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Experimental Studies of Attitudes towards Globalization

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700,000

During the current year a nationally representative survey with embedded experiments was fielded. The survey experiments were designed to examine the impact of the increase in foreign workers in Japan on attitudes toward globalization and immigration.

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During the current year a nationally representative survey with embedded experiments was fielded. The survey experiments were designed to examine the impact of the increase in foreign workers in Japan on attitudes toward globalization and immigration as well as to examine the types of interaction the Japanese public prefers to have with foreign populations. The results of the surveys provided support for a number of hypothesis. First, it was found that exposure to non-assimilated foreigners leads to a reduction in support for globalization among the elderly and general attitudes toward disgust drive attitudes toward immigration. Furthermore, it was found that the Japanese public prefers to have contact with foreign workers but also prefer high levels of cultural assimilation. I am currently completing 3 manuscripts based on the survey experiment results that will be submitted for peer review in an international journal.

International relations

Foreign Policy Immigration Globalization Public opinion Japanese Politics Experimental methods

１．研究開始当初の背景

　　This project consists of 3 studies that examine public attitudes toward immigration and globalization in Japan. Japan is facing a well-known demographic challenge. Since 2018, public policy has allowed for an increase in temporary foreign workers as a stopgap to alleviate shortages in the labor supply and stabilize welfare programs. Japan has thus experienced a significant increase in the number of foreigners entering the country. Such programs to stabilize the economy, however, are only sustainable long term if supported by the public in general, if not openly at least tacitly.

２．研究の目的

　　The main objective of the project is to build an understanding of the determinants and management of public attitudes toward globalization in Japan.

　　Study 1 considers the impact of individual-level cultural threats on attitudes toward globalization. Previous studies have found that contact with foreign communities can lead to a breakdown in interpersonal communication, cause cultural disorientation, and create individual-level interpersonal threats.

　　While much focus has been placed on increasing English-language skills in Japan, most incoming temporary workers are not English speakers. Japanese citizens are increasingly exposed to languages they are unfamiliar with, may begin to encounter signs and advertising in foreign languages, and face other barriers to linguistic communication. Does increased contact with non-assimilated foreigners impact public support for globalization in Japan?

Table 1: Typology of Immigration Regimes

		Assimilation		
		High	Neutral	Low
Contact	High	melting pot	salad bowl	multiculturalism
	Nuetral	seperation	coexistence	pluralism
	Low	segregation	assimilation	exclusion

Study 2 focuses on the management of public opinion and examines the type of immigration regime that is most acceptable to the public. This study examines a typology of immigration regimes that vary in the level of assimilation of immigrants as well as the level of contact between the immigrant and native populations.

　　Based on variation in assimilation and contact, a general typology of immigration regimes is constructed and presented in Table 1. A society where assimilation and contact are high could be described as a "melting pot" where the native population encounters foreign populations but desires foreign populations to assimilate to the dominant culture. On the other hand, a society with high contact and low assimilation could be considered a "multicultural society" where the native population encounters foreign populations with no expectation of assimilation to the dominant culture. Additionally, the public may prefer some level of separation from foreign populations with little contact and high or low levels of assimilation. What type of immigration regime is most supported by the public?

　　Study 3 considers the determinants of immigration attitudes with a focus on

psychological factors. Several psychological factors have been found to influence attitudes toward immigration and out-group members in Western countries. One prominent finding that may be particularly impacted by the recent pandemic is the relationship between disgust sensitivity and support for immigration. While an increase in disgust sensitivity is associated with a decrease in support for immigration, this relationship has been found to be moderated by assimilation.

Studies examining the relationship between disgust sensitivity and political attitudes, however, have been conducted in multicultural societies with weak group boundaries. This study considers the impact of disgust sensitivity and assimilation in a homogeneous society where in-group out-group boundaries are stronger. Does disgust sensitivity influence attitudes toward immigration and is this effect moderated by cultural assimilation?

３．研究の方法

The project utilizes experimental studies embedded in nationally representative surveys. Hypotheses are thus tested by analyzing treatment effects. The experiments are embedded into 2 separate surveys conducted in 2020 and 2022.

<u>Study 1:</u> To examine the impact of exposure to linguistic barriers, a survey experiment is conducted. A randomly assigned treatment group receives a question in a foreign language (Vietnamese or English) before either continuing with the questionnaire after a set time or selecting a Japanese button that links the respondent to the Japanese version. Following this foreign language exposure, attitudes toward globalization are assessed. A control group is directly asked attitudes toward globalization without exposure to a language treatment. The treatment allows us to examine the effect of barriers to linguistic communication on perceptions of cultural threat and globalization attitudes.

<u>H1A:</u> *Exposure to a foreign language decreases support for globalization.*

<u>H1B:</u> *The effect of exposure to a foreign language is conditional on age. As age increases foreign language exposure leads to a decrease in support for globalization.*

<u>Study 2:</u> A survey experiment is designed to examine how public opinion varies by immigration regime type by manipulating either the level of contact or level of assimilation of a hypothetical immigrant living in Japan. A vignette design is implemented, and respondents are randomly assigned to 1 of 5 experimental groups (control; high-contact; low-contact; high-assimilation; low-assimilation). Each respondent then receives a vignette about a hypothetical immigrant living in Japan. To measure attitudes toward immigration a 5-question index is given to respondents immediately following the vignette.

<u>H2A:</u> *The public is more/less accepting of assimilated/non-assimilated immigrants.*
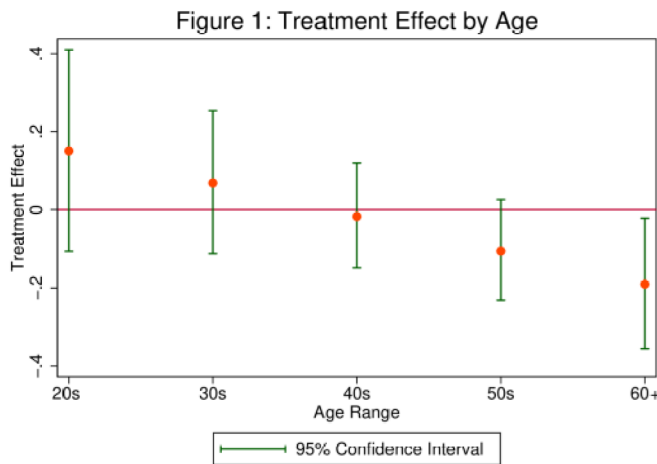
<u>H2B:</u> *The public is more/less accepting of low/ high contact immigrants.*

<u>Study 3:</u> A survey experiment is designed to examine the impact of disgust sensitivity (DS) on immigration attitude by manipulating either the level of contact or assimilation of a hypothetical immigrant living in Japan as described in Study 2. To measure DS, 6 core disgust items from the Japanese version of the Disgust Sensitivity Scale (DS-R-J) are included.

<u>H3A:</u> *An increase in DS is leads to a decrease in support for immigration.*

<u>H3B:</u> *The impact of DS is conditional on assimilation. DS leads to a decrease in support for immigration when assimilation is low but not when assimilation is high.*

４．研究成果

Figure 1: Treatment Effect by Age

Study 1: It is found that foreign language exposure has a negative impact on support for globalization, but this effect is only significant in older individuals (Table 2). Study 1 thus rejects hypothesis 1A and finds support for hypothesis 1B. The foreign language treatment has no general effect but is negative and significant in older

individuals. This effect of age is statistically significant (p<.05). As depicted in Figure 1, the foreign language treatment is significant for individuals 60 and over. Due to the aging population, this cohort makes up about 40% of Japan's population.

Table 2

Effect of Foreign Language Exposure

VARIABLES	(1) Model 1 Main	(2) Model 2 Interaction	(3) Model 3 Controls	(4) Model 4 Eng.	(5) Model 5 Viet.
Treatment	-0.0311	0.212	0.245	0.315*	0.184
	(0.0628)	(0.154)	(0.154)	(0.184)	(0.176)
Age		0.0251	0.0329	0.0313	0.0352
		(0.0325)	(0.0331)	(0.0334)	(0.0332)
Age * treatment		-0.0695*	-0.0863**	-0.0965**	-0.0816*
		(0.0407)	(0.0411)	(0.0484)	(0.0481)
Female			-0.00829	-0.0250	-0.0190
			(0.0636)	(0.0792)	(0.0776)
LDP supporter			0.275***	0.337***	0.229***
			(0.0641)	(0.0796)	(0.0779)
Education			0.0290**	0.0261*	0.0383***
			(0.0118)	(0.0146)	(0.0143)
Income			-0.0120	-0.0146	-0.0248*
			(0.0115)	(0.0138)	(0.0141)
No language study			-0.258***	-0.280***	-0.256***
			(0.0755)	(0.0920)	(0.0923)
Foreign contact			0.0692*	0.0577	0.0854*
			(0.0364)	(0.0447)	(0.0457)
Geographic region			(included)	(included)	(included)
Observations	1,260	1,260	1,256	836	839

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

A second analysis examines the effect of the Vietnamese versus English treatment. The English treatment may increase support for globalization in younger generations, but the effect fails to reach statistical significance for the observed age ranges (over 18). The effect of age on the treatment variable is negative and significant for individuals over 60 and not statistically different between the English and Vietnamese treatments.

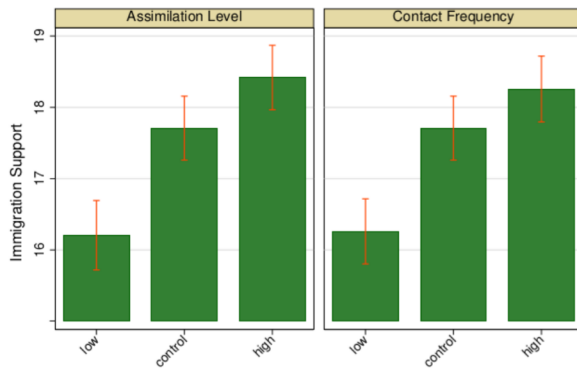**Study 2:** Public support for types of immigration regimes is examined by manipulating the level of contact and assimilation of a hypothetical foreigner living and working in Japan. The study rejects both null hypotheses. It is found that the public shows a preference for both high levels of contact with foreigners living in Japan and high levels of assimilation (Figure 2). This result is statistically at the .05 level.

Figure 2

Furthermore, respondents express a significant decrease in support for low levels of contact and assimilation. This suggests that the public would grow⬚ unhappy with an immigration regime that leads to separate communities or ethnic islands forming in Japan. Following the immigration regime typology presented in Table 1, it is argued that the Japanese public is most supportive of a "melting pot" type immigration policy where the native populations come into regular contact with foreign populations, but foreign populations are expected to assimilate to the dominant culture.

Table 3

Effect of Disgust Sensitivity on Support for Immigration

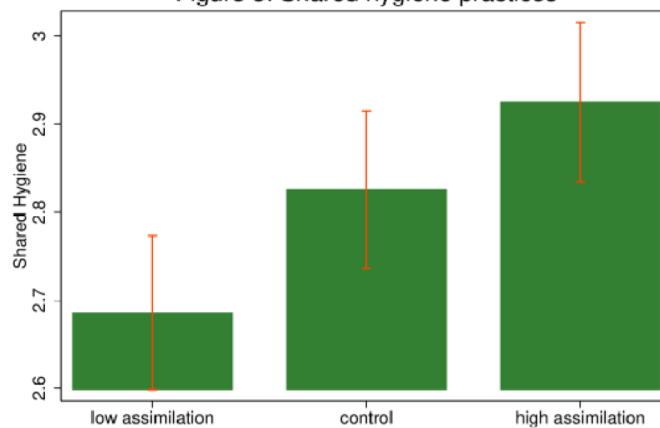| VARIABLES	(1) Model 1 Main	(2) Model 2 Controls	(3) Model 2 Controls
Disgust	-0.120***	-0.125***	-0.104*
	(0.0260)	(0.0290)	(0.0582)
Age		-0.0535	0.00546
		(0.0834)	(0.103)
Male		0.290	0.193
		(0.250)	(0.314)
Education		0.0930**	0.0714
		(0.0430)	(0.0557)
Income		0.0293	0.0582
		(0.0448)	(0.0560)
Assimilation			1.800*
			(1.028)
Treatment * DS			-0.0320
			(0.0449)
Region		(included)	(included)
Constant	20.21***	18.21***	16.38***
	(0.598)	(1.078)	(1.799)
Observations	1,309	1,179	718
R-squared	0.017	0.027	0.074

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Study 3: The effect of DS on support for immigration is examined. First, hypothesis 3A is supported. An increase in DS leads to a significant and large decrease in support for immigration (Table 3). The effect of DS, for example, is similar to the effect of education level. The study, however, finds mixed support for hypothesis 3B. On the one hand, level of assimilation is found to influence perceived hygiene of foreign nationals. Respondents in the high assimilation treatment for example are more likely to believe Mr Tran's hygiene practices are like those of people who grew up in Japan (Figure 3). The effect of DS on support for immigration however is not significantly influenced by the assimilation treatment (Table 3; Model 3). Future research should seek to clarify the relationship between assimilation, contact, and DS especially in homogeneous societies.

Figure 3: Shared hygiene practices

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