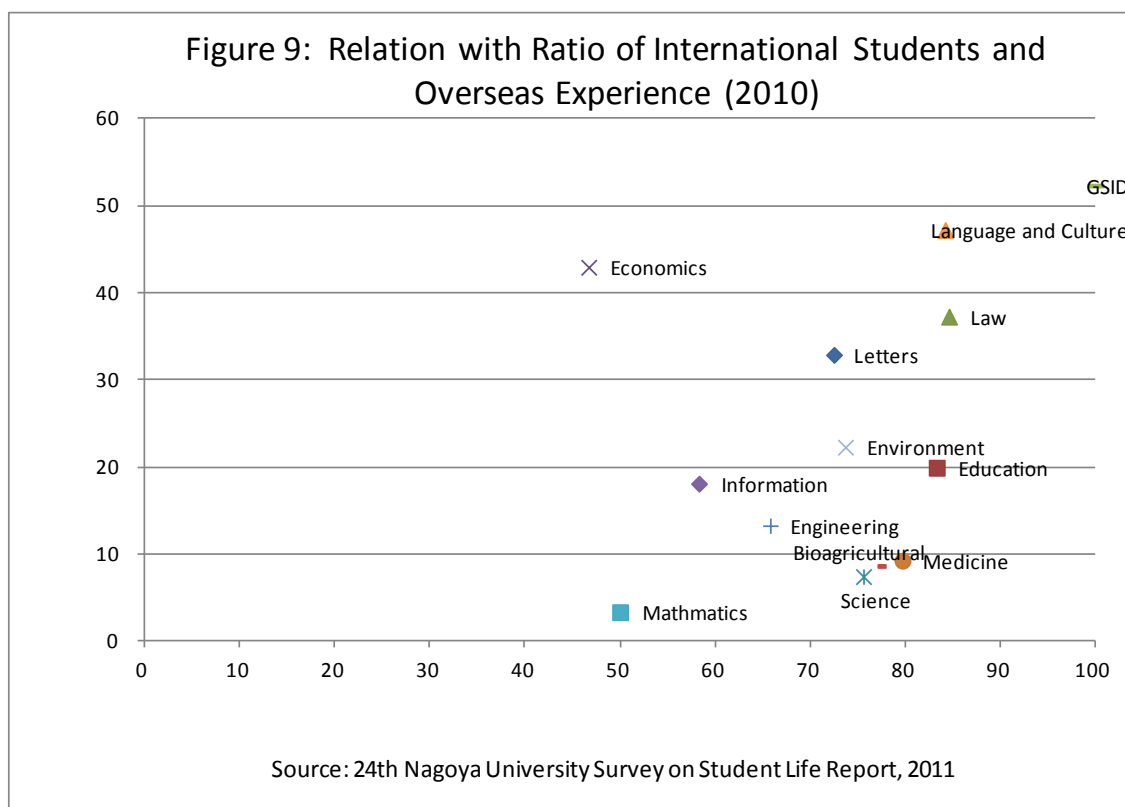
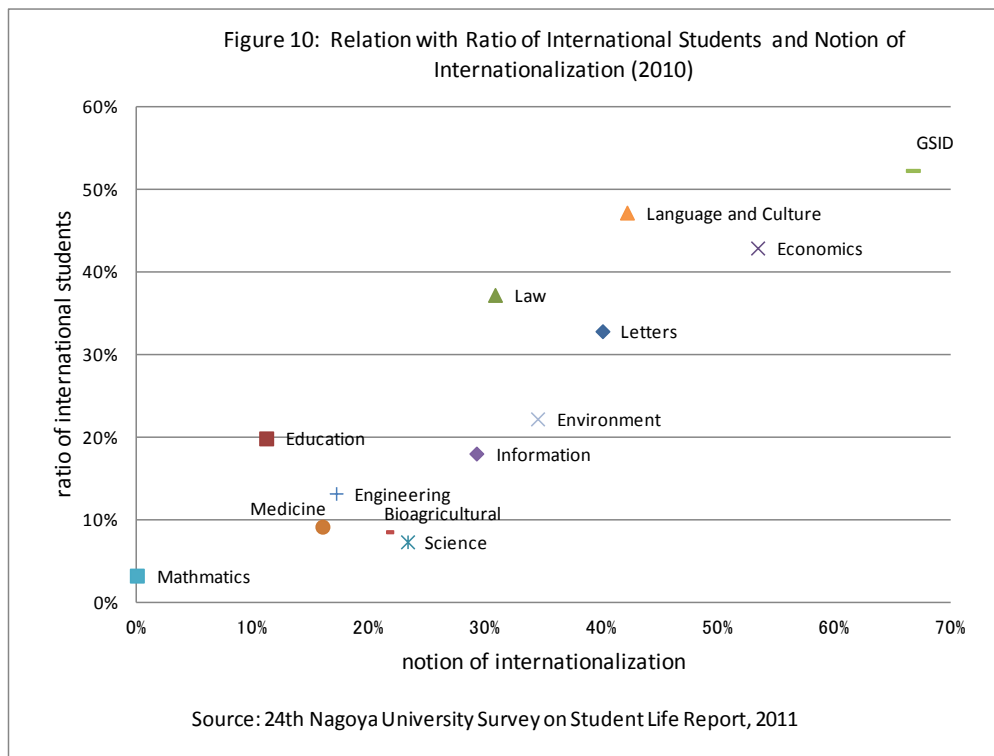


Figure 9 shows the relationship between the ratio of international students and the ratio of students who have overseas experience in each graduate school in Nagoya University. According to this, there is a certain correlation between them. The correlation coefficient is 0.61. In other words, broadly speaking, the more international students there are enrolled, the more Japanese students have overseas experience. Even though it is impossible to measure the direct relationship between

the existence of international students and Japanese students' overseas experience, it can be said that direct contact with international students somehow stimulates Japanese students' interests in foreign countries, as indicated in the tutoring activity report.



In addition to this, there are much stronger relationships between the notion of internationalisation and the existence of international students. Figure 10 shows the relationship between the notion of university internationalisation and the ratio of international students in each graduate school in Nagoya University. This has a much stronger correlation in comparison with overseas experience; the correlation coefficient is 0.88. It seems clear indication that the more international students there are in a graduate school, the more its students feel 'internationalised'. It is not completely clear what is specifically meant by 'internationalisation'; however, as the internationalisation of universities has become an important agenda in the Japanese university sector as well, it is a positive tendency that more students feel their own university is internationalised.

At the least, we can understand that the existence of international students somehow contributes to the internationalisation of a university, whether this consists of overseas experience or the notion of internationalisation. In this perspective, the high concentration of international students in GSID is obviously producing various positive effects for Japanese students.

Conclusion

This paper tries to show that the existence of international students is having a positive effect on local Japanese students in the context of the globalisation of Japanese society and economy. As the Japanese economy is accelerating its globalisation and many companies are expanding businesses overseas to seek growing and emerging markets, human capital with language skills and deep cross-cultural understanding is in high demand. It has become one of the most important missions of the Japanese university sector to effectively develop these human resources.

It has been strongly argued that the promotion of overseas study for Japanese students can help achieve this mission; at the same time, we should take a very proactive approach towards utilizing the large resource of international students in order to have a positive effect on Japanese students in terms of internationalisation.

In this paper, GSID, where half the total students are international students, was examined; and even though we do not have complete data, at least we can say that the existence of international students and mechanisms deliberately put in place to create contact between Japanese and international students are having a positive effect on Japanese students, in terms of language skills and cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, it will be an important agenda for the Japanese university sector to utilize international students, or maximize the benefit of internationalisation, for the benefit of local students.

GSID's example shows that not only a high concentration of international students is important, but also mechanisms to enable Japanese students to have close contact with international students. Therefore, of course, it is still very important to try to increase the total number of international students; however, it is also important to guarantee the chances of contact between Japanese and international students. This could be the tutor system in operation in GSID and Nagoya University, or a mandatory mixture of Japanese and international students in small number classes, or could be various events and festivals.

In the age of globalisation, accepting international students will continue to be an important mission for our university sector; at the same time, educating local students so that they are ready to work globally is also becoming a vital mission. The point is that we can achieve both missions by effectively connecting both local and international students. In this sense, GSID's success is a good practice to follow.