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# Sequencing Internationalization Policy in the 21st Century: A Comparative Analysis between Japan and the United States of America

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## Abstract

*This paper offers a comparative analysis of internationalization policy between two distinct nations entrenched in unique sociopolitical and economic cultures, namely Japan and the United States of America (U.S.A.). How do different policy-making processes impact internationalization policy in practice? While Japan's internationalization policy is clearly articulated at the national level, the U.S. does not have a national higher education internationalization policy that emanates from the federal government. Therefore, in this study we analyzed macro-level data from three distinct policy-making sectors to identify U.S. national policy. Our analysis identifies the policy-making process in each nation and elucidates how internationalization policy unfolded in both cases. Second, we compare the development of higher education internationalization policy efforts in the two countries, sequencing events, factors, and rationales that impacted national policy. This approach allowed us to compare the implications of having a centralized versus a pluralistic internationalization policy-making process in the 2000s. Our research shows that, in practical terms, there is more variation in higher education internationalization policy in the U.S. than in Japan. In both countries, policy dynamics were influenced by social and economic factors, and political factors influenced policy in the U.S. An academic and humanitarian rationale for internationalization policy was not central to the essence of the policy in either country.*

Keywords: comparative analysis, higher education institutions, internationalization policy, Japan

## Introduction

The 21st century is largely characterized by the effects of globalization, a process that has escalated through systematic regrouping and alignment of nation states since the Second World War (de Wit, 2002; Giddens, 2002). Globalization is a multi-pronged process that touches on economics, culture, and political processes as well as on transnational migration (Ritzer & Robinson, 2008). In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the multi-pronged effects

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of globalization revealing the extent of interconnectedness and interdependence between nation states (Ranney et al., 2020). In higher education, Altbach (2007) has defined globalization as "the broad, largely inevitable economic, technological, political, cultural, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education" (p. 64). In reaction, the higher education sector has utilized internationalization policy to address these globalization trends that generate interconnection and interdependence among nation states.

For Knight (2012), internationalization policy is an institutional reaction to globalization forces and resulting demands for human and social capital at an international level (Stanley, 2012). It has also been deemed an agent of globalization in itself (Knight, 2012; Paige, 2005), particularly as higher education institutions worldwide compete to attract over five million international students annually (UNESCO, 2019). Overall, scholars agree that internationalization policy has been a decisive factor in the transformation of tertiary education (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011; Knight, 2012). Nevertheless, and in spite of clearly articulated higher education internationalization measures around the globe, approaches, efforts, and initiatives have varied widely among nation states (Veerasamy, 2021).

The ways in which internationalization policy is outlined and implemented in individual countries vary greatly depending on approaches, governmental systems, and the specific mechanics of policy-making processes, all of which combine to yield different results. Consequently, a comparative investigation of nation states' internationalization policy processes for the higher education sector may be of particular value in an era of growing interconnectedness between countries, educational institutions, and widespread student mobility. Moreover, comparative analysis enables evaluation of the practical impact of differing policy-making processes on campus internationalization to advance research in this field. In this paper, we outline and compare macro-level higher education internationalization policy-making processes in Japan and the U.S., and offer a brief discussion on the nature and extent of 21st century internationalization policy efforts in these two nations to answer this question: How do different policy-making processes impact internationalization policy in practice?

## Literature Review

Scholars attest that investment in internationalization differs greatly among policy-making actors, institutions, and other stakeholders, and may be linked to a variety of sociocultural, political, economic and academic rationales (Brewer & Leask, 2012; Knight, 2004). Key among these rationales is internationalization as a source of revenue, especially through profits generated by international student recruitment (Rumbley et al., 2012). The goal of attracting students from abroad, in turn, kindles a quest to elevate an institution's reputation at the international level and achieve a top spot in competitive world rankings (Knight, 2012; Rumbley et al., 2012; Yamamoto, 2018). Another significant rationale emerging from the literature is the desire to produce interculturally competent graduates capable of addressing global challenges from different cultural perspectives and advancing economic development at a national level (Coelen, 2015; Deardorff & Jones, 2012; Yamamoto, 2018).

Internationalization rationales are accompanied by a range of international, regional, and national strategies involving stakeholders from government agencies to interest groups and educational providers in a variety of roles (Knight, 2012). Yet both rationales and strategies for internationalization have come under heavy criticism in the past decade. In 2011, Knight identified five myths relating to internationalization: first, that foreign students are internationalizing agents; second, that international reputation serves as a proxy for quality; third, that the quantity of international institutional agreements is a sign of institutional prestige; fourth that international accreditation is representative of the scope and quality of an institution's international activities; and fifth, that global branding, i.e., international institutional visibility, denotes internationalization. Knight's "Five Myths about Internationalization" are largely agreed on by international education scholars.

Furthermore, a corpus of research in the field has been critical of the disproportional emphasis placed by governments and institutions on quantitative output measures as symbols of internationalization, rather than on improved educational quality (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011; Knight, 2012). These scholars are also critical of the emphasis placed on global higher education rankings, highlighting issues with the ranking mechanisms (Rumbley et al., 2012; Yonezawa, 2010). Scholars have further added that internationalization rationales which fail to be accompanied by consistent policies, objectives, and monitoring systems lead to a disconnected and ultimately unsuccessful internationalization process

(Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011; Rumbley et al., 2012). In the following sections, we examine the cases of Japan and the U.S. to garner some understanding of the relationship between institutional policy-making models and national internationalization policy.

**Internationalization in Japan**

Japan's historical and cultural ties with other countries have been largely guided by political and economic motives (Inuzuka, 2017). In the 20th century, as part of reconstruction efforts after WWII, the Japanese government encouraged students to study abroad to connect with the outside world and gain knowledge that could help rebuild the war-torn country (Juwitasari, 2020; Sanders, 2019). As globalization intensified during the 1970s and Japan began to experience a period of large economic growth in the 1980s, there was a renewed push to internationalize the education system as a means to compete with the West; as such, building Japan's economic and political power remained at the forefront of internationalization policies in the 21st century (Inuzuka, 2017).

Based on a perceived need to foster global *jinzai*, or global human resources (GHR), capable of increasing the international competitiveness of Japan in the 1980s, debates on internationalization, or *kokusaika*, developed further (Yonezawa, 2014). From the onset, the Japanese government positioned itself at the center of the internationalization process by developing, promoting, and implementing policies in a top-down manner (Horie, 2002; Yamamoto, 2018). This approach required very little input from institutions, faculty, or students, leading to strong institutional dependence on government initiatives and funding over time (Yonezawa, 2009).

To achieve its economic development and global competitiveness goals, the government has concentrated efforts on two main internationalization strategies. The first strategy has focused on international student recruitment through the launch of two successive plans seeking to increase the number of enrolled international students at Japanese educational institutions. The first plan, appropriately titled "The International Student 100,000 Plan," aimed to increase the annual number of enrolled international students from 10,428 in 1983 to 100,000 by the year 2000 (Ota, 2003). Launched by Prime Minister Nakasone, this plan effectively marked the beginning of the current phase of internationalization in Japan by openly addressing reforms to Japanese higher education institutions (Horie, 2002; Ota, 2003). This initial plan was followed in 2008 by the "300,000 International Students Plan," which proposed intensifying recruitment efforts to annually attract 300,000 international students to Japan. This plan also placed a larger emphasis on attracting top talent and increasing the overall international student share of the market (Kuwamura, 2009).

The second strategy adopted by Japan has focused on the provision of governmental funding for institutions implementing internationalization policies. Since 2009, the Japanese government has designed three heavily funded internationalization projects, namely the Global 30 (2009-2014), Go Global Japan (2012-2017), and the Top Global University (TGU) Project (2014-2023), with a common goal of reforming and internationalizing higher education institutions from within. These three plans were designed and implemented in rapid succession, emphasizing goals of recruiting larger numbers of international students and faculty; developing courses and degrees in English; increasing the number of short-term study abroad programs; and establishing overseas offices (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology: MEXT, 2011, 2014, 2017a).

The most recent internationalization initiative, the TGU Project, was announced in 2014 with an original budget of 7.7 billion yen and scheduled to run until the end of the 2023 fiscal year (MEXT, 2014, 2017b). The project largely emerged out of a general sense that Japan is falling behind other nations in its internationalization of education and research, and it must act strategically to secure higher spots in the education world rankings (Sandhu, 2015). As such, the TGU Project aimed to promote internationalization initiatives in line with previous projects through the recruitment of international students and the development of English-medium courses, multicultural campuses, and internationalized curricula and co-curricula (Sandhu, 2015; Shimmi & Yonezawa, 2015). Overall, the project originally aimed to fund and further internationalize a total of 37 higher education institutions: 13 Type A universities, aiming to become one of the top 100 highest ranked HEIs in the world, and 24 Type B universities, responsible for leading internationalization efforts in Japan.

Recent strategies adopted by the Japanese government aiming to internationalize educational institutions echo Japan's historical approaches to relations with other countries and cultures. In fact, Japan's goals have remained mainly economic and political since the 20th century. In the 21st century, educational policies to produce globally competent graduates show that internationalization continues to be perceived as a means to reinforce and expand Japan's economic and political power both domestically and internationally.

**Internationalization in the U.S.A.**

In the U.S., internationalization policy grew after the Second World War, largely in an effort to build rapprochement between nation states and avoid future wars as stated in the Truman Report on higher education for democracy (U.S. DOS, 1947). In a pluralistic policy-making process, a multiplicity of actors from the public (government departments), the voluntary (higher education organizations) and the private sector (philanthropic foundations), initiates and implements the policy, and the actors can be aligned horizontally to understand their contributions (Harcleroad & Eaton, 2005; Thelin, 2011; Veerasamy & Durst, 2021). As an age-old policy with roots in the 19th century, multiple terms have been used over the years to connote "internationalization policy" including "international dimension, international education, [and] internationalization of education" (de Wit, 2002, p. xvii; Thelin, 2011).

Unlike Japan, the U.S. does not have a centralized Ministry of Education that dictates education policy for the nation. Consequently, at the federal level several government agencies and departments contribute to higher education internationalization policy based on their departmental purview (Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, Department of Education, Department of State, and Department of Homeland Security). In 2004, Knight noted that "the national/sector level has an important influence on the international dimension [in higher education] through policy, funding, programs, and regulatory frameworks" (p. 6); simply stated: various national-level policymakers determine which HEIs receive funding for their internationalization policies and initiatives. Additionally, at the national level, voluntary or citizen-run organizations also influence and contribute to internationalization policy through advocacy efforts and by providing training opportunities for their members (Cook, 1998; Harcleroad & Eaton, 2005; Veerasamy, 2021). Through diverse efforts and initiatives, major national voluntary organizations have helped shape the policy at the federal level (Cook, 1998; Veerasamy, 2021).

Similarly, private, philanthropic foundations have a history of funding international education efforts on American campuses and these efforts continued during the 2000s. These initiatives have typically helped with enhancement of international education in curriculum (Harcleroad & Eaton, 2005), international student scholarships (Ford Foundation, 2013), need-based aid for international students (Lumina Foundation, 2008), and research funding (Hayward, 2000).

Finally, on the world stage, the U.S. has long enjoyed the status of destination of choice for higher education (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2013). In 2017, one million international students were enrolled on U.S. campuses; in 2022, this number remained over the one million mark even in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (IIE, 2018, 2021, 2022). In the 21st century, with the exception of the Trump administration from 2016 to 2020, federal government immigration policies favored "brain gain" from the Global South (Sá & Sabzallieva, 2018). Deliberate immigration policies allowed F-1 and J-1 nonimmigrant student and scholar visa status to international students to extend their length of stay in the U.S. after graduation. The extension allowed them to pursue post-completion Optional Practical Training (1 year for F-1 alumni). The STEM OPT Extension allowed an additional 2 years after OPT for F-1 alumni with qualifying majors, and post-completion Academic Training (18-36 months for J-1 alumni) with a possibility to transition to employer-sponsored H-1B visa status (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2019a). As international student enrollment in U.S. HEIs has steadily increased in American campuses, scholars have stated that in the 21st century, international students have helped keep HEIs economically viable, rendering internationalization policy synonymous with international student recruitment to some scholars (Wadhwa, 2016).

Although generally campus internationalization has not always been viewed as a priority worthy of scarce financial resources (Stax Brown & Singer, 2015), different policy-making sectors have contributed to the expansion of the policy based on varied rationales. Emerging from different sources, U.S. internationalization policy is articulated in a fragmented or plural manner. Multiple actors provide support and initiatives for campus internationalization policy; a unified policy emanating from one government department has long been absent in the U.S. (Mestenhauser, 1998; Veerasamy & Durst, 2021).

## Theoretical Framework

This study examined internationalization policy historically, considering factors, events, and policy rationales that punctuated its evolution in the 21st century. We coded internationalization policy efforts in central and pluralistic policy-making settings in Japan and the U.S. to understand its development within a temporal context. Japan and the United States were selected for their seemingly different approaches to internationalization and the authors' research into internationalization strategies in these countries.

In our comparative analysis of policy processes, we relied on process sequencing as a lens to analyze our data set. Process sequencing derives from the punctuated equilibrium policy change model established by Baumgartner and Jones in 1993 (Sabatier & Weible, 2014). According to Daugbjerg (2009), an underlying assumption in process sequencing is that an event in a policy sequence is both a reaction to an antecedent event and a cause of a subsequent one. Scholars have recommended looking at policies over a period of time rather than simply at the policy-making mechanism to better understand the factors that impact the particular policy (Howlett, 2009). Process sequencing has been utilized to analyze the evolution of policy over time and historically (Haydu, 1998; Howlett, 2009; Howlett & Rayner, 2006). For Howlett (2009), "policy outcomes are neither purely deterministic nor random but rather are 'contingent' upon a variety of factors, not least being the order in which a sequence of events occurs" that may be deemed "inevitable" (p. 242).

## Methodology

This study employed qualitative research methods, in particular document analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Krippendorff, 2013). We analyzed archival documents written in English from government and non-governmental sources to ascertain the key policy-making actors and situate the state of national higher education internationalization policy in Japan and the U.S. We analyzed and coded the documents using lean coding (Creswell, 2013). In addition, by relying on process sequencing to analyze the data, we were able to identify themes in higher education internationalization policy efforts over a twenty-year span from 2000 to 2020 and the accompanying chain of reactions in both countries during this period. We organized and coded our data under each country and then compared the codes and themes between each nation to establish commonalities and differences. Through dialogue and reflection between the authors, we established that, for example, both nations engaged in internationalization at home and international student recruitment, thus allowing for this common theme to emerge from the codes for both countries. This process allowed for cross-verification and triangulation of our categorizations. In sum, it allowed us to validate the credibility of our analytical framework (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

### Data Collection

As part of government efforts to foster GHR in Japan, 37 universities were selected for the TGU Project. These institutions were required to propose and design a variety of internationalization strategies and initiatives, which in turn would shed light on how Japanese higher education institutions implement government policies. In this study, we analyzed a total of 29 websites containing 41 policy and implementation documents published in English by the Japanese government and Top Global universities. The documents analyzed consisted of policy reports and promotional materials directly published by MEXT (MEXT, 2011, 2014, 2017a) and by the Council on Promotion of Human Resources for Globalization Development (CPHRGD, 2011), as well as information on the official TGU Project website (MEXT, 2017b). Only documents related to the TGU Project and GHR were analyzed as they pertain to the Japanese government's most recent internationalization strategies and thus remain widely available for analysis.

Data from the U.S. was collected from the Department of State and the Department of Education from the public sector and from The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), The American Council on Education (ACE), The Association of Public Land-grant Universities (APLU), The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), The American Association of Universities (AAU), and The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)–the" Big Six" most influential, federal-level organizations from the voluntary sector (Cook, 1998). Data was also collected from the Lumina Foundation and the Ford Foundation from the private sector. In all three sectors, data was collected from publicly available documents such as (a) general information on the websites, (b) international education reports, (c) annual reports, (d) fact sheets, and (e) policy briefs. Specifically, from the public sector, data was collected from (a) executive directives, (b) executive orders, (c) memoranda, and (d) legislation. In total, 112 documents were analyzed, accounting for 55 from the public sector, 38 from the voluntary sector, and 19 from the private sector.

## Results

In Japan, many initiatives were proposed by the government, and TGUs employed combined strategies for their implementation. For instance, initiatives with a main focus on mobility were occasionally linked to one or more of the other four types of strategies; initiatives with a language goal occasionally associated with intercultural exchange or system reform; and collaborative initiatives were sometimes paired with reform, intercultural exchange, or language strategies. In the U.S., however, national policy efforts emerged from a multiplicity of actors from the public, the voluntary and the

private sector; each sector had its own area of policy focus and, in contrast to Japan, the different aspects of the policy were not deliberately combined. However, trends in policy efforts in the two nations were similar, emerging under the following themes: internationalization at home and international student recruitment, global student mobility, international institutional partnership efforts, and institutional reform; this final theme was only observed in Japan.

**Internationalization at Home and International Student Recruitment**

In Japan, internationalization has been largely associated with international student recruitment, namely, increasing numbers of international students on domestic campuses. Starting in 1983 with the "The International Student 100,000 Plan," the government has consistently aimed to attract international students to Japanese education institutions. The goals of this strategy are twofold: to internationalize education through international student enrollment and to have them promote Japanese culture abroad once they return to their home countries (MOFA, 2022). Our analysis of university documents revealed that intercultural exchange initiatives were at the forefront of planned internationalization strategies (41 initiatives). Twelve universities explicitly mentioned the need for diversity among the faculty and student bodies. Others emphasized international or global academic campuses and classrooms (10), interaction programs between domestic and international students on campus (10), intercultural exchange in general (4), and multicultural exchange with the local community (2). Additionally, programs that catered to international students, such as English-medium instruction courses and Japanese language education for international students, were also mentioned by 19 and 3 universities, respectively. Overall, international student recruitment policies have been highly successful. While Japan only welcomed approximately 10,000 international students annually in the early 1980s, this number increased to over 300,000 by 2019, pre-pandemic (JASSO, 2020).

The need for foreign language proficiency, associated with talented GHR, was also reflected in programs aimed at improving domestic students' foreign language skills (5 universities). With regard to the strong GHR-derived focus on English language skills for domestic students (Hofmeyr, 2021) and governmental efforts to promote English language education (MEXT, 2003), documents revealed a comparatively low emphasis on English education strategies at the institutional level. In fact, English education has been at the forefront of internationalization policy due to its role as the de facto international language of communication (Inuzuka, 2017), and English language education is now firmly institutionalized at the secondary and higher education levels, having been officially added to primary grade (5 & 6) curricula since 2020. In fact, most universities in Japan had already implemented mandatory English courses for first- and second-year students prior to the TGU Project via the Global 30 program, which might explain why such initiatives are given less focus in the most recent documents.

Overall, the implementation of the above-mentioned initiatives mirrors governmental rhetoric emphasizing international student recruitment as a key strategy for internationalization in Japan. The strategies identified in our document analysis reveal perceptions of international students a dual solution to labor shortage and the demand for competitive talent They are also perceived as internationalization agents, providing Japanese domestic students with opportunities for intercultural contact and exchange.

The U.S. has long served as a desirable place of study for international students. The 2000s saw international student numbers increase to reach the one-million mark in 2017 (IIE, 2018). The three sectors under analysis did not ignore this growing body of students. Between 2000 and 2020, three administrations – with the exception of the Trump administration (2017-2020) – took measures to attract and retain international students in the U.S. (although certain restrictions were adopted following the September 11 attacks in 2001). Measures to attract international students became necessary based on: (a) a shortage of skilled workers in the field of science and technology, and (b) an aging U.S. population (v. growing population in BRIC nations), and (c) the threat of China's economic rise with its accession to the World Trade Organization (Banks, 2014; Brookings Institute, 2012). In 2008, under the Bush administration, international students graduating in certain STEM fields included on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) STEM-designated degree program list became eligible for an extended period of post-completion Optional Practical Training (NAFSA, 2019). OPT, which is authorized by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), allows international students to extend their F-1 visa status and (a) remain in the U.S. to gain work experience in their field of study for a period of up to three years after graduation, and (b) potentially transition to a more long-term H-1B work visa if sponsored by an employer and approved by USCIS. This pathway often leads to permanent residence and even U.S. citizenship. The DHS STEM-designated degree program list was extended in 2012 under the Obama administration (NAFSA, 2019). The Obama administration also made

it less onerous for highly skilled non-citizens to work in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. Later, the Trump administration took strides to reverse many of these measures to attract international students and retain them as U.S. workers post-graduation.

At the federal level, language instruction as part of internationalization policy was linked to defense and economics. During the Cold War, language studies focused on the USSR and its satellite countries; the trend of funding strategic language studies related to foreign conflicts persisted in the 2000s and extended to countries with economic ties. According to Merkx (2010), "Since September 11, 2001, the increase in the annual budget of the DLI [Defense Language Institute] alone has been greater than the total annual appropriation for all Title VI programs combined" (as cited in Wiley et al., 2010, p. 28). In 2002, a new program came under the National Security Education Program and legislation encouraged universities to apply for grants to teach Arabic, Hindi, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Korean, Persian/Farsi, Russian, and Turkish (Tessler, 2010, as cited in Wiley et al., 2010, p. 59). By 2007, Foreign Language and Area Studies enrollment in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean received attention from national funding agencies for economic reasons (Wiley, 2010). In 2009, Less Commonly Taught Languages under Title VI expanded to include 195 languages (Wiley, 2010, p. 89).

Within the voluntary sector, the American Council on Education's Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE) published *A Comprehensive National Policy on Internationalization Education* in 2002. In this report, the ACE outlined its model for comprehensive campus internationalization. By 2003, the organization established an internationalization laboratory to help personnel of higher education institutions achieve the steps outlined in its comprehensive internationalization model (ACE, 2019b). Internationalization efforts by other voluntary associations also targeted specific types of institutions, such as community colleges, helping them develop programming on global awareness (AACC, 2019). In 2009, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' Global Learning Value Rubric was developed to measure student global learning outcomes in higher education curriculum (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2019a). All three sectors were involved in internationalization at home efforts through collaborative research funding between the voluntary and the private sector (Hayward, 2000); the development of toolkits on global learning (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2010); and the use of technology in Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), a type of virtual exchange which thrived during the global pandemic (American Council on Education, 2019, 2022).

**Student Mobility**

In our analysis of Japan, the second most frequent type of internationalization strategy referenced in policy and implementation activities was mobility. Student mobility in Japan has been emphasized as a means to develop students' foreign language skills and a broad understanding of other cultures while promoting Japanese culture abroad (MEXT, 2011, 2017a). Nevertheless, outbound mobility in Japan has faced challenges with the number of Japanese students studying abroad declining by nearly a third between 2004 (82,945) and 2011 (57,501) (Kobayashi, 2018). The decline in the number of outbound students has been attributed to many causes, including the declining birthrate, the high cost of study abroad programs, the strict job-hunting system during university years, and students' lack of confidence in their foreign language ability, among many other factors (Bradford, 2017).

Several of the Top Global universities referred to the goal of increasing both inbound and outbound mobility in general terms (17 universities), while others stressed the importance of supporting the development of study abroad programs (9), satellite campuses (8), and international internships (6). Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the number of Japanese university students internationally mobile was consistently on the rise (JAOS, 2017), clearly favoring English-speaking countries such as the U.S., Australia, Canada, and the U.K. This trend reinforces the perceived role of student mobility as the means to develop English language skills, an important component of GHR. In fact, results of the same 2017 survey conducted by the Japan Association of Overseas Studies (JAOS) revealed that short-term language exchanges lasting three months or less were students' preferred program type to go abroad. In our analysis of policy and strategic documents, mobility and intercultural exchange were described as the core, potential sources of intercultural competence development in students.

Efforts to promote student mobility in the U.S. came from the voluntary sector with HEIs moving away from the term *study abroad* to adopt the term *education abroad* as opportunities expanded to include internships, service-focused programs, and research abroad (Helms, 2017). The voluntary sector supported outbound opportunities for American students, but federal support, namely legislation in support of study abroad, failed to pass (Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act (S. 1198/H.R. 4555). Conversely, efforts from the public sector supported inbound opportunities for non-American students. Following the 9/11 attacks, the Department of State launched a proliferation of exchange programs,

such as DOS Kennedy, Lugar, FLEX, and DOS, to bring students from predominantly Muslim nations to the U.S. with a view to (a) strengthen bicultural understanding, (b) showcase American culture and political values, and (c) share Muslim culture with American host families and their communities (Aguirre, 2002). Under the Obama administration, these programs were extended to Muslim African nations via initiatives like the DOS YALI program. However, the Trump administration afforded little attention to building on these programs, eventually freezing these efforts.

**International Institutional Partnerships (IIPs)**

Many Japanese Top Global universities referred to various types of collaboration as the strategy most relevant to internationalization. In fact, partnerships with international institutions were the most popular strategy noted (27 universities), followed by the creation of either joint or dual-degree programs (12). Other collaborative strategies included developing relationships with the international community, with various industries, and with the Japanese government. Consistent with the publicized image of GHR (Hofmeyr, 2021), collaboration strategies were generally promoted as a means to develop global-ready graduates with specialized knowledge, problem-solving abilities, and leadership skills.

In the U.S., IIPs with institutions located abroad grew in all three sectors in the 2000s. The public and voluntary sectors developed strategic and long-lasting IIPs through agreements with foreign institutions to collaborate on research, deliver courses, develop exchange programs, establish branch campuses, offer dual degrees with institutions located abroad, and enhance international accreditation efforts (Department of Education, 2009; Institute for International Education, 2019). The voluntary sector provided personnel training for members administering IIPs (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2019), while the private sector funded research on African higher education institutions (Ford Foundation, 2019) and on global institutional collaborations (Lumina Foundation, 2017). The public sector maintained funding support for establishing IIPs, and existing institutional partnerships with different countries continued to grow from initial efforts in the 1990s (Department of Education, 2019). First-time partnerships with nations such as China emerged, and American HEIs relied on advances in technology to deliver education overseas from their home base in the U.S. (Helms, 2017).

**Institutional Reform**

Calls for system reform in Japan date to the Meiji Restoration of 1868 when Japan implemented various strategies to "catch up" with Western countries. In the 1980s, globalization and international competition led to the 1984 establishment of the Ad Hoc Council on Education in support of education reforms (Yamanaka & Suzuki, 2020). By the 21st century, challenges stemming from international relations and information technology advances led various government committees to call for curriculum reform and the upgrading of teaching and administrative practices (Yamanaka & Suzuki, 2020).

In the Japanese policy and implementation documents analyzed, system reform was noted as an important internationalization strategy, though to a much lesser extent than the other four types of strategies discussed in previous sections. Strategies discussed under this umbrella emphasized the need for educational reform to meet international standards (11 universities), enable new interdisciplinary research (5), galvanize governance system reform (3), and re-envision the research support system (1). Overall, system reform was generally encouraged not so much as the means to facilitate the implementation of internationalization strategies, but as a panacea for competing with highly ranked Western institutions and attracting top international students to Japanese universities. This approach echoes Japan's early motivations for implementing system reform that began in the mid-19th century.

In the U.S., HEIs are autonomous, self-regulating and do not answer to the different tiers of government. They are also diverse, varying by type (public, private, religious), academic degree offerings (associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral-granting), and mission (e.g., R1 institutions, liberal arts colleges, HBCUs, etc.). Within this diverse landscape, the decision to include an international dimension in course offerings has historically depended on the actions of national higher education policy actors (Knight, 2004), college presidents (Stax Brown & Singer, 2015) and faculty members (Dewey & Duff, 2009). Moreover, the level of internationalization has differed based on institution type. For example, according to Woodin (2016), 2-year institutions are less internationalized than 4-year institutions. A blanket federal policy requiring campuses to internationalize is non-existent in the U.S.

## Discussion

Japan and the U.S. adopted internationalization policies to serve different rationales. During the 2000s in Japan, internationalization policy was driven largely by socioeconomic rationales and emerged in reaction to changing economic forces and globalization. In the U.S., internationalization policy was historically adopted at the national level for academic

reasons and evolved to serve political rationales; in the 2000s, it emerged in reaction to economic and social rationales. In efforts to internationalize HEIs following its economic downturn in 2009, Japan adopted a national policy led by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, which set specific goals and targets for selected universities to receive government funding with the goal of increasing the nation's competitiveness in the global market. Conversely, the U.S. did not adopt a clearly articulated national strategy for internationalization policy in the 21st century despite President Clinton's explicit support for international education in his 2000 Memorandum and globally competent graduates being linked to economic success (Spellings, 2006). Instead, internationalization policy efforts and initiatives evolved in a pluralistic, ad hoc manner from actors within the public, voluntary, and private sectors.

Spurred by Japan's economic crisis in 2009 and subsequent events, the Japanese government and Top Global universities under study proposed specific strategies and initiatives in response to increasing demand by domestic industries for talented GHR to contribute to the nation's economic development and competitiveness. With a competitive focus, many of the Japanese government's strategies were designed with the goal of placing Japanese HEIs at the top of international ranking scales. In the U.S., political, economic, and social events in the 2000s, such as China joining the WTO in 2002, slowed economic growth in 2008, and changing demographic trends domestically and internationally in emerging countries (BRIC nations), influenced the trajectory of internationalization policy.

In Japan, internationalization policy evolved as a means of creating GHRs capable of working in international and intercultural environments, and efforts to achieve this goal were supported and funded by the government. Through international student recruitment, Japan aimed to produce international graduates who would return to their home countries with a positive connection to and understanding of Japan. In addition, Japan aimed to provide its domestic students with opportunities for intercultural exchange and foreign language practice, especially in English. The creation of English-medium instruction programs that were, in principle, open to both international and domestic students, served similar purposes. Parallel policies by the government aiming to implement English language education beginning in elementary school further reinforced strategies devised by HEIs to yield globally competent graduates.

In the U.S., efforts to develop globally competent students through higher education curricula emerged, however, language studies unfolded both accidentally yet inevitably. The events of September 11, 2001 deeply impacted the course of policymaking and academic prioritization within higher education for the remainder of the decade. For example, campuses pivoted to offer Arabic and languages spoken in the Muslim regions of Central Asia in reaction to the terrorist attacks on American soil. In addition, when China joined the WTO in 2002, Mandarin became a popular foreign language on American campuses, as did Korean, due to the rising economic might of these two nations and the associated career opportunities for learners in the U.S. The voluntary and private sectors took several measures to internationalize HEIs by training faculty and staff and offering curricula development support to produce graduates with global skills.

In vying for a place in the global world order, international student recruitment in Japan was partially driven by international ranking considerations, while in the U.S. it was spurred by socioeconomic factors. Ultimately, both nations were impacted by their own demographic changes and needed to appeal to youth from outside their respective countries to sustain their HEIs and, in the case of the U.S., society. In both countries, international student recruitment changed course, expanded, and reached an equilibrium in the context of global interconnectedness and local demographic realities.

Similar to international student recruitment goals, student mobility in Japan was developed mainly as a gateway for intercultural exchange and foreign language proficiency development. As a result, most mobility partnerships were focused on countries where English was spoken as a first language and there were many short-term ESL immersion study abroad programs. In practice, however, student mobility, much like other internationalization initiatives in Japan, was assessed through "box-ticking" practices. In the U.S., student mobility took various forms and adapted to include outbound study, internships, and research abroad as well as hosting inbound students from Muslim countries to improve national ties in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001. Federal support to expand access to outbound student mobility failed, revealing no shift in this aspect of internationalization policy.

Finally, in both nations, their 21st century policy dynamics were indisputably punctuated by a trend toward implementing IIPs, largely as a result of globalization. IIPs for Japan were driven mainly by two factors related to the cultivation of GHR: first, the need for partnerships that could facilitate student mobility and the development of specialized knowledge, problem-solving, and leadership skills in Japanese students, and second, the prestige associated with having a large number of partnerships which aimed to serve the double purpose of attracting top international students and scoring higher in global education rankings. Conversely, IIPs in the U.S., were also reactive and driven by alliances with economic

powerhouses, establishing branch campuses abroad, and incremental expansion of socio-political relationships overseas. In the process, technology was leveraged to reach learners located outside of the U.S.

In practice, internationalization policy in these two nations with distinct sociopolitical cultures was impacted by events from within and external to their countries. In both countries, internationalization policy efforts were reactive with policies developed in response to select events such as demographic changes, international terrorism, economics, and globalization. With its centralized, top-down approach, Japan adopted HEI reforms to enable internationalization policy efforts on campuses. In the U.S., however, policy efforts emerged from a multiplicity of sectors and were varied and wide-ranging, but not pervasive among the country's diverse higher education system. In the globalized, international environment of the 21st century, Japan became fixated on world ranking metrics for its universities, while in the U.S. the events of September 11, 2001 skewed policy focus to specific geographic regions and religions. The U.S. adapted its policy to react to China's accession to the global market and both the U.S. and Japan sought to attract international students. Overall, the implications of the two nations' different policymaking processes with respect to the essence of internationalization policy appeared to be minimal in this study. Both the centralized system in Japan and the pluralistic system in the U.S. failed to anchor their efforts in one of the core purposes of internationalization policy: education for fostering understanding across cultures.

## Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it offered a brief analysis of national internationalization policy-making processes in only two nations based on documents available in the public domain. Second, policy analysis in the Japanese context focused mainly on documents available in English and belonging to institutions receiving funding to internationalize. Third, analysis of policy-making sectors in the U.S. was limited to only three sectors. Finally, the focus of the comparative analysis was limited to a twenty-year span from 2000 to 2020. Despite these limitations, this study offers a lens that can be extended for the two countries and a frame of analysis that can be utilized to examine internationalization policy among other nations. Future research in Japan should focus on analyzing documents in Japanese and examining projects funded before and after the TGU Project. In the U.S., internationalization policy analysis should be extended to examine market and legal sectors with a comprehensive focus beyond 2020.

## Conclusion

National policy or otherwise, in both Japan and the U.S. there was a failure to advance the academic rationale for adopting internationalization policy. An academic rationale for internationalization policy favors the advancement of knowledge and the development of intercultural competence using clearly identifiable and assessable outcomes. Instead, both countries were driven by socioeconomic motivations, and the U.S. was also influenced by geopolitical developments. In addition, both countries lacked a humanitarian rationale for internationalization policy, namely discourse on 21st-century competencies in empathy, mindfulness, and compassion in a world where major events and crises are increasing along with higher numbers of refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs) and where food insecurity is tangible and the effects of climate change devastating on developing nations. Moving forward, ethical advancement of the field of internationalization policy requires sustained attention by scholars, practitioners, and organizational leaders as well as committed financial resources so that academic and humanitarian rationales receive meaningful investment to ensure learners develop compassionate and mindful ways of thinking and existing in our interconnected and interdependent world.

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