

Session 1

Strategic Return: A Qualitative Analysis of Why Study-Abroad Students Choose Domestic Universities

Kumi MATSUZAKI

D5 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

In Japan, government policies actively promote study abroad in high school to foster global talent. Simultaneously, the domestic university admission system is rapidly diversifying, shifting away from traditional subject-based examinations toward non-subject-based "Comprehensive Selection" (AO) and recommendation admissions. This qualitative study explores the decision-making processes of students who experienced long-term study in English-speaking countries during high school but opted to enroll in Japanese domestic universities rather than progressing overseas.

Findings from semi-structured interviews with university students reveal that domestic progression is a proactive and strategic choice. The expansion of Comprehensive Selection functions as a major institutional driver. Instead of being disadvantaged by the temporary interruption of their standard high school curriculum, returnees strategically leverage their study abroad and extracurricular experiences as powerful assets for these non-subject evaluations. Furthermore, this decision-making process is deeply shaped by a multi-layered structure involving individual motivations, family resources, and high school guidance. Ultimately, the study demonstrates how returnees navigate the intersection of personal trajectory and Japan's evolving university admission system.

Japan as a Destination? Transformations in Pragmatic Choices and Evolving Aspirations among Southeast Asian EMI Students

Akinari HOSHINO Maki KATO

Professor (Nagoya University)

Abstract

This study explores why undergraduate students from Southeast Asia choose Japan as a study destination through English Medium Instruction (EMI) programs and how their motivations and expectations change after arrival. Using a qualitative case study of Nagoya University's G30 program, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight first- and second-year Southeast Asian undergraduate students across STEM and social science disciplines.

The analysis shows that students' pre-arrival motivations are largely shaped by pragmatic considerations. Key factors include the availability of generous scholarships such as MEXT and G30, the relatively low cost of tuition and living expenses compared to Western countries, strong research and educational infrastructures—particularly in STEM fields—and Japan's reputation for safety and high quality of life. The opportunity to study in English while gaining exposure to Japanese language and culture also influenced decision-making.

However, students' lived experiences in Japan revealed several mismatches between expectations and reality. Many reported limited interaction with Japanese students due to institutional structures and language barriers, as well as uneven academic rigor within EMI programs. At the same time, their views on future careers evolved: rather than seeing Japan as a single, fixed destination, students developed more flexible and internationally oriented career aspirations, including graduate study or employment in other countries.

This study highlights both the appeal and the structural challenges of EMI undergraduate programs in Japan and offers insights for universities seeking to further internationalize their undergraduate education.

How Do Chinese International Students Choose to Work in Japan? : A Retrospective Human-Centered Analysis

Yukiyo SATO

Specially Appointed Instructor (Nanzan University)

Yukiko MOMMA

Senior Lecturer (Tohoku University)

Abstract

The number of international students obtaining employment with Japanese companies has increased in recent years. Previous studies suggest that their post-graduation decisions are often motivated by the pursuit of career advantages in their home countries or shaped by structural constraints, including differences in academic calendars and recruitment practices. This study argues that the choice of country where international students seek employment after graduation and their settlement intentions are influenced by sociocultural values and socioeconomic conditions of their home countries. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with sixteen former Chinese international students who completed graduate programs at a national research university in Japan. The data were analyzed using a retrospective human-centered perspective framework.

The results indicated that their decision-making and aspirations are shaped by traditional Chinese cultural values, including ‘learning as a means of survival’, ‘family bonds’, and ‘normative importance of home ownership’, as well as societal circumstances—such as ‘derailment of traditional values and norms’, ‘rising individualism’, ‘money driven’, ‘declining government trust’, and ‘tough job market for new graduates’. Consequently, it is confirmed that many research participants actively and strategically pursue employment and settlement opportunities in Japan.

Policies, Source Countries, and Industrial Sectors Retaining International Students in Taiwan: Mobility and Post-Graduation Employment Trends

CHENG-CHENG YANG

Professor (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

Taiwan's higher education sector is intensifying internationalization due to demographic decline, regional competition, and post-pandemic policy shifts. While international students are seen as important for institutional and workforce needs, their transition into the labor market is not clearly defined. This study evaluates recent trends in international student mobility and regulated post-graduation employment in Taiwan by synthesizing Ministry of Education enrolment data on overseas students (2015–2024) with Ministry of Labor administrative records regarding effective work permits granted to foreign graduates under the Evaluation Points System (2014–2024). Using a descriptive–interpretive approach, the report highlights three main findings. Taiwan's recruitment of international students has shifted focus from East Asia to Southeast Asia, mainly due to rising numbers from Vietnam, Indonesia, and New Southbound Policy countries. Regulated post-study employment opportunities have grown, though work-permit holders' nationalities don't fully mirror enrollment trends—Malaysia remains largest, but Vietnam and Indonesia are increasing. Employment outcomes after graduation differ by nationality, with foreign graduates distributed unevenly across industries despite consistent regulations, revealing a segmented system.

Poster session

Core Principles of Teacher Compensation Systems and the Impact of Compensation Satisfaction on Job Performance

HSUAN-FU HO

Professor (National Chiayi University)

HUNG-YU PAN

Associate Professor (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

Teacher compensation systems play a critical role in attracting and retaining talent, motivating educators, and improving educational quality. However, almost no systematic research has examined the principles that define an effective compensation system. This study synthesizes existing literature on teacher salary and pension reforms to identify twelve fundamental principles. Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), data were collected from 150 elementary school members in Taiwan to evaluate the relative importance of the principles and compare perspectives across groups. Thereafter, the twelve principles were further streamlined into eight principles, categorized under equity, incentive, and adequacy. A subsequent survey of 620 elementary school teachers assessed satisfaction with Taiwan's salary system and its influence on job performance. Findings revealed relatively high levels of satisfaction and demonstrated that compensation satisfaction exerts a significant positive effect on teachers' job performance.

Keywords: school finance, teacher compensation, AHP

Exploring the Backgrounds and Meanings of Philanthropic Behavior among University Alumni in Japan

Tsubasa FURUHATA

Designated Assistant Professor (Nagoya University)

Abstract

This study explores how university alumni in Japan come to engage in philanthropic activities for their alma mater and how they interpret the meanings of such engagement. It also examines whether and how alumni–university relationships are transformed through these processes. Drawing on in-depth interviews with twelve alumni who graduated from a national university in the Kanto region, the study adopts a qualitative approach to analyze their narratives. The findings indicate that alumni are often motivated to support their alma mater through interpersonal relationships formed during their student years, as well as through social networking platforms after graduation. Alumni interpret their philanthropic behavior in multiple ways: some frame it as a form of reciprocity or a sense of obligation toward their alma mater, while others understand it as a means of addressing perceived imbalances after observing others’ contributions. In contrast, some describe their engagement in more casual and less morally charged terms. Furthermore, alumni’s psychological ties to their alma mater tend to be strengthened through philanthropic engagement, and their perspectives on the university evolve over the life course, often mediated by their views of current students.

How Do Freelance Instructors Make Sense of Their Teaching Experience in Higher Education? ; An Exploratory Interview Study of Dual-Role Part-Time Lecturers in Japan

Kazuaki MARUYAMA

Associate Professor (Nagoya University)

Kayoko ITO

Assistant Professor (Aichi Shukutoku University)

Abstract

Recent years have seen growing reliance on part-time lecturers in universities. While the experiences and difficulties of those who work primarily or exclusively as part-time lecturers have been discussed extensively, often in relation to labor conditions and precarity, much less attention has been paid to those who teach part-time while also working outside higher education. This presentation focuses on one such group: freelance instructors engaged in career support who concurrently serve as part-time lecturers at Japanese universities. Drawing on exploratory qualitative interviews, the study examines how these instructors make sense of their teaching experience in higher education. In particular, it asks how they perceive the meaning, value, and challenges of teaching at universities in relation to their professional work outside academia. By focusing on instructors who move between the university and external professional fields, this study aims to shed light on an overlooked dimension of contemporary academic labor. The findings are expected to contribute to discussions on the diversification of the teaching workforce in higher education and on the changing boundaries between academic and non-academic professional practice.

Session 2

The benefits and obstacles of tablet teaching: A research questionnaire on the application and dilemma of primary school teachers

YA-TING ZHANG

M1 (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the current implementation, perceived effectiveness, and challenges of tablet-assisted teaching among elementary school teachers in the Yunlin–Chiayi region of Taiwan. A questionnaire survey was conducted with public elementary school teachers in the target area. The research instrument consisted of five dimensions: teachers' background information, current use of tablets in teaching, perceived instructional benefits, challenges and difficulties encountered, and school support needs. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent-samples t tests, and one-way analysis of variance.

The findings revealed that teachers generally held positive views toward tablet-assisted teaching, particularly in terms of enhancing students' learning motivation, classroom engagement, learning performance, interaction, and self-directed learning. Nevertheless, several obstacles were identified, including device maintenance issues, increased lesson-preparation workload, student distraction, and inconsistent parental attitudes toward tablet use. In addition, teachers expressed a strong need for greater school support, especially in technical assistance, professional development, and instructional resources.

Development of a Classification of High School Students' Misconceptions in Geometrical Optics

Shiho SASAKI

D1 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

In the field of optics in physics, learners have many difficulties. In particular, many studies have reported misconceptions about geometrical optics. However, few studies have systematically classified these misconceptions. Moreover, these findings are not fully aligned with the Japanese educational curriculum and are therefore difficult for Japanese teachers to apply in practice. In light of the above, this study aims to develop a classification table of misconceptions in geometrical optics to support instructional practice among high school physics teachers in Japan. Based on a review of the literature, some misconceptions were selected and categorized into five perspectives. These five perspectives were classified according to their characteristics and common ways of thinking. In addition, supporting materials including illustrations and explanations were developed so that teachers can readily understand the characteristics of each misconception at a glance. The proposed classification table may serve as a tool for understanding misconceptions and for supporting instructional design in classroom contexts.

Is Teaching Unique? : A Quantitative Cross-Occupational Analysis Using Job-Tag/O-NET Data

Reiko FUKUHARA

M2 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

This study offers an exploratory cross-occupational comparison using Japan's O-NET dataset to examine the "uniqueness" of the teaching profession. Here, "uniqueness" refers to three interrelated claims: (1) teaching presupposes work characterized by open-ended duties combined with professional discretion; (2) it functions as an occupational ethic that sustains teachers' professional identity under conditions of chronic busyness; and (3) it underpins a professionalization logic that justifies appropriate treatment on the grounds of such open-ended and discretionary work.

While educational research in Japan has often emphasized this uniqueness, it has rarely been assessed using a common metric across occupations. The analysis compares four teaching professions and five medical professions using ten work-value items.

Results show that teaching is positioned near the overall median on most items, without marked deviation. Clearer differences appear in "work-life balance" and "service/social contribution." Difficulty in achieving work-life balance is shared by teachers and physicians, whereas junior high school teachers display a distinctive position. Physicians also show greater variation across specialties. A supplementary analysis of an interpersonal work-context indicator suggests that teachers and physicians may jointly constitute an outlier group. These findings imply that perceived uniqueness may stem less from job content itself than from working conditions across professions.

Session 3

A Study on the Motivation and Learning Outcomes of University Students Enrolling in Interdisciplinary Programs

SHU-JUN LIU

M1 (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

In the era of globalization and the knowledge economy, complex societal challenges and the competency-based focus of the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum require higher education to cultivate integrated, interdisciplinary talents. To understand whether students enroll in Interdisciplinary Programs driven by intrinsic interest or external factors, this study investigates their motivations and learning outcomes. A self-designed, five-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to students at National Chiayi University who are currently or previously enrolled in such programs. Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent-samples t-tests. The study expects to clarify differences in motivations and outcomes across various background variables, and to verify the predictive power of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations on cognitive, affective, and skill-based learning outcomes. Ultimately, the findings aim to serve as a practical reference for academic administrative units to optimize promotion strategies and counseling mechanisms for interdisciplinary education.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary Programs, Learning motivation, Learning outcomes

Why Does the Higher Education Need to be Hectic?; The Growing Significance of the Slow Academia in Japan

Ryoya HAJI

D1 (Nagoya University)

Yukiya HAMADA

D1 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

Acceleration is a central core principle of modernization, causing educational institutions, including higher education, to be hectic. In turn, this winds up engendering an academic reaction called “Slow Academia”, a counter notion to acceleration worldwide. This academic movement, by and large, is associated with neoliberal educational reform. However, while there is a plethora of research that focuses on the neoliberal reform in Japan’s higher education context, little has been examined regarding the relationship between “Slow Academia”, and higher education. Thus, this collaborative presentation comprehensively examines a couple of examples of Japan’s higher education reform under the neoliberal era and situates the “Slow Academia” concept in the context of Japan’s higher education. This presentation concludes by arguing that no higher education is sustainable without slowness, and the “Slow Academia” concept is a forthcoming academic tool to underscore the significance of slowness, especially in Japan’s higher education. Further research is needed to meticulously analyze how the accelerating society has adverse effects on higher education in Japan.

Rethinking general education and student success

Chie FUJIKAKE

D3 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of the reform of a general education curriculum on student success. This research focuses on an urban state university on the West Coast of the United States because of its distinctive general education curriculum developed and implemented by a dedicated academic department. The curriculum was established approximately 30 years ago. The faculty members are specifically hired for the department. One of its defining features is its connection to local communities, as well as its emphasis on diversity and social justice as central learning goals. The community-engaged learning courses they offer are capstone experiences for senior students. Because of its distinctive nature, the program has attracted attention from both the U.S. and overseas. However, the interview data indicate that reform of the general education curriculum and the possible closure of the department are currently under discussion due to a combination of the current government policies, declining enrollment, and different perspectives from the other academic departments. Since first-generation students account for a large percentage of the student population, such changes may have significant implications for student learning and success. This presentation discusses those potential impacts.

Session 4

A Study on Retirement Preparation of Elementary School Teachers in Taiwan

HSIN-I HUANG

M1 (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

By the end of 2025, Taiwan's population aged 65 and above had reached 19.9% of the total population, officially entering a "super-aged society." In such a long life course, proper retirement preparation plays a crucial role in post-retirement psychological adjustment, physical and mental health, and overall life satisfaction. Therefore, how to assist teachers in smoothly transitioning from their professional careers to retirement life has become an important issue. This study takes current elementary school teachers aged 50 and above as its research subjects, using a self-developed questionnaire as the research instrument. Based on existing literature, the researcher identified 12 key items of retirement preparation, categorized into three major dimensions: "Physical and Mental Health," "Financial Preparation," and "Social Participation." A five-point Likert scale was adopted for measurement. In addition to assessing the current status of teachers' retirement preparation, the study further explores differences across age, gender, and educational background. The research findings will be compiled into concrete recommendations to serve as references for teachers in their personal retirement planning, as well as important guidance for the government in developing future teacher retirement policies.

Keywords: Retirement, health preparation, financial preparation, social preparation

Research on the Self-Efficacy of Elementary School Teachers in Taiwan

HSIANG-LI YANG

M1 (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

Teacher self-efficacy not only enhances teachers' work emotions and job satisfaction, but also has a significant impact on increasing teachers' commitment, which in turn improves students' learning outcomes. Teacher self-efficacy refers to the beliefs and judgments that teachers hold about their ability to effectively accomplish teaching tasks, manage classrooms, and promote student learning in specific teaching contexts. Based on existing literature, this study categorizes teacher self-efficacy into three dimensions: classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. In addition to examining the overall level of teacher self-efficacy among elementary school teachers, this study also investigates whether significant differences exist across age, gender, and years of teaching experience. A self-developed Likert five-point scale questionnaire was used as the primary research instrument, distributed to 60 in-service elementary school teachers. The findings of this study can serve as a reference for teacher professional development planning, and provide educational authorities with a clear guide in designing more effective teacher training and support measures.

A Study of Undergraduate Students' Sustainability Course Experience, Sustainability Knowledge and Attitudes, and Sustainable Apparel Consumption Behavior

YI-CHUN WU

M1 (National Chiayi University)

Abstract

The UN views Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a catalyst for societal change. This is vital in the fast fashion era—the world’s second-largest polluter. Although Generation Z dominates fast fashion consumption, they show a higher willingness to pay for eco-friendly products. Using sustainable fashion as a lens, this study examines how campus courses shape students' sustainability literacy across disciplines. It aims to bridge the gap between awareness and actual consumption behavior.

Keywords: Course Experience, Sustainability Consciousness, Sustainable Fashion, Sustainable Consumption Behavior.

Evaluating Sustainability through Component-Based HE Institutional Performance Framework: An SDG and ESG Perspective

Jasur SALIKHOV

D2 (Nagoya University)

Abstract

This study develops a multidimensional framework for assessing sustainability in higher education institutions (HEIs) by operationalizing sustainability through five core institutional components: program integration, pedagogical capacity, research activity, academic mobility, and management practices. In contrast to approaches that treat sustainability as a singular or isolated institutional attribute, the present framework conceptualizes it as a complex and systemic phenomenon embedded across the academic, scientific, organizational, and administrative functions of universities. The proposed indicator system enables a comprehensive evaluation of how HEIs contribute to sustainable development through measurable university-level variables. The assessment model further recognizes that not all indicators contribute equally to sustainability performance. Their relative importance is therefore determined, allowing the final evaluation framework to reflect the differentiated significance of indicators and components. For analytical interpretation, the identified indicators are also linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), making it possible to examine HEIs' contributions to sustainable development in a structured manner. In addition, the SDGs may be clustered within the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework by aligning ecology and resource-oriented goals with the Environmental dimension, human development and inclusion-oriented goals with the social dimension, and institutional, policy, and partnership-oriented goals with the Governance dimension. Overall, the study offers a scientifically grounded and empirically informed framework for evaluating sustainability in HEIs through an integrated system of indicators and SDG-oriented analysis.

Organizing Committee:

加藤 真紀／Maki KATO (Nagoya University, Japan)

松崎 久美／Kumi MATSUZAKI (Nagoya University, Japan)

高橋 俊樹／Toshiki TAKAHASHI (Nagoya University, Japan)

古畑 翼／Tsubasa FURUHATA (Nagoya University, Japan)

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