

Call for Abstracts:
Special Issue of the Social Science Japan Journal
Internationalization of Education and Labour in Japan

Submission deadline for Abstracts (200-300 words): November 31st, 2024

Please submit all Abstracts to: steve.entrich@uni-due.de

Summary

In response to Japan's economic stagnation since the “bubble burst” in the early 1990s, various reform proposals and policy measures have been introduced to free Japan from its self-imposed economic isolation. In particular, the renewed push towards internationalization (*kokusaika*) is expected to “revitalize” the labour market. In fact, recent studies indicate that many companies have started to hire more qualified foreign employees to drive internal internationalization and are increasingly screening applicants based on whether they possess transnational human capital (THC), i.e. foreign language skills and intercultural competencies. Some leading companies, such as Rakuten, have even introduced English as the new official corporate language to internationalize the mindset of their employees. To increase the proportion of global human resources among the Japanese workforce, two strategies are being pursued: (1) controlled immigration of foreign high-skilled workers; and (2) the internationalization of Japanese education with special emphasis on international educational exchange to produce more high-skilled Japanese workers with high levels of THC. In April 2023, for example, the Council for the Creation of Future Education (CCFE), chaired by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, formulated a new strategic initiative. It aims to significantly increase the number of foreign students to up to 400,000 in the coming years following the COVID-19 slump. In the opposite direction, the even more ambitious goal is to send 500,000 Japanese students abroad every year. How well placed the firm belief that this internationalization strategy will pay off actually is anything but clear.

This special issue therefore aims to collect original contributions providing new insights on the outcomes of recent internationalization attempts in Japan with regards to either (1) labour market integration of immigrants in Japan, (2) the internationalization of education in Japan, (3) the effects of education on labour market outcomes, or (4) a combination of the former (e.g., effects of educational programs directed at the integration of immigrants into the

Japanese labour market). Special emphasis is given to social, ethnic, and gender inequalities in the outcomes of internationalization of education and labour in Japan.

Eligible articles should thus cover topics related to:

- Pre- to post-pandemic internationalization of education and its effects for individuals (Japanese and foreign nationals) and their labour market outcomes
- Educational activities and programs at all levels of the education system meant to foster transnational competencies of individuals (Japanese and foreign nationals) and how this may affect subsequent labour market outcomes / integration, e.g.,
 - Study abroad
 - English learning
 - Academic and labour exchange (including internships etc.)
 - School and university-level internationalization programs
 - Inclusive education

Researchers from diverse disciplines – especially sociology, education, psychology, economics, migration studies – are encouraged to submit articles providing new insights into the state of internationalization of Japan. Contributions are expected to present innovative theoretical approaches and empirically sound analyses that provide new findings on the role of internationalization programs and practices for individual educational and career paths, as well as gender, ethnic and social inequalities.

Please submit your Abstract (200-300 words) until November 31st, 2024 to the following email-address: steve.entrich@uni-due.de

Publication schedule:

- 1) October/November:** Collecting abstracts
- 2) December 2024:** Pre-decision of papers based on Abstracts
- 3) January to April:** Submission of full papers
- 4) April onwards:** Review process etc., including several rounds of review
- 5) October-December 2025:** Publication of the special issue

Keywords: internationalization, kokusaika, education, social stratification, gendered life course, social inequality, labour migration, study abroad, international student mobility, labour market outcomes

About the journal: <https://academic.oup.com/ssjj>

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