Education as a Soft Power Resource to Promotion of Immigration and Assimilation in Japan

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Abstract

The concept of soft power presents both theoretical and practical difficulties for researchers and policy makers. This essay examines the practical use of soft power and argues that soft power resources in education are important for attracting individuals to migrate between countries and assimilate to the new language and culture of the new location. Japan's attempts to utilize soft power resources in its educational system have provided mixed results dependent on the target population. Japan has successfully attracted individuals into fields related to higher education much more so than skilled labor programs. This essay discusses the importance of educational soft power resources in Japanese strategy to increase educated working population that is assimilated to Japanese language and culture. After reviewing the literature on soft power in Asia, and Japanese cultural integration policies, the essay examines three cases of Japanese educational soft power - the JET Programme, the caregiver-training program, and internationalization of university programs. In addition, the essay shows that Japan is more successful attracting higher educated individuals seeking higher paying employment rather than skilled labor through these programs.

Keywords

Soft Power, Education, Attraction

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Ⅰ. Introduction

Ever since the first introduction of soft power into political science research, it has faced both practical and theoretical problems. From a theoretical perspective, soft power lacks clear conceptualization. From a practical perspective, questions linger on how actors can use soft power to improve their position. This article examines the practical aspect of soft power use to determine the conditions under which resources directed toward attraction as a soft power resource, become more effective. The article compares three attempts at soft power attraction in Japan through educational programs designed to attract foreigners to live and work in Japan.

Attraction has become a key word in diplomatic interactions between nations and peoples around the world through Joseph Nye's formulation of soft power. Since the earliest discussions, nations in Asia have made significant policies toward increasing attractiveness toward their nation for various ends, such as investment and image of policy choices. The wealth and prosperity of Japan, coupled with its strong democratic values and cultural uniqueness create an attraction among various countries' peoples in the world. In a Pew Research Poll conducted in 2015, for example, 71% of those surveyed in the Asia Pacific found Japan favorable, while China received only 57% and South Korea only 47% favorability (Stokes, 2015). In the Pew Poll, Japan received the highest average favorability, though not all states held the most favorable positions toward Japan, such as Pakistan (48%), South Korea (25%), and China (12%). For Pakistan and South Korea, China received the highest favorability ratings,

while China favored South Korea the highest. These indicators suggest that Japan (and China) possesses a latent attractive resource based on culture, economy, and political system.

There are two direct ways to use this latent power economically. In one case, Japan might use this power to attract tourists to Japan to improve its economy. The Japanese economy has experienced very long periods of stagnation and deflation in recent history, where increased economic activity might help alleviate these issues. Although Japanese tourism is not and probably will never be a major part of the Japanese economy, Japan is experiencing an unprecedented growth in tourism from other Asian nations in recent years, especially China. In 2015, Japan received a record number of visitors amounting to over "3.48 trillion Yen" surpassing the number of travelers from Japan in the year (Otake, 2016). These numbers are expected to continue to increase up to and beyond the Olympic games in 2020.

In the second case, Japan can improve attractiveness toward potential migrants to find jobs, and remove some pressure on the aging workforce. The primary difficulty with immigration to Japan involves the Japanese population's resistance to foreign cultures potentially altering the Japanese culture, which is extremely rich in socially constructed rule-based requirements. Combining this rule-based culture with a closed attitude toward discussions with strangers, non-natives find it extremely difficult to navigate.

How might Japan deal with this difficult assimilation? What kinds of policies might Japan implement to increase assimilation and under what rhetorical framework might these assimilatory efforts occur? Japan has successfully implemented two education based programs and failed in a third education program that encourage foreign immigration to japan and

helps with assimilation. In two cases, the described program intentions diverge greatly in the actualization of the program. In the third case, the desired outcome was more in line with the actual outcomes of the program, however, diverging interests of the immigrants and immigrating country as well as the difficulty of the program contributes to its failure.

This essay examines Japanese attractiveness through three programs designed as part of educational internationalization and training of foreign populations. Before the empirical discussion, the paper discusses initial assumptions about hard and soft power and the importance of attraction as a form of soft power. Second, the paper reviews the literature discussing how nations might use their educational systems and government policies toward attracting the public to improve their national image and eventually gain economic or political benefits. Following this review, the essay discusses the three cases of Japanese educational soft power in the JET Programme, internationalization of higher education as part of the Super Global 30 project and other policies, and the Guest Worker and Training programs for health care and nurses. The paper concludes that these programs are all geared toward assimilatory policies rather than increasing multicultural diversity (in the Western conceptual definition). In addition, the paper suggests that the largest component responsible for successful assimilation of foreign populations involves the language barrier, which inevitably leads toward cultural awareness and deeper understanding.

II. Acculturation

Before discussing the importance of educational resources as a tool of national soft power, this section discusses the process of acculturation and the strategies by both the larger cultural group and the new ethnocultural group. These strategies depend on the desired relationship between the new group and larger society as well as the desire to maintain cultural heritage or adopt the culture of the larger group. Acculturation serves as the mechanism by which individuals become part of another societal group, thus more likely to live and work in that society.

Acculturation describes the changes that occur when two cultures meet each other, changing both groups in the process (Berry, 2005). This process occurs when two or more groups come in contact, where one group holds a dominant societal position while the other group involves a smaller ethnocultural group. For both these groups, contact causes some changes, while the greater stress and pressure occurs for the minority group. Acculturation does not specifically describe what changes occur and how those changes might occur, which depend on the desires and strategies employed by the two groups in relation to their own cultural identity and integration with the other group.

There are four strategies depending on the degree to which the groups desire inclusion and the degree to which the groups desire to maintain their cultural heritage, listed in Table 1. The strategies for the larger group involve the use of multiculturalism, melting pot, segregation, or exclusion. Multiculturalism involves the maintenance of the cultural

heritage of the ethnocultural group and a high degree of relationship between the two groups. The policy of a melting pot involves a higher degree of changes for the ethnocultural group while also maintaining high degree of relationships between the groups. Historically, the United States adopted the melting pot strategy incorporating individuals from a variety of cultures and backgrounds, while requiring those individuals to adopt American culture and language. In more recent years, the United States policy toward immigration has altered into a multicultural view, where the smaller ethnocultural groups maintain stronger ties to their identity and culture, including use of their own language. Although all of the strategies for both the ethnocultural group and the larger society deserve extensive discussion, this project concentrates on the two strategies relevant to modern Japanese politics.

Historically, before the 1970s, Japan supported its own cultural heritage and only allowed ethnocultural groups to assimilate into Japanese society. The pre-World War II assimilation policies resonated throughout Asia and in Japan to those who were ethnoculturally different from Japanese. Requirements such as adopting a Japanese name and disallowing dual nationality are two modern government policy examples illustrating the melting pot strategy in Japan.

Despite the historical tendency to pursue melting pot strategies, the Japanese government, pressured by Western standards and practices (Okubo, 2013), favors a new multicultural policy. The new multicultural policy, tabunkakyosei, favors harmonious co-existence and co-living in Japan, created by a desire for high relations between the groups and the ability for groups to maintain cultural identities. This modified or "contested" multiculturalism, however, does not fully allow maintenance of one's

own culture. Instead, this strategy attempts to manage the impact of diversity on Japanese society while encouraging assimilation by foreign communities by providing additional lifestyle and administrative support (Okubo, 2013). Essentially, Japan straddles the division between melting pot and multicultural policies by encourage foreign communities to adopt Japanese practices through support while managing cultural differences to avoid strong impacts on Japanese society.

Figure 1: Acculturation Strategies

		Ethnocultural Strategy	
		Maintain cultural heritage	Adopt new cultural heritage
Relationship Strategy	Seeking high relations	Integration -multiculturalism	Assimilation -Melting Pot
	Seeking Low Relations between Groups	Separation -Segregation	Marginalization -Exclusion

The paper now turns to discuss the importance of soft power in Education as one of the means through which Japanese government and society provide support to immigrating individuals to assimilate those individuals into Japanese society. The support, as discussed later, involves the use of educational institutions and programs discussed as internationalizing Japanese society or institutions, while using those same resources to promote Japanese language and cultural adoption for the integrating groups.

Ⅲ. Hard and Soft Power

Scholarship traditionally defines power based on the ability of one actor to change the behavior of another actor through any means. This definition of power derives from Dahl (1957) who helped illustrate the four important defining aspects of power relations between two individual actors. These include the source of the power, the instruments of power, the quantity of power, and the scope of the power (Dahl, 1957, p. 203). Many discussions of power subsequent to Dahl worked within the confines of these four aspects, attempting to measure latent and manifest power sources, exercise of power over others and the tools used, measuring relative power between actors, and finally measuring the fungibility of power over various behaviors. For example, studies in realism often involve measuring relative power changes and resulting changes in state behavior (Schweller, 2004; Taliaferro, 2004) or the fungibility of military power to influence the behavior of other states (Art, 1996).

A second set of examinations on power and influence over others involves the ideas of soft power, which discuss the means and mechanisms of influence of mostly non-physical forms of influence, based in resources such as symbolism and culture. Joseph Nye emphasized the importance of attraction of culture and norms as a means to change behavior of other actors in the international system. Nye defined soft power as the "ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments⋯ from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies" (Nye, 2004, p. x). Soft power primarily defined as attraction of one entity to another. Although the definition of this form of soft

power contains some contentious elements, for the purpose of this argument, we assume that some form of attractive soft power is possible and that states can attempt to capitalize on this attraction. It is particularly clear in cases of migration where countries are literally attracting people from other nations to move, live, and work, in a new location. In these cases, therefore, attraction not only has a mental or metaphysical property, but also a clear physical observable change in behavior - people move to a new country.

Nye makes a stark contrast between hard and soft powers, primarily by distinguishing the means of influence over others. Rather than relying on military means of influence, he defines soft power through cultural attraction. This dichotomy is somewhat unsatisfying since it does not allow for fungibility of power across different forms of power and ignores other tools such as economic attraction, agenda-setting power, and the use of rhetoric or framing. Instead, harder and softer powers form a continuum across which different means and resources are used to influence other actors whereby some means cross into different types of power (Rothman, 2011).

The idea of attraction essentially requires that states maintain policies that attract attention and affection from other nations or nationals of other states. The idea of attraction is a concept primarily reserved for objects with the ability to sense something desirable in another. In the definition of soft power, Nye neglects the importance of intent. In most definitions of power, there is an important difference between exerting influence intentionally and unintentionally affecting behavior of another. Soft power blurs this distinction because cultural attraction is difficult to manipulate and use to a particular end. In fact, the same culture can be

repulsive as well as attractive to different individual actors depending on the relationship between the target actor and the culture. Saliency of a particular culture and the framing of the culture can have influences over the degree to which the culture influences an actor and the direction of that influence (Rothman, 2010). Difficulties in our understanding of the fungibility of different forms of power and the intentionality of actors using different forms of power impeded our understanding of the differences between hard and soft power.

Despite these difficulties, soft power attraction remains an important part of national foreign policy for a number of states. In Asia in general, and for China, Japan, and Korea in particular, soft power and rhetorical framing have been important parts of foreign policy. In a type of war of culture, these three nations in particular engage in soft power influence through cultural sharing, language exchanges, symbolic movements and protests, and internationalization of education. Reforming educational institutions in particular creates greater opening for the migration of foreign nationals. Internationalization of educational institutions in particular increases the potential for migration by opening up domestic schooling institutions to greater numbers of foreign students. This migration allows nations to impart their cultures on the students visiting from other countries and attract them toward national policies. In the case of migration, a number of costs are involved with relocation including monetary costs of transportation and housing, the opportunity costs of previous employment, the emotional or cultural costs of adjusting to a new location, and possibly learning a new language in the case of international migration.

IV. Education as Soft Power

Altbach and McGill state Altbach and McGill state, "Higher education has always served as an international force, influencing intellectual and scientific development and spreading ideas worldwide" (Altbach & McGill-Peterson, 2008, p. 37). Education as a tool for implementing soft power internationally is relatively under-explored in the literature on soft power in international relations, though there are some efforts discussing education within the Asian context. In particular, Asian nations such as China and Japan use their educational institutions in different ways to further the national goals through educational soft power influences. Without a doubt, national educational practices influence the domestic political culture and interaction among individuals. Educational practices in Germany and Japan during World War II, and educational reforms after the war affected the attitudes of individuals in those countries. Educational practices in Japan have since continued to raise controversy with the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China (M. Lee, 2001; W. Lee, 2001; Rose, 1999). In the United States, as well, higher educational practices raised discussion about the degree to which professors' bias toward liberal discussions and discourage conservative viewpoints among students, altering the culture and identity for future generations (Groseclose, 2011; Gross, 2013). Russia also relies on education to encourage economic development and transmit particular cultural values to the domestic population (Tareva & Tarev, 2017). These studies show little doubt that education is an important state tool toward conditioning domestic populations with particular ideological and cultural identities.

Within the limited research on soft power and international education, studies suggest the importance in two areas: directed policy on the internationalization of domestic educational institutions to encourage foreign participation and the exporting educational opportunities abroad to influence foreign populations.

Internationalization of education involves the ability of countries to expose their domestic cultural attractive traits to international students. Many countries developed programs to increase international cultural understanding after World War II, such as the United States Information Agency, the British Council, the DAAD and Goethe Institutes, EduGrance, the Japan Foundation, and the Canadian Studies Program within the department of foreign affairs (Trilokekar, 2010). Students who attend foreign universities "usually return home with a greater appreciation of … values and institutions" (Nye, 1999, p. 42). The goal of many programs involved domestic institutional reform to encourage foreign applicants to domestic university systems. In 2007, Yang reported that Chinese universities enrolled students from 178 countries and increased from about 36,000 to 110,800 within a ten-year period (Yang, 2007). The Japanese government created a program, the JET Programme, to import foreign instructors of English to reform primary and secondary education while exposing these foreign instructors to Japanese culture. Rather than internationalizing the university school system, the Japanese government provided opportunities for foreign students to experience Japanese culture, create networks, and establish stronger connections to Japan for use later in their careers. This is discussed in more detail later in the paper.

In the second case of soft power and education, countries export their

educational programs abroad to develop soft power influences. China successfully created such a program through the use of Confucius Institutes teaching Chinese language throughout the world's higher educational institutions (Ren, 2012). By 2012, 353 Confucius institutes were established in 104 countries (Ren, 2012). Although Ren concludes that Confucius institutes provide little contribution to Chinese soft power influence because they lack a strong cultural education component, language education alone may constitute some soft power influence. Although not the subject of this article, it is possible that students simply taking the time to learn a foreign language have a greater propensity to interact with that country in the future making that influence somewhat substantial, as is demonstrated in the JET Programmed discussed later. As Paradise (2009) suggests, even if the only benefit to China through Confucius institutes involves the expansion of networks and contacts for Chinese universities, it amounts to substantial gain for China.

The research on education and soft power clearly suggests an important potential for influence on both domestic and foreign populations. The degree to which different programs are successful depends on factors yet to be clearly determined in the literature. Up until this point, research on educational soft power influences involves particular state sponsored programs designed to develop increased relations with foreign populations. Measuring success, or effectiveness, differs from measuring the effects, which requires no a priori knowledge of program goals. Even measuring effects of these programs requires some estimation as to the soft influence over cultural and the time-lag before the educational soft power changes policy outcomes. Despite these complications, this paper attempts to examine the effectiveness of three programs measured by the degree

to which individuals in the programs express their desire to live and work in Japan. The programs examined in this paper all attempt to increase the attractiveness of Japan by easing the transition and acculturation process. Interpretation of influence on foreign nationals beneficial toward the state, however, remains ambiguous.

Ⅴ. Japanese Educational Soft Power

Japan attempted to attract foreign nationals in three ways: bringing foreign nationals as English teachers, using international educational institutions to teach Japanese language and culture, and using training institutions to teach Japanese language and culture. These three methods differ significantly from western practices using higher educational institutions as a form of soft power. Japan suffers from a more difficult context, being a non-English speaking country and desiring to attract foreign nationals through the educational system. For many educational institutions in the western English-speaking countries, bringing students from foreign countries into their institutions is a viable practice. Since much of the world uses English as a second language, the attraction of participating in a higher education experience in a desirable language environment creates potential study abroad spaces.

In addition to the language environment, Japan is a highly contextualized culture, which requires significant experience to understand the cultural norms in both language and living practice. Although the Japanese government frequently discusses the importance of increasing

foreign nationals in Japan, the culture is difficult for most to penetrate. Japanese society as a whole remains rather xenophobic toward foreign cultures influencing and changing the Japanese practices in lifestyle and business. This combination of resistance to change from foreign cultures and the seemingly impenetrable Japanese cultural and social practices generates serious impediments to incorporating foreign nationals into the community work due to cultural and language difficulties.

1. Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Programme

The Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Programme was designed to kick start an internationalization process in Japan in the late 1980s in order to bring Japan closer to the international community of diversified states. The program specifically started to "increase mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the people of other nations" (The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, n.d.). The program continues even today as one of the most successful attempts at internationalization through importation of diverse populations into the education system. Although touted as a means to promote internationalization by improving English education at the local community level (The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, n.d.), Japan shows very little progress improving English standards. In Asia, Japan ranks below many other Asian nations such as Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam, and South Korea ("EF English Proficienty Index: Asia," n.d.). In the English Proficiency Index, Japan ranks as "low" proficiency in the second to lowest category of countries in Asia.

In 2000, a comprehensive examination of the JET Programme concluded that the program implementation lacked coherence and often fails to

achieve objectives of improving education and internationalization of youth in Japan (McConnell, 2000). Educational practices in Japan failed to change much from importing foreign college graduates who were themselves, largely untrained in educational pedagogy or formal English studies. In addition, foreign nationals participating in the JET program stood out from the Japanese system, where educators in Japan placed these individuals at safe distances allowing Japanese practices and foreign educational approaches to act concurrently (McConnell, 2000, p. 269). Most of the studies on the JET Programme primarily focus on the educational value of importing English speakers to improve the lackluster English education program, lacking significantly behind Asian counterparts (Metzgar, 2017). However, focusing on the educational benefits for language misses a larger point of the connections being built through Japanese soft power and contact with the foreign college graduates.

Rather than improving English education and internationalism at the local level, the program instead allows Japanese individuals to experience foreign national cultures and identities and create connections between the foreign individuals who participate in the program and Japan. What studies discussing the JET Programme fail to notice are the large numbers of foreign nationals that either remain in Japan after the JET Programme time limit ends or maintaining connections to Japan through their later business or career enterprises. There are a number of JET alumni associations and continued cooperation with JET participants through the Council of Local Authorities for International Affairs, CLAIR, which partly funds the official alumni organizations (Metzgar, 2017, p. 114).

Through a snowball sampling survey, Metzgar analyzed results of over 500 American JET alumni and concluded that the JET alumni have a

generally overwhelming positive impression of Japanese society (Metzgar, 2017, p. 127). This, in itself cannot document success of the JET program influencing internationals simply because there is no comparison made with the general population. The results suggest however, that there is an impact on foreign nationals and Metzgar concludes so, though not necessarily an intended consequence of the program.

This paper further contends that the internationalization sought in Japan is not the same as the one considered in the west. Western definitions of multiculturalism and internationalization involve increasing the diversity, racial, ethnic, cultural, etc. Japanese internationalization, however, seeks to do so through assimilation rather than diversifying the population at large. In other words, the JET program served as a first step toward other programs aimed at educating foreign individuals on the cultural practices in Japan, acclimating those individuals to the customs by which time many of those individuals will find a place to live and work within this culture. Rather than bringing in foreign cultures to Japan, Japan programs seek to Japanize foreign nationals into much of the culture and practices within Japan. This serves an important purpose to lessen the difficulties for Japanese nationals with the increased diversity within their borders.

2. University Internationalization and Assimilation

In what almost seems like a second stage of internationalization, moving from middle and high school internationalization to university, a series of recent policies increased funding for higher education internationalization. However, this program, just as the JET Programme seems more attuned to bringing internationals to Japan and acclimating them to Japanese norms

and society than it is to internationalizing the Japanese population, though there are likely effects on both. One of the recent policies implemented at the Ministry of Education on higher education is designed to increase the use of English as a medium for education in classes. These English based education programs do not generally entice Japanese nationals to increase their English proficiency, but they often attract English speakers from abroad to Japanese society and education system. This serves clear economic benefits by bringing foreign nationals to live and work in Japan, and the institutions may maintain programs to ease the transition into Japanese society. Rather than focusing on changing the Japanese population to accept greater intrusions and diverse cultures, these institutionalized policies attempt to both select those who are inclined toward Japanese societal institutions and norms and assimilate those individuals more deeply into Japanese culture and language.

Recently, the Japanese Ministry of Education launched a number of initiatives to improve internationalization of universities in Japan. One of the largest of these initiatives involves the Super Global 30 Program. The program is funded by the Ministry of Education to increase competitiveness of Japanese universities through internationalization and developing curricula based on international standards. For instance, one university selected for the program, University of Tokyo, developed a plan to create a global campus through reforming their educational policies, developing wider number of English based courses, publishing research in English, as well as Japanese and other languages, and developing the administrative support throughout the university (Tokyo, n.d.). The Super Global University program separated universities between two types, those pursuing high-level international rankings (Type A) and those pursuing

increased internationalization (Type B). Based on university self-reported data to the Ministry of Education, data show the number of universities offering at least one course in English as a medium of education increase between 2005 and 2013 from about 176 to 262 (Brown, 2017). Although many universities maintain some level of education classes in English, the programs are rather shallow and do not serve many subject areas or in many course across these universities (Brown, 2017).

The number of foreign students in Japan also exploded in recent years. In six years between 2010 and 2016, the number of Vietnamese studying in Japan increased by a factor of 12, which now amounts to about 25% of the foreign students in Japan (Chinese students amount to about 41%) (Yoshiaki & Nguyen, 2017). Despite the large increase of students in some areas, the total number of foreign students in Japanese higher education institutions has been relatively steady in data provided by the Ministry of Education between 2010 and 2014 at about 120,000 students (MEXT, 2016). The increases in students documented in Japan, therefore, occur at other institutions such as language schools, presecondary institutions, or non-accredited education institutions.

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) offers dual curricula in both English and Japanese for a student body from more than 150 countries regularly in attendance (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, n.d.). Most courses at the university are offered in both English and Japanese and the degree requirements vary based on foreign (English-based) students and domestic (Japanesebased) students.

Although the university is also mandated to increase the internationalization of Japanese students attending the university, some of the strictest policies implemented at the university assimilate the foreign population to

living in Japan. That is not to say that there is no interaction between Japanese students and foreign students or that there are no internationalization effects on Japanese students.

The two policies at the university that have the greatest impact on international students are the Japanese language requirements and the living requirements for first year students. All English-base students are required to take approximately two years of intense Japanese language education and many students take courses. Language acquisition is a pre-requisite for longterm relations with Japan because the country largely operates on a Japanese basis. Although it is possible for most individuals to live in Japan without learning Japanese language in depth, this requirement acts to acclimate these students toward longer-term attachment and living in Japan. Although data are not available, counterfactually, it is easy to imagine that students are more likely to maintain relations with Japan given the difficulty and large time investment required to learn a second and difficult language. In addition, all international students are required to maintain residency together in a dormitory near campus and away from the general population of the city where the university is located. During the time the students live in the dormitory, they are taught several cultural norms, experiencing how to live and work in Japanese society. For instance, because Japanese cultural norms require careful sorting of garbage for pickup on specific days, there are very specific policies for students to sort their garbage sometimes for inspection. These policies are just two examples of how the university incorporates Japanese normalization and acculturation into the foreign students, who after living and experience Japan for four years usually stay in Japan to work and live for a medium to long term period.

3. Worker Training Programs

Given Japan's difficulties in specific labor markets due to aging population and a reduction in working aged adults, the Japanese government has encouraged a number of foreign worker training and immigration programs. These "guest worker" programs involve a variety of relatively lowskilled and unskilled labor pools, such as construction and health care. Although these programs do not directly involve immigration and cannot be discussed as immigration programs due to domestic political concerns (Curran & Cislo, 2016). In general, Japan has no particular visa status for unskilled laborers and no path to residency. Instead, Japan relies heavily on programs for interns, guest workers, and training programs, which are sometimes used to exploit foreign labor without adequate oversight. The US Department of State, which compiles a comprehensive report on trafficking for nations around the world and categorizes them based on abuse, placed Japan in "Tier 2" since 2014 suggesting significant problems. The 2016 report states that Japan, "is a destination, source, and transit country for men and women subjected to forced labor." The report also states that migrant workers are "subjected to conditions of forced labor, including some cases through the governments' Technical Intern Training Program."

Despite these concerns over labor abuses, these programs have flourished to increase the number of workers in specific areas where Japanese labor market remains too small. One such program involves the Economic Partnership Agreement between Indonesia and Japan to increase the number of aid workers and health care workers in the overly burdened elderly care industry. Japan nursing industry in general suffers from conditions such as lower pay, lower social status, long hours, irregular

working conditions and unpaid overtime (Radesa, 2014, p. 23).

Under this program, nurses are required to pass Japanese nursing exams in order to be licensed to work in Japanese health care facilities. This requires a substantial knowledge of Japanese language and cultural issues in order to deal with the working environment and the exam. Based on information gathered from the Deputy of Labor Placement Division in Indonesia, the number of applicants from Indonesia declined between 2009 and 2012 quite dramatically due to the difficulties passing the exams (Radesa, 2014). Though more recently, in 2014, the Japanese government increased the time available to these individuals to pass the test in order to increase the overall exam pass rate, which seemed to be the greatest cause of difficulty to entry into the Japanese labor market (Kyodo, 2015).

The case of Indonesian and other health care workers point directly to the problem of language and acculturation into Japanese society as the primary impediment to continued long-term work prospects in Japan. The limitation the government places on 3 or 4 years for these individuals to come to Japan, learn the language and culture enough to work and live in Japan and pass the nursing exam has been the primary difficulty (Kyodo, 2015; Radesa, 2014). One of the biggest problems with language education for these candidates involves the use of local dialects and slang, which is not taught as part of formal Japanese language education programs (Radesa, 2014).

Although the program for nursing continues and the Japanese government attempts to alleviate some of the difficulties, the program is considered generally as a failure. Few of the applicants are successful passing the exam to become licensed nursing or health care workers in Japan. The

primary reason for this failure involves Japanese language and the difficulty of long work hours in the training program expected of the workers.

VI. Conclusions

This paper examined the use of educational programs as a means to increase soft power attraction toward Japan and increase immigration and cultural attachment. Attractive resources are important parts of a national soft power strategy to improve image among foreign publics. Asian nations in particular, have been utilizing education as a resource for soft power influence and increase the attractiveness in a new soft-power rivalry in particular among the East Asian states of China, Korea, and Japan.

In all the programs examined in this paper, language education seems most vital to the transferal of attraction toward the nation. In all three programs, language education plays an integral part as a necessary condition for improving image. Without the language, assimilation becomes very difficult and acquisition of deepening cultural understanding becomes impossible. In the nursing training program, it is clear that the largest reason for failure involved the lack of language education and the difficulties understanding nuanced language from the local culture as well as for the nursing/caregiving exam. In China's case for Confucius Institutes as well, language education is the most important service provided (though this is not examined in this paper).

In addition, the mandate and stated intent of the programs may alter their success. In the two educational programs, JET and the internationalization of higher education, the stated intention is to increase domestic multiculturalism among Japanese citizens. The effects of these programs, however, are very strong in their influence over the Japanese image for foreigners and the attraction that results. The alumni for both the international universities and the JET program maintain very strong ties to Japan. In the nursing program, however, the stated goal discusses the importance of bringing workers and laborers to help deal with the decreasing population. In this program, despite the stated goal, the program has failed to achieve the results. In a sense, by stating the desire for foreign workers, the program limits the attractive power. Perhaps attraction must be generated more subtly.

Two programs designed as internationalizing Japan have greater effects on foreign populations attachment to Japan, while the one program designed specifically to bring foreigners to Japan largely fails at achieving its goals. Indirectly attracting individuals to Japan works better than directly attempting to import labor or workers from abroad. In addition, in order to bring foreign nationals to Japan to live and work, the acculturation is vital to the success of the program. Without adequate training in cultural norms and language, the individuals do not make a significant investment to treat Japan as viable living and working environment in the long-term.

This paper points to some interesting ideas that deserve further examination. First, cultural attraction requires language affinity between the target and the source. Second, attraction requires some subtlety of intention that is often desirable when using harder power resources to

influence other actors. These two conditions on the success of soft power attractiveness need further examination to determine the extent to which they hold true for other cases and represent a more general understanding of how attraction works between nations and foreign populations.

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