The Relationship between University Education and Pro-Immigrant Attitudes Varies by Generation: Insights from Japan*

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Abstract

While there is lively debate on whether higher education cultivates support for immigrants in North America and Western Europe, there is little discussion on the extent to which this relationship generalizes beyond these continents. In light of Japan's growing reliance on foreign workers and the growth in enrollment rate, as well as internationalization of Japanese universities over the last half-century, we explore the relationship between university education and Japanese attitudes toward immigrants. Using two surveys asking an overlapping set of questions in 2009 and 2022, we find the connection between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes varies by generation. Otherwise positive relationship is significantly weakened for Japanese who entered universities in the 1990s through 2000s. Even though Japan is a modern democracy with well-developed higher education institutions, these institutions do not always correlate with more supportive attitudes toward immigrants. Our findings underscore the dynamic nature of higher education's role in shaping public opinion outside of North America and Western Europe.

Keywords

Japan, university education, immigrant attitudes

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Debates on immigration are dominated by research set within western contexts. A review of 288 published articles in 55 English-language journals between 1955 and 2011 shows the four most prolific countries on immigration research are the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia (Bilodeau, 2016). It is true that these countries are highly desirable destinations, but the issue of immigration is no less relevant for countries like South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan (Chung, 2020). Immigrants in popular Asian destinations confront behavioral and institutional biases against the proverbial 'other' in much the same way as their counterparts do in North America and Western Europe. However, they are situated within different institutional and social contexts.

This article focuses on universities as mediums for shifting public opinion on immigrants. In empirical studies based on North America and Western Europe, the majority of evidence show individuals with higher levels of education express stronger pro-immigrant attitudes (Cavaille & Marshall, 2019; Citrin et al., 1997; d'Hombres & Nunziata, 2016; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2009; Hjerm, 2001; Raijman et al., 2003; Semyonov et al., 2006; but see Michel & Blatter, 2021). Implicit in this body of research is the assumption that the relationship between higher education and public opinion is static. However, if "education system is the primary vehicle through which the 'official' or 'ideal' culture is transmitted to citizens" (Phelan et al., 1995), surely what is considered official or ideal changes across time and space. We examine the nature of this dynamic relationship in Japan. For reasons we discuss next, Japan presents a 'most likely' case for finding generational differences in the role of university education.

Existing studies in the Japanese context show positive correlations between university education and support for admitting immigrants (Green, 2017; Mazumi, 2015; Nukaga, 2006; Okubo, 2021; but see Nagayoshi, 2012), while the connection is less clear for attitudes toward political and social integration (Nagayoshi, 2013, 2014). However, they do not consider how the relationship between university education and pro-immmigrant attitudes might have changed as a result of major transformations in the capacity and quality of Japanese universities over the last half-century. On capacity, university enrollment rates of the 18-year-old population rose from 25% in 1990 to 56.8% in 2020 (Kariya, 2011; Shimizu, 2021). On quality, since the 1990s, Japanese universities have reformed their student recruitment, staffing, and teaching practices, all with an eye toward becoming more competitive at the international level (Ninomiya et al., 2009; Yonezawa, 2020). It is fair to expect these institutional transformations change how (and how much) universities shape public opinion.

We examine both attitudes toward admitting and integrating immigrants in Japan, and consider how the effects of universities on such attitudes vary across different generations of graduates. Specifically, we ask: *how have transformations in enrollment rate and edu-*

cational content affected the relationship between university education and attitudes toward immigrants in Japan? By re-examining a well-established empirical pattern in an atypical and dynamic context, we challenge existing assumptions regarding the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes. Also, by studying the extent to which internationalization reforms in universities shape the opinion formation process, our question has practical implications for non-western countries that attempt to "westernize" their education system.

To answer our question, we review scholarship on why there is a positive relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes, and the extent to which the relationship applies to Japan. Then we assess how changes since the 1990s—increased enrollment capacity, foreign students and faculty, adoption of active learning pedagogy—should have strengthened the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes, and why their effects may be attenuated for some generations of students. We test our theoretical prediction using public opinion surveys fielded in 2009 and 2022. These two surveys offer overlapping sets of questions to assess if our findings are consistent across different points of time, i.e., 2009 and 2022, and survey modes, i.e., mail and online. We assess if the impact of education varies by enrollment cohort using a novel methodological approach to estimate non-linear interaction effects (Hainmueller et al., 2019), followed by robustness checks and exploratory analyses of the mechanisms underlying our theoretical framework.

We find a positive correlation between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes amongst the youngest (post-2010) and oldest (pre-1990) enrollment cohorts while the relationship is weak or non-existent among the middle cohort who entered university in the 1990s and 2000s. Our theory and exploratory analyses of causal mechanisms suggest the positive correlations seen among the youngest and oldest enrollment cohorts stem from two different explanations: socialization in a post-reform education environment explains pro-immigrant attitudes of recent graduates, while self-selection explains pro-immigrant attitudes of older graduates. As for the middle cohort, there seems to be a lag between the implementation of institutional change and the development of mechanisms needed to change public opinion on immigrants. We conclude by discussing the implications of these findings and how we can build upon them in further research.

University Education and Attitudes Toward Immigrants

Theories to explain the connection between higher education and attitudes toward immigrants emphasize the roles of economic outcome, socialization, and self-selection. Most studies show higher educational attainment improves economic outcomes (see Card, 1999 for

a review). However, there is debate on whether the mediating impact of economic outcome on immigrant attitudes is positive (Mayda, 2006; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001) or negative (Facchini & Mayda, 2009; Hanson et al., 2007). Findings are also mixed on whether economic effects are moderated by occupation type (Dancygier & Connelly, 2013; Malhotra et al., 2013) or financial security (Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007, 2010; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2015; Meeusen et al., 2013).

Universities affect pro-immigrant attitudes more directly through political socialization. Specifically, influence from liberal professors (Gross & Simmons, 2014; Langbert et al., 2016; van de Werfhorst, 2020), exposure to active learning pedagogy (Nie et al., 1996), and increased social contact with ethnic outgroups (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew et al., 2011; Sigelman & Welch, 1993; Welch & Sigelman, 2000) encourage more accepting attitudes toward immigrants.

The last set of theoretical explanations posits higher educational attainment is an outcome, rather than a cause, of socialization. For example, Lancee & Sarrasin (2015) argue children who are already socialized in a way to develop positive attitudes toward immigrants pursue higher education out of their own volition. Using a household panel survey in Switzerland, they demonstrate differences in immigrant attitudes between eventual college graduates and eventual non-college graduates are already apparent prior to college entry age. They also show higher education does not further enhance pro-immigrant attitudes among college graduates. Higher educational attainment, in this sense, is an outcome of earlier political socialization and value development.

In this study, we empirically control for the economic effects of education and focus on the two mechanisms that address attitudinal antecedents and consequences of education more directly. One way to engage the debate between socialization and self-selection is to extend case selection beyond North America and Western Europe. For example, Chatard & Selimbegovic (2007)'s review of the empirical literature on how higher education affects egalitarian attitudes shows the relative impact of socialization over self-selection may be stronger in countries with collectivist cultures (e.g., Eastern Europe and Africa) than individualist cultures (e.g., North America and Western Europe). Since existing theories on the connection between higher education and pro-immigrant attitudes have largely been developed and tested in countries with individualist cultures, Japan provides a venue for extending them to a collectivist culture. Another way to engage the debate between socialization and self-selection is to extend case selection beyond a single time point. Major transformations of Japanese universities in the last half-century provide meaningful turning points for us to assess our theory. In the next section, we discuss some of these changes and how they affect public opinion on immigrants.

Transformations of University Education in Japan

Since the late 20th century, Japanese universities have undergone two major transformations. First, university enrollment rates increased (Amano, 2014; Kariya, 2011; Shimizu, 2021). Second, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) incentivized internationalization by providing prioritized support to universities selected for programs such as the "Global 30" scheme and "Top Global University Project" (Burgess et al., 2010; Ota, 2018; Rose & McKinley, 2018; Yonezawa, 2020). In the next two subsections, we discuss how each of these transformations could have strengthened or weakened the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes. The third subsection presents a theoretical prediction on how this relationship varies across generations of university students.

Increase in university enrollment rates

Looking back on the post-war history of Japanese university education, Kariya (2011) identifies four distinctive cohorts. Cohort I reached university entry age before the mid-1970s, which was a period of steady growth in university enrollment rate (from around 10% to 30%). Cohort II reached college-entry age during the mid-1970s until the 1980s, which was a period of "stagnation" in enrollment rate at around 30%. Cohort III reached college-entry age in the 1990s when enrollment rate started to increase steadily again (up to 40%). Up to this period, the rise in enrollment rate was mainly driven by the increase in enrollment capacity of universities, so it correlated strongly with the actual number of enrolled students. For Cohort IV, those who reached college-entry age in the 2000s, Japan entered the "universal" stage of post-secondary education enrollment (Kariya, 2011, p.72) where the decline in youth population, rather than enrollment capacities, drove enrollment rates. In order to fill their existing capacities when there were fewer college-entry age youth, many universities relaxed their entry standards. In this sense, university education democratized because Japanese from a broader range of socioeconomic backgrounds could access this experience. By 2010, the enrollment rate surpassed 50% (Huang, 2014). While Kariya (2011) does not provide analysis beyond the 2000s, enrollment rates continued to grow in the 2010s, albeit at a slower rate compared to the 1990s and 2000s, reaching 56.8% by 2020 (Shimizu, 2021). For the purpose of this study, we group individuals who reached college-entry age after 2010 into Cohort V.

Since higher enrollment rates are a reflection of how the university experience is no longer reserved for the privileged few, mechanisms driving the relationship between university education and immigrant attitudes should also change across Cohorts I to V. If self-selection

is the primary mechanism for the positive relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes in Japan, we should expect its influence to weaken when universities become more democratized. That is to say, if Japanese who are predisposed to supporting immigration are more likely to attend university than those who are less supportive, this selection effect would be more apparent in older cohorts.[1]

Internationalization of universities

Prior to the 1990s, Japanese ethnicity dominated student and faculty populations in universities, and lectures relied on passive Confucius-style learning centered on repetition and memorization (Aoki, 2008). Since then, Japanese universities have sought to become more competitive internationally by hosting more foreign exchange students, recruiting foreign faculty to teach courses in English, and revising teaching pedagogy to encourage more critical thinking (Burgess et al., 2010; Ota, 2018; Rose & McKinley, 2018; Yamada, 2017; Yonezawa, 2020). Adding up the number of new student visas each year from 1984 to 2018, Liu-Farrer (2020) estimates the Japanese government admitted 1.3 million foreign students during this time, making them the "largest entry category of long-term immigrants" (47). Around the same time period, full-time international faculty in Japan increased from 940 (0.9% of all faculty) to 8262 (4.5% of all faculty) between 1979 and 2017 (MEXT, 2018). Given that very few foreigners enroll or work in primary and secondary schools, universities are one of the first educational institutions that provide opportunities for Japanese natives to interact with foreigners as classmates, friends, and instructors (Baseel, 2015; Green, 2019; Liu-Farrer, 2020; Vogel, 2018).[2] A series of educational policy reforms in the late 2000s and early 2010s also introduced active learning and student-centered learning pedagogy in Japanese universities (Ito & Takeuchi, 2020), which led to a shift away from passive Confucius-style learning that often "overlooks the development of the soft skills that are valued in Western education and society, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and spontaneous discussion and debate" (Yamada, 2017, p.18).

Increased social contact with foreigners and exposure to student-centered learning pedagogy should foster more positive and accepting attitudes toward immigrants (Allport, 1954; Nie et al., 1996; Pettigrew et al., 2011; Sigelman & Welch, 1993; Welch & Sigelman, 2000), especially in a collectivist culture such as Japan. In line with these expectations, a case study of a Japanese university class suggests that in-class group work, coupled with the inclusion of foreign exchange students in groups, increases self-evaluated adaptability to diversity (Fujiwara, 2021). However, the timing of education reforms means exposure to socialization varies across different generations of university students. Since Cohorts IV and V attended university when entry became less exclusive and internationalization reforms had already

begun, they should be more supportive of immigrants due to socialization than Cohorts I to III.

The caveat to this timing effect of internationalization reforms in universities are changes in Japanese society more broadly. The impact of internationalization reforms on Cohorts IV and V may either be slow to take effect, or attenuated by encounters with foreigners outside of universities, some of which reinforce negative stereotypes. First, encounters with foreigners at universities may be neither frequent nor unique. The rate of increase in foreign students was relatively slow in the 1990s and 2000s, and it was only during the 2010s that Japan started to see a rapid increase in the number of international students (Kuroda et al., 2018, Figure 6). This timing coincides with when Japan started to see a surge in foreign workers and visitors (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2023; Liu-Farrer, 2020).[3] Second, contact with foreigners may not always be positive. Most international students in Japan are from Korea and China, and there are reports of on-campus discrimination that reflect discrimination against Korean and Chinese immigrants in Japanese society at large (Murphy-Shigematsu, 2002; Japan Today, 2010; Zhang, 2018).

The impact of internationalization reforms on Cohorts IV and V may also be attenuated by the time lag between top-down institutional mandates for change and behavioral changes at the individual level. Large-scale interviews of foreign faculties from various disciplines reveal they perceive indifference from Japanese colleagues and feel "tokenized" in "symbolic internationalization" (Brotherhood et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2019). If the increase of foreigners on university campuses is largely symbolic, their presence may not have a meaningful impact on students' attitudes toward immigrants. Furthermore, it is unclear if western-style pedagogy is applied effectively, since a 2019 survey of university instructors across Japan reveals they have a poor understanding of what active learning means in practice (Ito & Takeuchi, 2020). Even if instructors are able to implement active learning, their students may not be ready for it immediately. Japanese students tend to enter universities without the basic training to think and generate ideas on their own (Dunn, 2015), so the shift away from passive Confucius-style learning is gradual.[4]

University education and pro-immigrant attitudes: theoretical prediction

We summarize our theoretical claim as follows: effects of university education are driven by both self-selection and socialization, but the relative strength of each mechanism changes over time. In Japan, the effects of self-selection were strongest when university entry was the most exclusive (i.e., Cohort I) and weakened when university entry became more democratized. Meanwhile, the effects of socialization were non-existent when university entry was the most exclusive and had not undergone internationalization reforms (i.e., Cohort I and

II), present but minimal when reforms were in their nascent stages (i.e., Cohort III and IV), and strongest once reforms became more widespread (i.e., Cohort V). This theory explains how the influence of Japanese universities in shaping attitudes toward immigrants varies across different generations of students. Specifically, we make the following prediction:

> *In Japan, the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes is positive in the oldest cohorts due to self-selection, and it is positive in the youngest cohorts due to socialization by internationalization reforms. The relationship is weak for cohorts in the middle, because they reached university entry age when universities became less exclusive and internationalization reforms were still in their nascent stages.*

One testable implication of this theoretical prediction is that the positive relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes is stronger in the eldest and youngest cohorts and weaker in the middle cohorts. Our main analyses focus on testing this implication. In additional analyses, we explore the mechanisms of self-selection and socialization.

Data and Analytical Strategy

For our main analyses, we rely on two surveys with overlapping questions that were fielded in different years and with different survey modes. The first survey is the Public Opinion Poll on Internationalization and Citizens' Political Participation, 2009 (ICPP 2009).[5] ICPP 2009 is a mail-in survey fielded between October and December 2009, before the Japanese government introduced a series of policies that aimed to attract and retain foreign workers. Respondents of ages 20 to 80 were recruited nationwide based on two-stage stratified random sampling from the government's official list of voters based on birth registration.[6] The response rate was 43.4%. Our second data source is an original survey that we fielded online in March 2022, after the Japanese public have experienced a significant inflow of foreign workers during the last decade. We collected responses from 2406 participants recruited from the monitor pool of the online survey company, Rakuten Insight, with the criteria that participants are 18 and older. The sampling takes account of balance in the distribution of gender and age cohorts (i.e., 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s or over) according to the Japanese census.

Our outcome variables tap into two aspects of pro-immigrant attitudes (original Japanese wordings are provided in Online Appendix A). The first outcome is support for increasing the number of foreigners in residential neighborhoods ("admit more foreigners"). Respondents choose from "agree", "somewhat agree", "somewhat disagree", and "disagree". We recode each option as 1, 2/3, 1/3, and 0 to generate an outcome variable on the unit scale. The

second outcome is support for granting local suffrage to long-term foreign residents ("integrate foreign residents"). We code the original five-point scale options as 1 (think so), 0.75 (somewhat think so), 0.5 (cannot say), 0.25 (somewhat don't think so), and 0 (don't think so). Despite the difference in timing and survey modes, both outcome variables have similar single-peaked response patterns in ICPP 2009 and our 2022 web survey (See Figure A8 in Online Appendix I).[7]

Our explanatory variable is attainment of university education, coded 1 if a respondent completed four-year university or graduate school and 0 otherwise. Our moderator variable is age cohort of attending university. Based on Kariya (2011), we divide respondents into five cohorts corresponding to the growth stages of university enrollment using the typical year of entering university (i.e., the year of turning 18 or 19 years old).[8] Cohort I reached university entry age before 1975; Cohort II reached entry age between 1975 and 1989; Cohort III reached entry age in the 1990s; Cohort IV and Cohort V reached entry age in the 2000s and after 2010 respectively. Due to the timing of ICCP 2009, it does not have any observations for Cohort V; due to the timing of our 2022 web survey, it only has a small number of observations that fall within Cohort I and II, so we combine these two cohorts. Both surveys show that over time, a higher proportion of Japanese respondents attain university degrees. However, the average rate of attaining a university degree is significantly higher in our 2022 web survey. This pattern is often observed when using web surveys, so it is important to check if results of the two surveys corroborate.

To control for determinants of pro-immigrant attitudes that precede university education, we include respondent gender because Japanese women tend to have lower education levels than men, and their political attitudes tend to be different as well (Mishima et al., 2018). To filter out potential influence by economic outcomes of university education, we control for income, employment status (full-time, part-time, or unemployed), marital status, and urban levels of current residence. We avoid including attitudinal control variables such as political ideology, as they are conceptually too similar to our dependent variables. Given that our dependent variables are approximately normally distributed and our explanatory variable, i.e., university education, is binary, we implement OLS regression and use robust standard errors to account for potential correlations in residuals.[9]

To assess whether the relationship between university education and attitudes toward immigrants vary by age cohort, we take two approaches. First, we include an interaction term between university education and age cohort as a categorical variable. This approach allows us to capture the potential non-linear nature of the education-age interaction. Second, we use a method suggested by Hainmueller et al. (2019), which uses a kernel smoothing estimator to generate marginal effects.[10] This approach allows us to visually illustrate continuous non-

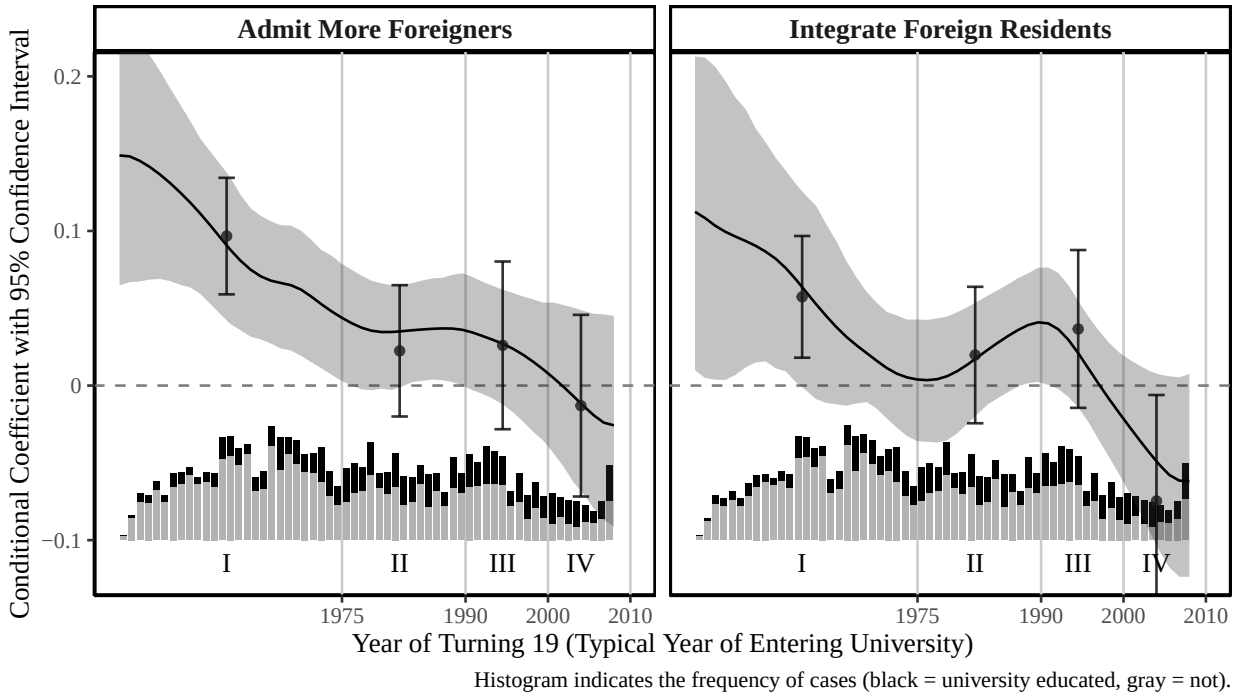

Figure 1: Connection between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes declines from Cohort I to IV (ICPP 2009)

linearity in the interaction effect without making any assumptions about cohort grouping, so it is a more direct approach to assess the non-linear interaction effect between education and age.

Main Result: ICPP 2009

Starting with analyses using ICPP 2009, Figure 1 shows simulated conditional coefficients of education-age interactions (regression tables for categorical interaction models are provided in Online Appendix B). Points with error bars represent coefficients and 95% confidence intervals generated from the categorical interaction model, lines with shaded ribbons represent coefficients and 95% confidence intervals exported from the kernel-smoothed interaction model. For both "admit more foreigners" (left panel) and "integrate foreign residents" (right panel), conditional coefficients of university education diminish in magnitude from Cohort I to Cohort IV. For Cohort I, the coefficient estimate from categorical interaction models is 0.07 when the outcome is "admit more foreigners" (left panel) and 0.10 when the outcome is "integrate foreign residents" (right panel). These values indicate how much more on the 0-1 scale an average Japanese university graduate support admitting/integrating immigrants compared to respondents who do not complete university. The substantive impacts they

represent are not large because they correspond to only 0.37 and 0.21 standard deviation increases in pro-immigrant attitudes. Nevertheless, the connection between university education and support for admitting/integrating immigrants is largest among Cohort I and both coefficients are highly statistically significant. By Cohorts II and III, the magnitude of coefficients diminish by about half; and by Cohort IV, the mean coefficient estimate of university education switches signs from positive to negative.

We predict the positive relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes is stronger in the oldest (Cohort I&II) and weaker in the middle cohorts (Cohort III&IV). Results from ICPP 2009 largely support this prediction: the positive relationship between university education and attitudes toward immigrants was positive for Cohort I, but steadily reduced to negative by Cohort IV, when the ICPP 2009 ends. However, the timing of this survey means it only captures effects of internationalization reforms when they were at their nascent stages, so we cannot test our hypothesis that pro-immigrant attitudes return to positive again for the youngest cohorts (Cohort V). Also, ending analyses in 2009 does not allow us to assess if opinion formation patterns persist after the Japanese public witness a significant rise in foreign workers after 2010. To address these questions that the ICPP 2009 cannot answer, we turn to findings from our 2022 web survey.

Main Result: 2022 Web Survey

Figure 2 shows estimated coefficients of university education from our 2022 web survey, presented in a parallel way as in the previous section. From Cohort I & II through Cohort IV, the figure tracks patterns in Figure 1: university education correlates with positive attitudes toward immigrants for Cohorts 1 and II (combined in this case), but the correlation weakens among Cohort III and IV. The Cohort I & II coefficient magnitudes show values of both dependent variables increase by approximately 0.05 and 0.07 among university graduates. The magnitudes are again not large as they correspond to only 0.17 and 0.21 standard deviation increases in pro-immigrant attitudes, yet both coefficients are statistically significant at the 5% level.[11] Then, we see that this relationship is significantly weakened among Cohort III and IV, with Cohort IV having coefficient estimates going below zero. Even when fielded with different data collection timings and survey modes, results from ICPP 2009 and our 2022 web survey are similar.

What stands out in the result of the 2022 survey is the pattern for Cohort V, the generation we could not observe the influence of university education in ICPP 2009. In support of our theoretical prediction, university education returns to have a positive correlation with pro-immigrant attitudes. In both panels of Figure 2, we see that university education has

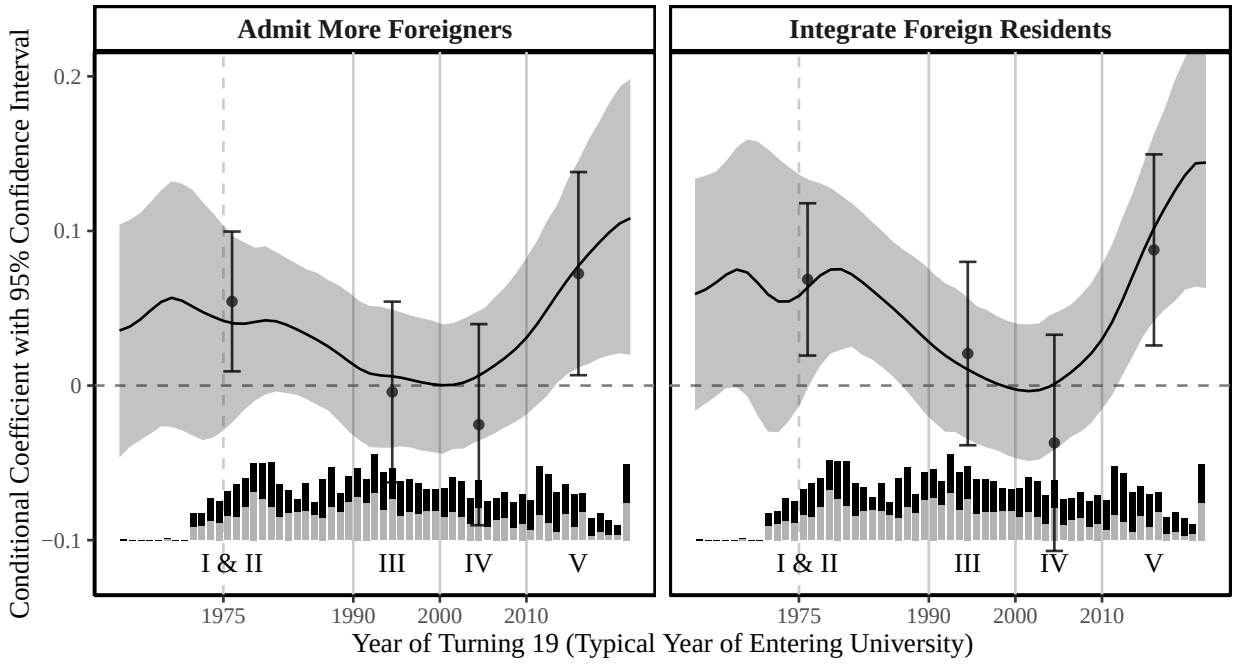

Figure 2: Connection between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes declines until Cohort IV but rises from Cohort V (2022 web survey)

a positive and statistically significant relationship with attitudes toward immigrants, with magnitudes comparable to or slightly exceeding those of Cohort I&II (coefficient estimates are approximately 0.07 and 0.09, which correspond to 0.23 and 0.27 standard deviation increases in pro-immigrant attitudes).

Robustness Checks

We conduct three types of robustness checks on our main results. First, we re-run the same models as the main analyses with alternate measures of attitudes toward admitting immigrants (only for ICPP 2009) and integrating them (for both ICPP 2009 and our 2022 web survey). We generate the alternate measures as factor scores of answers to multiple relevant questions in order to reduce measurement errors. The detailed measurement procedure is described in Online Appendix C. Appendix Figures A1 and A2 present results with alternate dependent variables. Results are consistent with that of Figure 1 and 2.[12]

As a second robustness check, we use ICPP 2013, a survey conducted using the same methodology and including a similar set of questions as ICPP 2009.[13] Although ICPP 2013 does not include the same set of questions we use in our main analyses, we can replicate the first robustness check we did for ICPP 2009. Results are consistent with ICPP 2009

analyses in that university education is positively correlated with pro-immigrant attitudes among older generations but not for Cohort III and IV (Appendix Figure A3).

Lastly, we use wave 7 of the World Values Survey (WVS7) to assess the external validity of our 2022 web survey results. The survey in Japan for WVS7 was conducted in 2019 using a similar methodology as ICPP 2009, i.e., sampling through the Japanese government's official list of voters and data collection through postal mail. WVS7 does not include questions that are worded in the same way as those we use to construct "admit more foreigners" and "integrate foreign residents" in the main analyses, but it does ask one question related to immigration policy (Q130). This question has four qualitative, quasi-ordered response options, but since responses to two of them are extremely rare, we create a binary outcome measurement of pro-immigrant attitudes to run a similar analysis as our main analyses. The outcome variable here is at best a crude approximation to outcome measures in our main analyses, but we are able to recover the central implication of our 2022 web survey results: a positive correlation between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes in Cohort V, but a null or negative correlation in Cohort III and IV (Appendix Figure A4). For Cohort I and II, on the contrary, we do not find evidence of a significant positive correlation. This result, while tentative, implies that the educational impact for Cohort I and II is relatively weak compared to that for Cohort V (additional details of WVS7 analyses are in Online Appendix E).

Exploring Mechanisms

This section presents a supplemental analysis using our 2022 web survey to examine mechanisms driving the patterns we have uncovered so far. According to our theory, increasing enrollment rates (weakening self-selection) and internationalization reforms (strengthening socialization) explain the changing connection between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes in Japan. We now explore if relevant empirical patterns follow such expectations (detailed procedures and results for this section are in Online Appendix G).

We first consider if there is evidence of weakening self-selection into university. Since existing evidence show factors such as parental education, gender, and childhood residential environment affect decisions to pursue higher education (Kuhn et al., 2021; Maxwell, 2019; Mishima et al., 2018), their connection with who gets to graduate university should weaken if the self-selection mechanism weakens across generations. Figure 3 shows results from a logistic regression model where respondent's education level is the dependent variable and "university-educated parents", "male", and "hometown in city" (instead of town or village) are explanatory variables. Each predictor interacts with the cohort (or university entry age)

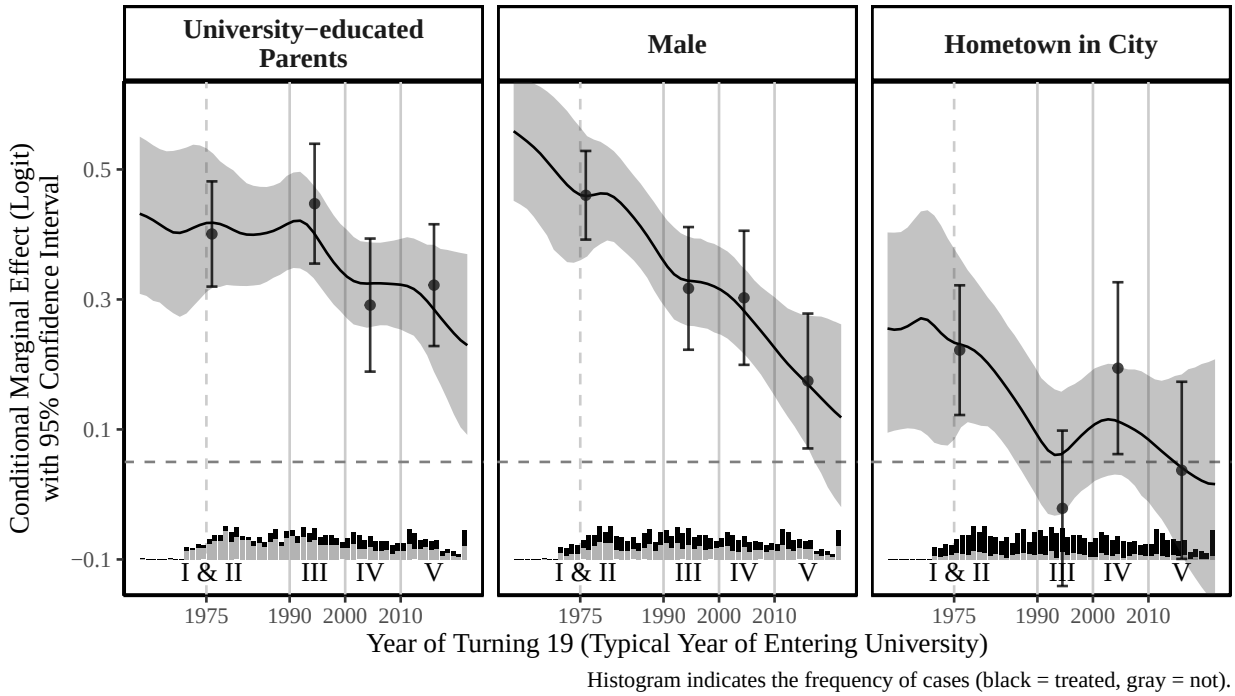

Figure 3: Parents' educational backgrounds, gender, and location of hometown become weaker predictors of university education across generations, which indicate the self-selection mechanism has weakened (2022 web survey)

variable in a similar way as in Figure 1 and 2. While there are some variations, marginal effects of the predictors are generally shrinking across generations. It used to be the case that Japanese university graduates typically had parents who also attended university, were male, and raised in a city. In more recent cohorts, such backgrounds matter less in explaining who gets to graduate university. Although the three variables we examine here do not cover all factors behind self-selection, the decline in their predictive powers across generations align with our theory that self-selection into university weakens from Cohort I to Cohort V.

Next, we consider if there is evidence of stronger socialization effects after Japanese universities adopted reforms to internationalize. Recall, we posit younger cohorts of students are more likely to encounter foreigners on campus and experience student-centered learning, both of which play key roles in fostering pro-immigrant attitudes. However, effects of socialization in universities may either be slow to take effect, or attenuated by encounters with foreigners outside of universities as well as negative encounters. Indeed, substantive magnitudes of the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes in Figure 1 and 2 are small, though they are positive and statistically significant in Cohort V.

To test the social contact mechanism, our 2022 web survey asks respondents to list encounters with foreigners on various occasions in their lives. Based on their responses, we

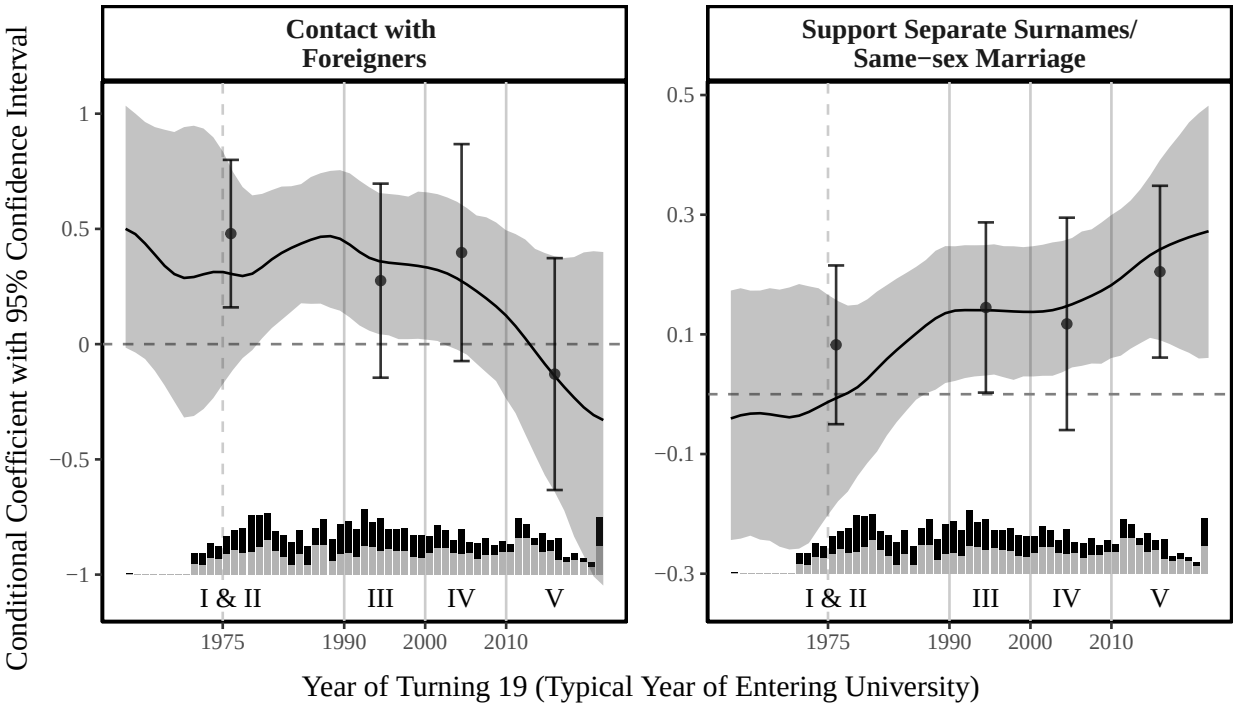

Figure 4: Only some aspects of socialization have strengthened across generations. Connection between university education and contact with foreigners declines across generations, but connection between university education and support for separate surnames/same-sex marriage rises across generations (2022 web survey)

create a composite measure of "contact with foreigners" which ranges from 0 to 7. We do not have a direct measure of student-centered learning in our 2022 web survey. However, we have measures of outcomes related to it. Our survey asks questions regarding support for separate surnames for married couples and same-sex marriage. Like immigrants, married women who keep their maiden surnames and same-sex couples are minorities in Japan. If student-centered learning fosters pro-immigrant attitudes by enhancing open and accepting attitudes toward minorities, university graduates should also be more supportive of separate surnames for married couples and same-sex marriage. We generate a factor score to summarize attitudes toward these two issues.[14] In support of stronger socialization effects, this score is positively correlated with our main dependent variables (Pearson's correlation coefficients are 0.31 with "admit more foreigners", 0.33 with "integrate foreign residents"). To test the socialization mechanism more rigorously, we include an identical set of predictors as in the analysis for Figure 1 and 2, but replace the dependent variable with "contact with foreigners" and "support separate surnames/same-sex marriage".

If the socialization mechanism strengthens from Cohort I to V, we should see an increase in the correlation between university education and "contact with foreigners" as well as

"support separate surnames/same-sex marriage". Results on the right panel of Figure 4 are consistent with increased socialization effects: university graduates express stronger support for separate surnames/same-sex marriage across generations. However, results on the left panel do not show stronger socialization effects. The positive and statistically significant correlation between university education and "contact with foreigners" in Cohort I stays nearly constant across generations until there is almost no correlation in Cohort V. To investigate this trend, we conduct two additional assessments on the nature of contact with foreigners in contemporary Japan. Our first additional assessment focuses on a specific type of contact out of our composite measure of "contact with foreigners": whether respondents have studied together with foreigners. We find recent university graduates are more likely to have had foreign study partners than graduates in earlier cohorts.[15] However, exactly the same trend also holds among recent non-university graduates (see the left panel of Appendix Figure A7). This finding explains why increasing contact with foreigners among younger generations of university graduates does not necessarily widen the *gap* in pro-immigrant attitudes between university graduates and non-university graduates. Our second additional assessment finds contact with foreigners has almost no correlation with pro-immigrant attitudes (Pearson's correlation coefficients are 0.08 with "admit more foreigners," -0.02 with "integrate foreign residents"). This finding suggests the contact experience is not necessarily positive.

In sum, our exploratory analysis of the socialization mechanism aligns with a reality where post-2010s Japanese university graduates have many other venues for socializing with foreigners outside of universities, and even when they encounter foreigners on-campus, these experiences are not necessarily positive. Relative to contact with foreigners, the pedagogical element of internationalization plays a more critical role in socializing post-2010s Japanese university students and fostering pro-immigrant attitudes.

Discussion

This article re-examines an established pattern in attitude formation by applying it to a country that has typically been overlooked in discussions of how higher education shapes attitudes toward immigrants. Japan allows us to ask the question in a cultural context that puts less emphasis on individual choice than in North America and Western Europe. Furthermore, transformations in Japanese universities over the last half-century enable us to assess how the effects of university education vary by generation. We theorize two components of historical transformations, i.e., increased enrollment rates and internationalization reforms, have affected the connection between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes. The former reduced self-selection into universities and made university graduates

look more like non-graduates; the latter promoted socialization in universities in ways that increased familiarity with and openness towards immigrants. Based on the timing of these changes, we predict the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes is stronger in the eldest and youngest cohorts and weaker in the middle cohorts.

We test our theoretical prediction using a 2022 web survey that asks overlapping questions as a nationally-representative mail-in survey in 2009. The analyses support our prediction and show university education is positively connected to pro-immigrant attitudes only for Japanese who entered university prior to the 1990s and after the 2010s. Positive connections are absent for cohorts that entered university during the 1990s and 2000s. Additional exploration of mechanisms show factors related to self-selection have indeed been weakening across generations. Regarding factors related to socialization, social contact with foreigners may have little to do with the relationship between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes in Japan. Rather, transformations in teaching content and pedagogy seem to be slowly exerting their influence.

These findings have three key implications for scholarship and practice. First, they show that the role of higher education in attitude formation is not as static as is implicitly assumed in the existing literature. So, researchers should pay more attention to how cultural and institutional contexts interact with the processes in which higher education exerts its influence on public opinion. Second, when higher education is reserved for the privileged few, self-selection can serve as a primary mechanism driving attitudinal differences between university graduates and non-graduates. However, the role of self-selection declines as the university experience becomes more democratized. Our analysis of Cohort I through IV supports this pattern even in a relatively collectivist culture such as Japan. Third, our finding that the o between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes is minimal for the middle enrollment cohort suggests when non-western countries reform their institutions to become more internationalized, it takes some time to embed these changes within existing practices so that the same mechanisms for social change can develop. Practitioners should expect a lag between institutional mandate for change and actual changes in teaching content and pedagogy within classrooms.

Our findings do come with caveats. For one, the cross-sectional nature of the datasets does not allow us to make a strong causal claim on connections between university education and pro-immigrant attitudes. In order to deepen the theoretical understanding behind our findings, we ideally need panel data to track how attitudes toward immigrants change over time for both university graduates and non-graduates. Our analyses also lack measurements that directly capture the socialization mechanism. So, in future studies, it would be helpful to measure, for example, whether recent Japanese university attendees are more likely to

have been taught by foreign faculty (or faculty who are supportive of immigrants) or taught using active learning methods.

Finally, the predominance of research on western universities suggests they play an instrumental role in shaping each generation's ideological and policy views. Our goal in this paper is to examine how the same argument can be extended to contexts with different university cultures and institutions. However, we have only examined whether university education affects public opinion on one issue in one Asian country. Similar analysis can be applied to other issues, such as gender inequality in political participation and representation, LGBTQ acceptance, and freedom of religious expression. Moreover, as MIPEX indicators and Erin Chung's recent book *Immigrant Incorporation in East Asian Democracies* (Chung, 2020) show, there are variations in levels of immigrant integration, even among East Asian countries. Extension of the current study beyond Japan provides more opportunities to test the generalizability of our findings as well as to theorize underlying causal mechanisms.

Notes

[1]Another perspective to look at increasing enrollment rates is shrinking occupational advantages of university graduates (Kambayashi & Kato, 2017; Kariya, 2011; Yonezawa, 2020). While it is possible younger Japanese college graduates feel more economically threatened by immigrants compared to older cohorts, economic outcomes are controlled variables in our analysis.

[2]Citing information from MEXT, Liu-Farrer (2020) reports "In 2016, among 7020 public schools in Japan that had foreign children that needed support, 2851 of them had only one child and 1,339 had two. Only 1729 had more than five children..." (239).

[3]Regarding in-school encounters with foreigners prior to universities, the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET) has been sending contract-based English-native teachers to primary and secondary schools across Japan since 1987. However, the expansion of JET mainly occurred during the 1990s, not the 2010s nmjk,licv(JET Programme, 2022).

[4]For another perspective on this challenge, see The Asahi Shimbun (2021) for comments by Syukuro Manabe, 2021 Nobel laureate in physics, on the scientific research climate in Japan.

[5]The data for this secondary analysis, "Public Opinion Poll on Internationalization and Citizens' Political Participation, 2009" (Survey Number 0838, Depositors Shunsuke Tanabe and Mitsuru Matsutani), was provided by the Social Science Japan Data Archive, Center for Social Research and Data Archives, Institute of Social Science, The University of Tokyo.

[6]250 respondents are recruited per location. In the analyses of ICPP 2009, robust standard errors are clustered by locations to account for a clustered structure of the dataset.

[7]If compared across age cohorts, younger generations are slightly more pro-immigrant than older generations, but there is a similar amount of variations within any age cohort (Figure A9).

[8]Since we don't have exact dates of birth, this value is approximate. Using the fact that the academic year in Japan starts in April, ICPP respondents, who answered questions in October-December, are assumed to be already turned 19 if they entered university at age 18. Respondents of our 2022 survey, fielded in March,

are assumed to be at the age of 18 if they are entering university in the given year.

[9]To check the validity of the OLS regression modelling strategy, we also estimate the same models using ordered logit models. Online Appendix F shows that their results are virtually identical to that of our main results.

[10]In the analysis, the bandwidth of the kernel smoothing estimator is fixed to five years in age to ensure comparability across results.

[11]The results from kernel-smoothed interaction models imply that the coefficients for Cohort I and II are statistically insignificant for some or all ranges, while their magnitudes are comparable to that of categorical interaction models. This result is likely due to the insufficient size of samples.

[12]For immigrant acceptance attitudes in our 2022 web survey, we have the outcome measurement with alternative wording (but no other relevant questions). The result with this variable is presented in Appendix Figure A2.

[13]The data for this secondary analysis, "Public Opinion Poll on Internationalization and Citizens' Political Participation, 2013" (Survey Number 1159, Depositor Research Project for Internationalization and Political Participation, PI Shunsuke Tanabe), was provided by the Social Science Japan Data Archive, Center for Social Research and Data Archives, Institute of Social Science, The University of Tokyo.

[14]Regression-based score based on exploratory factor analysis thorough `fa` function in `psych` package from the statistical software R. Higher score indicates more support for those rights. Cronbach's alpha for the two variables is 0.73 and sufficiently high.

[15]We focus on study partners because overall contact with foreigners naturally increases throughout the course of one's life. This alternate dependent variable shows similar trends as the composite measure of contact we use in the main analysis (compare the right panel of Appendix Figure A7 to the left panel of Figure 4.)

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